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Dear Hamtramck Academy Parents:

The 2009-10 school year is well underway and Hamtramck Academy is making great progress toward what I'm confident will be another successful year. Students have been focused and putting forth great effort and I'm sure you are anxious to review your child's enclosed report card to see how they are personally progressing.

As you know, Hamtramck Academy is one of a number of NHA schools that opted to transition from the traditional 100 point scale/letter grade system to the NHA scoring scale model for the 2009-10 school year. I thought you might find it beneficial if I provide some background on how this transition came about.

Beginning in spring 2007, after a long period of research and discovery, NHA introduced the scoring scale to school leadership and began providing them, as well as staff, with professional development and resources regarding this direction. At that point, every grade level began becoming familiar with the system.

During the winter of 2008, NHA conducted a series of parent focus groups in multiple cities to introduce the scoring scale and receive input from parents. The feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive. At the end of the 2008-09 school year, based on the benefits and ability to better measure and understand student learning Hamtramck Academy opted in to the new scoring system for 2009-10. In spring and summer of 2009, training sessions were held with the entire staff as well as the leadership team and additional support was provided to all the schools that selected to move to this scoring scale for the 2009-10 school year.

The aim of the scoring scale is to provide the best measure of where students are at and how they are progressing within the NHA Curriculum. This information is important for teachers, students and parents to understand accurately students' level of understanding of objectives as outlined in the NHA Curriculum. NHA's curriculum was developed to achieve specific education goals, aligned with state standards, so that students learn in each grade level the content necessary to prepare them for high school, college and beyond.

As you review the report card, please note that your child's scores more accurately reflect their current level of achievement. This is because the score is heavily weighted on the most recent learning rather than a simple averaging of grades over the marking period. Secondly, please note that a 3.0 on our scoring scale reflects achievement of expertise at this grade level towards our goal of college readiness. We are pleased when students reach this level and beyond.

I know you have a choice when it comes to your child's education and I'm thankful you chose an NHA school. It's truly our privilege to serve your family. Thank you for your support of Hamtramck Academy and for serving as our partner in your child's education.

Best Regards.

Jeff Clark  
President & CEO  
National Heritage Academies