Dear Parents,

Welcome to another great year at Toombs Central Elementary. We want you to be aware of the changes occurring in our public education. One change is the Common Core Standards adopted by the state of Georgia. These standards create one set of clear and consistent expectations for all students. The Common Core Standards are relevant to the real world reflecting the knowledge and skills young people need to be prepared for both college and work in a global economy. They will focus on problem solving and critical thinking skills.

You will see differences in the kinds of assignments students receive, including differences in the ways in which they demonstrate what they have learned. You will see students reading a wider variety of texts including more “informational” text at every grade-text that gives information about the world rather than simply telling a story. You will also see students producing more writing, and being asked to revise and improve that writing. Word Study will be an important part of your child’s curriculum. This means the weekly spelling test may not occur. Words will be studied in a more meaningful way. Georgia’s Common Core English Language Arts Standards will prepare our students to read, write, speak, and listen at higher levels.

The K-5 math standards provide students with a solid foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals—which help young students build the foundation to successfully apply more demanding math concepts and procedures, and move into applications. The standards stress not only procedural skill but also conceptual understanding, to make sure students are learning and absorbing the critical information they need to succeed at higher levels - rather than the current practices by which many students learn enough to get by on the next test, but forget it shortly thereafter, only to review again the following year.

The Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) are aligned to the highest international and national standards and have an increased emphasis on the following:
- Reading more informational and complex texts
- Writing to justify thinking and reasoning and writing for more authentic purposes
- Engaging in more problem-solving and problem-based learning
- Making more real-world, relevant connections
- Assessing learning at higher-levels

These standards inform schools of “what” to teach but leave “how” to teach in the hands of our capable teachers. Your child’s classroom will be an even more engaging setting as students are provided with increased opportunities for collaboration, conversation and problem-solving.

What could parents do to help their child achieve at these higher levels?

Here are some important suggestions:

Stay in touch with your child’s teacher.

Support your child as assignments become more difficult to read and more challenging to write. Be patient.

Please feel free to contact your child’s teacher and set up a conference to discuss his/her progress.

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