



## Academy of Advanced Technologies Public Charter School Grades 9-12

igniting your purpose!

September 10, 2019

Dear Parents & Guardians,

I've always enjoyed greeting my students at the start of each new school day and look forward to seeing your sons and daughters first thing in the morning. It has also been great to see those of you who drop your kids off each morning and to get your perspective. It seems that MTA has been really good in busing Manchester students to and from Spark each day. We are certainly grateful to them and to the Manchester School District for helping us out!

Each new school year brings a sense of freshness with it as we shake off our summer schedules and all get used to the structure of a school day and the details of school life. As this is Spark's first year, we are still getting some software matters in place. The licensing for SolidWorks and ALEKS has been a challenge, but SolidWorks is up and running. Unfortunately, the licensing for ALEKS has been frustrating. Mr. Pouliot is hopeful that ALEKS will be cleared up by the end of the day.

As Humanities is not dependent on a particular software package, that class has been up and running from day one. During this first week, I have been getting to know your daughters and sons in terms of reading, writing, and speaking preparedness. I never think in terms of a student's *abilities* and use the terms *preparedness* or *performance* as we can never see anyone's true abilities. As I said, I have been getting to know our students in terms of the skill levels pertaining to humanities where the processing of information is at the core of that curriculum. I am also adjusting the forms of assessment for Humanities and the benchmarks for grading. So far, my assessment is based on effort, and the students are doing well in that regard.

Tomorrow will bring our first exploration day. We will stay on the MCC campus but will do so outside the classrooms for much of the day. At 9:00, the college's Electrical Lineworker program will conduct a



demonstration to introduce our students to the practical side of electricity transmission. This will be taking place outdoors. There is a possibility of showers, and students should bring rain jackets, just to be prepared. At approximately 10:00, the students will be taken on a tour of the various departments to introduce them to the programs offered at MCC. Alternating with the tour will be an introduction to drawing and illustration techniques using an innovation first developed in the 15th century and adapted to today's technology. This technique will help our students make 2D representations of our 3D world.

We have identified Wednesday, October 16th, for the administration of the PSAT 8/9. The students need do nothing to prepare for the test aside from getting a good night's rest and having breakfast before coming to school. The students should bring a couple *Number 2* pencils and their calculators for the test. The PSAT will help us establish benchmarks as our students move through the program and will help us identify student strengths as well as areas for improvement. The exam will end late morning, followed by lunch and a movie. Dismissal will take place at the regular time, 3:00.

Finally, I was able to meet this morning with Dr. Susan Huard, president of MCC, to discuss various ways to bring college resources into Spark classrooms to enrich our program and open our students' horizons. I must say that everyone here at MCC has been extremely welcoming and helpful to us!

Thank you for your feedback so far. I always look forward to your perspectives so that we can all make Spark Academy the best school possible for our students!

Denis Mailloux  
Director



