



Where the future is present.

**Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

May 11, 2017

Dear Families of Capital Preparatory Magnet School,

I am writing to address the recent news articles concerning the magnet lottery process. I know that many Capital Prep staff, students, and families are frustrated by the implications of this recent press coverage and that is understandable. The students and staff at Capital Prep have worked hard to achieve notable success in academic performance, athletics, college acceptance, and persistence in college. As parents, guardians, family members and supporters of our Capital Prep students, you have much to be proud of.

I have stated many times my commitment to be transparent and accountable for our efforts at the district. The possibility of students being admitted outside the formal State Department of Education RSCO Lottery process in any of our magnet schools is serious. To that end, I have asked for an internal review of any discrepancies in the lottery process at our schools. As it relates to Capital Prep, the data cited in last week's press coverage came from an audit of state practices related to student admissions in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. The audit did identify a number of students at Capital Prep enrolled through a special process. This process was, however, approved by the State Department of Education as part of the school's operations plan. It is very important to note that, while the Capital Prep audit highlighted a past practice, this is no longer the case. Current data from the 2016-2017 Capital Prep audit when the school was under Principal Ferguson's leadership shows that NO students were enrolled this academic year outside of the lottery process.

I recently sent out a memo to our principals restating my expectation at Hartford Public Schools that students cannot be enrolled in a magnet school outside of the lottery process. We do know that there are situations where students with rare circumstances merit special consideration. I will be reaching out to the State Department of Education for guidance on a process to address these extreme cases across our schools. In addition, I will seek clarity on the processes and protocols outlined in the Capital Prep operations plan that has caused some confusion.

I am committed to a district where all schools support student success and development, and where we have high expectations for students and staff. I am committed to fair and equitable practices at all levels and to transparency about our work through open communication to families and the community.

Thank you for your support of your students – we are all proud of Capital Prep's progress. I look forward to continuing our shared work in ensuring an equitable system that provides access and opportunity for all of our families and children.

Sincerely,

Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez

*"Every Child Thrives. Every School is High Performing. No Exceptions."*