September 9th, 2009

Dear parents and guardians,

Welcome to the new Garfield computer science program – the students and I have an exciting semester of AP Computer Science ahead of us! I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself and the course and to encourage you to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

First of all, I would like to address a point of confusion: though this is an AP course, your student should currently be signed up for IB Programming. The district has never had an AP computer science course before and we are working on getting the course title approved. We will be following an AP curriculum heavily inspired by the University of Washington's introductory courses and will be working towards a May 4th, 2010 test date.

I intend to stay well-connected with you throughout the year by using the Source, a website and blog at http://garfieldcs.com and Twitter through @garfieldcs. My hope is to post assignments, handouts and lecture notes in a timely manner to allow students who need review quick access to it while providing students who miss class to catch up on their own.

I have attached a copy of the syllabus for you to look over and keep for your records. Please take the time to review it with your student and encourage him or her to come to me with questions.

While a computer science student at the University of Washington, I had the opportunity to be involved in a number of instruction and outreach projects. I was struck by how captivating computer science can be for students of all ages and backgrounds in contrast to how little access to it there has been. To me, the best way to help diversify computing careers while creating opportunities for students is by transforming their existing love for technology into critical thinking and problem solving skills. Computer science is a broad, dynamic field and I hope your students will learn to share some of my enthusiasm for it.

I welcome your feedback and participation in this course and look forward to meeting you soon!

Sincerely,

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