

# CHARLOTTE

## Innovation and Excellence in Education

**REACH FURTHER. GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS** starts here. The Charlotte community is proud of what Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools offer, and the district's slogan matches their vision. CMS provides a strong foundation in the basics — reading, writing and mathematics — and much, much more — all to prepare students to be globally competitive.

Nationally recognized for combining academic rigor with rich opportunities in the arts and humanities, CMS has the resources and the expertise to focus on the unique needs of each student. CMS offers a world of choices, from classical studies to culinary arts, information technology, and the highly acclaimed International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement Diploma programs.

THE **CHARLOTTE** COMMUNITY'S DEEP AND **CONTINUING** COMMITMENT TO **SUPERIOR** EDUCATION IS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE **QUALITY** OF THE CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOL SYSTEM.



### Quality and Growth

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg community treats education as one of its most precious resources and the Board of Education is dedicated to ensuring that "CMS provides all students the best education available anywhere, preparing every child to lead a rich and productive life."

CMS is recognized nationally for academic excellence. Recently, CMS was a finalist for the Broad Prize, which is presented annually to four school districts in the country for elevating their achievement levels. As a finalist, the district received \$125,000 in scholarships. CMS was also ranked by *Forbes* as seventh in the country for the "Best Education in the Biggest Cities."

CMS serves 134,060 students in Pre-K through 12th grade. As the 23rd largest district in the country, CMS has 172 schools and more than 19,000 employees. CMS is big, but its national reputation comes from the outstanding education provided to each student in the district. CMS realizes that what works for one student may not work for another.

CMS class size conforms to state requirements. The Equity Plus program in CMS lowers class size in schools with higher percentages of students who live in poverty.

### Top Quality Employees

CMS employs more than 9,300 full-time teachers, 8,945 student support staff and approximately 1,177

administrative staff. More than 3,100 of the district's certified teachers have advanced degrees.

North Carolina is first in the country in terms of the number of National Board Certified (NBC) teachers and second in number of newly certified teachers. CMS ranks in the top five school districts nationally for number of NBC teachers. In November 2007, more than 160 CMS teachers achieved National Board Certification for a total of 1,208. Equivalent to the CPA exam for accountants or the bar exam for lawyers, the National Board Certification documents a teacher's skills.

### Superior Student Achievement

CMS sets high expectations for students and challenges them to reach their fullest potential. Thus, academic rigor and access to challenging courses are top priorities in CMS. In 2008, 14 CMS high schools were ranked among America's top 1,300 out of more than 27,000 high schools surveyed by *Newsweek* Magazine. Myers Park High School ranked 38th, the highest in the state. A report released in October 2008 shows that students in CMS out perform students from most other nations in mathematics. This report was conducted by the American Institute for Research.

Enrollment in AP courses increased in 2008-2009, when 5,539 CMS students took AP exams. That's up from 5,106 in 2006-07. As a result of the district's commitment to academic excellence, CMS was selected as one of 28 school





systems across the country to award the first AP diplomas. In 2007-2008, 12,231 AP exams were taken, compared to 7,918 in 2000-01 and 2,220 in 1994-95. Fifty percent of CMS graduating seniors successfully completed at least one AP or IB course. Of the 206 IB Diploma candidates, 122 students earned the IB Diploma.

### Above Average SAT Scores

In CMS, nearly 70 percent of graduating seniors took the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The top 10 percent of CMS graduates outperform their public and private school peers nationwide, scoring an average of 1765 compared to 1722 for the top 10 percent in North Carolina.

National, state, and Mecklenburg SAT scores are a composite of both public and non-public schools. Mecklenburg's results compare favorably with both state and national scores.

In 2007-2008, 6,731 students graduated from the 33 Charlotte-Mecklenburg high schools. Last school year, CMS graduates earned more than \$70 million in academic and athletic scholarships.

**MORE THAN 6,700 STUDENTS GRADUATED FROM CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS IN 2008.**

### Exceptional Magnet Programs

Magnet schools offer students an opportunity to focus on a particular theme or curriculum while receiving the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Today, 40 schools offer specialized magnet programs ranging from visual and performing arts to math, science and technology, Montessori, and language immersion. CMS' nationally recognized magnet schools serve more than 20,000 students in 11 different programs.

### Classrooms on the Cutting Edge

As a result of business and community support, technology is a strong focus in all CMS schools. An example of this dedication to technology includes the Computer Access to Neighborhood Program located within the community at various school sites.

Phillip O. Berry and Garinger New Technology are the district's magnet technology high schools, offering students an array of upper level technology courses necessary for certification exams. Officials at schools collaborate with business professionals and higher education institutions to ensure they concentrate on current and future high demand IT career areas.

### A Model Pre-K Program

Bright Beginnings, a program for four-year-olds, is recognized nationally and serves as a model for similar programs throughout

### Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

	Writing	Math	Critical Reading	Total
Mecklenburg	509	527	513	1,549
N.C.	482	511	496	1,489
National	494	515	502	1,511



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**37 CMS SCHOOLS** WERE NAMED  
SCHOOLS OF **EXCELLENCE** OR  
**DISTINCTION** BY THE STATE OF  
**NORTH CAROLINA.**

the state and country. Developed in 1996, this literacy-based program helps students enter kindergarten ready and eager to learn. Currently, 3,120 four-year-olds are enrolled in this program.

## Committed to Meeting Special Needs

The goal of CMS is to provide educational opportunities that encourage, challenge and motivate all students. Through programs for the Exceptional Children, students with disabilities are encouraged to develop and flourish through individualized instruction in the least restrictive environment. Programs are available throughout Mecklenburg County and are determined by addressing each student's needs through individual education programs.

## A Multitude of Programs and Services

CMS offers a broad range of services and programs to enhance the district's educational opportunities. The English as a Second Language (ESL) program offers assistance to students whose native language is not English. More than 12,000 CMS students have been identified as limited English proficient; 140 native languages are spoken, and more than 160 countries are represented.

The After-School Enrichment Program (ASEP) provides a caring and nurturing environment for students beyond the regular classroom day at every CMS elementary and at select middle schools. The program focuses on exciting activities such as sports, arts, computer exploration, music, dance, drama, clubs and much more. The program is supported by the weekly fees paid by parents, and operates on school holidays as well as during winter and spring break. Before-school care is available in many of these schools.



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## Effective Business Partnerships

CMS is fortunate to have many business and community partners that provide resources and volunteer support to our schools. Tens of thousands of volunteers have contributed more than a million hours. More than 1,000 business partners provide assistance to the schools through more than \$17 million in school-business partnerships.

## Superior Transportation

North Carolina law requires all school systems to offer free transportation to any student who lives 1.5 miles or more from his or her assigned school. Special needs students are also guaranteed free transportation. Currently, 1,267 buses serve CMS students and provide more than 36,000 stops daily. The CMS buses travel more than 139,000 miles each day and more than 117,000 students use these services.

## Efficient Education Dollars

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg community shows consistent dedication to quality education. The community passed a \$516 million bond referendum in 2007 to renovate older facilities and build six new schools. These new facilities will help address the growing population in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, as well as equity. The 2008-09 total operating budget for CMS is \$1.19 billion with funding support from County, State and Federal sources. Per pupil expenditure is \$8,794.

## New Facilities with Higher "IAQ"

With bulldozers rolling and construction crews hard at work, CMS is currently undergoing the largest building, construction and renovation program in the district's history. The district will open six newly constructed schools by 2009. Additional new facilities and renovation projects are scheduled over the next decade to address the facility needs that arise from rapid growth and aging buildings.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



(EPA), CMS builds healthy, high-performance schools by following the guidelines of EPA's IAQ Design Tools for Schools program. The district was recognized and awarded the EPA's 2007 Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools National Model of Sustained Excellence Award.

In CMS, one thing is certain: every child deserves and can expect to receive the best education possible. To find out more about Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the opportunities available to every child, log on to [www.cms.k12.nc.us](http://www.cms.k12.nc.us), check out CMS TV 3 or contact the Public Information Office at (980) 343-7450.

## Other School Alternatives

Nearly 23,000 students are enrolled in 58 independent, non-public and charter schools. Among them is a growing Catholic school system of elementary, middle and high schools, in addition to a variety of denominational church schools and non-church related institutions. A complete list of these schools is available from the Chamber.

For Public School Information Contact:  
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