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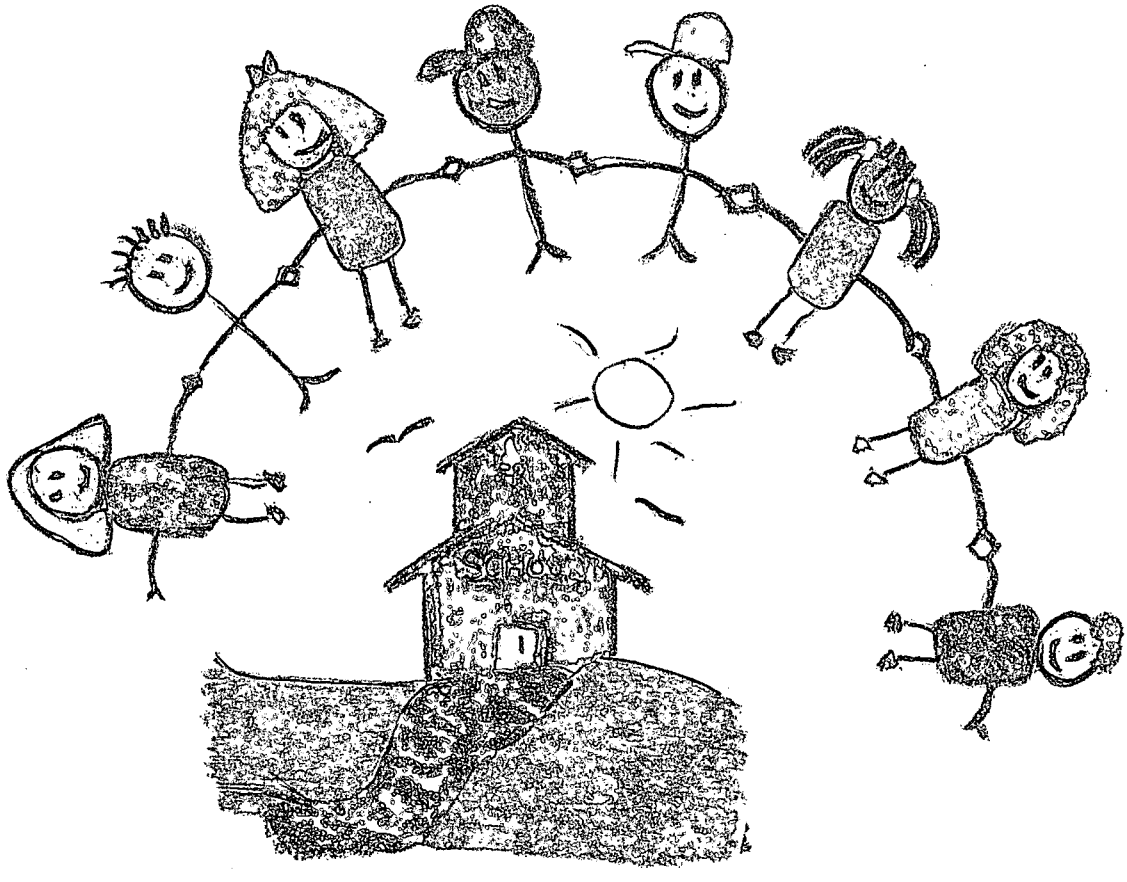
ABSTRACT

This report examines North Carolina's Charlotte-Mecklenburg public school system (CMS) and assesses its failures and achievements. Though the proportion of students who chose CMS over private and charter schools has decreased from 95 percent in the 1970s, it still remains over 80 percent. Enrollment for exceptional, and poor children and children who do not speak English as their native language, however, has increased significantly. CMS does not educate all of its students well. Progress has been made on increasing academic achievement and narrowing race- and income-related achievement gaps. The system measures and spends school-by-school in order to provide instructional materials on an equal basis, recognizing that at-risk schools need extra dollars. The state's ABC accountability program, which is constantly monitored, needs refinement and expansion, since many students are still failing. Disaggregated data on student achievement and race show that low achievement is a problem for CMS students of all races. About 35 percent of 3rd-8th grade students test below grade level in reading and/or math. White CMS students consistently outscore White North Carolina students, while black North Carolina students consistently outscore black CMS students. More CMS students are taking advanced placement courses and getting high test scores leading to college credits. CMS has one of the highest high school dropout rates of any large school system in the state. (SM)

STATE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION REPORT:

A TALE OF TWO SYSTEMS, OR THREE OR FOUR



CHARLOTTE • MECKLENBURG
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The mission of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation is to define the issues and to advocate for the changes required to permanently improve the quality of public education in Mecklenburg County.

Thank you to the 2000 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation Public Policy Committee, chaired by Howard Haworth.

Thank you to those people who participated as readers and editors. Your time and energy was invaluable.

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January 2001

Dear Reader:

In discussions during the fall of 1999, at the Education Summit in March 2000 and on the annual Community Assessment, hundreds of members of this community talked about what they wanted from our public schools: excellence and equity, parent and community involvement, safety and diversity, good teaching and recognition that school is about more than test scores.

People care about much more than pupil assignment. And that list is not just about schools or educators, or even parents. It is also about community support. If the community is unhappy with its schools, then some of the responsibility is the community's.

A school – much less a system like CMS with more than 100,000 pupils and 140 schools – cannot really be given a single grade. Superintendent Eric Smith, in remarks prepared for a reception last month, noted that one of his earliest speeches here was entitled *The Tale of Two Cities – One of Hope and Prosperity and One of Inequity and Disappointment.* Any assessment of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is a tale of two school systems, or three or four. Some students do wonderfully well, others fail, and some are stuck in the middle. Averages can hide the success of top-ranked students and mask the plight of students at the bottom, both for the system and individual schools.

In this introductory State of Public Education Report, we will share our conviction on two things. First, while CMS is – to quote the superintendent – a target-rich environment, with many problems to fix, there are many successes in our schools. Second, this community can have the educational excellence it wants, but not by simply drifting along the familiar trajectory to big-city size, big-city politics and big-city failure.

Sincerely,

Tom Bradbury
President, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation

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Table of Contents

Executive summary

This first State of Public Education Report is about Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. But any assessment of CMS is a tale of two school systems, or three or four. Some students do wonderfully well, others fail, and some are stuck in the middle. Averages can hide the success of top-ranked students and mask the plight of students at the bottom, both for the system and individual schools. The question in each instance is how does our school system do with students at each level, at each school.

In terms of enrollment, the system is on a knife-edge. Once 70% white and 30% African American, CMS is now 47% white and 42% African American (with other races accounting for the rest of the students). The Education Foundation's Community Assessment last spring showed that just 30% of registered voters even have a child enrolled in school, and just 25% have a child in CMS.

Not all of Mecklenburg's students are in CMS. Consider what might be called the CMS "market share," the proportion of students who choose CMS over private and charter school. Three decades ago, the CMS market share was over 95%. It is still over 80%, but white enrollment has been largely flat over the past five years. At the same time, enrollment has increased for exceptional children, poor children and children who don't speak English as their native language – all of whom cost more to educate.

CMS, like school systems across the country, does not yet educate all of its students well. CMS will likely fall short of many of the goals it set for 2001. For example, the goal is to have 85% of third graders read on grade level by 2001; the figure for 2000 was 72%. It is important to recognize both the successes and the failures. Progress has been made on increasing academic achievement and narrowing the achievement gaps associated with race and income. This year has seen significant new programs across the board: efforts to lift lagging students and at-risk schools, for example, and efforts to be sure that every high school challenges its students with high-quality Advanced Placement courses.

Here, as elsewhere, there is wide variation in the conditions schools confront. Voters again last fall approved bonds to, among other things, help modernize facilities in older schools. The system is measuring and spending school by school to equalize things like instructional materials, recognizing that at-risk schools need extra dollars. Whatever steps the system takes itself, it is essential for CMS to have citizens looking over its shoulder. The school-by-school equity report recommended by the Student Assignment Oversight Committee ought to be produced each year. It should include both student mobility and teacher turnover, as well as information on student performance and school effectiveness.

The state's ABC program – which supplies tests and rewards to local schools – is constantly being studied by the state; it ought to be refined and expanded. The ABC program, for example, sets goals for every school. But that is not detailed enough. A school can succeed with one group of its students but not with another group. The CMS local accountability bonus program and the state pilot ABC program being tested this year both look at subgroups within a school. The "average" is not a good measure of how

well a school does with its different groups. The reporting of what different students are learning within every school is important for parents trying to make informed decisions about their own children, for policymakers trying to ensure that every school is effective across the board.

Disaggregating the data – breaking the test scores down by different groups – is vital, but the percentages don't tell the whole story. In percentage terms, for example, African Americans are far more likely that whites to be below grade level on the reading and math tests. But because whites outnumber African Americans in North Carolina schools, the actual numbers are closer: There are at least 70,000 students of each race who are below grade level in reading, math or both on the tests given in grades 3-8 in North Carolina (72,000 whites, 86,000 African Americans). Low achievement is not a problem limited to any one race.

Another problem with simple numbers comes with the interplay of national and state tests. States can be compared by using the tests given to a sample of students by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Indeed, N.C. students rank around the national average on NAEP tests and the state's progress has been noted by national researchers. But individual students must be measured by North Carolina's own tests, which are also used in CMS. These state tests are scored far more generously than the nation's, showing a higher percentage on grade level than the NAEP tests say are "proficient." More than semantics is involved. First, the road to adequately educating all students may be longer than the state's own tests would indicate. Second, state officials ought to commission a major study of gains on the state test and gains on the NAEP to deal with fears that gains on state tests don't really reflect real gains in learning. North Carolina is moving in the right direction with the First In America report card, which gave N.C. schools three B-minuses, a C-plus and a C. But the efforts at both state and local levels to improve the testing program and its credibility must continue.

In any case, even the state tests show that there is a long way to go. Most students ought to be on what North Carolina considers grade level. In fact, though, some 35% in grades 3-8 in CMS tested below grade level in reading or math or both. That represents real improvement from the 44% below grade level just four years ago, but it is still far too high. We are making progress, but the journey is far from finished.

Again, looking beyond simple averages is important. For example, CMS trails North Carolina on reading and math. But breaking the scores down by race shows a different picture. CMS white students consistently outscore N.C. whites. CMS African American students just as consistently score lower than N.C. African Americans.

The record of top students gives another example of the need to look beyond averages. The figures on National Merit Scholarship semifinalists, Advanced Placement courses and International Baccalaureate courses show that many very successful students attend CMS, at a variety of schools. There were 38 Merit Scholarship semifinalists in the class of 2000; there are 44 this school year. CMS students took more than 6,300 AP exams in 2000, up from approximately 2,700 in 1998; the percentage of scores 3 or higher dipped

from 54% two years ago to 41%, but the **number** rose from 1,400 to 2,600. CMS is not simply a system for those with no other choice, nor is academic success limited to a few schools or a few neighborhoods.

While offering and taking advanced courses is important, it is only the beginning. More students are taking AP courses, and more getting the 3 or higher on AP tests that leads to course credit at many colleges. But the percentage of students getting a 3 or higher on AP exams ranges from 77% at Providence to 8% at Olympic. Quality and access both matter.

It has long been known that the dropout rate varies by school, as it varies by subgroup. But schools also vary when the same subgroup is compared. A school can have a low overall dropout rate – say because it is has relatively few of the groups likeliest to drop out – but still have a very high rate for certain subgroups. Look at the system's regular high schools in 1998-99, for example: Providence High School had one of the system's lowest overall dropout rates (5.4%) but the highest dropout rate for black students (18.6%).

Measuring dropouts can be arcane, but still useful. The complex definitions and procedures followed by educators allow comparisons from system to system and year to year. The statistics show, for example, that CMS has one of the highest high school dropout rates of any large school system in North Carolina. (Gaston and Durham have higher dropout rates, but they are one-third of the enrollment of CMS). But the process is almost hopelessly complex, and the numbers virtually meaningless for the general public: To use the state figures for CMS, what does it mean to say that 5.5% of the students in grades 7-12 drop out, or 7.7% of the students in grades 9-12? Emphasize instead the graduation rate, and measure against the seventh grade, or earlier, not the ninth. The question about dropouts, after all, is what percentage of students finally graduate.

One central concern of educators everywhere is teachers. But that concern is largely absent from the regular reports. The state does do a report showing that CMS has an annual teacher turnover rate of 19%, the highest of any large N.C. system. The report says that some 1,200 teachers leave CMS's classrooms each year, and that doesn't count the teachers who go from one CMS school to another. Locally, the CMS 2001 goals are commendably concerned mostly with outputs – especially student results – but they don't include any teacher measures. Yet teacher turnover and absences matter, so do out-of-field teaching and the success or failure of CMS steps to attract master teachers to schools serving large numbers of at-risk students. The new balanced scorecard is moving in the right direction, but the reports ought to reflect the fact that teachers are a major concern of CMS.

One of the major local preoccupations is the funding by the county commissioners of the local portion of the CMS budget. It is worth remembering the state supplies over 60% of the money to operate CMS; the county commissioners supply a bit over 30%. Being perceived as closer to the voters, the county commissioners get the majority of the public heat at budget time. The county funding, in fact, greatly influences the margin of

excellence and innovation in local schools, but state rules and state formulas matter enormously.

The figures on funding can be sliced a lot of ways, and public support for schools is shown by bond approval. But what this community still needs is a way to really harness its wealth in a unified attack on its manifest educational problems. For now, the reality remains that this soaring community is not providing the education it wants. Must that be Charlotte-Mecklenburg's future?

A word about this report

The State of Public Education Report: A Tale of Two Systems or Three or Four is a first for our community and for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation [CMEF]. The purpose was to develop a tool that could be used annually to help make sense of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

This report begins with an Executive Summary and a Preface. Then behind each tab is a short section of text, followed by data tables that are more for reference than for reading. At the end is an Afterword, followed by appendices that contain remarks prepared for the superintendent to deliver at a reception in December 2000, a page from CMS listing some successes, and a glossary of many of the terms. The organization is designed to make reading and reference easy.

CMS, with 100,000-plus students and some 140 schools, generates a huge volume of information. Data is available at different times and to differing degrees of completeness. Statistical information looks precise, but it is at best a snapshot, taken by different people on different days using different definitions for different purposes. Consequently, numbers differ slightly from one source to another. There is a lot of data available on students, though not enough, but far less on teachers.

A great deal of information is in the data pages, although the report does not repeat much that has been published elsewhere. In addition, this report does not address exceptional children, alternative schools, charter schools, the debate over magnets and regular schools, the superintendent's ideas for wider choice, or the enormous controversy over pupil assignment. Equity is mentioned, but needs a report in itself.

Over the course of this next year, CMEF will examine some of the questions raised by *The State of Public Education Report* and will communicate the findings through newsletters, white papers and speaking to groups. There will be events through which the community can both explore and comment.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg is in fact many communities, organized around work and school, faith and neighborhood. Whether formed to address school issues or not, those groups and their people are crucial to understanding the schools and supporting the resources they need. No one group can do this alone. This report will be successful if it educates the many groups in this community and helps them in the quest we all share: to assure the best possible education for Charlotte-Mecklenburg's children.

Your responses and questions are welcomed and encouraged. Contacting CMEF through its website and email addresses is often the most helpful as those comments can be tracked and filed. The website address is *www.cmef.org*, through which you can access email addresses. Additional contact information is printed on the back cover of this report.

Recommendations

1. Complete the expansion of the Bright Beginnings 4-year-old program so that it reaches all eligible children, not just half of them. Use local funds if necessary, but also take advantage of the ruling by a state court in October that the state ought to provide funding for preschool education for at-risk students. It offers Mecklenburg a way to stabilize funding for an expanded Bright Beginnings program before the preschool effort sputters and confidence is lost in the entire reform effort.

2. Change the relationship between the school board and the county commissioners by completely redoing the way budgets are prepared and presented. The effort to stabilize Bright Beginnings and get state funding could be a model.

3. Expand reporting of academic achievement so that ***all*** groups are measured individually. The pilot ABC program is one step in the right direction. Look at including special programs, of which language immersion is only one example.

4. Undertake a full study of the teaching crisis here, looking at everything from pay to school-by-school turnover, from teacher absenteeism to the substitute shortage, from professional development to the mentoring program, from all the steps being taken to strengthen pre-service teacher education to the desperate need for preparing principals.

5. Report school-by-school student mobility, examine its impact on learning and change schools as necessary to handle the student instability that is often a fact of life.

6. Institutionalize an equity report so that no school is neglected ***and*** so success can be defined and celebrated.

7. Face signs of a political split that goes far beyond the court case. Race is part of it, but not all of it.

Preface

What CMS says:

> "The Vision is to ensure that the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools System becomes the premier urban, integrated school system in the nation in which all students acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to live rich and full lives as productive and enlightened members of society."
>
> CMS Vision Statement

What the community says:

> "All children must be held to high academic expectations and standards and provided with meaningful and relevant learning opportunities. High academic achievement is the centerpiece of quality education. Other issues ought to be examined with regard to how they can improve and promote children's academic achievement."
>
> Community Vision Initiative for Quality Public Education,
> Preliminary Community Vision, January 2000

Those are high standards, and familiar ones. Education reform and improvement are old stories here. So is desegregation. So is equity.

There's certainly been change. Charlotte city schools and Mecklenburg County schools merged to become Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools 40 years ago. For 20 tumultuous years – from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s – this community moved from segregated schools, to integrating a few schools with a literal handful of students, to busing to achieve countywide school desegregation. Now new court orders have raised other questions, as have the national focus on student achievement and the plans of the current superintendent and school board.

Educators have always cared about student achievement. Equity between whites and African Americans has long been an issue, as has equity between schools on the Westside and schools elsewhere in the county. Previous superintendents like John Murphy, Jay Robinson and Craig Phillips – to name just three from the last 40 years – wrestled with these questions.

The current superintendent, Eric Smith, is not the first leader to see problems and have plans. There is no golden age to which he can simply return, some wonderful era in which there were no dropouts and high achievement by every student. Indeed, it was just 50 years ago that the U.S. Census first reported that a majority of young adults (53%) were at least high school graduates; the rest, in modern parlance, were dropouts. When Charlotte-Mecklenburg thinks about how far it has to go, it needs also to remember how far it has come.

This report will use a lot of numbers. They are useful, but they aren't everything. Several points before we dive in:

- Tests can only sample what is taught in a course, much less the courses that aren't even tested. In the lower grades the state concentrates on reading, writing and math. But science and social studies and the arts are also important. So are parents and family and all the intangibles that go into growing up; it has never been the aim of schools to just produce literate savages. Test scores are very important, but "building dreams" is far more than a slogan.

- The state's ABC accountability program – which sets goals for every school, publicizes the results and pays bonuses if the results are achieved – is focused heavily on **growth** in academic achievement. That means that a school is responsible for the growth of the students it has, no matter where they start. That's good, in that it focuses attention on steady progress. It is silly to judge a school by whether its students arrived far ahead or far behind. But both growth **and** achievement level are important. **Growth** shows whether the **school** is working, whether it is adding value. **Achievement** shows whether the **students** are where they need to be. If "progress" does not eventually lead to achievement, it is empty for students who aren't being prepared for life and school ahead.

- Is "good enough" – on grade level according to the ABCs – really good enough? Look at the following table:

Grade 8 reading in 1998, national versus state standards

	National NAEP test: At least proficient	**State tests: On grade level**
National average	31%	—
North Carolina	31%	79.5%
Connecticut	42%	66%

It shows three things:

1. North Carolina students rank around the national average on the tests given by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Indeed, though the table does not try to give all the NAEP scores, N.C. students have raised their math scores dramatically in the last decade.

2. North Carolina's own tests are scored far more generously than the nation's. Maybe the national

definition of "proficient" is too high. Maybe the N.C. definition of grade level is too low. Or both.

3. On that last point, look at Connecticut. It, too, had fewer students meeting national standards for proficiency than its own state standards for grade level, but the two numbers are closer together. The point is not to compare the two states, but to show how state standards match national ones in two places. **More** Connecticut students were proficient according to NAEP, but **fewer** students there were on grade level according to Connecticut's state tests and standards. It is easier to be on grade level in North Carolina than in Connecticut. This does not negate the progress N.C. students are making by NAEP's national measures. But it does show that being on grade level by North Carolina's standards is only the beginning of the road, not the end.

A study done for the National Education Goals Panel praised the gains by North Carolina and Texas on the NAEP tests, and a RAND study last summer talked in part about the gains made by North Carolina and Texas on the NAEP math tests. RAND has also done another study noting that Texas's gains on NAEP are not as dramatic as the gains on Texas's state tests. North Carolina officials ought to do a similar study for this state. As they constantly revise the ABCs, they need to answer fears that state requirements are too low and that gains on state tests don't reflect real gains in learning.

Demographics

Introduction:

Many elements are involved in CMS's demographics, the composition of its students. One element is what might be called the "market share," the proportion of public and private enrollment choosing CMS over educational alternatives. Another is the growing population of the poor, the handicapped and the non-English speaking.

The data:

Market share: Many Mecklenburg County children who are in school have chosen various options over the past 30 years. This "market share" is one way of seeing how many students go to CMS and how many choose such alternatives as private schools, charter schools and home schooling.

- Almost 84% of the Mecklenburg County children who were in school in 1999-2000 chose CMS, but the CMS market share has declined over the last 30 years. For comparison, the statewide market share of public schools is about 91%.
- This statistic does not include dropouts, or the families who choose to live in surrounding counties. Nor does it explain why people make the choices they do: Some perhaps are fleeing CMS, others might be newly arrived Catholics who have always gone to Catholic schools.

CMS enrollment: Several things stand out in the data from the CMS Instructional Accountability department showing the ethnic composition of CMS and four special programs.

- Since the late 1980s, CMS has experienced rapid overall growth, gaining 25,000 students.
- CMS is now a school system in which roughly 53% of the enrollment is composed of various "minorities." Both whites (non-Hispanic) and African Americans are minorities in the system; that is, neither group accounts for 50% of the enrollment. White enrollment has been largely flat over the past five years.
- CMS has an increasing percentage of children in the programs for free-and-reduced price lunch, for exceptional children and for English as a Second Language.
- The statistics for the programs are very sensitive to the exact definitions and dates. CMS has a number of children who are rated as "Limited English Proficient," for example, but are not being served by the "English as a Second Language" program. And while the charts from Instructional Accountability and the Second Language Department agree on the increase in children whose first language is not English, they are not in perfect sync on the numbers for ESL students.

Comment:

In terms of enrollment, the system is on a knife-edge. Once 70% white and 30% African American, CMS is now 47% white and 42% African American (with other races accounting for the rest of the students). The Education Foundation's Community Assessment last spring showed that just 30% of registered voters have a child enrolled in school, and just 25% have a child in CMS.

The CMS market share of enrollment is still over 80%, but white enrollment has essentially not grown since 1996-97. The steepest rise has been in Hispanic students, who have more than doubled to 5% of the enrollment since then. At the same time, enrollment has increased for exceptional children, poor children and children who don't speak English as their native language – all of whom cost more to educate.

The result is that costs are rising: because there are more students and because system has more difficult-to-educate children.

CMS Market Share

Year	CMS	Charter School	Private School	Home School	Market Share
1968-1969	81,700	0	2,156	0	97.4%
1969-1970	82,517	0	2,739	0	96.8%
1970-1971	80,047	0	4,575	0	94.6%
1971-1972	78,931	0	6,668	0	92.2%
1972-1973	77,848	0	6,853	0	91.9%
1973-1974	76,930	0	7,563	0	91.0%
1974-1975	76,461	0	8,010	0	90.5%
1975-1976	76,889	0	8,129	0	90.4%
1976-1977	79,273	0	7,831	0	91.0%
1977-1978	78,189	0	7,891	0	90.8%
1978-1979	76,517	0	8,235	0	90.3%
1979-1980	75,395	0	8,600	0	89.8%
1980-1981	74,151	0	9,133	0	89.0%
1981-1982	72,901	0	9,299	0	88.7%
1982-1983	72,162	0	9,187	0	88.7%
1983-1984	71,982	0	8,798	0	89.1%
1984-1985	71,968	0	8,905	0	89.0%
1985-1986	72,408	0	8,587	0	89.4%
1986-1987	73,360	0	8,784	0	89.3%
1987-1988	74,148	0	8,756	0	89.4%
1988-1989	74,595	0	8,618	267	89.4%
1989-1990	75,384	0	9,146	341	88.8%
1990-1991	76,551	0	9,598	441	88.4%
1991-1992	77,211	0	9,975	548	88.0%
1992-1993	79,736	0	10,738	670	87.5%
1993-1994	82,188	0	11,195	866	87.2%
1994-1995	85,389	0	11,969	997	86.8%
1995-1996	88,975	0	11,957	1,186	87.1%
1996-1997	92,935	0	13,735	1,304	86.1%
1997-1998	95,727	76	14,327	1,580	85.7%
1998-1999	98,470	380	15,283	1,754	85.0%
1999-2000	100,303	1,007	16,212	2,224	83.8%

CMS Enrollment

20th Day, Fall 2000

Grade	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Multi-racial	White	Total	%African-American	%Hispanic	%White	%Nonwhite
Pre-K	1,702	118	335	40	116	425	2,736	62.2%	12.2%	15.5%	84.5%
Kindergarten	3,278	329	714	66	176	3,741	8,304	39.5%	8.6%	45.1%	54.9%
1	3,430	358	632	64	170	3,879	8,533	40.2%	7.4%	45.5%	54.5%
2	3,646	338	586	68	126	3,818	8,582	42.5%	6.8%	44.5%	55.5%
3	3,705	343	531	57	107	3,874	8,617	43.0%	6.2%	45.0%	55.0%
4	3,830	339	554	32	74	3,938	8,767	43.7%	6.3%	44.9%	55.1%
5	3,679	355	448	34	44	3,824	8,384	43.9%	5.3%	45.6%	54.4%
6	3,796	353	417	33	43	3,761	8,403	45.2%	5.0%	44.8%	55.2%
7	3,683	342	408	36	38	3,642	8,149	45.2%	5.0%	44.7%	55.3%
8	3,394	343	355	35	26	3,652	7,805	43.5%	4.5%	46.8%	53.2%
9	4,391	435	451	39	54	4,249	9,619	45.6%	4.7%	44.2%	55.8%
10	2,970	397	292	30	22	3,687	7,398	40.1%	3.9%	49.8%	50.2%
11	2,004	322	178	11	13	3,161	5,689	35.2%	3.1%	55.6%	44.4%
12	1,596	285	116	15	18	2,797	4,827	33.1%	2.4%	57.9%	42.1%
Total	**45,104**	**4,657**	**6,017**	**560**	**1,027**	**48,448**	**105,813**	**42.6%**	**5.7%**	**45.8%**	**54.2%**
Total, excluding Pre-K	**43,402**	**4,539**	**5,682**	**520**	**911**	**48,023**	**103,077**	**42.1%**	**5.5%**	**46.6%**	**53.4%**

Ehtnic group/Program	Exceptional Children	Subsized lunch	English as Second Language	Talent Develop.	TOTAL
African American	6,708	28,696	263	1,719	**43,402**
Asian	188	1,860	793	589	**4,539**
Hispanic	343	3,933	2,317	149	**5,682**
Native American	68	292	12	25	**520**
Multi-racial	67	387	19	57	**911**
White	4,060	4,825	425	10,171	**48,023**
Total, excluding Pre-K	**11,434**	**39,993**	**3,829**	**12,710**	**103,077**
Percentage, excluding Pre-K	**11.1%**	**38.8%**	**3.7%**	**12.3%**	

CMS Enrollment

20th Day, Last Six School Years

Ethnic group/School Year	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
African American	35,781	38,110	39,600	41,182	41,880	43,402	40.5%	41.0%	41.4%	41.8%	41.8%	42.1%
Asian	3,083	3,424	3,860	3,992	4,386	4,539	3.5%.	3.7%	4.0%	4.1%	4.4%	4.4%
Hispanic	1,716	2,250	2,808	3,365	4,397	5,682	1.9%	2.4%	2.9%	3.4%	4.4%	5.5%
Native American	392	437	465	503	512	520	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Multi-racial	17	110	259	468	680	911	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%	0.9%
White	47,263	48,556	48,690	48,917	48,411	48,023	53.6%	52.3%	50.9%	49.7%	48.3%	46.6%
Total, excluding Pre-K	**88,252**	**92,887**	**95,682**	**98,427**	**100,266**	**103,077**	100.0%					
Non-white excluding pre-K	40,989	44,331	46,992	49,510	51,855	55,054	46.4%					
Percent Non-white	46.4%	47.7%	49.1%	50.3%	51.7%	53.4%						

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Exceptional Children	8,350	9,224	9,847	10,313	10,815	11,434	9.5%	9.9%	10.3%	10.5%	10.8%	11.1%
Free and reduced lunch	30,711	28,811	36,413	38,298	39,089	39,993	34.8%	31.0%	38.1%	38.9%	39.0%	38.8%
English as a Second Language	1,584	1,906	2,265	2,361	3,058	3,829	1.8%	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%	3.0%	3.7%
Talent Development	12,163	12,695	12,629	12,836	12,894	12,710	13.8%	13.7%	13.2%	13.0%	12.9%	12.3%

Source: CMS Instructional Accountability

Students Whose 1st Language Isn't English

Year	NOMS	LEP	ESL
1994-95	4,182	1,889	1,517
1995-96	4,872	1,732	1,412
1996-97	5,858	2,639	2,259
1997-98	6,512	2,649	2,235
1998-99	7,607	4,339	3,605
1999-2000	9,150	5,570	4,567

NOMS: National Origin Minority Students (first language is not English, regardless of English proficiency)

LEP: Limited English Proficient (first language is not English and not proficient in English)

ESL : English as a Second Language (LEP students enrolled in the ESL program)

The chart is based on the annual report filed each fall with the state. LEP and ESL data reflect the total enrollment during the school year indicated. NOMS data is captured each fall for that year's state report; thus, the 1999-2000 NOMS figure represents students in attendance the fall of 2000.

CMS goals for 2001

Introduction:

When the new superintendent arrived in 1996, specific goals were set for 2001. Now as spring 2001 approaches, the superintendent and board are looking at many more goals and a "balanced scorecard" to give a much more comprehensive picture of the system. But it is useful to keep an eye on those original goals.

The data :

Academic achievement:

- 85% of 3rd graders will read on grade level: **72% in 1999-2000**
- 75% of students will complete geometry before 11th grade: **59%**
- 33% of graduates will complete at least one IB/AP course: **44%**
- Disparity will be less than 10 percentage points for race, gender and socioeconomic states: **CMS says a composite of scores shows that the gap has narrowed since 1996 but it is still too wide. The disparity in 1999-2000 for race was 34%, for socioeconomic status 30% and for gender 8%.**
- SAT scores will equal the national average: **The CMS score was 989 in 1999-2000, compared to national average of 1019**
- EC students [exceptional or handicapped students] earning a diploma will increase by 10%: **Was 34%; now dropped to 27%. (Note: The standards for getting a diploma became stricter when the state phased in a harder competency test. In 2000, the state provided a new occupational course of study, which will be an option for EC students recommended for it. Students will receive a regular N.C. diploma if they successfully complete this course of study.)**

Safe and orderly environment: 85% of students will indicate that they:

- Know rules and consequences: **91% in 1999-2000.**
- Believe students are well-behaved: **50%**
- Feel safe at school: **71%**
- Composite: **71% in 1999-2000**

Community collaboration and involvement: 85% of families will indicate that they:

- Receive regular and frequent communication from the school: **83% in 1999-2000**
- Feel free to express concerns or make suggestions: **78%**
- Composite: **80%**

The fourth goal: Deliver support services on time, on budget, with 100% accuracy and with quality at or above the expectation of the school-based customer. **CMS said in an update last fall (before the November court ruling): "With the new student assignment plan, great attention to planning and detail will be required this year, as in the past."**

Comment:

It is likely that CMS will fall short on many of its goals, though progress has been made on a number of them. This year there are significant new programs, and the superintendent is proposing new and more detailed goals for the future. The board ought to be sure that it has goals for all the things that are important, including reducing dropouts and slowing teacher turnover.

The talk about goals is often bloodless. But the numbers are built on real students and real teachers. When goals aren't met, it means that students are being failed, that they aren't being prepared for work, life or further education. Goals that are too easy or are ignored invite derision; they will not attract families, support or confidence. Goals that are too hard invite excuses and repel support by creating an expectation of failure.

CMS Goals for 2001

Goal	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
85% of third grade students will read at or above grade level	61%	63%	70%	72%	72%
75% of students will complete geometry prior to grade 11	54%	52%	53%	54%	59%
33% of graduates will complete at least one IB/AP course	31%	35%	38%	42%	44%
Disparity based on race, gender and socioeconomic status will be no greater than 10 percentage points:	36% 8% 34%	37% 6% 35%	38% 9% 34%	32% 7% 33%	34% 8% 30%
Average SAT scores will equal the national average (1019 for 2000)	991	990	994	985	989
Rate of exceptional students earning diploma will increase by 10%	34%	34%	26%	25%	27%
85% of students respondents on a student survey will indicate they:					
A) Know the rules for appropriate behavior and consequences	90%	88%	90%	90%	91%
B) believe students are well-behaved	38%	42%	42%	45%	50%
C) feel safe at school	61%	65%	65%	67%	71%
Composite	**63%**	**65%**	**66%**	**67%**	**71%**
85% of respondents on family survey will indicate:					
A) they receive regular and frequent communication	78%	79%	81%	83%	83%
B) they feel free to express concerns or make suggestions	76%	73%	75%	76%	78%
Composite	**77%**	**77%**	**79%**	**81%**	**80%**

- Represents a composite between groups for 3rd grade reading, geometry, SAT scores and AP/IB course completion.
- They survey results show the percentage of families that indicate (1) they get adequate information about their child's progress and (2) they receive enough communication to keep them informed about school activities.

Equity

Introduction:

Equity to the superintendent does not mean simply that every school should be equal, though the system has often not met that standard. He means that more resources should be provided for those who need more to improve. The Student Assignment Oversight Committee – a major citizen group appointed by the school board – has called for a regular and far-reaching equity report and, as this is printed, is discussing whether the proposed balanced scorecard is adequate.

The data:

The table, which is arranged alphabetically, excerpts two elementary-school sections from a spreadsheet created by CMS to identify schools for special help:

- **Student mobility**: Defined as the percentage of students who either left or joined a school during the school year 1998-99, student mobility ranges from 43% at Westerly Hills to 2% at Elizabeth Traditional.
- **Teacher turnover:** Based on a three-year average, teacher turnover ranges from over 30% to under 5%.

Comment:

Equity is a huge issue here. It goes far beyond physical facilities. Efforts have been made to equalize such resources as library books, faculties and facilities. Indeed, CMS policy is to give more resources to schools with greater need. There were 41 Equity-Plus II schools last year; they were picked after a detailed look at everything from student achievement and mobility to teacher turnover and parent involvement. This year there will be 25 schools in the new A+ program, with 10 picked for initial attention.

The tables presented here – on student mobility and teacher turnover – show that there is wide variation in the conditions schools confront. The annual equity report recommended by the Student Assignment Oversight Committee ought to include both of these elements, as well as information on student performance and school effectiveness.

In addition, both student mobility and teacher turnover ought to be studied for their impact on achievement.

CMS Equity Worksheet for Elementaries

	Student Mobility		Teacher Turnover	
School Name	1998-99 Data	Mobility Rank	3-year Average Turnover Percentage	Turnover Rank
Albemarle Road	42%	83	19%	59
Allenbrook	33%	70	21%	69
Ashley Park	12%	15	34%	84
Bain	9%	9	7%	6
Barringer	5%	4	11%	26
Berryhill	38%	79	16%	46
Beverly Woods	24%	42	18%	54
Billingsville	10%	10	12%	29
Briarwood	31%	63	20%	67
Bruns Avenue	10%	11	35%	85
Chantilly	11%	13	8%	11
Clear Creek	19%	25	10%	18
Collinswood	22%	33	20%	61
Cornelius	14%	18	7%	8
Cotswold	28%	48	14%	36
Crown Point	32%	68	15%	42
Davidson	16%	22	10%	19
David Cox Road	7%	6	11%	24
Derita	28%	49	20%	62
Devonshire	29%	51	26%	79
Dilworth	24%	43	10%	20
Druid Hills	8%	8	17%	51
Eastover	22%	34	14%	37
Elizabeth Lane	14%	19	15%	43
Elizabeth Trad	2%	1	13%	32
First Ward	13%	17	19%	57
Greenway Park	31%	64	9%	15
Hickory Grove	20%	26	5%	2
Hidden Valley	29%	52	23%	76
Highland	26%	45	21%	71
Hornets Nest	23%	38	11%	25
Huntersville	30%	60	20%	66
Huntingtowne Farms	30%	61	25%	77
Idlewild	37%	76	14%	39
Irwin Avenue	29%	53	9%	16
Morehead	29%	54	7%	4
Amay James Montessori	3%	3	8%	9
Lake Wylie	23%	39	17%	52
Lansdowne	27%	46	14%	41
Lebanon Road	22%	35	20%	65
Lincoln Heights	10%	12	17%	53
Blythe	33%	71	20%	60
Long Creek	23%	40	12%	30
Mallard Creek	29%	55	18%	55
Matthews	17%	24	9%	17

School Name	Student Mobility 1998-99 Data	Student Mobility Rank	Teacher Turnover 3-year Average Turnover Percentage	Teacher Turnover Rank
McAlpine	20%	27	16%	49
McKee Road	12%	16	7%	7
Merry Oaks	42%	84	8%	13
Montclaire	34%	73	14%	38
Myers Park Traditional	7%	7	11%	22
Nathaniel Alexander	21%	31	19%	58
Nations Ford	39%	80	23%	75
Newell	32%	69	11%	23
J.H. Gunn	30%	62	13%	31
Oakdale	23%	41	18%	56
Oakhurst	20%	28	16%	47
Oaklawn	16%	23	32%	81
Olde Providence	5%	5	7%	5
Park Road	27%	47	33%	83
Paw Creek	28%	50	20%	68
Pawtuckett	31%	65	28%	80
Pineville	22%	36	22%	73
Pinewood	37%	77	11%	21
Piney Grove	29%	56	3%	1
Rama Road	21%	32	13%	33
Reedy Creek	20%	29	9%	14
Reid Park	11%	14	16%	48
Sedgefield	22%	37	20%	63
Selwyn	15%	21	6%	3
Shamrock Gardens	33%	72	25%	78
Sharon	20%	30	22%	72
Smithfield	25%	44	13%	35
Starmount	31%	66	22%	74
Statesville Road	40%	82	11%	27
Steele Creek	29%	57	12%	28
Sterling	39%	81	8%	12
Thomasboro	37%	78	21%	70
Tuckaseegee	29%	58	8%	10
University Park	14%	20	14%	40
University Meadows	31%	67	13%	34
Villa Heights	2%	2	17%	50
Westerly Hills	43%	85	32%	82
Winding Springs	29%	59	20%	64
Windsor Park	35%	74	15%	45
Winterfield	35%	75	15%	44

Source: CMS

The ABCs

Introduction:

The ABC accountability system, introduced by the state four years ago and being updated, provides standards for individual schools and bonuses at successful schools of $1,500 each for teachers and other certified staff and $500 for teacher assistants.

The data:

ABCs: The tables, downloaded from the state's ABC website, show the ABC status for 1999-2000 of each of the CMS regular and magnet schools. They do not include alternative and charter schools. The "performance composite" is essentially the percentage of students on grade level.

There were 127 regular and magnet CMS schools in the state's ABC program (plus six special schools not dealt with here). Over half of them made the state's goals for growth (or gain for the high schools). The following table summarizes the results for 1999 and 2000 (percentages don't always add to totals because of rounding).

	1999 CMS	**2000 CMS**
Met growth/gain goals:		
Exemplary growth/gain	45%	35% (44 schools)
Expected growth/gain	25%	20% (25 schools)
Subtotal	**70%**	**54% (69) schools)**
Not met growth/gain goals		
No recognition	30%	43% (54 schools)
Low performance	1%	3% (4 schools)
Subtotal	**30%**	**46% (58 schools)**

CMS had one of the state's "most improved" high schools (West Mecklenburg), though only 51.5% of that school's students met state performance standards. It had eight Schools of Excellence, meaning that they had at least 90% of students on grade level **AND** met their goals for growth. Of the 14 CMS schools that the state labeled "Schools of Distinction" for having at least 80% of the students on grade level," all but two also met their growth goals.

Comment:

Statewide, there was a significant *decrease* in the percentage of schools meeting or exceeding their growth or gain goals (from 81% in 1998-99 to 70% in 1999-2000). There was an even steeper decline in CMS. However, since the ABC's started there have been increases in both state and CMS students on grade level.

There is an ABC category called "No Recognition." It is for schools that did not meet their growth goals, but still have a majority of their students above grade level. It is a sizeable category here (43% of schools) and statewide (28%). "No recognition" schools are indicated in the state report; but not really highlighted. They are rarely mentioned in the local discussions. They deserve far more attention.

CMS Elementary Schools on ABCs 2000

School	Expected growth?	Exemplary growth?	Performance composite	Spec.	ABC status
Albemarle Road Elementary	Yes	Yes	70.9	~	Exm
Allenbrook Elementary	No	No	60.2	~	NR
Ashley Park Elementary	Yes	Yes	68.8	~	Exm
Bain Elementary	Yes	No	81.3	~	Exp Dst
Barringer Acad Ctr	Yes	Yes	98.4	~	Exm Exc
Berryhill Elementary	No	No	56.9	~	NR
Beverly Woods Elementary	No	No	67.5	~	NR
Billingsville Elementary	No	No	60.8	~	NR
Briarwood Elementary	No	No	62.5	~	NR
Bruns Avenue Elementary	Yes	No	72.5	~	Exp
Chantilly Elementary	No	No	75.7	~	NR
Clear Creek Elementary	No	No	68.8	~	NR
Collinswood Elementary	Yes	Yes	74	~	Exm
Cornelius Elementary	Yes	Yes	85.8	~	Exm Dst
Cotswold Elementary	Yes	No	68.4	~	Exp
Crown Point Elementary	Yes	No	73.4	~	Exp
Davidson Elementary	Yes	Yes	90	~	Exm Exc
David Cox Road Elementary	Yes	Yes	83.2	~	Exm Dst
Derita Elementary	Yes	No	66.2	~	Exp
Devonshire Elementary	No	No	59.9	~	NR
Dilworth Elementary	No	No	69.2	~	NR
Druid Hills Elementary	No	No	72.2	~	NR
Eastover Elementary	Yes	Yes	74.5	~	Exm
Elizabeth Lane Elementary	Yes	Yes	94.6	~	Exm Exc
Elizabeth Traditional	Yes	No	87.2	~	Exp Dst
First Ward Elementary	Yes	Yes	81.2	~	Exm Dst
Greenway Park Elementary	Yes	Yes	79.4	~	Exm
Hawk Ridge Elementary	Yes	No	88.1	~	Exp Dst
Hickory Grove Elementary	No	No	74	~	NR
Hidden Valley Elementary	No	No	56.1	~	NR
Highland Elementary	No	No	62.5	~	NR
Hornets Nest Elementary	Yes	Yes	66.7	~	Exm
Huntersville Elementary	Yes	Yes	71.1	~	Exm
Huntingtowne Elementary	Yes	No	72.2	~	Exp
Idlewild Elementary	Yes	Yes	61.5	~	Exm

School	Expected growth?	Exemplary growth?	Performance composite	Spec.	ABC status
Irwin Ave Open	No	No	62.3	~	NR
John Motley Morehead	No	No	63.8	~	NR
A James Montessori	No	No	85.7	~	Dst NR
Lake Wylie Elementary	Yes	No	69.9	~	Exp
Lansdowne Elementary	Yes	No	70.6	~	Exp
Lebanon Road Elementary	No	No	71.9	~	NR
Lincoln Heights Elementary	No	No	72.3	~	NR
Legette Blythe Elementary	No	No	70.7	~	NR
Long Creek Elementary	No	No	68	~	NR
Mallard Creek	No	No	73.1	~	NR
Matthews Elementary	Yes	Yes	89.3	~	Exm Dst
McAlpine Elementary	Yes	No	89.4	~	Exp Dst
McKee Road Elementary	Yes	Yes	94.9	~	Exm Exc
Merry Oaks Elementary	Yes	No	62.1	~	Exp
Montclaire Elementary	Yes	Yes	71.5	~	Exm
Myers Park Trad Elementary	Yes	Yes	78	~	Exm
Nathaniel Alexander	Yes	No	71.1	~	Exp
Nations Ford Elementary	Yes	No	73.6	~	Exp
Newell Elementary	No	No	67.3	~	NR
J H Gunn Elementary	No	No	66.7	~	NR
Oakdale Elementary	No	No	59.8	~	NR
Oakhurst Elementary	Yes	No	80.2	~	Exp Dst
Oaklawn Elementary	Yes	Yes	71.4	~	Exm
Olde Providence Elementary	Yes	Yes	89.1	~	Exm Dst
Park Road Elementary	No	No	59.2	~	NR
Paw Creek Elementary	No	No	61.8	~	NR
Pawtuckett Elementary	Yes	No	60.7	~	Exp
Pineville Elementary	Yes	No	77.7	~	Exp
Pinewood Elementary	Yes	No	59.6	~	Exp
Piney Grove Elementary	Yes	No	77.2	~	Exp
Rama Road Elementary	No	No	68.1	~	NR
Reedy Creek Elementary	No	No	70	~	NR
Reid Park Elementary	Yes	No	75.9	~	Exp
Sedgefield Elementary	No	No	57.8	~	NR
Selwyn Elementary	Yes	Yes	78	~	Exm
Shamrock Gardens Elementary	No	No	52.7	~	NR
Sharon Elementary	No	No	63.4	~	NR
Smithfield Elementary	No	No	64.2	~	NR
Starmount Elementary	No	No	65.7	~	NR
Statesville Road Elementary	Yes	Yes	58.1	~	Exm

School	Expected growth?	Exemplary growth?	Performance composite	Spec.	ABC status
Steele Creek Elementary	No	No	68.3	~	NR
Sterling Elementary	No	No	60.7	~	NR
Thomasboro Elementary	No	No	39.1	~	LP
Tuckaseegee Elementary	No	No	58.2	~	NR
Univ Park Creative Arts Elementary	Yes	Yes	77.7	~	Exm
Univ Meadows Elementary	Yes	Yes	69.6	~	Exm
Villa Heights Elementary	Yes	Yes	97.9	~	Exm Exc
Westerly Hills Elementary	Yes	No	54.8	~	Exp
Winding Springs Elementary	Yes	Yes	70.1	~	Exm
Windsor Park Elementary	No	No	60.5	~	NR
Winterfield Elementary	No	No	62.6	~	NR

Performance composite	**The percentage of students at or above Level III**
Exm	**Exemplary Growth**
Exp	**Expected Growth**
NR	**No Recognition (Did not make Expected Growth, but at least 50% of students on grade level)**
LP	**LP = Low Performing (Did not make Expected growth and less than 50% of students on grade level)**
Exc	**School of Excellence (Met expected growth and more than 90% of students are on grade level)**
Dst	**School of Distinction (At least 80% of students on grade level, regardless of whether school made Expected Growth)**

CMS Middle Schools on ABCs 2000

School	Expected growth?	Exemplary growth?	Performance composite	ABC status
Albemarle Road Middle	No	No	64.2	NR
Carmel Middle	No	No	76.7	NR
Cochrane Middle	No	No	54.4	NR
Coulwood Middle	Yes	Yes	60.2	Exm
Crestdale Middle	Yes	Yes	89.3	Exm Dst
Davidson Int Bacc Middle	Yes	Yes	93.3	Exm Exc
Marie G Davis Middle	Yes	Yes	90.4	Exm Exc
Eastway Middle	No	No	52.5	NR
Francis Bradley Middle	No	No	66.3	NR
Alexander Graham Middle	No	No	75.6	NR
Hawthorne Trad Middle	No	No	59.1	NR
James Martin Middle	No	No	68.9	NR
Robert F Kennedy Middle	Yes	Yes	69.9	Exm
Mcclintock Middle	Yes	Yes	76.2	Exm
Northeast Middle	Yes	Yes	80.9	Exm Dst
Northridge Middle	No	No	63.9	NR
Piedmont Open Middle	No	No	71.5	NR
Quail Hollow Middle	No	No	72.5	NR
Randolph Middle	No	No	67.3	NR
Ranson Middle	No	No	58.5	NR
Sedgefield Middle	No	No	62.9	NR
Smith Middle	No	No	70.2	NR
South Charlotte Middle	Yes	Yes	92.3	Exm Exc
Spaugh Middle	Yes	No	77.9	Exp
J T Williams Middle	No	No	86.7	Dst NR
Wilson Middle	No	No	44.1	LP
J M Alexander Middle	Yes	No	74.5	Exp

Performance composite	**The percentage of students at or above Level III**
Exm	**Exemplary Growth**
Exp	**Expected Growth**
NR	**No Recognition (Did not make Expected Growth, but at least 50% of students on grade level)**
LP	**LP = Low Performing (Did not make Expected growth and less than 50% of students on grade level)**
Exc	**School of Excellence (Met expected growth and more than 90% of students are on grade level)**
Dst	**School of Distinction (At least 80% of students on grade level, regardless of whether school made Expected Growth)**

CMS High Schools on ABCs 2000

School	Expected growth?	Exemplary growth?	Performance composite	ABC status
Northwest High	Yes	No	62.8	Exp
David W Butler High	Yes	Yes	59.1	Exm
East Mecklenburg High	Yes	Yes	62.9	Exm
Garinger High	Yes	Yes	34.2	Exm
Harding Univ High	Yes	Yes	60.5	Exm
Independence High	Yes	Yes	61.1	Exm
Myers Park High	Yes	Yes	65.9	Exm
North Mecklenburg High	Yes	Yes	62.3	Exm
Olympic High	No	No	38.3	LP
Providence High	Yes	Yes	78.2	Exm
South Mecklenburg High	Yes	No	62	Exp
West Charlotte High	No	No	26.8	LP
West Mecklenburg High	Yes	Yes	51.5	Exm MI
Zebulon B Vance High	Yes	Yes	57.8	Exm

Performance composite	**The percentage of students at or above Level III on several mandated exams**
Exm	**Exemplary Gain**
Exp	**Expected Gain**
NR	**No Recognition (Did not make Expected Gain but at least 50% of students at Achievement Level III or above)**
LP	**LP = Low Performing (Did not make Expected growth and less than 50% of students at Achievement Level III or above)**
Exc	**School of Excellence (Met expected gain and more than 90% of students are on grade level)**
Dst	**School of Distinction (At least 80% of students at Achievement Level III or above, regardless of whether school made Expected Growth)**
MI	**Most improved (The 10 high schools that most exceeded their Exemplary Gain standard)**

The local bonus program and pilot ABCs

Introduction:

The state's ABC student achievement reports are issued for every school, but do not go further to look at demographic subgroups or special programs. Experience showed educators that some schools were making their ABC goals yet not succeeding with all groups of their students.

That's why Mecklenburg took the lead in seeking a better system. CMS in 1999-2000 had a local bonus program aimed at academic achievement for **both** high and low socioeconomic groups. For the 2000-2001 school year CMS will merge it with the ABC Pilot Program, with the local money used to match the state payments and extend the state program's categories and coverage.

The data:

There are four tables developed from the CMS Local Accountability Bonus Program. Students are divided into "higher" and "lower" socioeconomic (SES) groups by a formula that considers eligibility for subsidized meals and other data. Note, however, that in some cases the actual number of students in a group involved was very small :

1. This table shows the status of each school under the Local Accountability Bonus Program for the 1999-2000 school year; counting benefits and matching deferred bonuses for Equity Plus II schools, it was a $4.8 million program. The local program, which operated on a complex formula, included more people at each school than the state ABC program and somewhat different goals and categories. "Exemplary" required meeting 115% of expected growth, for example, compared to 110% in the state ABCs. The local program gave more weight to meeting academic goals in high-poverty schools and included an intermediate "met" category for schools that only met a portion of their goals. Schools with low achievement and meeting few of their goals were designated "critical needs" schools.
2. There were 24 elementary and middle schools that met their academic growth goals for all students taken together, but did **not** meet the goals for one of the two economic sub-groups (the lower economic group was the group left behind except at Westerly Hills, and that school had just 6 third graders in the higher SES group).
3. Average achievement can be deceiving in a school with a range of students. Such schools as Steele Creek and Montclaire lead the list when schools are ranked by the reading gain achieved by their *higher* SES third graders.
4. Similarly, schools can be ranked on the gain achieved by their *lower* SES third graders. Note that the average N.C. score in reading for 3rd graders was 146.5; for 4th graders, it was 149.8, a difference of 3.3 points. As the tables show, the span can be much larger than that between groups at a single school.

Comment:

It is possible for a school to succeed with one group of its students but not with another group. The merged Local Accountability Bonus Program/ABC Pilot program will look at 10 subgroups: high and low income; six ethnic groups; those who tested above grade level initially and those who tested below. Such detail is vital if parents are to make informed decisions about schools and where to send their children. In addition, parents make a good case for breaking scores down by programs at a school, such as language immersion.

Local Accountability Bonus Program

(Additional deferred bonus paid to personnel in Equity Plus II schools)

School	Level	1999-00 Local Bonus Status	Matching bonus for Equity Plus II schools?
Albemarle Road	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Albemarle Road	Middle	No Recognition	
Alexander	Middle	No Recognition	
Alexander Graham	Middle	Met	
Allenbrook	Elementary	No Recognition	
Amay James Montessori	Elementary	No Recognition	
Ashley Park	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Bain	Elementary	Met	
Barringer	Elementary	Exemplary	
Berryhill	Elementary	Met	Y
Beverly Woods	Elementary	No Recognition	
Billingsville Montessori	Elementary	No Recognition	
Blythe	Elementary	No Recognition	
Bradley	Middle	No Recognition	
Briarwood	Elementary	No Recognition	
Bruns Avenue	Elementary	Met	
Butler	High	Expected	
Carmel	Middle	No Recognition	
Chantilly	Elementary	No Recognition	
Clear Creek	Elementary	No Recognition	
Cochrane	Middle	Critical Needs	
Collinswod	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Cornelius	Elementary	Exemplary	
Cotswold	Elementary	Exemplary	
Coulwood	Middle	Expected	Y
Covenant Academy		Low Performing	
Crestdale	Middle	Met	
Crown Point	Elementary	Exemplary	
David Cox Road	Elementary	Expected	
Davidson	Elementary	Met	
Davidson IB	Middle	Met	
Derita	Elementary	Exemplary	
Devonshire	Elementary	No Recognition	

School	Level	1999-00 Local Bonus Status	Matching bonus for Equity Plus II schools?
Dilworth	Elementary	No Recognition	
Double Oaks	Pre-K	Expected	
Druid Hills	Elementary	Met	
East Mecklenburg	High	Expected	
Eastover	Elementary	Met	
Eastway	Middle	No Recognition	
Elizabeth Lane	Elementary	Exemplary	
Elizabeth Traditional	Elementary	No Recognition	
First Ward	Elementary	Exemplary	
Garinger	High	Exemplary	Y
Greenway Park	Elementary	Exemplary	
Harding	High	Met	
Hawk Ridge	Elementary	Expected	
Hawthorne	Middle	Critical Needs	
Hickory Grove	Elementary	No Recognition	
Hidden Valley	Elementary	Critical Needs	
Highland	Elementary	No Recognition	
Hornets Nest	Elementary	Exemplary	
Huntersville	Elementary	Met	
Huntingtowne Farms	Elementary	Met	
Idlewild	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Independence	High	Expected	Y
Irwin Avenue	Elementary	No Recognition	
JH Gunn	Elementary	No Recognition	
JT Williams	Middle	No Recognition	
Kennedy	Middle	Expected	Y
Lake Wylie	Elementary	No Recognition	
Lansdowne	Elementary	Met	
Learning Academy	High	Expected	
Lebanon Road	Elementary	No Recognition	
Lincoln Heights	Elementary	No Recognition	
Long Creek	Elementary	No Recognition	
Mallard Creek	Elementary	No Recognition	
Management	Middle	Expected	
Marie G Davis	Middle	Met	
Martin	Middle	No Recognition	
Matthews	Elementary	Exemplary	
Mayfield Alternative		No Recognition	
McAlpine	Elementary	Expected	

School	Level	1999-00 Local Bonus Status	Matching bonus for Equity Plus II schools?
McClintock	Middle	Exemplary	
McKee Road	Elementary	Expected	
Merry Oaks	Elementary	Expected	
Metro	K-12	Expected	
Midwood	High	Expected	
Montclaire	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Morehead	Elementary	No Recognition	
Morgan	High	Expected	
Myers Park	High	Expected	
Myers Park Traditional	Elementary	Met	
Nathaniel Alexander	Elementary	Met	
Nations Ford	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Newell	Elementary	No Recognition	
North Mecklenburg	High	Expected	
Northeast	Middle	Exemplary	
Northridge	Middle	No Recognition	
Northwest School Of The Arts	Middle/High	No Recognition	
Oakdale	Elementary	No Recognition	
Oakhurst	Elementary	Met	
Oaklawn	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Olde Providence	Elementary	Expected	
Olympic	High	Critical Needs	
Park Road	Elementary	No Recognition	
Paw Creek	Elementary	No Recognition	
Pawtuckett	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Piedmont Open	Middle	No Recognition	
Pineville	Elementary	Met	
Pinewood	Elementary	Exemplary	
Piney Grove	Elementary	Exemplary	
Plaza Road	Pre-K	Expected	
Providence	High	Met	
Quail Hollow	Middle	No Recognition	
Rama Road	Elementary	No Recognition	
Randolph	Middle	No Recognition	
Ranson	Middle	No Recognition	
Reedy Creek	Elementary	No Recognition	
Reid Park	Elementary	Met	
Sedgefield	Elementary	No Recognition	
Sedgefield	Middle	No Recognition	

School	Level	1999-00 Local Bonus Status	Matching bonus for Equity Plus II schools?
Selwyn	Elementary	Expected	
Shamrock Gardens	Elementary	Critical Needs	
Sharon	Elementary	No Recognition	
Smith	Middle	No Recognition	
Smithfield	Elementary	No Recognition	
South Charlotte	Middle	Met	
South Mecklenburg	High	Expected	
Spaugh	Middle	No Recognition	
Starmount	Elementary	Met	Y
Statesville Road	Elementary	Exemplary	Y
Steele Creek	Elementary	No Recognition	
Sterling	Elementary	No Recognition	
TAPS	High	Expected	
Thomasboro	Elementary	Critical Needs	
Tryon Hills	Pre-K	Exemplary	
Tuckaseegee	Elementary	No Recognition	
University Meadows	Elementary	Exemplary	
University Park	Elementary	Exemplary	
Vance	High	Met	
Villa Heights	Elementary	Exemplary	
West Charlotte	High	Critical Needs	
West Mecklenburg	High	Exemplary	Y
Westerly Hills	Elementary	Met	Y
Wilson	Middle	Critical Needs	
Winding Springs	Elementary	Exemplary	
Windsor Park	Elementary	No Recognition	
Winterfield	Elementary	No Recognition	

Source: CMS

Growth Only for Some

Schools that met local goals for growth in achievement overall but not for a subgroup, usually the lower SES students. The numbers are simply how far short they were of the standardized growth goal.

School	All students	Higher SES students	Lower SES students
Bain Elementary	Expected	Expected	-1.1
Bruns Avenue Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-2.3
Davidson Elementary	Exemplary	Exemplary	-1.4
Eastover Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-0.1
Elizabeth Traditonal Elementary	Expected	Expected	-2.3
Huntersville Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-1.4
Huntingtowne Farms Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-0.9
Lake Wylie Elementary	Expected	Expected	-4.4
Lansdowne Elementary	Expected	Expected	-1.3
Merry Oaks Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-0.1
Myers Park Traditional Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-1.0
Nathaniel Alexander Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-3.7
Oakhurst Elementary	Expected	Expected	-0.5
Olde Providence Elementary	Exemplary	Exemplary	-2.2
Pineville Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-1.3
Reid Park Elementary	Expected	Exemplary	-3.7
Selwyn Elementary	Exemplary	Exemplary	-1.7
Westerly Hills Elementary	Expected	-0.5	Expected
Coulwood Middle School	Expected	Exemplary	-1.2
Crestdale Middle School	Exemplary	Exemplary	-0.2
Davidson IB Middle School	Expected	Exemplary	-1.3
Marie G. Davis Middle Scool	Expected	Exemplary	-2.8
Alexander Graham Middle School	Expected	Exemplary	-6.8
South Charlotte Middle School	Exemplary	Exemplary	-2.9

Notes:

The growth expected for "all" students varies in some cases from the state ABC program

This list ONLY includes schools that met their achievement goals for "all" students but missed them for a subgroup

SES means socioeconomic status

Source: CMS

Higher SES Students: Reading and Growth

The average reading score for the group and the points gained

School	Grade	SES	Reading	Reading gain	Number of Students
Steele Creek Elementary School	03	Higher	151.6	10.0	45
Montclaire Elementary School	03	Higher	150.0	10.0	11
Long Creek Elementary School	03	Higher	149.4	9.5	42
Eastover Elementary School	03	Higher	151.8	9.3	46
Hornets Nest Elementary School	03	Higher	150.4	9.3	54
Olde Providence Elementary School	03	Higher	155.2	9.1	101
Dilworth Elementary School	03	Higher	154.1	8.9	24
Selwyn Elementary School	03	Higher	156.5	8.7	39
Winterfield Elementary School	03	Higher	146.8	8.6	17
Paw Creek Elementary School	03	Higher	149.5	8.5	39
University Park Elementary School	03	Higher	153.5	8.4	53
Hidden Valley Elementary School	03	Higher	151.2	8.3	9
Albemarle Road Elementary School	03	Higher	148.9	8.3	38
Sterling Elementary School	03	Higher	147.2	8.3	13
Idlewild Elementary School	03	Higher	147.5	8.3	22
Cornelius Elementary School	03	Higher	151.9	8.3	104
Greenway Park Elementary School	03	Higher	152.2	8.2	44
Elizabeth Lane Elementary School	03	Higher	154.7	8.2	154
Oakhurst Elementary School	03	Higher	153.6	8.2	32
McAlpine Elementary School	03	Higher	154.2	8.1	123
Davidson Elementary School	03	Higher	154.1	8.1	120
J. H. Gunn Elementary School	03	Higher	148.8	8.1	38
Piney Grove Elementary School	03	Higher	149.6	7.9	47
Pineville Elementary School	03	Higher	150.5	7.7	76
Matthews Elementary School	03	Higher	152.3	7.7	120
Crown Point Elementary School	03	Higher	151.4	7.7	54
Statesville Road Elementary School	03	Higher	144.1	7.6	7
Beverly Woods Elementary School	03	Higher	151.8	7.6	48
Shamrock Gardens Elementary School	03	Higher	144.6	7.6	9
Amay James Montessori School	03	Higher	154.2	7.5	32
Winding Springs Elementary School	03	Higher	151.8	7.5	51
Briarwood Elementary School	03	Higher	146.6	7.5	19
Berryhill Elementary School	03	Higher	146.5	7.5	6
Bruns Avenue Elementary School	03	Higher	150.8	7.5	29

School	Grade	SES	Reading	Reading gain	Number of Students
Clear Creek Elementary School	03	Higher	148.1	7.4	29
Barringer Elementary School	03	Higher	159.0	7.4	65
Huntersville Elementary School	03	Higher	152.2	7.4	52
Oakdale Elementary School	03	Higher	147.9	7.3	29
Nathaniel Alexander Elem. School	03	Higher	148.3	7.3	92
University Meadows Elementary	03	Higher	150.3	7.3	55
Huntingtowne Farms Elem. School	03	Higher	150.2	7.3	44
Blythe Elementary School	03	Higher	151.5	7.2	90
Collinswood Elementary School	03	Higher	149.4	7.0	12
Starmount Elementary School	03	Higher	146.7	6.9	16
Derita Elementary School	03	Higher	148.5	6.9	27
Ashley Park Elementary School	03	Higher	149.7	6.9	22
Hawk Ridge Elementary	03	Higher	151.7	6.9	118
First Ward Elementary School	03	Higher	151.3	6.8	18
McKee Road Elementary School	03	Higher	153.5	6.8	185
Lansdowne Elementary School	03	Higher	150.1	6.7	63
Pinewood Elementary School	03	Higher	143.3	6.7	19
Villa Heights Elementary	03	Higher	156.6	6.7	38
Westerly Hills Elementary School	03	Higher	145.2	6.7	6
Reid Park Elementary	03	Higher	154.2	6.6	53
Irwin Avenue Open Elementary School	03	Higher	152.2	6.5	39
Sedgefield Elementary School	03	Higher	148.6	6.4	9
Mallard Creek Elementary School	03	Higher	150.1	6.4	89
Lake Wylie Elementary School	03	Higher	148.2	6.2	85
Elizabeth Traditional Elem. School	03	Higher	152.4	6.2	74
Hickory Grove Elementary School	03	Higher	147.0	6.1	59
Myers Park Traditional Elem. School	03	Higher	152.7	6.1	67
Lebanon Road Elementary School	03	Higher	148.1	6.0	57
Rama Road Elementary School	03	Higher	152.8	5.9	52
David Cox Road Elementary School	03	Higher	151.7	5.8	81
Druid Hills Elementary School	03	Higher	152.2	5.6	28
Bain Elementary School	03	Higher	148.6	5.5	118
Reedy Creek Elementary School	03	Higher	149.1	5.4	73
Sharon Elementary School	03	Higher	153.8	5.4	50
Oaklawn Elementary School	03	Higher	151.1	5.4	15
Devonshire Elementary School	03	Higher	144.1	5.4	15
Cotswold Elementary School	03	Higher	153.1	5.3	30
Lincoln Heights Elementary School	03	Higher	153.4	5.2	34
Morehead Elementary School	03	Higher	149.7	5.2	60
Allenbrook Elementary School	03	Higher	148.7	5.1	9

School	Grade	SES	Reading	Reading gain	Number of Students
Smithfield Elementary School	03	Higher	146.7	5.1	54
Park Road Elementary School	03	Higher	145.9	4.9	14
Pawtuckett Elementary School	03	Higher	144.1	4.8	15
Nations Ford Elementary School	03	Higher	150.5	4.6	33
Windsor Park Elementary School	03	Higher	143.1	4.1	19
Billingsville Elementary School	03	Higher	145.6	4.0	27
Newell Elementary School	03	Higher	147.1	3.8	38
Tuckaseegee Elementary School	03	Higher	146.4	3.2	9
Chantilly Elementary School	03	Higher	147.6	2.2	17

Note: Highland, Merry Oaks and Thomasboor elementaries were removed because they had 5 or fewer higher SES students

SES means socioeconomic status

Source: CMS

Lower SES Students: Reading and Growth

The average reading score for the group and the points gained

School	Grade	SES	Reading	Reading gain	Number of Students
Elizabeth Lane Elementary School	03	Lower	151.1	10.7	9
Villa Heights Elementary	03	Lower	154.3	9.8	6
Hawk Ridge Elementary	03	Lower	153.0	9.7	6
Steele Creek Elementary School	03	Lower	143.3	8.6	79
Greenway Park Elementary School	03	Lower	144.0	8.5	33
Cornelius Elementary School	03	Lower	141.5	8.4	17
Barringer Elementary School	03	Lower	153.1	8.2	13
University Park Elementary School	03	Lower	143.7	8.1	34
Oakhurst Elementary School	03	Lower	145.2	7.9	36
Highland Elementary School	03	Lower	143.9	7.8	41
Bain Elementary School	03	Lower	147.3	7.7	23
Collinswood Elementary School	03	Lower	144.1	7.6	40
Westerly Hills Elementary School	03	Lower	143.6	7.4	56
Selwyn Elementary School	03	Lower	139.7	7.4	29
Piney Grove Elementary School	03	Lower	145.0	7.4	40
Oakdale Elementary School	03	Lower	143.2	7.2	33
Winding Springs Elementary School	03	Lower	142.4	7.2	38
Matthews Elementary School	03	Lower	147.5	7.1	19
Oaklawn Elementary School	03	Lower	142.1	7.0	40
Starmount Elementary School	03	Lower	144.7	6.9	19
University Meadows Elementary	03	Lower	143.2	6.8	64
Hornets Nest Elementary School	03	Lower	140.6	6.8	57
Pineville Elementary School	03	Lower	144.9	6.8	46
Idlewild Elementary School	03	Lower	142.2	6.6	66
J. H. Gunn Elementary School	03	Lower	143.2	6.6	53
Nations Ford Elementary School	03	Lower	144.6	6.6	27
Blythe Elementary School	03	Lower	142.4	6.5	56
Montclaire Elementary School	03	Lower	142.7	6.5	43
Derita Elementary School	03	Lower	142.4	6.4	46
Berryhill Elementary School	03	Lower	143.0	6.3	46
Ashley Park Elementary School	03	Lower	142.1	6.2	49
Dilworth Elementary School	03	Lower	143.2	6.2	35
Windsor Park Elementary School	03	Lower	142.7	6.1	65
Crown Point Elementary School	03	Lower	142.3	6.1	55

Sterling Elementary School	03	Lower	141.5	6.0	42
Hidden Valley Elementary School	03	Lower	143.4	6.0	111
Olde Providence Elementary School	03	Lower	146.9	6.0	26
Clear Creek Elementary School	03	Lower	143.3	5.9	38
Albemarle Road Elementary School	03	Lower	144.5	5.9	64
Shamrock Gardens Elementary School	03	Lower	140.6	5.8	75
Devonshire Elementary School	03	Lower	140.0	5.8	51
Statesville Road Elementary School	03	Lower	140.6	5.8	54
First Ward Elementary School	03	Lower	143.5	5.8	33
Tuckaseegee Elementary School	03	Lower	141.7	5.7	64
Beverly Woods Elementary School	03	Lower	139.7	5.7	35
Huntingtowne Farms Elem. School	03	Lower	144.4	5.6	17
Lebanon Road Elementary School	03	Lower	142.4	5.6	45
Amay James Montessori School	03	Lower	143.3	5.5	15
Winterfield Elementary School	03	Lower	141.7	5.5	65
Pinewood Elementary School	03	Lower	140.1	5.4	60
David Cox Road Elementary School	03	Lower	140.8	5.4	30
Davidson Elementary School	03	Lower	142.9	5.3	15
Thomasboro Elementary School	03	Lower	139.4	5.3	53
Paw Creek Elementary School	03	Lower	140.1	5.3	45
Huntersville Elementary School	03	Lower	138.7	5.3	32
Hickory Grove Elementary School	03	Lower	144.5	5.2	47
Briarwood Elementary School	03	Lower	140.1	5.2	67
Long Creek Elementary School	03	Lower	137.8	5.2	34
Chantilly Elementary School	03	Lower	143.0	5.1	30
Pawtuckett Elementary School	03	Lower	141.6	5.0	34
Park Road Elementary School	03	Lower	138.8	4.9	24
Nathaniel Alexander Elem. School	03	Lower	140.0	4.8	69
Newell Elementary School	03	Lower	141.6	4.6	50
Reid Park Elementary	03	Lower	141.5	4.4	39
Elizabeth Traditional Elem. School	03	Lower	146.6	4.4	24
Lansdowne Elementary School	03	Lower	140.7	4.4	36
Morehead Elementary School	03	Lower	139.2	4.3	77
Merry Oaks Elementary School	03	Lower	139.7	4.3	50
Sedgefield Elementary School	03	Lower	139.9	4.2	53
Irwin Avenue Open Elementary Schoo	03	Lower	138.7	4.1	58
Billingsville Elementary School	03	Lower	143.2	4.1	31
Rama Road Elementary School	03	Lower	138.4	3.6	47
Druid Hills Elementary School	03	Lower	143.5	3.6	35
Lake Wylie Elementary School	03	Lower	139.9	3.6	42
Myers Park Traditional Elem. School	03	Lower	140.1	3.5	31

Eastover Elementary School	03	Lower	139.1	3.4	27
Reedy Creek Elementary School	03	Lower	140.8	2.4	34
Sharon Elementary School	03	Lower	136.6	2.4	31
Bruns Avenue Elementary School	03	Lower	138.8	2.2	26
Lincoln Heights Elementary School	03	Lower	138.6	2.2	40
Allenbrook Elementary School	03	Lower	138.9	1.8	39
Smithfield Elementary School	03	Lower	138.1	1.7	47
Cotswold Elementary School	03	Lower	139.3	1.4	31
Mallard Creek Elementary School	03	Lower	139.0	0.8	33

Note: McAlpine and McKee Road elementaries were removed because they had 5 or fewer lower SES students

SES means socioeconomic status

Source: CMS

Student achievement, the racial and income gaps

Introduction:

Much attention is focused on the achievement gap between African Americans and whites, but the figures show how big a mistake it would be to assume that low achievement is only a problem for one race or ethnic group. Take, for example, reading and math in grades 3-8 for North Carolina and CMS in 1999-2000:

North Carolina

	Percentage below grade level	**Actual number below grade level**
Whites	19.9%	72,528
African Americans	50.6%	86,358
Hispanics	43.4%	7,431

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

	Percentage below grade level	**Actual number below grade level**
Whites	16.4%	3,639
African Americans	56.7%	10,942
Hispanics	46.5%	780

The "achievement gap" is real, but percentages don't tell the whole story. In percentage terms, for example, African Americans are far more likely that whites to be below grade level; but because whites outnumber African Americans in North Carolina schools, the actual numbers are closer: There are at least 70,000 students of each race lagging in grades 3-8 in North Carolina (72,000 whites, 86,000 African Americans). In CMS, there are 10,900 African American students, 3,600 white students and almost 800 Hispanic students lagging in these grades. Again, the "achievement gap" is real, but low achievement is not a problem limited to any one race.

The data:

1. Data on the combined score for grades 3-8 in reading and math shows that there is a substantial gap between white and African American students. While N.C. students overall score higher than CMS students, breaking the data down by race gives a different picture: While white students in CMS do better than their state counterparts, African American students do worse.
2. The CMS reading and math scores grade by grade show two things: That there are achievement gaps by income as well as by race, and that CMS has raised scores and reduced both gaps over the last four years in virtually every case.
3. Moving to the End of Course tests given in middle school and high school, there is a similar but not identical pattern to the reading and math scores. There is a substantial racial gap, with white students leading African

American ones. For most subjects, but not all of them, local white students lead their state counterparts and local African American students score lower than African Americans statewide.

4. Locally, the scores for four core End-of-Course exams show mostly improvement. While CMS scores in U.S. History dropped over the period, CMS scores increased for whites, African Americans and overall in Algebra I, biology and English I. The gap between whites and African Americans did not change much, increasing for Algebra I and U.S. History and decreasing for English I and biology.

Comment:

Most students ought to be on what North Carolina considers grade level. In fact, though, some 35% in grades 3-8 in CMS were below grade level in reading or math or both in 1999-2000. That represents real improvement from the 44% below grade level just four years ago, but it is still far too high.

CMS often trails North Carolina in the averages, but breaking the scores down by race shows a different picture. CMS white students consistently outscore N.C. whites, but CMS African American students just as consistently score lower than N.C. African Americans.

CMS and North Carolina End of Grade Composites

Grade 3-8, Reading and Math

School Year	1999-00	1999-00	1999-00	1998-99	1998-99	1998-99	1997-98	1997-98	1997-98	1996-97	1996-97	1996-97	1995-96	1995-96	1995-96
Ethnic group/School System	**NC**	**CMS**	**CMS-NC**	**NC**	**CMS**	**CMS-NC**	**NC**	**CMS**	**CMS-NC**	**NC**	**CMS**	**CMS-NC**	**NC**	**CMS**	**CMS-NC**
All	69.4	64.8	**-4.6**	69.1	64.1	**-5.0**	66.3	61.2	**-5.1**	61.7	56.6	**-5.1**	60.0	56.0	**-4.0**
Native American	56.3	52.7	**-3.6**	55.5	54.9	**-0.6**	50.4	50.8	**0.4**	42.9	45.6	**2.7**	40.7	46.4	**5.7**
Asian	77.0	74.2	**-2.8**	75.0	71.2	**-3.8**	73.2	67.5	**-5.7**	70.5	62.6	**-7.9**	70.6	63.1	**-7.5**
African American	49.4	43.2	**-6.2**	48.5	41.7	**-6.8**	44.7	37.0	**-7.7**	38.4	31.4	**-7.0**	36.2	30.6	**-5.6**
Hispanic	56.6	53.5	**-3.1**	55.6	53.3	**-2.3**	52.0	51.1	**-0.9**	48.7	44.7	**-4.0**	49.5	48.8	**-0.7**
Multi-racial	71.0	69.5	**-1.5**	70.4	67.7	**-2.7**	66.7	62.7	**-4.0**	62.0	59.6	**-2.4**	61.8	61.5	**-0.3**
White	80.1	83.6	**3.5**	79.2	82.7	**3.5**	76.7	79.9	3.2	72.7	75.9	**3.2**	70.9	74.3	**3.4**
Racial Gap															
NC white			80.1			79.2			76.7			72.7			70.9
NC African American			49.4			48.5			44.7			38.4			36.2
NC Racial Gap			**30.7**			**30.7**			**32.0**			**34.3**			**34.7**
CMS white			83.6			82.7			79.9			75.9			74.3
CMS African American			43.2			41.7			37.0			31.4			30.6
CMS racial gap			**40.4**			**41.0**			**42.9**			**44.5**			**43.7**
NC/CMS Gap															
NC white			80.1			79.2			76.7			72.7			70.9
CMS white			83.6			82.7			79.9			75.9			74.3
CMS-NC for whites			**3.5**			**3.5**			**3.2**			**3.2**			**3.4**
NC African American			49.4			48.5			44.7			38.4			36.2
CMS African American			43.2			41.7			37.0			31.4			30.6
CMS-NC for African Americans			**-6.2**			**-6.8**			**-7.7**			**-7.0**			**-5.6**

Source: CMS

CMS Reading

Percentage on grade level on EOG tests

Grade 3	1995-96	1999-00	Difference over time
Racial gap	39	30	-9
African American	39	57	18
White	78	87	9
All races	61	72	11

Grade 3	1995-96	1999-00	Difference over time
Income gap	39	33	-6
Subsidized lunch	37	53	16
Paid lunch	76	86	10

Grade 4	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	41	36	-5
African American	39	50	11
White	80	86	6
All races	64	69	5

Grade 4	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	40	37	-3
Subsidized lunch	38	47	9
Paid lunch	78	84	6

Grade 5	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	41	30	-11
African American	35	59	24
White	76	89	13
All races	59	75	16

Grade 5	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	41	32	-9
Subsidized lunch	33	56	23
Paid lunch	74	88	14

Grade 6	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	41	41	0
African American	41	42	1
White	82	83	1
All races	65	64	-1

Grade 6	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	42	42	0
Subsidized lunch	38	38	0
Paid lunch	80	80	0

Grade 7	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	42	38	-4
African American	36	49	13
White	78	87	9
All races	59	69	10

Grade 7	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	42	37	-5
Subsidized lunch	32	45	13
Paid lunch	74	82	8

Grade 8	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	35	31	-4
African American	47	60	13
White	82	91	9
All races	68	77	9

Grade 8	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	35	33	-2
Subsidized lunch	44	55	11
Paid lunch	79	88	9

"Subsidized lunch" means free and reduced-price lunch

Source: CMS Report

CMS Mathematics

Percentage on grade level on EOG tests

Grade 3	1995-96	1999-00	Difference over time
Racial gap	39	37	-2
African American	42	49	7
White	81	86	5
All races	64	69	5

Grade 3	1995-96	1999-00	Difference over time
Income gap	40	37	-3
Subsidized lunch	39	47	8
Paid lunch	79	84	5

Grade 4	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	39	28	-11
African American	44	65	21
White	83	93	10
All races	68	80	12

Grade 4	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	41	27	-14
Subsidized lunch	41	64	23
Paid lunch	82	91	9

Grade 5	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	37	26	-11
African American	44	65	21
White	81	91	10
All races	66	79	13

Grade 5	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	36	28	-8
Subsidized lunch	43	62	19
Paid lunch	79	90	11

Grade 6	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	38	33	-5
African American	49	55	6
White	87	88	1
All races	71	73	2

Grade 6	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	40	34	-6
Subsidized lunch	46	52	6
Paid lunch	86	86	0

Grade 7	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	43	35	-8
African American	41	54	13
White	84	89	5
All races	65	73	8

Grade 7	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	42	34	-8
Subsidized lunch	38	51	13
Paid lunch	80	85	5

Grade 8	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Racial gap	40	38	-2
African American	40	51	11
White	80	89	9
All races	64	72	8

Grade 8	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Income gap	38	37	-1
Subsidized lunch	38	47	9
Paid lunch	76	84	8

"Subsidized lunch" means free and reduced-price lunch

Source: CMS Report

N.C. End of Course Tests

Percentage scoring in top two levels (Levels III & IV)

	Alg. I	Alg. II	Biology	Chem.	English I	English II	ELPS	Geometry	Physical science	Physics	U.S. history
CMS	52.8	60.8	58.9	53.0	67.5	59.5	60.6	52.5	46.9	67.7	47.7
NC	68.8	62.6	57.5	62.0	68.4	58.0	67.3	60.0	57.0	72.9	46.9
Difference	-16.0	-1.8	1.4	-9.0	-0.9	1.5	-6.7	-7.5	-10.1	-5.2	0.8
CMS African American	29.8	38.1	35.0	29.0	46.4	41.8	39.2	27.7	24.9	36.1	22.4
NC African American	48.0	39.6	32.0	38.1	49.3	41.3	45.9	32.5	32.9	46.3	24.6
Difference	-18.2	-1.5	3.0	-9.1	-2.9	0.5	-6.7	-4.8	-8.0	-10.2	-2.2
CMS white	70.6	70.2	77.7	64.6	85.3	73.4	78.8	66.5	71.3	76.5	65.1
NC white	77.6	70.0	68.5	69.3	77.8	65.5	77.6	70.6	69.4	77.9	56.5
Difference	-7.0	0.2	9.2	-4.7	7.5	7.9	1.2	-4.1	1.9	-1.4	8.6
1999-2000											
CMS African American	29.8	38.1	35.0	29.0	46.4	41.8	39.2	27.7	24.9	36.1	22.4
CMS white	70.6	70.2	77.7	64.6	85.3	73.4	78.8	66.5	71.3	76.5	65.1
Difference	-40.8	-32.1	-42.7	-35.6	-38.9	-31.6	-39.6	-38.8	-46.4	-40.4	-42.7

Source: CMS, NC

CMS on N.C. End of Course Tests

Percentage at/above Level III on EOC tests

Algebra I	1995-96	1999-00	Difference over time
Gap	38	41	3
African American	25	30	5
White	63	71	8
All races	50	53	3

Biology	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Gap	46	43	-3
African American	29	35	6
White	75	78	3
All races	56	59	3

English I	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Gap	40	39	-1
African American	37	46	9
White	77	85	8
All races	60	68	8

U.S. History	1995-96	1999-00	Difference
Gap	40	43	3
African American	31	22	-9
White	71	65	-6
All races	55	48	-7

Advanced students

Introduction:

Some 44% of CMS graduates in 2000 had taken at least one International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement course (up from 31% four years ago, and well beyond the goal of 33%).

Seventy CMS graduates received Advanced Placement diplomas this year, as CMS helped pioneer the new AP diploma. Through a detailed process, the superintendent will certify that a high school offers a rigorous AP program; all CMS high schools have been invited to apply. One aim is to be sure that all high schools offer rigorous courses and broad opportunity to their students.

When Newsweek ranked the nation's 25,000 public high schools by the percentage of students taking IB and AP courses, CMS had nine high schools in the top 500 nationally.

CMS had 38 Merit Scholarship semifinalists in the 1999-2000 school year. This school year, there are 44, coming from six CMS high schools.

The data:

1. While the *percentage* of students getting a 3 or better on the AP exams has dipped from two years ago, the *number* has increased. A score of 3 or above is accepted by many colleges for course credit or advanced placement. The number of exams yielding a 3 or higher is approximate because it was obtained by multiplying the number of exams taken by the percentage yielding a 3, 4 or 5.
2. The 2000 AP and IB exams show significant variation in the results by school. For example, 77% of students who took the test at Providence High School, but only 8% at Olympic, scored a 3 or better on the AP exams.

Comment:

Many very successful students attend CMS, at a variety of schools. CMS is not simply a system for those with no other choice, nor is academic success limited to a few schools or a few neighborhoods.

More students are taking AP courses, and more are getting the 3 or higher on AP tests that leads to advanced placement or course credit at many colleges. Even students who don't get college credit can benefit from the rigorous curriculum.

The percentage of students getting a 3 or higher on AP exams varies widely from school to school. Offering and taking advanced courses are important, but they are just a beginning.

CMS Students Taking and Passing AP Exams

	Exams taken			Percent at score 3 or higher			Number at 3 or higher		
	1998	1999	2000	1998	1999	2000	1998	1999	2000
CMS	2,704	5,867	6,339	54.1%	41.2%	41.4%	1,463	2,417	2,624
African American	207	738	736	28.5%	18.6%	14.9%	59	137	110
White	2,124	4,223	4,557	57.3%	45.7%	46.1%	1,217	1,930	2,101
Other	373	906	1,046	49.9%	38.7%	39.6%	186	351	414

Source: CMS

Advanced Placement Exam Results

School	Number taking AP exams	Number of exams taken	Percentage of scores at 3, 4 or 5
Butler	189	345	35%
East Mecklenburg	238	542	43%
Garinger	96	184	14%
Harding	221	512	24%
Independence	145	282	39%
Myers Park	310	683	44%
North Mecklenburg	252	555	37%
NW School of the Arts	79	191	53%
Olympic	170	321	8%
Providence	350	899	77%
South Mecklenburg	327	678	45%
Vance	218	463	47%
West Charlotte	168	517	25%
West Mecklenburg	104	167	23%
CMS District Overall	**2,867**	**6,339**	**41%**

Note: Many colleges accept scores of 3 or above for advanced placement

International Baccalaureate Exam Results

School	Number of seniors taking IB exams	Percentage receiving IB diploma
East Mecklenburg	5	100%
Harding	30	60%
Independence	76	47%
Myers Park	78	94%
North Mecklenburg	27	63%
CMS District Overall	**216**	**69%**

Source: CMS

The SAT

Introduction:

SAT scores are a terrible way to measure schools, in part because the percentage of students taking them can vary so widely. A higher SAT score in Mississippi, where 4% of graduating students take the SAT, does not make education there better than in North Carolina, where 64% of this year's graduates took the SAT. But while the SAT is the predominant test for college-bound students in only about half the states, SAT scores are a popular indicator that is often used as a measure of how schools and students are doing.

The data:

1. CMS is just ahead of North Carolina in average SAT score but trails the nation.
2. The picture changes somewhat when scores are broken down by race. White and African American students both score higher than their N.C. counterparts, and white students here top whites nationwide.
3. The CMS students in the top 10% of their class score higher than similar students statewide and nationally (not in the tables).

Comment:

The percentage of SAT test-takers here who are African American has risen from around 20% a decade ago to 28% today. (About 10% in CMS don't mark any race.)

The participation rate does not explain away everything in looking at local test scores. The consolidated Durham system, which has a similar participation rate and higher percentage of African American students taking the test, also had a higher score than CMS.

	Participation rate	**% of test-takers who are African American**	**Score**
Nation	44%	11%	1019
North Carolina	64%	21%	988
Durham City/County	75.5%	34%	994
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	73%	28%	989

Scores on the SAT

All races

Year	Number tested in CMS	Percent tested in CMS	CMS	N.C.	U.S.
1990	2,999	60.0%	968	949	1001
1991	2,676	61.8%	966	952	999
1992	2,638	64.8%	981	961	1001
1993	2,648	64.1%	991	966	1003
1994	2,541	63.7%	990	967	1003
1995	2,718	67.0%	994	970	1010
1996	2,768	69.7%	991	976	1013
1997	2,915	64.7%	991	978	1016
1998	3,058	69.6%	994	982	1017
1999	3,444	71.2%	985	986	1016
2000	3,569	71.9%	989	988	1019

White students on the SAT

Year	CMS	NC	US
1994	1040	1011	1041
1995	1043	1014	1043
1996	1041	1018	1049
1997	1043	1023	1052
1998	1060	1026	1054
1999	1050	1031	1055
2000	1060	1035	1058

African American students on the SAT

Year	CMS	NC	US
1994	854	831	850
1995	860	836	854
1996	857	840	856
1997	850	834	857
1998	851	839	860
1999	842	837	856
2000	843	835	860

Source: North Carolina and CMS reports. Number and percent tested are from N.C. reports

SAT Scores for 2000

System	Number tested	Percent tested	Total score
United States Total	1,260,278	44.0%	1019
North Carolina Total	43,077	64.0%	988
N.C. Systems			
Alamance County	671	67.1%	967
Alexander County	127	44.1%	932
Alleghany County	48	55.8%	960
Anson County	95	40.9%	887
Ashe County	105	60.0%	996
Avery County	81	58.7%	1007
Beaufort County	206	56.3%	961
Bertie County	137	57.8%	810
Bladen County	165	56.7%	874
Brunswick County	215	48.0%	965
Buncombe County	825	60.5%	1059
Asheville	174	74.4%	1038
Burke County	313	51.3%	983
Cabarrus County	668	65.0%	1013
Kannapolis	82	50.9%	910
Caldwell County	236	38.3%	1001
Camden County	46	59.0%	977
Carteret County	296	67.6%	994
Caswell County	86	50.3%	868
Catawba County	423	51.5%	1010
Hickory	148	81.8%	1058
Newton-Conover	81	55.9%	1036
Cherokee County	118	57.0%	1016
Chowan County	62	41.1%	971
Clay County	42	62.7%	1032
Cleveland County	218	52.7%	955
Kings Mountain District	111	52.6%	929
Shelby	103	68.7%	1007
Columbus County	165	39.7%	872
Whiteville	96	71.1%	894
Craven County	425	65.8%	971
Cumberland County	1,322	50.9%	960
Currituck County	66	44.0%	967

System	Number tested	Percent tested	Total score
Dare County	178	76.7%	994
Davidson County	540	58.4%	978
Lexington	65	45.8%	956
Thomasville	37	43.0%	870
Davie County	172	61.6%	1002
Duplin County	246	60.3%	878
Durham County	956	75.5%	994
Edgecombe County	167	45.3%	902
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County	1,508	68.9%	1003
Franklin County	167	45.0%	960
Gaston County	840	55.6%	949
Gates County	71	68.9%	902
Graham County	43	59.7%	980
Granville County	144	45.1%	971
Greene County	71	45.5%	914
Guilford County	2,309	73.8%	999
Halifax County	146	49.2%	760
Roanoke Rapids	94	54.7%	980
Weldon	37	53.6%	724
Harnett County	314	47.4%	960
Haywood County	207	52.3%	1009
Henderson County	404	63.8%	1038
Hertford County	116	49.4%	770
Hoke County	100	40.2%	854
Hyde County	22	51.2%	911
Iredell County	385	48.5%	995
Mooresville	135	61.1%	1054
Jackson County	128	66.7%	995
Johnston County	472	53.0%	970
Jones County	49	54.4%	834
Lee County	232	51.8%	963
Lenoir County	264	60.0%	950
Lincoln County	315	52.8%	941
Macon County	149	66.8%	997
Madison County	65	52.4%	964
Martin County	173	59.9%	882
McDowell County	165	45.7%	1002
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	**3,569**	**71.9%**	**989**
Mitchell County	61	45.2%	1017

System	Number tested	Percent tested	Total score
Montgomery County	85	36.8%	931
Moore County	332	54.6%	990
Nash-Rocky Mount	442	51.6%	957
NC School of Science and Math	245	NA	1320
NC School of the Arts	88	NA	1117
New Hanover County	809	66.4%	1007
Northampton County	102	51.5%	798
Onslow County	594	53.5%	975
Orange County	218	71.2%	994
Chapel Hill	460	90.6%	1175
Pamlico County	54	39.4%	981
Pasquotank County	164	62.6%	893
Pender County	180	54.2%	936
Perquimans County	54	50.5%	903
Person County	155	57.4%	941
Pitt County	656	63.6%	1002
Polk County	59	50.4%	973
Randolph County	304	41.8%	979
Asheboro	132	70.2%	1017
Richmond County	196	50.6%	891
Robeson County	469	44.3%	858
Rockingham County	386	56.0%	966
Rowan County	509	47.6%	986
Rutherford County	275	52.2%	948
Sampson County	192	50.4%	872
Clinton	123	71.9%	895
Scotland County	201	64.0%	908
Laurinburg Charter	3	13.6%	*
Stanly County	380	63.0%	947
Stokes County	125	37.3%	956
Surry County	157	43.7%	978
Elkin	43	59.7%	1007
Mount Airy	58	52.3%	1031
Swain County	54	56.3%	987
Transylvania County	154	64.2%	1004
Tyrrell County	27	50.9%	910
Union County	663	65.5%	991
Vance County	164	57.1%	858
Wake County	3,860	77.9%	1061

System	Number tested	Percent tested	Total score
Warren County	79	61.7%	886
Washington County	103	59.9%	836
Watauga County	224	71.3%	1054
Wayne County	539	51.0%	933
Wilkes County	236	50.3%	991
Wilson County	310	51.0%	943
Yadkin County	156	48.6%	936
Yancey County	64	44.4%	1026

Source: NCPPI

Dropouts

Introduction:

While the percentage of young American adults who have at least a high school education has increased over the past 50 years, some students still don't make it to graduation. Some later get a high-school diploma or equivalent, but the failure of many students to persist to graduation often reflects the failure of the schools to educate and to seem worthwhile.

Data:

1. Data provided to the school board showed that schools vary in their dropout rates even when the same subgroup is compared. A school can have a low overall dropout rate – say because it is has relatively few of the groups likeliest to drop out – but still have a very high rate for certain subgroups. For example, Providence High has an overall dropout rate of 5.4%, but a dropout rate for African American students of 18.6%.
2. Each year North Carolina lists dropouts by school system for both grades 7-12 and 9-12. The latest list, based on the 1998-99 school year, is not comparable to previous lists because the state changed the definition of a dropout. As the state puts it, "Students who transfer from high school to community college are now counted as a dropout when they previously were not. Therefore, useful comparisons between this year and the years before are rendered difficult, as best, by this change in policy."

   CMS has the highest high school dropout rate of any large system in North Carolina. (Gaston and Durham have higher dropouts rates, but while they are relatively large for this state they are one-third of the enrollment of CMS). Note the footnote to the table with Superintendent Eric Smith's report that the rate here is higher than the state says but lower than the year before.

Comments:

The usual question is what percentage of students drop out short of graduation. Or, to turn the question around, what percentage of seventh graders make it through to graduation? Do 90% graduate, say, or 50%? Unfortunately, that's not the way this nation reports dropout statistics. So what you will get from the state is that in Charlotte-Mecklenburg 5.5% of students in grades 7-12 dropped out in 1998-99. Maybe that sounds pretty good; just 5.5% of our students drop out. But that doesn't mean that 94.5% graduate. The number of dropouts mounts as a class moves through school; some students drop out as eighth graders, then some more leave when the class moves on to ninth grade, and so on. The percentage of students who drop out before graduation is much higher than 5.5%. Specialists know that. Does the casual listener? CMS is on the right track in trying to show in its annual District Profile what happens to 9th graders (see the next section).

It is important to look at the statistics by school and by various subgroups within the school – including groups defined by their earlier academic performance. The aim is not to generate more numbers, but to find out what is working to keep students in school, and what is working to push them out.

It is easy enough to raise the bar. The trick is getting everyone to jump high enough to clear it. The proof of success for the state's new no-social-promotion policy (officially known as the new North Carolina Student Accountability Standards) won't be more retention, but higher performance, fewer dropouts and more graduates.

CMS Dropout Rates 1998-99

School	School average	African American average	White average	Subsidized lunch	Paid lunch
Butler	6.9%	9.6%	5.0%	10.6%	5.9%
East Mecklenburg	6.6%	8.8%	5.2%	11.9%	5.1%
Garinger	10.3%	9.6%	12.4%	10.2%	10.4%
Harding	2.4%	2.1%	2.7%	3.2%	2.1%
Independence	7.0%	7.9%	6.4%	9.6%	5.8%
Myers Park	4.9%	10.0%	1.8%	10.4%	2.9%
North Mecklenburg	7.3%	15.4%	4.0%	16.2%	5.2%
Olympic	8.5%	8.5%	8.4%	10.9%	7.1%
Providence	5.4%	18.6%	2.5%	19.8%	2.8%
South Mecklenburg	6.3%	13.4%	3.8%	14.8%	4.2%
Vance	7.0%	9.2%	5.1%	14.7%	4.7%
West Charlotte	9.3%	9.8%	5.0%	11.2%	7.6%
West Mecklenburg	14.7%	14.8%	14.7%	17.7%	12.3%

The chart omits Northwest School of the Arts and several special schools

Subsidized lunch: Students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch

Dropout determination: **Students who were enrolled on 20th day of 1998-99 school year and were inactive at the end of the school year with withdrawal codes W2A, W2B, NS,W1S,W1X or W1R**

Source: CMS Report to Board of Education

N.C. Dropout Rates for 1998-99

(By rate, with highest rates first)

		Grades 7-12 Dropouts		Grades 9-12 Dropouts	
System	**Rank**	**Number**	**Rate**	**Number**	**Rate**
Graham County	121	47	8.5%	40	11.3%
Anson County	120	159	7.8%	146	10.8%
Vance County	119	224	7.%	203	10.2%
Perquimans County	118	65	6.9%	63	10.1%
Burke County	117	414	6.7%	402	10.1%
Robeson County	116	706	6.7%	687	9.8%
Alexander County	114	152	6.4%	143	9.1%
Hickory City	113	120	6.3%	116	9.4%
Iredell-Statesville	112	437	6.1%	424	9.1%
Ashe County	110	98	6.1%	97	8.9%
Asheboro City	111	108	6.1%	99	8.9%
Avery County	109	67	6.1%	67	9.%
Randolph County	108	436	6.%	401	8.8%
Gaston County	107	816	5.9%	787	8.9%
Bertie County	106	105	5.9%	101	8.3%
Nash-Rocky Mount	105	460	5.8%	409	8.%
Durham County	104	722	5.7%	708	8.6%
Wilson County	103	317	5.7%	283	7.8%
Lenoir County	102	266	5.6%	247	8.1%
Kings Mountain	101	105	5.5%	99	8.1%
Rockingham County	100	359	5.5%	332	7.9%
Mecklenburg County	**99**	**2,401**	**5.5%**	**2,202**	**7.72***
Swain County	98	44	5.5%	44	8.%
Edgecombe County	97	194	5.4%	175	7.4%
Currituck County	96	79	5.3%	79	8.1%
Surry County	95	189	5.2%	187	7.8%
Pasquotank County	94	148	5.2%	145	7.9%
Lexington City	93	69	5.2%	68	8.2%
Hyde County	92	18	5.1%	14	6.%
Lee County	91	192	5.1%	173	7.2%
Shelby City	90	67	5.%	62	7.2%
Hoke County	89	129	5.%	127	7.6%
Pitt County	88	436	5.%	430	7.4%

		Grades 7-12 Dropouts		Grades 9-12 Dropouts	
System	**Rank**	**Number**	**Rate**	**Number**	**Rate**
Forsyth County	87	929	5.%	890	7.2%
Franklin County	85	159	4.9%	145	7.3%
Lincoln County	86	236	4.9%	236	7.4%
Montgomery County	84	98	4.9%	92	7.1%
Scotland County	83	149	4.9%	145	7.2%
Richmond County	81	172	4.9%	150	6.7%
Warren County	82	72	4.9%	70	7.4%
Johnston County	80	391	4.8%	356	7.1%
Cleveland County	79	188	4.8%	186	7.4%
Harnett County	78	322	4.8%	312	7.4%
Whiteville City	77	61	4.8%	53	6.6%
Wilkes County	76	219	4.8%	219	7.3%
Alamance-Burlington	75	418	4.8%	407	7.1%
Brunswick County	74	211	4.7%	201	7.%
Caswell County	73	76	4.7%	76	7.3%
Person County	72	118	4.6%	116	7.%
Buncombe County	71	522	4.6%	505	6.8%
North Carolina	70	25,578	4.6%	24,466	6.8%
Madison County	69	53	4.6%	53	6.9%
Asheville City	68	88	4.6%	88	6.6%
Cherokee County	67	74	4.5%	71	6.5%
Columbus County	66	159	4.5%	142	6.2%
Yancey County	65	50	4.5%	47	6.4%
Craven County	64	294	4.5%	284	6.6%
Henderson County	63	235	4.4%	224	6.4%
Haywood County	61	152	4.4%	152	6.7%
Rowan-Salisbury	62	401	4.4%	380	6.4%
Beaufort County	57	148	4.4%	136	6.2%
Chatham County	58	129	4.4%	129	6.9%
Jackson County	59	75	4.4%	75	6.5%
Martin County	60	99	4.4%	95	6.3%
New Hanover County	56	429	4.4%	424	6.4%
Cumberland County	54	994	4.3%	953	6.4%
Mcdowell County	55	123	4.3%	110	6.1%
Gates County	53	42	4.3%	41	6.5%
Mooresville City	52	75	4.3%	70	6.2%
Northampton County	51	74	4.3%	74	6.4%
Guilford County	50	1,152	4.3%	1,109	6.3%

		Grades 7-12 Dropouts		Grades 9-12 Dropouts	
System	**Rank**	**Number**	**Rate**	**Number**	**Rate**
Onslow County	49	410	4.2%	407	6.3%
Jones County	48	28	4.2%	28	6.3%
Catawba County	47	294	4.2%	287	6.3%
Transylvania County	46	79	4.2%	75	5.8%
Carteret County	45	174	4.2%	171	6.2%
Granville County	44	137	4.1%	125	6.2%
Caldwell County	43	216	4.1%	212	6.1%
Sampson County	42	131	4.1%	126	6.1%
Davie County	40	95	4.%	90	5.9%
Wayne County	41	355	4.%	342	6.%
Duplin County	39	148	4.%	129	5.6%
Thomasville City	38	35	4.%	34	6.1%
Dare County	37	82	3.9%	82	6.%
Hertford County	36	78	3.9%	78	5.8%
Pamlico County	35	37	3.9%	36	5.4%
Watauga County	34	95	3.9%	95	5.9%
Davidson County	33	329	3.9%	317	5.7%
Macon County	31	73	3.8%	71	5.7%
Clinton City	32	44	3.8%	44	5.7%
Cabarrus County	29	310	3.8%	307	5.7%
Rutherford County	30	166	3.8%	166	5.8%
Camden County	28	23	3.6%	23	5.7%
Union County	27	325	3.6%	320	5.6%
Pender County	26	101	3.6%	101	5.5%
Halifax County	25	98	3.6%	98	5.3%
Clay County	24	23	3.5%	23	5.2%
Orange County	23	94	3.5%	94	5.5%
Kannapolis City	22	62	3.5%	59	5.3%
Washington County	21	38	3.4%	35	4.6%
Yadkin County	20	85	3.3%	80	4.9%
Stokes County	19	107	3.3%	102	4.9%
Greene County	17	45	3.3%	45	5.1%
Weldon City	18	16	3.3%	15	4.6%
Bladen County	16	81	3.2%	80	4.8%
Moore County	15	155	3.2%	153	4.8%
Alleghanycounty	14	21	3.1%	21	4.6%
Wake County	13	1,224	3.1%	1,203	4.7%
Roanoke Rapids City	12	42	3.1%	42	4.8%

		Grades 7-12 Dropouts		Grades 9-12 Dropouts	
System	**Rank**	**Number**	**Rate**	**Number**	**Rate**
Tyrrell County	11	11	2.9%	10	3.9%
Edenton/Chowan	9	31	2.6%	31	3.9%
Elkin City	10	12	2.6%	10	3.1%
Stanly County	8	112	2.5%	107	3.7%
Mitchell County	6	21	1.9%	21	3.%
Mount Airy City	5	16	1.9%	16	3.1%
Newton-Conover	4	19	1.6%	18	2.3%
Polk County	2	15	1.6%	15	2.5%
Chapel Hill-Carrboro	1	62	1.5%	62	2.4%

***Note: The CMS superintendent says the CMS rate for grades 9-12 is actually 8.3%, but lower than 1998-99 rate of 9.0%**

(Duplicated Counts and Rates, Excluding Expelled Students Per G.S. 115C-12(27))
Ranked by rate for grades 7-12, highest rate first
Charter schools eliminated

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

Graduation

Introduction:

The previous section talked about dropouts, about students who leave before graduation. This one talks about the percentage of students who ultimately graduate and what curriculum they followed in high school.

Data:

1. There are significant differences among schools in the percentage of graduates who took either a college prep or a college tech prep course of study. This is one measure of students with a definite curriculum in high school, as opposed to those who just drifted through. Both the state and CMS made dramatic changes this year (see below) but current graduates will follow the old rules.
2. As part of its annual District Profile, CMS looks at what has become of students who were 9th graders four years ago. The table shows the percentage who have graduated, the percentage who are still in school, the percentage who have officially dropped out and the percentage who have left CMS. For example, CMS reported in the 1999 Profile that just 55% of the 1995-96 ninth graders graduated on time in 1999, and that 28% had officially dropped out, with another 5% still in school and 13% leaving CMS. While an imperfect measure, it does show dramatic differences in graduation rates between those who qualify for free and reduced-price lunches and those who do not.
3. A simpler chart is published by the state each year as part of its Statistical Profile. It shows the number of graduates as a percentage of the 9th grade class four years earlier. The latest report, for the class of 1999, shows that the number of graduates in CMS was 65% of 9th grade enrollment four years earlier; the state average was lower, 59%.

Comments:

Again, graduation requirements were dramatically stiffened this year. The state, in specifying the courses of study that students must take to get a diploma, in effect said that every high school student must be in a program that heads somewhere. It is also moving toward an exit exam for graduation. On the local level, CMS approved going from 20 units to graduate now to 28 units for the class of 2004. Coupled with other steps, such as the new North Carolina Student Accountability Standards (no-social-promotion rules), they mark a dramatic change. The question will be whether they lead to more and better-prepared graduates, or more students who are uneducated and marked by failure.

Measuring dropouts annually is important, but it is almost hopelessly complex for the public to understand. Emphasize instead the graduation rate, and measure not against the ninth grade, but the seventh grade or even the fifth grade. CMS should reconcile state graduation figures (which are important for system-to-system comparison) and local figures (which are available with more detail). This is particularly important as standards are raised.

It is important to know both what graduates know and how many students leave before graduation. There is now a wealth of both anecdotal information and statistical

data (on dropouts, for example, and on remediation in higher education), and there will more data in the future under the balanced scorecard being developed. CMS should be sure that all this data adds up to information about how the schools are working for the many different children in this community.

Grads: In College Prep/ College Tech Prep

School	1999	2000
Butler	74.4%	77.4%
East Mecklenburg	82.5%	81.6%
Garinger	54.4%	62.2%
Harding	84.0%	81.1%
Independence	69.6%	74.7%
Myers Park	78.7%	78.8%
North Mecklenburg	72.7%	76.7%
NW School of the Arts	80.7%	83.9%
Olympic	65.6%	69.1%
Providence	81.3%	86.4%
South Mecklenburg	81.0%	83.0%
West Charlotte	66.1%	68.6%
West Mecklenburg	55.7%	53.4%
Zebulon Vance	69.8%	76.7%
CMS District Overall	71.7%	75.5%

Source: State ABC file, CMS

CMS Graduation Rate

August 1999 Status of 1995-96 Ninth Grade Students

	Number	Graduated	Active student	Left CMS	Dropped out
African American	3,208	46.9%	6.9%	8.2%	38.1%
White	3,728	61.6%	3.1%	15.7%	19.6%
Other	390	49.2%	4.9%	20.8%	25.1%
Free-reduced lunch	2,420	37.6%	7.1%	11.7%	43.6%
Paid lunch	4,905	62.8%	3.7%	13.2%	20.3%
All CMS	7,326	54.4%	4.8%	12.7%	28.0%

Source: CMS District Profile

N.C. Estimates of Graduation Rates

System	Grade 9 Enrollment 1995-96	Grades 9-12 Estimated Retention Rate*
Alamance-Burlington	1,539	61.4%
Alexander County	408	64.0%
Alleghany County	144	71.3%
Anson County	340	61.5%
Ashe County	366	55.2%
Avery County	208	61.4%
Beaufort County	793	48.0%
Bertie County	394	52.3%
Bladen County	562	61.0%
Brunswick County	834	56.2%
Buncombe County	2,065	64.6%
Asheville City	458	49.1%
Burke County	1,166	53.3%
Cabarrus County	1,346	66.6%
Kannapolis City	332	50.0%
Caldwell County	1,039	56.0%
Camden County	114	75.4%
Carteret County	731	63.5%
Caswell County	307	49.2%
Catawba County	1,204	66.1%
Hickory City	399	51.1%
Newton-Conover	247	87.9%
Chatham County	530	54.4%
Cherokee County	301	68.4%
Edenton/Chowan	248	64.5%
Clay County	106	79.2%
Cleveland County	749	57.8%
Kings Mountain	385	54.2%
Shelby City	251	60.6%
Columbus County	729	50.0%
Whiteville City	223	57.4%
Craven County	1,373	56.2%
Cumberland County	3,833	63.5%

System	Grade 9 Enrollment 1995-96	Grades 9-12 Estimated Retention Rate*
Currituck County	250	55.4%
Dare County	349	66.1%
Davidson County	1,532	64.2%
Lexington City	223	55.2%
Thomasville City	193	48.7%
Davie County	367	68.3%
Duplin County	714	56.0%
Durham County	2,710	48.7%
Edgecombe County	743	52.2%
Forsyth County	3,532	58.8%
Franklin County	570	54.4%
Gaston County	2,284	58.8%
Gates County	183	52.7%
Graham County	100	58.0%
Granville County	719	49.5%
Greene County	272	54.6%
Guilford County	5,179	59.2%
Halifax County	700	49.4%
Roanoke Rapids	234	71.4%
Weldon City	103	53.9%
Harnett County	1,078	57.2%
Haywood County	592	68.2%
Henderson County	1,011	62.2%
Hertford County	406	56.0%
Hoke County	594	42.7%
Hyde County	74	70.3%
Iredell-Statesville	1,356	55.8%
Mooresville City	299	64.8%
Jackson County	315	62.5%
Johnston County	1,315	61.2%
Jones County	141	56.0%
Lee County	669	57.0%
Lenoir County	1,092	40.1%
Lincoln County	872	58.7%
Macon County	372	57.3%
Madison County	220	58.4%
Martin County	435	57.0%
McDowell County	485	66.1%

System	Grade 9 Enrollment 1995-96	Grades 9-12 Estimated Retention Rate*
Mecklenburg County	**7,268**	**65.2%**
Mitchell County	232	64.2%
Montgomery County	401	54.1%
Moore County	896	65.1%
Nash-Rocky Mount	1,291	69.7%
New Hanover	1,830	62.8%
Northampton County	380	50.8%
Onslow County	1,948	56.6%
Orange County	566	55.8%
Chapel Hill-Carrboro	690	68.9%
Pamlico County	176	62.5%
Pasquotank County	592	46.0%
Pender County	545	57.6%
Perquimans County	173	55.5%
Person County	498	60.3%
Pitt County	1,761	52.8%
Polk County	160	70.6%
Randolph County	1,346	56.5%
Asheboro City	322	61.4%
Richmond County	609	63.0%
Robeson County	2,193	42.6%
Rockingham County	1,295	56.1%
Rowan-Salisbury	1,724	54.1%
Rutherford County	911	54.0%
Sampson County	599	61.4%
Clinton City	248	62.3%
Scotland County	707	48.1%
Stanly County	771	69.8%
Stokes County	576	59.4%
Surry County	727	58.9%
Elkin City	107	83.0%
Mount Airy	151	64.2%
Swain County	165	57.7%
Transylvania County	289	73.7%
Tyrrell County	90	76.7%
Union County	1,538	65.1%
Vance County	664	40.4%
Wake County	6,543	68.5%

System	Grade 9 Enrollment 1995-96	Grades 9-12 Estimated Retention Rate*
Warren County	343	38.8%
Washington County	231	66.7%
Watauga County	453	64.4%
Wayne County	1,547	63.2%
Wilkes County	914	58.4%
Wilson County	1,078	51.1%
Yadkin County	447	63.7%
Yancey County	236	64.4%
North Carolina**	**2,238**	**59.2%**

*** The "retention rate" is a simple mathematical comarison with the 9th grade enrollment four years earlier**

**** The state total includes charter school dropouts**

Source: NC DPI

Teachers and teaching

Introduction:

Study after study has said that teachers and teaching are essential to improving schools. Researchers are concerned about the supply of teachers, about the distribution of teachers, about resources provided to teachers, about the enormous impact teachers have on student achievement. The field is of huge national and state concern; the subject is not unique to CMS.

Data:

1. The state does an annual teacher turnover report on teachers leaving each system's classrooms each year. The state average is 13.6%; the figure in Mecklenburg is 19.44%, and that doesn't count teachers who go from one CMS school to another.
2. Each county sends the state a report listing the reasons teachers left its classrooms. Mecklenburg's 2000 report shows that 1,234 teachers left the classroom in CMS for more than a dozen reasons; 104 of those retired, and 36 moved to non-teaching jobs in education.

Comments:

North Carolina has diligently pursued the goal of meeting the national average in teacher salaries. Mecklenburg is a state leader in providing additional local supplements for its 6,500 teachers. CMS is working not only to attract teachers, but to attract and hold them for high-poverty schools with such things as additional salary and bonuses, smaller classes, paid masters degree programs at UNCC and Winthrop and, hopefully, higher achievement and more success for students. There are statewide initiatives to improve colleges that prepare teachers, and to report results.

CMS ranked second only to Los Angeles in the number of teachers earning certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), with 99 local teachers qualifying in 1999. In all there were 134 NBPTS certified teachers in CMS in the fall of 2000, or 2% of the teaching staff. It was announced in December that another 107 earned certification in 2000. The state pays the $2,300 fee for the process. It gives successful teachers a roughly 12% pay boost, if they spend at least 70% of their time with students.

Charlotte knows it must compete nationally in attracting talent to its core businesses. Teaching is no different. In hiring new teachers, it competes with such higher-paying systems as Atlanta-area Cobb County, which last school year was already offering new teachers more than $31,000, compared to $26,695 here. This school year, the salary for a new bachelor's-degree teacher in CMS was boosted to $28,062, though a $2,000 signing bonus that helped recruit in early 2000 disappeared in budget cuts.

The state average for teacher turnover is almost 14%. But a state study found that low-performing schools averaged two-and-a-half to three times that, or more than 30% a year. Those numbers are **averages**, with some schools higher and some lower. As this report's equity section shows, the three-year **average** at some CMS schools was over 30% a year.

The annual CMS survey of teachers, with a response rate from teachers of 70.9%, shows that morale varies by level. It is highest for teachers of pre-kindergarten children, worst for teachers in middle school:

Teachers agreeing strongly/somewhat that "the morale at my school is good"

	1999	2000
Pre-Kindergarten		87%
Elementary	64%	57%
Middle school	42%	47%
High school	48%	56%

A lot of information on teachers is simply not part of the regular reports. The CMS goals, for example, are concerned mostly with outputs – especially student results – and don't include any teacher measures. But teacher turnover and absences matter, so do out-of-field teaching and the success or failure of CMS steps to attract master teachers to schools serving large numbers of at-risk students.

Good teaching and good teachers are difficult to quantify and measure. Some of the answers lie outside CMS, such as the recruitment of top-flight college undergraduates to train as teachers. Some of the essentials – such as *effective* mentoring and top-quality professional development – aren't easy to measure. But if the public is to have confidence that the right steps are being taken to raise achievement, CMS must report in detail about its aims, its methods and its results in recruiting and retaining effective teachers.

N.C. Teacher Turnover, 1999-2000

System	Total Teachers	Teachers Leaving	Turnover
Alamance-Burlington	1,456	264	18.13%
Alexander County	318	40	12.58%
Alleghany County	126	11	8.73%
Anson County	277	64	23.10%
Ashe County	223	14	6.28%
Avery County	228	23	10.09%
Beaufort County	558	62	11.11%
Bertie County	283	36	12.72%
Bladen County	424	38	8.96%
Brunswick County	741	93	12.55%
Buncombe County	1,775	153	8.62%
Asheville City	390	60	15.38%
Burke County	1,161	172	14.81%
Cabarrus County	1,243	142	11.42%
Kannapolis City	292	54	18.49%
Caldwell County	844	108	12.80%
Camden County	88	13	14.77%
Carteret County	647	37	5.72%
Caswell County	252	30	11.90%
Catawba County	965	148	15.34%
Hickory City	319	61	19.12%
Newton-Conover City	210	39	18.57%
Chatham County	445	84	18.88%
Cherokee County	277	22	7.94%
Edenton-Chowan	189	31	16.40%
Clay County	100	7	7.00%
Cleveland County	646	67	10.37%
Kings Mountain City	296	28	9.46%
Shelby City	245	43	17.55%
Columbus County	561	56	9.98%
Whiteville City	208	23	11.06%
Craven County	1,038	109	10.50%
Cumberland County	3,097	258	8.33%
Currituck County	278	27	9.71%
Dare County	364	30	8.24%
Davidson County	1,276	145	11.36%
Lexington City	225	46	20.44%

System	Total Teachers	Teachers Leaving	Turnover
Thomasville City	180	30	16.67%
Davie County	348	46	13.22%
Duplin County	634	141	22.24%
Durham County*	2,274	385	16.93%
Edgecombe County	578	140	24.22%
Forsyth County	3,789	537	14.17%
Franklin County	507	81	15.98%
Gaston County	2,180	301	13.81%
Gates County	163	12	7.36%
Graham County	100	3	3.00%
Granville County	495	80	16.16%
Greene County	198	32	16.16%
Guilford County	4,791	589	12.29%
Halifax County	466	87	18.67%
Roanoke Rapids City	221	38	17.19%
Weldon City	85	18	21.18%
Harnett County	1,117	143	12.80%
Haywood County	549	22	4.01%
Henderson County	786	87	11.07%
Hertford County	315	37	11.75%
Hoke County	358	101	28.21%
Hyde County	73	10	13.70%
Iredell-Statesville	1,206	130	10.78%
Mooresville City	262	30	11.45%
Jackson County	248	21	8.47%
Johnston County	1,492	174	11.66%
Jones County	121	26	21.49%
Lee County	599	57	9.52%
Lenoir County	760	96	12.63%
Lincoln County	594	95	15.99%
Macon County	212	17	8.02%
Madison County	181	14	7.73%
Martin County	418	83	19.86%
McDowell County	450	54	12.00%
Mecklenburg County	**6,349**	**1,234**	**19.44%**
Mitchell County	174	10	5.75%
Montgomery County	286	51	17.83%
Moore County	712	127	17.84%
Nash-Rocky Mount	1,161	175	15.07%

System	Total Teachers	Teachers Leaving	Turnover
New Hanover County	1,535	253	16.48%
Northampton County	268	37	13.81%
Onslow County	1,362	250	18.36%
Orange County	486	66	13.58%
Chapel Hill-Carrboro	775	113	14.58%
Pamlico County	158	19	12.03%
Pasquotank County	436	59	13.53%
Pender County	470	71	15.11%
Perquimans County	141	17	12.06%
Person County	437	85	19.45%
Pitt County	1,475	163	11.05%
Polk County	162	33	20.37%
Randolph County	1,249	164	13.13%
Asheboro City	283	46	16.25%
Richmond County	592	63	10.64%
Robeson County	1,562	221	14.15%
Rockingham County	1,034	154	14.89%
Rowan-Salisbury	1,453	188	12.94%
Rutherford County	659	55	8.35%
Sampson County	548	62	11.31%
Clinton City	187	35	18.72%
Scotland County	530	85	16.04%
Stanley County	709	81	11.42%
Stokes County	557	76	13.64%
Surry County	563	80	14.21%
Elkin City	95	14	14.74%
Mount Airy City	165	19	11.52%
Swain County	133	12	9.02%
Transylvania County	289	35	12.11%
Tyrrell County	61	17	27.87%
Union County	1,433	228	15.91%
Vance County	532	135	25.38%
Wake County	6,635	715	10.78%
Warren County	197	39	19.80%
Washington County	200	38	19.00%
Watauga County	378	49	12.96%
Wayne County	1,495	145	9.70%
Wilkes County	731	51	6.98%
Wilson County	924	114	12.34%

System	Total Teachers	Teachers Leaving	Turnover
Yadkin County	304	33	10.86%
Yancey County	182	3	1.65%
Total	**88,882**	**12,075**	**13.59%**

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction (preliminary data)

ANNUAL TEACHER TURNOVER SUMMARY

Personnel Office Report

School System: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools **Report Period:** 7/1/99 - 6/30/00

1. Total number of teachers employed in the school system: 6,349
   Total number of teachers leaving 7/1/99 - 6/30/00: 1,234 Turnover percentage: 19.44%
   Number leaving in 1999-2000 who were tenured in your school system: 302

2. Give the number of teachers who left teaching, or left your school system in 1998-99 for each of the reasons below. (Where more than one reason applies, choose the one which best describes the reason the teacher is leaving.)

Count	Reason
104	Retired with full benefits
**	Retired with reduced benefits
9	Dismissed
25	Resigned - in lieu of dismissal
31	Did not obtain or maintain license
24	Interim contract ended* - Not rehired
8	Non-Renewed - Probationary contract ended
N/A	Reduction in Force
36	Moved to a non-teaching position in education
**	Resigned - To teach in another NC system
**	Resigned - To teach in another state
103	Resigned - Dissatisfied with teaching/career change
98	Resigned - Family responsibility/child care
233	Resigned - Family relocation
36	Resigned - To continue education/take a sabbatical
33	Resigned - Because of health/disability
234	Resigned - Reason unknown
36	Resigned - Better Pay
216	Resigned -To accept other employment
4	Job Abandonment
4	Deceased

3. Please list the strategies your school system is currently using to reduce teacher turnover.
   a. New Teacher Support Program
   b. Teacher Pay Increase
      - Implemented teacher salary schedule with equivalent state and local ratings
   c. Implemented Lunch Room Assistants at elementary schools to provide duty free lunch
   d. Community business provide various perks
   e. "Working Conditions" Program at EquityPlus II Schools
      -Reduced class size
      -Free or reduced cost for content area Master's degree
      -Increased supply funds

NOTE: In compliance with G.S. 115C-12(22), the information on teacher turnover will be compiled in a report to the State Board of Education

* Report only for interim contracts of 6 or more months.
** Separation reasons not tracked.

Source: CMS

Community support

Introduction:

Nothing ranks as high as education in polls and conversation here, and community involvement was deemed essential to quality education by participants in CMEF's community engagement discussions.

Data:

The 2000 Community Assessment by CMEF asked registered voters to give a grade to CMS schools, with respondents also classified by whether they had children in school. Voters overall – and CMS parents – gave CMS a C. CMS parents did give their oldest child's schools a higher grade of C+, with 62% giving either an A or a B.

Nationally, public school parents rated their community's schools somewhat higher than did CMS parents. But nationally, as in CMS, public school parents gave an even higher grade to their oldest child's school.

Comments:

Trust is not primarily a data issue. But people who have long watched the schools here worry about signs that even people who support education do not support the school board. School bonds, delayed from 1999, passed with 71% of the vote last fall. But even people close to the schools worry that some people with children are being scared off by confusion and uncertainty about pupil assignment. Division into two systems along have/have-not lines or white/black lines may be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The school board ranked higher than the county commissioners on the Community Assessment, but the poll also showed a significant reservoir of deep distrust. The school board earned the confidence of just 27% of the respondents. CMS schools only rated C among registered voters – whether the respondents had children in CMS or not. The point is not that all this is normal, or that parents think more highly of their own child's school, but that the public perception here of CMS is so negative. Perception matters, especially since 70% of registered voters do **NOT** have children in school.

Some 90 percent of elementary parents said on the CMS family survey that they attended at least one school conference. But while an estimated 70% of elementary parents returned the survey, we calculated that only about 31% of high school parents bothered to turn in the form and a majority of those said they had not attended a single conference by the time of the survey in December 1999. Part of the new CMS "intensive care" model this school year for students doing poorly is a requirement that elementary school teachers meet with parents of low-performing students. It is important to track such parent involvement – as Georgia does, for example – not merely ask about it on surveys.

Another issue is safety. A "safe and orderly environment" – with 85% of students to agree on several survey items – is one of the superintendent's goals. CMS surveys show that schools here are generally regarded as safe by teachers, though there is cause for worry in the perceptions of older students – particularly in middle schools. The survey ratings for orderliness run lower.

Individual school is safe: (CMS surveys, 1999-2000; wording varies)

	Pre-K	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Students *(I feel safe at my school)*		81%	60%	70%
Teachers *(I feel safe working at this school)*	90%	93%	86%	88%
Parents *(My child is safe at this school)*	95%	90%	80%	79%

Individual school is orderly (CMS surveys, 1999-2000; wording varies)

	Pre-K	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Students *(Students are well-behaved at my school)*		56%	39%	55%
Teachers *(Students behave in an orderly manner in open areas (hall, cafeteria, etc.))*	87%	76%	59%	60%
Parents *(Students are well-behaved at this school)*	96%	82%	63%	58%

Note: The CMS Family Survey was sent in December of 1999 to parents of all students in grades Pre-K through 12. Responses were received from 57,818 parents, a response rate of 57.3%. The return rate by level, while not reported by CMS, was approximated by dividing the number of responses at each level by the September enrollment at that level.

The 1999-2000 Teacher Survey/Teacher Survey was administered by CMS in the spring of 2000. Surveys were sent to all 9,531 teachers/teacher assistants working in schools, but the source report dealt only with responses from teachers. Of the 6,593 surveys distributed to teachers, 4,679 were completed and returned (a response rate of 70.9%).

The CMS Student Survey was sent in December 1999 to students in grades 5, 7 and 11. A total of 21,440 surveys were distributed, with 18,923 (88.3%) returned.

Community Grading of CMS

Grade	Local Voters on CMS	All Parents on CMS	CMS Parents on CMS	CMS Parents on Child's School
A	3%	2%	3%	23%
B	27%	25%	29%	39%
C	47%	49%	48%	30%
D	15%	17%	15%	4%
F	4%	6%	5%	3%
DK/Refused	4%	0%	0%	1%
GPA	2.10	2.00	2.10	2.76

Source: CMEF Community Assessment, 2000

Phi Delta Kappa National Poll

Public school parents

Grade	Community's schools	Child's school
A	14%	26%
B	42%	44%
C	33%	21%
D	6%	5%
F	3%	2%
DK/Refused	2%	2%
GPA	2.6	2.9

Source: Phi Delta Kappa

Budget and business

Introduction:

One of the long-running disputes here is over the school system's management of business affairs and buildings. This has become the superintendent's "4th goal"; the major upgrade of business computers is one example. Another dispute is over the county commission's funding of the school system's request for local dollars. This past year, commissioners gave the schools a 10% increase in local funds, but it was less than half of the requested increase.

Data:

1. CMS, the state's largest system, ranked 31st in total per pupil expenditures among the state's 117 schools systems in 1998-99 and 10th in the per pupil capital spending averaged over past five years.
2. Mecklenburg ranked 88th in state spending per pupil for 1998-99 and 5th in local spending. Note that the state often funds positions – giving a local system so many teachers, for example, instead of so many dollars.
3. Mecklenburg ranked first in per capita income among N.C. counties in 1998.

Comments:

School funding would seem to lend itself to numerical analysis, and people on all sides of the issue have crunched a lot of numbers. But it is not primarily an argument about numbers. The issue is whether this wealthy, pro-education community will let its school system fail. It is like would-be rescuers arguing over the average depth of the lake while a struggling swimmer drowns.

Several points:

- The anger over 2000's incomplete funding of the CMS local operating request will not be assuaged by explanations of how much the county has given schools. The budget as finally adopted required serious cuts in the superintendent's plan; the promising Bright Beginnings program for at-risk 4-year-olds still reaches only half the eligible children. The October 2000 ruling by a state court that the state should pay for pre-kindergarten schooling for at-risk 4-year-olds may offer a long-term solution. But seeking state aid must not become an excuse for not doing essential things if they take local dollars.
- Mecklenburg County government does go far beyond what is required by law in providing local support for schools. A May 17, 2000 memorandum from then-County Manager Jerry Fox estimated that the county provides more than three times the required $73 million for schools. That doesn't settle the argument over how much Mecklenburg *can* provide, and should provide. Indeed, providing more than the minimum was the rationale for city school systems.
- CMS, while stringently accountable under the law, does not supply county commissioners with all the information that they want. Indeed, it cannot supply its own school board and superintendent with all the information they

want and need. This is why the school system is in the midst of updating its ancient computer systems and the budgeting built on them.

- There is an inevitable tension within the school system itself. If cutting is necessary, the argument goes, educators will always favor children over roofs. But the day will come when the roofs will leak on the children. This internal tension between education and maintenance – between children and buildings – is cited by proponents of giving things like school maintenance to the county or a separate agency. Either way, it still takes money to build, maintain and operate schools.
- North Carolina has a highly state-centralized educational system. The exact percentages vary slightly from year to year, of course, but generally a bit over 60% of the money to run CMS schools comes from the state, as do the Standard Course of Study, the required tests for end of grade and end of course and the ABC accountability and bonus system. The county's share is a bit over 30%. The federal share is around 5%.
- What was originally known as the Leandro lawsuit has the potential to radically change the North Carolina's system of funding schools. Filed by five low-wealth counties and joined by six urban ones including CMS, it was originally thought of as a lawsuit over funding. Now it is clearly a lawsuit over educational results as well.
- The old rule that the state pays for school operations and the county pays for school buildings is in tatters, which is why a state study committee was appointed. N.C. counties, for example, spent almost $1.5 billion for school operations in 1999-2000. The state, for its part, had a successful $1.8 billion bond vote in 1996 for local schools, including $120 million for Mecklenburg.

The figures can be sliced a lot of ways, but what this community needs is a way to harness its wealth in a unified attack on its manifest educational problems. Begin with a review of how local dollars are spent. For example:

- What spending is required by the state, and has it been increasing or decreasing?
- What does Mecklenburg spend because state-paid wages are not adequate in Charlotte, whether for teachers or painters?
- What do we spend to deal with urban problems, or to provide urban amenities?
- What do we want to try now, without waiting on Raleigh?
- What should we be working to shift to state shoulders, and thus provide for all of North Carolina's children? If the local Bright Beginnings pre-kindergarten program is not expanded statewide, for example, then Mecklenburg will also suffer when at-risk school-age children without the benefits of that early education move here from other N.C. counties.
- How could changes in state formulas or appropriations help? A study by the Public School Forum of North Carolina estimated, for example, that a state increase of 10% in per pupil spending targeted to low-income students could mean $25 million more a year for Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The 2001

legislative package from CMS includes requests for a number of changes in state funding formulas.

- Are state and federal dollars keeping pace with the increasing size and changing face of local schools?
- What is the long-term picture?

Primitive technology – outdated CMS business computers and systems – is one impediment to better ways of dealing with the budget. Habit, turf and suspicion are others. There have been joint meetings with school board members and county commissioners. There are several citizen task forces.

There is hope in the updated business technology coming to CMS, and the completion of the revamped school budget process from PricewaterhouseCoopers.

But the schools don't belong just to the educators. We all have a stake. For now, the reality remains that this soaring community is not providing the education it wants for its children. Must that be Charlotte-Mecklenburg's future?

Profiles of 25 Largest N.C. School Systems

"Rank" shows position among all 117 N.C. school systems for 1998-99

System	Average Daily Membership	Rank ADM	Total Per Pupil Expenditure	Rank Per Pupil Expenditure	Per Pupil Cap Outlay 5 r Avg	Rank Cap Outlay 5 Yr Avg
Mecklenburg County	97,231	1	$6,456	31	$1,115	10
Wake County	91,121	2	$5,878	70	$1,419	6
Guilford County	60,322	3	$6,251	44	$502	63
Cumberland County	50,335	4	$5,359	106	$521	58
Forsyth County	42,105	5	$6,332	38	$662	41
Gaston County	29,524	6	$5,530	94	$590	45
Durham County	28,494	7	$6,833	15	$404	72
Buncombe County	24,543	8	$5,779	77	$577	47
Robeson County	23,394	9	$5,485	97	$179	110
New Hanover	21,101	10	$6,243	46	$732	33
Onslow County	20,866	11	$5,251	112	$789	27
Union County	20,504	12	$5,341	108	$330	87
Rowan-Salisbury	19,643	13	$5,517	95	$752	31
Pitt County	19,531	14	$5,675	86	$286	101
Alamance-Burlington	19,364	15	$5,382	103	$485	64
Johnston County	19,150	16	$5,463	99	$1,046	12
Wayne County	18,896	17	$5,439	102	$367	80
Davidson County	18,332	18	$5,195	113	$408	70
Cabarrus County	17,790	19	$5,121	117	$219	106
Nash-Rocky Mount	17,442	20	$5,830	74	$569	48
Randolph County	16,141	21	$5,187	114	$698	39
Iredell-Statesville	15,986	22	$5,543	93	$660	42
Harnett County	15,350	23	$5,324	111	$865	20
Catawba County	15,303	24	$5,334	110	$783	28
Craven County	14,541	25	$5,694	84	$528	55
North Carolina	1,221,746		$5,899		$658	

Source: NCDPI

Expenditures of 25 Largest N.C. School Systems

"Rank" shows position among all N.C. school systems for 1998-99

		State		Federal		Local		Total	
ADM	System	PPE	Rank	PPE	Rank	PPE	Rank	PPE	Rank
1	Mecklenburg County	$3,879	111	$386	88	$2,191	5	$6,456	31
2	Wake County	$3,895	109	$259	114	$1,724	13	$5,878	70
3	Guilford County	$3,984	100	$396	84	$1,871	10	$6,251	44
4	Cumberland County	$3,834	113	$511	49	$1,014	74	$5,359	106
5	Forsyth County	$4,084	84	$373	92	$1,875	9	$6,332	38
6	Gaston County	$3,987	99	$381	90	$1,161	53	$5,530	94
7	Durham County	$4,051	89	$427	74	$2,355	4	$6,833	15
8	Buncombe County	$4,024	92	$339	103	$1,416	25	$5,779	77
9	Robeson County	$4,188	63	$757	16	$540	115	$5,485	97
10	New Hanover	$4,003	95	$392	85	$1,848	11	$6,243	46
11	Onslow County	$3,879	110	$482	58	$890	92	$5,251	112
12	Union County	$3,846	112	$298	108	$1,196	46	$5,341	108
13	Rowan-Salisbury	$3,957	104	$405	79	$1,156	54	$5,517	95
14	Pitt County	$4,088	81	$492	54	$1,095	63	$5,675	86
15	Alamance-Burlington	$3,783	114	$373	93	$1,227	44	$5,382	103
16	Johnston County	$3,916	107	$352	100	$1,195	47	$5,463	99
17	Wayne County	$4,084	83	$565	43	$789	103	$5,439	102
18	Davidson County	$3,946	105	$260	113	$989	78	$5,195	113
19	Cabarrus County	$3,729	116	$252	117	$1,140	56	$5,121	117
20	Nash-Rocky Mount	$4,093	80	$504	52	$1,233	42	$5,830	74
21	Randolph County	$3,962	103	$301	107	$925	86	$5,187	114
22	Iredell-Statesville	$3,899	108	$332	104	$1,311	33	$5,543	93
23	Harnett County	$4,075	86	$466	64	$782	104	$5,324	111
24	Catawba County	$3,761	115	$280	110	$1,292	34	$5,334	110
25	Craven County	$4,063	87	$602	40	$1,029	73	$5,694	84
	State Total	**$4,087**		**$446**		**$1,367**		**$5,899**	

Source: NCDPI

Per Capita Personal Income, 1998

County	Income	Rank
Alamance	$24,836	16
Alexander	$21,298	44
Alleghany	$23,687	21
Anson	$20,496	59
Ashe	$20,161	62
Avery	$22,328	32
Beaufort	$20,340	60
Bertie	$18,497	83
Bladen	$19,908	64
Brunswick	$19,731	67
Buncombe	$25,998	15
Burke	$20,644	57
Cabarrus	$26,480	12
Caldwell	$22,060	36
Camden	$19,679	69
Carteret	$23,442	24
Caswell	$18,463	84
Catawba	$27,157	11
Chatham	$27,489	10
Cherokee	$17,469	94
Chowan	$21,238	47
Clay	$18,861	78
Cleveland	$21,126	49
Columbus	$20,046	63
Craven	$23,527	23
Cumberland	$24,104	19
Currituck	$22,162	34
Dare	$23,096	28
Davidson	$23,034	29
Davie	$27,937	9
Duplin	$20,574	58
Durham	$28,492	7
Edgecombe	$19,349	73
Forsyth	$31,304	3
Franklin	$20,932	53
Gaston	$23,210	27
Gates	$17,775	91
Graham	$16,877	96

County	Income	Rank
Granville	$21,007	50
Greene	$18,001	90
Guilford	$29,229	4
Halifax	$18,357	87
Harnett	$19,129	75
Haywood	$21,494	42
Henderson	$26,115	14
Hertford	$17,626	92
Hoke	$13,582	100
Hyde	$18,157	89
Iredell	$24,382	18
Jackson	$20,777	55
Johnston	$23,288	26
Jones	$19,160	74
Lee	$24,563	17
Lenoir	$21,287	45
Lincoln	$21,422	43
Macon	$19,522	71
Madison	$21,191	48
Martin	$18,599	81
McDowell	$18,657	80
Mecklenburg	**$35,245**	**1**
Mitchell	$19,449	72
Montgomery	$19,789	66
Moore	$28,493	6
Nash	$23,572	22
New Hanover	$26,346	13
Northampton	$18,452	85
Onslow	$22,109	35
Orange	$28,256	8
Pamlico	$21,256	46
Pasquotank	$19,581	70
Pender	$18,535	82
Perquimans	$17,609	93
Person	$20,990	52
Pitt	$22,772	30
Polk	$28,614	5
Randolph	$22,622	31
Richmond	$18,845	79
Robeson	$17,179	95

County	Income	Rank
Rockingham	$20,866	54
Rowan	$21,594	41
Rutherford	$20,183	61
Sampson	$19,880	65
Scotland	$19,026	76
Stanly	$21,689	40
Stokes	$20,714	56
Surry	$21,939	38
Swain	$16,156	97
Transylvania	$23,378	25
Tyrrell	$15,475	99
Union	$22,277	33
Vance	$19,008	77
Wake	$33,780	2
Warren	$15,874	98
Washington	$18,366	86
Watauga	$20,996	51
Wayne	$19,710	68
Wilkes	$22,014	37
Wilson	$23,823	20
Yadkin	$21,860	39
Yancey	$18,308	88

Source: NCDPI Statistical Profile 2000

Miscellaneous

Student Absences

Students who attend school do better – much better – than students who are absent. That's not surprising. Unfortunately, many students are absent a lot. More than 20% of students were absent 18 days or more at some high schools in 1988-99, for example; for African American students, almost 24% system wide were absent from high school 18 or more days. Or take some figures reported in the 1999 CMS District Profile for absences and scores on the grade 3 reading End of Grade exam:

	% in Absence Category	**% on Grade level**
10 or more days	23%	65%
9 or fewer days	66%	74%
0 days	11%	79%

Different categories are covered, but the same picture is visible for the 2000 End of Grade reading exam in grades 3-8:

	% in Absence Category	**% on Grade level**
22 or more days	5%	42%
15 to 21 or more days	6%	58%
8 to 14 days	20%	68%
0 to 7 days	68%	75%

Correlation is not the same thing as cause. Absences might cause low scores, or the academic failure that leads to low scores might cause the absences. But clearly they go together. A more-definitive study would be useful. Meanwhile, CMS is right to target absences as an early indicator of student failure.

Vocational and End of Course tests

Some students pop out of the statistics at the top, some at the bottom. But there is large and varied group in between, what might be called students in the middle. Two useful steps are being taken to pay more attention to them in test results:

1. The state is taking the first steps toward expanding analysis and reporting of the tests given in vocational courses and including them in the ABC reports. But there is not yet a focus on measuring what students have learned from their vocational courses.
2. By a state rule approved this year, the five core End of Course tests must count at least 25% of the final grade; other EOC tests must count *something*, but the state did not say how much. In CMS, all EOC tests will count 25% of the grade. The tests are a powerful outside check on the

teaching done in key courses taken by all students, much like AP and IB tests are for higher-level students.

The new rules against social promotion:

Based on the tests given last school year, CMS estimates that some 2,360 of this year's 5th graders could be retained when the state's new no-social-promotion rules start with their grade this spring. To put it another way, retention in grade five could swell elementary enrollment by the equivalent of roughly three new 800-seat schools here.

(For additional information on the new North Carolina Student Accountability Standards, as the no-social-promotion rules are called, see the CMEF white paper, *The New North Carolina Student Availability Standards*, available from CMEF or from the website www.cmef.org).

Afterword: The glass half full

Charlotte-Mecklenburg's public school system gets national attention for academic success and innovation. The system has often been a pioneer in the state. In poll after poll, Mecklenburg residents say that nothing matters more than education, and they have enormous wealth to apply. There are many reasons for celebration now and optimism about the future. When it comes to public schools, this could be a Super Bowl community.

Yet as Charlotte grows, there is fear that the school system will follow a predictable pattern and descend into the too-familiar urban mediocrity. That would have an incalculable and negative effect on the face of the city and the future of the county.

The perception of CMS affects where people send their children to school. It affects whether families choose to live in Union, Cabarrus, Iredell or other regional counties. All these choices affect the make-up and priorities of the local electorate. If people with children flee to other counties or send their children to private schools, that will be reflected in bond votes and other electoral choices.

Successful schools – schools eagerly sought out for their educational excellence – are not easy to produce. Ever alert for educational failure, citizens must also be willing to celebrate success here, no matter how gloomy the national drumbeat. Quick to trumpet success, educators must be equally willing to spotlight and attack failure. While ***local*** funding and ***local*** rules are critical, ***state*** funding and ***state*** rules are also critical.

Some of what we all expect of our schools is unfair. Children, after all, do not approach kindergarten, or pre-kindergarten, on an equal footing. They spend a small minority of their time actually in school, and family problems can undermine all that a teacher tries to accomplish. Society is asking educators to solve some problems that it hasn't.

High expectations shouldn't be applied only to students and schools. Parents and the rest of us ought to meet high expectations as well. But schools are the best hope for ensuring that all children have the opportunity to bloom and that no child who is capable reaches adulthood without at least the minimum skills to succeed in this society. Realistically, no goal can be 100%, but there is a significant way to go before the limits are reached.

Some will look at Charlotte-Mecklenburg's public schools and talk mostly about the successes: The National Merit Scholars, the award winners, the thousands of CMS students who have done well in higher education and life, the children who are able to succeed despite everything stacked against them, the progress made toward some 2001 goals. There are wonderful stories to be told.

Some will talk mostly about failures: The students below grade level, the schools that have low achievement levels because they have a lot of low-performing students, the too-high dropout rate, the high turnover of overworked teachers, the evidence that a system or school somewhere else is doing better, the inertia and unresponsiveness feared or seen in a huge and complex enterprise, the distance remaining on many goals.

Some will defend the schools publicly while working quietly to make them better.

In truth, the superintendent and those working under him are acutely aware of the problems and shortcomings. But those educators live in a world that is schizophrenic. On the one hand, they must celebrate success if they are to attract students and teachers. On

the other, they must be candid about problems if they are to identify and solve them. Reports from groups such as the Education Foundation and the Student Assignment Oversight Committee are important.

In many ways, Charlotte-Mecklenburg's schools have never been better, and this county has the wherewithal to make them better yet. But the ultimate story will be told by a few things:

- Will schools finally succeed in educating the students at the bottom? There is more to education than standardized tests, but this system cannot succeed without raising scores *and* lowering dropouts.
- Will CMS find a way to do what schools have been preaching for years and reach that broad middle group of students with education that is effective, compelling and interesting?
- Will public schools here remain attractive to students, to taxpayers, to potential teachers and other employees – many of whom have other choices? Demographic trends and judicial rulings are beyond the control of educators. Public schools are responsible for whoever shows up. But their job will be harder, and their resources reduced, if they cannot compete.
- Will all members of the wider system – the schools, the county commissioners, the public – stop expending so much energy on fixing fault and concentrate on changing the things that need to be changed?

Appendix 1:

CMS Successes

End-of-Grade Test Scores

- Since 1995-96, as measured by the N.C. End-of-Grade reading test, there has been an **11 percentage point** increase in the number of third grade students scoring at or above Level III. The number of African American students scoring at or above Level III has increased **18** percentage points (46%). The gap between white students and African American students has been reduced by **9** percentage points.
- Since 1995-96, there has been an increase of **9.6** percentage points (48%) in the number of African American students completing geometry prior to the 11th grade.

Academic Achievement Reaching New Heights

International Baccalaureate – *The most challenging curriculum offered in the U.S. At a minimum, IB students are required to take college-level English, math and foreign language courses before completing the program. Some CMS IB graduates enter college as sophomores.*

- **216** CMS graduates from the Class of 2000 took International Baccalaureate exams, which is a 19% increase over last year. **149** students (69%) earned the IB diploma, up from 127 students last year. This is a 17% increase over last year.

Advanced Placement – *College freshman-level courses, administered by the College Board, are recognized by most colleges and universities in the United States. Students are able to earn college credit while still in high school.*

- For the 1999- 2000 school year, CMS was selected as one of six school systems in the nation to award the first AP diplomas. **Seventy** CMS graduates received the AP diploma.
- **44%** of 2000 CMS graduates completed at least one AP or IB course, up from 41.7% in 1999 and 31% in 1996.
- The gains cut across race and income levels with **26%** of African American students in the class of 2000 enrolled in at least one AP or IB course, up from just 14% in 1996 and 21% in 1999.
- Since 1991-92, there has been an increase of **155%** in AP enrollment, from **1,317** students to **3,359** students. There also has been an increase in the enrollment of African American students, from **77** students in 1991-92 to **974** students last year.
- Since 1994-95, CMS has had an increase in the number of AP exams taken from 2,222 exams to 6,339.

National Merit and Achievement Scholarships

- This year, CMS has 44 seniors chosen as National Merit Semifinalists, 27 from Myers Park High School. This program honors the nation's brightest students who meet rigorous standards. Myers Park High alone had more semifinalists than all of the private and parochial schools in the Charlotte region combined.

Source: From CMS sheet listing accomplishments

Appendix 2:

Superintendent's remarks

On December 7, 2000 a reception was held to honor CMS Superintendent Eric Smith for his selection as Outstanding Urban Educator of the Year by the Council of Great City Schools, which gave him the Richard R. Green Award. The local reception was not an occasion to talk about problems, as Dr. Smith noted afterwards. Instead, he talked about what CMS has done and what it has achieved. Here are the remarks prepared for that speech:

When I arrived in Charlotte more than four years ago, I had the unique opportunity to talk with numerous parents and business leaders about the pulse of this community. We talked about the community's vision for our public schools and where you wanted to see our schools go in the next five years and beyond.

Unanimously, I heard that this community wanted to prove that urban education can be successful for **ALL** children.

One of my earlier speeches to this community was about my findings in Charlotte – the speech was entitled *"The Tale of Two Cities – One of Hope and Prosperity and One of Inequity and Disappointment."*

As I visited schools, and talked with parents, business and community leaders, I repeatedly heard that this is a **"can do"** community. One that comes together for the good of the community, especially for children, and makes things happen.

Four years ago, our schools and community joined together to attack the issue of inequity aggressively, and today we're making progress because of those efforts.

This community and school system have spent the past four years making an **uneven** playing field **even.** The results of this work are dramatic and indisputable. I believe that's why the Council of the Great City Schools selected this community and school system for the Richard R. Green Award.

I want to emphasize that this award was not presented to me personally, but to the 15,000 educators, 105,000 students and their families - and the total Charlotte-Mecklenburg community for **your** belief that **ALL** children can succeed. **This is an award that we should all accept and take pride in.**

I believe that everyone in this room tonight has in one way or another impacted the life of a child. Because of your advocacy and hard work, we are making great progress. We all agree that children can and must succeed at a high level in today's competitive world regardless of race, economic status, gender or exceptional conditions.

I want to take a few minutes to talk about some of the initiatives and projects that I believe have had a tremendous impact on student success in CMS. Many of these efforts would not have been possible without the support of the community and our families.

- **The Bright Beginnings Program**, which was implemented in 1996, has had a tremendous impact on more than 8,000 pre-kindergarten students over the past four years. The program was designed to give children an equal grounding before they enter kindergarten. The program, which is based on research, best practices, and strong family involvement, prepares children to enter their first, most formative years of education ready and eager to learn.

- We have placed a strong focus on academic rigor and access to more challenging classes. The **AVID program (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program** is offered in every middle and high school to prepare students who are underrepresented in post-secondary education.

- In our **Equity Plus** schools, we have provided additional resources and offered incentives and bonuses to attract professionals within these schools. Among those incentives:
  - A one-time **$500 signing bonus** to all new teachers in critical subject areas (math, science, technology, foreign language, and special education),
  - **Master Teacher** incentive which offers a $2,500 bonus to teachers who hold a master's degree and meet certain criteria set by CMS, and a $1,500 bonus to teachers who meet certain criteria and are enrolled in a graduate level program,
  - And assistance with masters degree programs through Winthrop and UNCC.

- The **Equity Plus program** has also provided additional resources and materials to schools that are making a difference for students.

- A focus has been placed on **differentiated staffing** to provide more individualized instruction for our students. Schools that have the highest number of low performing students have provided smaller class sizes. That means more one-on-one time with the teacher –
  - In grades K-3, we are staffing at a 1:16 ratio,
  - In grades 4-6, we staff at a 1:19 ratio,
  - and at the high school level, we will add as many as 4 to 6 additional teachers. And these efforts are making a difference!

- We also have a large number of teachers who have completed National Board certification or are seeking this distinguished honor. Last year, 99 teachers achieved this distinction – and in CMS, we have a total of 138 National Board Certified teachers. CMS is first in the state and second in the nation for having the most number of National Board Certified teachers. [Since then, the

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has announced that 107 additional CMS teachers have earned National Board certification.]

- In order for teachers to be able to teach, they have to have the necessary resources, equipment, supplies and materials. **A baseline standard has been set for every classroom so that teachers can teach to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.** These standards have been set for teaching materials, media center materials, technology and other areas.

- While we know that teachers and curriculum are the foundation for successful learning, students also have to have adequate facilities. This community has been extremely responsive to our need for school facilities that will provide the best learning environment for students.

Some facts about facilities and the aggressive work we've done to address the needs of inadequate facilities:

1. **The 1996 and 1997 bond dollars,** totaling more than **$534 million,** have provided renovations for **69 schools** in this system. With the **1997 bond money, 46 schools** have been or are in the process of being renovated currently, and **10 new schools** are being built.

2. **Over the past four years,** bond dollars and the certificate of participation program (COPS) **will allow for 74 schools in CMS to be renovated and 8 schools to be replaced.**

3. These schools are located throughout Mecklenburg County and an aggressive effort has been placed on getting older facilities up to our building standards.

   Throughout CMS, we have found that many of our students who are struggling in school attend inferior facilities. Our goal through the support of the community and the recent bond programs is to address these needs so that all students have the same opportunities and the same facilities.

But all of this only speaks about the programs and the statistics. Now, I want to make these efforts more personal. In the video you saw this evening, you heard from individuals who have been impacted by these programs and initiatives:

You heard from Audrey White, a parent with a child in the Bright Beginnings program. Thanks to Bright Beginnings, her child, like more than 2,000 other children in CMS this year, is getting a great start for kindergarten.

You heard from Tim Staton, a student at South Mecklenburg High School, who is making great strides in school thanks to the AVID program.

You heard Carl Flamer, principal at First Ward Elementary, share his success story. Three years ago, 39% of his students were on grade level. Last year, his school was honored as a School of Distinction by the state with 81% of his students on grade level. First Ward Elementary is an Equity Plus school receiving differentiated staffing, additional resources and incentives for teachers.

You also heard from Maria Petrea, principal at Collinswood Dual Language Academy, which has gone from being a low performing school to having 100% of their fifth grade students on grade level in reading last year. What a success story!

Across the board, our schools are making great gains. In **grade 3 reading,** CMS has **increased performance by 11 percentage points in the last four years** as compared to the **state's 9 percentage point increase**.

African American students in CMS have **shown an 18 percentage point increase versus the state's increase of 15 points. In 1988, 32% of our African American students were on grade level** and the same was true eight years later in **1996. Last year, 46% of our African American students were performing on grade level.**

In grade 5 reading, the results are even more dramatic, with an **overall gain of 16 points versus the state's increase of 12 points**. For **African American students, CMS boasts a 24 percentage point gain** since 1996 versus the **state increase of 18 points. White scores** have increased **13 percentage points to 89%** at or above grade level versus the state increase of 11 percentage points.

At the high school level, 44% of our CMS graduates have completed at least one AP or IB course, up from **31%** in 1996. **For African American students, CMS has increased from 11% participation in these courses in 1996 to 26% last year. In 1991-92, only 77 African American students took an AP course. In 1999-2000, nearly 1,000 African American students took at least one AP course.**

In the video, you also heard from Sheryn Northey, a teacher at Northwest School of the Arts, who recently received **National Board certification** and was selected as one of 65 teachers in the country to participate in an accomplished teaching workshop.

These are just a few of the faces that represent the great things going on in our school system and the outstanding progress that we're making.

These gains are a result of the commitment and focus of this system and this community.

I continue to be reminded that what makes this community great is parents and community members who reach out for the good of all of our children. It's not enough for us to just care about our own child...but we must also care for our brother's child...for the neighbor down the street, and the child who sits next to our child in school...and school on the other side of the county. CMS is made up of 105,000 students

and families who deserve the best!

To ensure that success, we must continue as a community to come together. We have a special bond that must remain intact for all of our students. That bond is very unique to CMS and one that I treasure as a superintendent.

I want to express my appreciation to every staff member, parent, student, community and business leader here tonight. I am proud to serve each and every one of you.

Appendix 3:

Glossary:

A+ program	An intensive CMS program to lift achievement.
ABCs	Annual measurement of individual schools by N.C. Department of Public Instruction. Teachers and other certified staff receive either $1,500 or $750, depending on the goals met. Teachers assistants get either $500 or $375.
ABC Pilot	Experimental program will pay additional bonuses when schools also meet the ABC goals for 10 racial, economic and achievement subgroups. CMS is participating, and using its Local Bonus Program to extend its effort beyond the state's pilot.
Advanced Placement (AP)	College level courses taught in high school. Students in AP courses take tests that are graded each summer by an external team trained by the College Board.
Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)	A national "untracking" program designed to help under-achieving students with high academic potential prepare for entrance to college and universities. In 1999-2000, it served 2,500 students in all CMS middle schools and high schools.
AP	Short for Advanced Placement
AVID	Acronym for Advancement Via Individual Determination program.
Board of County Commissioners	Governing body for Mecklenburg County. It has nine members: three elected at-large, six from districts, all serving two-year terms. It must approve all local bond issues and supplies the local portion (about one-third) of the CMS operating budget.
Board of Education	Governing body for CMS. Has nine members: three elected at large; six from districts. Members serve staggered four-year terms. At-large members were elected in 1999; their seats will be up in 2003. District seats, filled in 1997, will be on the ballot in 2001. Also known as the School Board. Does not have authority to levy taxes.
Bright Beginnings	A CMS pre-kindergarten program for educationally needy children. Because of limited funds for facilities and operations, it currently serves only about half the eligible children.

Charter schools	Schools chartered by the state and governed by their own boards, they receive public money and are thus public schools. They are free of many of the rules governing traditional public school systems. One of the issues before the N.C. General Assembly will be whether to raise the current legislative cap of 100 on the number of charter schools.
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation (CMEF)	An independent non-profit dedicated to quality public education in Mecklenburg County. It sponsors such things as the Community Assessment, the 2000 Education Summit and this report.
CMEF Community Assessment	An annual poll of some 1,200 registered voters in Mecklenburg County.
CMEF Preliminary Community Vision WorkBook	The 28-page booklet published by CMEF from 1999's community discussions of education and in preparation for the 2000 Education Summit.
CMS	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Created in 1960 from the merger of the city of Charlotte and county of Mecklenburg school systems, it is a countywide school system.
End of Course Tests (EOCs)	Tests developed by N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and given to students near the end of such standard middle school and high school courses as Algebra I, Algebra II, English I (ninth grade English) and U.S. History.
End of Grade Tests (EOGs)	Tests developed by N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in reading and mathematics and given to all students in grades three through eight. There is also a 10th grade test of reading and mathematics.
EOC	Abbreviation for End of Course tests
EOG	Abbreviation for End of Grade tests
Exemplary Growth/Gain	Goal set by the state for "exemplary" increases in academic achievement..
Expected Growth/Gain	Goal set by the state for the "expected" increase in academic achievement.
Gateways	Key grades in the state's Student Accountability Standards (no-social-promotion policy). The first Gateway, in grade 5, takes effect this school year.
Growth/Gain	See Exemplary Growth/Gain and Expected Growth/Gain
IB	Abbreviation for International Baccalaureate

Intensive Care Model	A detailed new program in CMS for ensuring that low-performing students get extra attention.
International Baccalaureate (IB)	A program with external assessments leading to an internationally recognized diploma.
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	A standardized test, which is given to a sample of N.C. students.
ITBS	Acronym for the Iowa Test of Basic Skills
National Merit Scholarships	Scholarships given through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation
National Merit Semifinalists	Each year, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation uses scores of the PSAT/NMSQ co-sponsored by the College Board to name Merit Semifinalists. It is used as a benchmark of school quality and the ability to attract top-performing students.
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	Mandated by Congress, NAEP assesses national student performance by tests given to national samples. More than 40 states, territories and the District of Columbia also have a sample of their students participate in NAEP so state-level measures can be reported.
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)	Established after the 1986 report from the Carnegie Foundation's Task Force on Teaching As A Profession called, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century.*
NBPTS	Abbreviation for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
NBPTS Certification	Certification of excellence granted to teachers by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. CMS announced in December of 2000 that it had 107 teachers certified in the latest round, second only to the Los Angeles Unified School District.
NCDPI	Abbreviation for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.	The state education agency, headed by an elected state superintendent who serves under the appointed State Board of Education. Abbreviated as NCDPI or just DPI.

No Recognition	A category under the N.C. ABCs program for schools that do not meet their goals for expected growth/gain but have more than half of their students performing on grade level.
No Social Promotion Policy (Student Accountability Standards)	North Carolina's new rules that, in effect, will require students in key "gateway" grades to pass the End of Grade tests in order to be promoted. The first gateway, in grade five, takes effect this school year. A white paper prepared by CMEF explains the standards in detail.
Public School Forum of North Carolina	A statewide nonprofit group based in Raleigh with a board composed of citizens, educators and legislators.
SAT I	The formal name of what is commonly called simply the SAT. It is a test given by the College Board/Educational Testing Service and taken by high school students applying to colleges. In about half the states (including North Carolina), the SAT I is the predominant test. In the other half of the states, the ACT Assessment is the main test. Because scores vary with participation rate, the SAT is not a good measure of a state's schools. In North Carolina, 64% of the most recent high school graduates had taken the SAT. The state's figure for CMS was 72%.
School Board	The same as Board of Education.
Schools of Distinction	Category of award under the state's ABC program given to schools that have at least 80% of their students on grade level. There is no requirement that the schools also meet their growth/gain targets.
Schools of Excellence	Category of award under the state's ABC program given to schools that have at least 90% of their students on grade level AND that meet their growth/gain targets.
State	North Carolina state government. Through the legislature and the NCDPI, it sets many of the rules for local schools and provides much of the funding.
Student Accountability Standards	The state's preferred term for the no-social-promotion policy.
Student Assignment Oversight Committee:	A local committee appointed by the CMS Board of Education to look at the proposed student assignment plan and monitor equitable distribution of resources from school to school. One of its recommendations last spring was for an Equity Report.

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