



cms
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

School Choice Programs

Current and
Future States

April, 2026

Endless Possibilities
START WITH CMS!



Endless possibilities start with



OUR MISSION

To create an innovative, inclusive, student-centered environment that supports the development of independent learners.

OUR VISION

To lead the community in educational excellence, inspiring intellectual curiosity, creativity, and achievement so that all students reach their full potential.

2024 – 2029 DISTRICT GOALS



Improve Early Literacy in Grades K – 2



Improve Literacy Skills in Grades 3 – 8



Strengthen Math Performance in Math 1



Post-Grad Readiness

CORE BELIEFS

Public education is essential to democracy and necessary for economic opportunity, mobility and the broader public good.

We are responsible for building and maintaining a high performing school district.

Each student is uniquely capable and deserves an engaging, relevant, and challenging educational experience.

Our principals and teachers make the critical difference in student achievement and building a positive school community.

The school system, families, and communities are necessary partners in ensuring the academic, social, emotional and behavioral success of students.



Equity over Equality:
Reducing Achievement Gaps



Safety & Security



Attending to the Whole Child:
Wellbeing & Engagement



Staffing:
High Quality Teachers

GUARDRAILS



Academic
Excellence



People
Excellence



Operational
Excellence



Engagement
Excellence

FOUR PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE

OUR COMMITMENT TO DELIVER **EXCELLENCE** WITHOUT EXCEPTION



School Choice Programs

Current and Future States



Visual and Performing Arts



STEM



World Languages and Dual
Language Immersion



Visual and Performing Arts





Visual and Performing Arts

Current State: Two Models

1

FLAGSHIP

Full Arts Magnet

County-wide schools with no attendance boundaries and are dedicated entirely to the arts:

K-5 University Park Creative Arts

6-8 First Ward Creative Arts

9-12 Northwest School of the Arts



PROGRAM CHOICE

Partial Arts Magnet

2

Neighborhood schools that house a smaller arts "program within a school."

Long Creek Elementary **K-5**

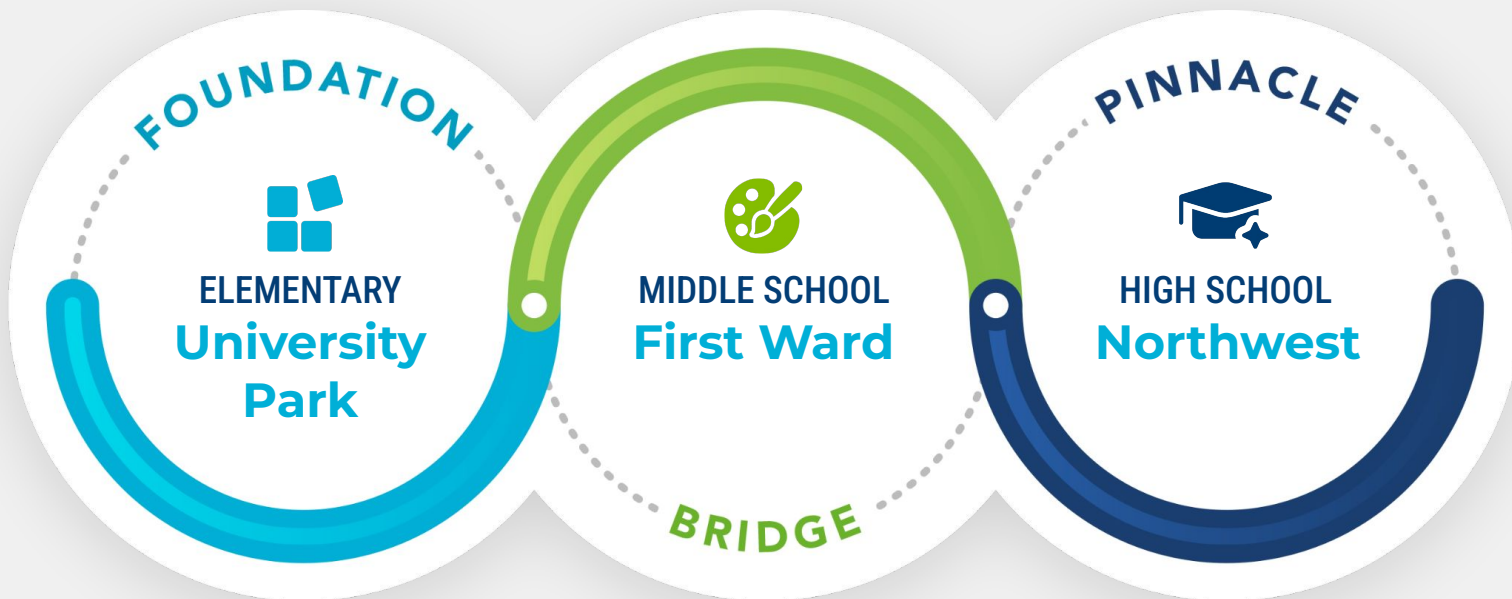
Greenway Park Elementary **K-5**

Crestdale Middle School **6-8**



Visual and Performing Arts

Future State: New K-12 Arts Continuum





Visual and Performing Arts

Future State: New K-12 Arts Continuum

A Cohesive Pathway



Students follow a cohesive standards-aligned continuum of learning, enabling them to build a strong, intentional creative portfolio over their 13-year journey.

Guaranteed Continuity



Enrolled students will have a seat available in the next program with an approved audition. Auditions are required at each transition, with placement decisions beginning in high school.

Expanded Access



CMS will provide transportation for all full magnet programs, expanding access for students and their families beyond geographic boundaries.

Sports Participation



Students may continue to participate in athletics at their home high school.



STEM

(Science, Technology,
Engineering, & Math)





STEM

Special Features



An integrated approach to learning that combines the North Carolina Standard Standards with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics concepts into a cohesive experience.



Strong problem-solving and computational thinking skills, developed through coding, logic, and breaking complex challenges into manageable steps.



A blend of creative and analytical processes, combining the artistic process and scientific method to foster exploration, critical thinking, and collaboration.



Preparation for the future, equipping students for post-secondary education and success in a 21st-century workforce.



STEM

Current State

Hands-on, pathway-based learning includes MakerSpace rotations, Digibridge programming, project-based learning, and dedicated STEM and Science Lab classes.

Identified staff receive training on how to develop integrated standards-based lessons and STEM concepts through local partnerships with UNC Charlotte STEM Leaders, The Dot, and Code.Org.

Students engage in **dynamic, real-world problem-solving**, applying concepts in meaningful and practical ways.

Students explore the **“how” and “why”** behind creative and technical processes, building deeper understanding of how ideas are developed and applied.





STEM

Future State

Elementary Personnel & Training



Teachers engage in **job-embedded learning** through collaboration, co-teaching, and site-based training to strengthen inquiry-based, real-world STEM instruction.



Teachers collaborate to design **integrated units** that connect STEM and North Carolina Standards with clear, intentional learning outcomes.



School leaders model **inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving** in daily interactions and decision-making.



Staff build **partnerships** with STEM organizations to expand access to real-world learning, mentorship, and extracurricular opportunities.



STEM

Future State

Elementary School Experience

Student Ownership



Students take ownership of learning through design challenges, experiments, and real-world STEM problem-solving.

Career Exploration



Students explore STEM careers through partnerships, guest speakers, and exposure to industry professionals.

Hands-On Learning



Students engage in hands-on, problem-based learning across disciplines, applying knowledge and skills in authentic, connected ways.

Collaboration



Structured partner and small-group problem-solving will be embedded in students' daily learning routines, building collaboration and critical thinking as core practices.



STEM

Future State

Elementary School Experience

Curriculum Integration



STEM concepts and practices will be integrated into all courses during daily instruction and extended through extracurricular experiences.

Competitions



Students compete at the local, state, national, and international levels through academic competitions designed to challenge, inspire, and grow their capabilities.

Family Engagement



Families will be invited to participate in themed events each quarter to deepen their understanding of STEM education and celebrate the work their students have created.

Tech Tools & Resources



Students use tools like robotics, coding, and 3D printing through immersive, technology-rich learning.



STEM

Future State

Middle School Personnel & Training



Teachers engage in **job-embedded learning** through collaboration, co-teaching, and site-based training to strengthen inquiry-based, real-world STEM instruction.



Teachers collaborate to design **integrated units** that connect STEM and non-STEM content with clear, intentional learning outcomes.



School leaders model **inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving** in daily interactions and decision-making.



Staff build **partnerships with STEM organizations** to expand access to authentic learning, mentors, and extracurricular opportunities.



Staff support **career exploration** by aligning student interests, strengths, and coursework with future career pathways.



STEM

Future State

Middle School Experience

Curriculum Integration



STEM concepts and practices are intentionally embedded across all courses and extended through extracurricular activities.

Student Ownership



Students take ownership of learning through student-led design experiences, investigations, experiments, and computational thinking challenges.

Hands-On Learning



Students engage in hands-on, problem-based learning across disciplines, applying knowledge and skills in authentic, connected ways.

Assessment



Students demonstrate learning through projects, portfolios, performance-based assessments, and traditional assessments.



STEM

Future State

Middle School Experience

Collaboration



Daily partner and small-group problem-solving builds collaboration, critical thinking, and teamwork.

Service Learning



Students participate in service-learning projects that apply STEM skills to real community needs.

Course Pathways



Students can take precursor courses to high school STEM classes, building depth and credentials in areas of interest.

Project Lead the Way



Students participate in Project Lead the Way courses, including computer programming, to build STEM and technical skills.



STEM

Future State

Middle School Experience

Competitions



Students have opportunities to compete in academic competitions at the district, state, national, and international levels.

Tech Tools



Students gain hands-on experience with tools like robotics, coding platforms, and 3D printing through immersive technology integration.

Career Awareness



Students build awareness of STEM careers through community partnerships and industry guest speakers.

Field Exposure



Eighth graders will participate in college and company field trips to explore post-secondary STEM pathways.



STEM

Future State

High School Personnel & Training



Teachers engage in **job-embedded learning** through collaboration, co-teaching, and site-based training to strengthen inquiry-based STEM instruction.



Staff receive **Naviance training** to support career exploration and help align student coursework to future pathways.



Teachers collaborate to design **integrated units** that connect STEM and non-STEM content with clear learning outcomes.



School leaders model **inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving** in daily interactions and decision-making.



Staff build **partnerships** with STEM organizations to expand access to authentic learning, mentors, and extracurricular opportunities.



STEM

Future State

High School Experience

Integrated STEM Learning



STEM concepts and practices are intentionally embedded across all courses and subject areas.

Student Ownership



Students take ownership of learning through student-led design experiences, investigations, experiments, and computational thinking challenges.

Academic Competitions



Students have opportunities to compete at the district, state, national, and international levels.

Collaboration & Problem-Solving



Daily partner and small-group work builds collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Service Learning



Students apply STEM knowledge through service-learning projects that address real community needs.



STEM

Future State

High School Experience



Community Partnerships & Industry Guest Speakers

Partner Programs

- Atrium Health's The Pearl
- UNC Charlotte's High School STEM Research Program
- UNC Charlotte STEM Career Fair
- Summer Ventures in Science and Math
- iamSTEAMCLT
- CPCC STEM Prep
- Apprenticeship 2000



STEM

Future State

High School Experience



Specialty Pathway Courses

- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering
- Automotive
- Biomedical Science
- Carpentry
- Game Art Design
- Graphic and Digital Design
- Software Development
- Sport and Event Marketing



STEM

Future State

High School Experience



Work-Based Learning Opportunities

- Aviation Institute of Maintenance
- Atrium Patch Program
- Apprenticeship 2000
- City of Charlotte Office of Youth Opportunities
- Education 2 Employment
- Mayor's Youth Employment Program
- MeckPathways
- NCWIT
- Novant Bridges to Healthcare Phase I
- Road to Hire
- iamSTEAMCLT
- ACE Mentor and Trades Day
- Rise to Success
- Code 2 College



World Languages and Dual Language Immersion





Dual Language Immersion

Benefits

Stronger Communication Skills



Students build confidence in expressing ideas and understanding others by learning and using another language in meaningful, real-world contexts.

Cultural Awareness & Global Perspective



Language learning fosters cultural understanding, empathy, and the ability to connect and collaborate across diverse communities.

Cognitive Growth & Future Readiness



Students develop cognitive flexibility, improved memory, and critical thinking skills that support success in an increasingly interconnected world.



World Languages

Current State: Dual Language Immersion (DLI)

Develop First Language



Learn Target Language

1

One-Way DLI

Students develop their English and acquire Chinese, French, German or Japanese



Two-Way DLI

2

Students develop their Spanish and acquire English along with students who develop their English and acquire Spanish

All students work toward **biliteracy** and **multiculturalism**



World Languages

Current State

What Does Dual Language Immersion Look Like?

One-Way Immersion

Two-Way Immersion

- Pathway can be implemented as a track **within an existing school**
- Pathway begins in **kindergarten**. Late entry after kindergarten may be possible through Magnet Office
- Class equally composed of **native and non-native** speakers of the target language
- Class mainly composed of students who are **not native speakers** of the target language
- Core subjects are **taught in the target language** by native / native-like teachers
- Pathway includes targeted daily **English instruction** in specific grade levels*



**Grade levels with English Instruction vary based on language program and model.*



Two-Way Dual Language Immersion

Current State

Two-Way Immersion



Mix of native English speakers and native speakers of the partner language (about 50/50)



Instruction is delivered in **both languages**.



Kindergarten is primarily taught in Spanish.



Spanish literacy, science, and math are taught in Spanish in **grades 1-8**.

Schools Offering Two-Way Spanish/English DLI

K-8

Charlotte East Language Academy
Full Magnet

K-8

Collinswood Language Academy
Full Magnet

K-8

Oaklawn Language Academy

K-5

Huntingtowne Farms IB
Select Classrooms

K-4

Winterfield Elementary
Select Classrooms



One-Way Dual Language Immersion

Current State

One-Way (Full) Immersion



Designed for
non-native speakers
of the target language.



Most instruction
occurs **in the**
target language.



English language arts
typically begins in
Grade 3 for alphabetic
languages.



For Chinese and
Japanese, English literacy
is **introduced earlier**
(K-2) because of different
writing systems.

Schools Offering One-Way Immersion

North Academy of World Languages (NAWL)



Chinese



French



German

South Academy of International Languages (SAIL)



Chinese



French



German



Japanese

*Both schools are **K-8 magnet programs**, but grades 6-8 focus on language continuation rather than teaching core content in the immersion language.*



World Language Choice Program

Current State

Grades 6–8

Students not in immersion programs can choose to enter the **World Language Choice Program** and begin high school-level language courses in **6th grade**.



Chinese



French



German



**Japanese - at
SAIL only**



**Spanish - at
SAIL only**

Courses are offered through **NAWL** and **SAIL**.



High School World Languages

Current State

Grades 9–12

High school programs offer **Dual Language Immersion** language continuation pathways and **World Language program choice** options.

North Mecklenburg High



Chinese



French



German



Spanish

South Mecklenburg High



Chinese



French



German



Japanese



Spanish

Students complete **7 theme-specific courses** across grades 9–12
(two courses in each grade except 11th)



World Languages

Future State: New Program at Garinger High School



Garinger High School



Serves as a continuation for **Two-Way Spanish DLI** students in the Green Zone



Expands Spanish world language offerings for grades 9–12



Will potentially add **additional languages** (TBD)