



Greetings, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Families!

Congratulations to our 2025-26 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools [Teacher of Year, Beginning Teacher of the Year and Teacher Assistant of the Year finalists!](#)

Teacher of the Year Finalists

- Tiara Davis, Harding University High School
- Jennifer Gallagher, Ardrey Kell High School
- Rebeckah Hauss, Metro School
- Brittany Watkins, Francis Bradley Middle School
- Dr. Seon Sloley, Southwest Middle School
- Holly Corbit, Billingsville-Costwold Elementary School
- Dr. Antoinette Brandon, Winterfield Elementary School
- Molly McKee, Irwin Academic Center
- Abbey Saal-Dosé, Highland Mill Montessori Elementary School
- Madeline Bowling, Winding Springs Elementary School
- Courtney Weathers, Dilworth Elementary School

Teacher Assistant of the Year Finalists

- Journey Warren-Henderson, Lansdowne Elementary School
- Derrick Graves, Highland Renaissance Academy
- Aquisia Broome, Charles H. Parker Academic Center
- Chania Sanders, Grand Oak Elementary School
- Ashley Wells, Hickory Grove Elementary School
- Clarice Surlles, Berryhill School
- Miranda Bowens, Ridge Road Middle School
- Jameka Forte', Ranson Middle School
- Samantha Tillman, Harding University High School
- Rhonda Watson, Providence High School
- DaShaun Connor, Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology
- Molly McKee, Irwin Academic Center

Beginning Teacher of the Year Finalists

- Breanne Beatty, Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School
- Reese Finnie, Bruns Avenue Elementary School
- Sofia Pertinez, Knights View Elementary School
- Emily Henderson, Huntersville Elementary School
- Lexy Yeager, Greenway Park Elementary School

- April McClendon, Eastway Middle School
- Gwyndolyn Daniels, Wilson STEM Academy
- D’Onna Webster, Thomasboro Academy
- Elena Sheward, Myers Park High School
- Victoria A. Walters, Rocky River High School
- Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jacob Kelly, Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology

We will celebrate these incredible educators at our [Gem Awards](#) on May 5.

We also are celebrating the 48 CMS schools that have been recognized by [Capturing Kids’ Hearts as National Showcase Schools and Rising Star Schools](#). Capturing Kids’ Hearts is a nationally recognized program that equips educators with strategies to build relationally connected and emotionally safe learning environments.

National Showcase Schools

- Albemarle Road Elementary School
- Ashley Park Pre K-8 School
- Briarwood Academy
- Charlotte East Language Academy
- Druid Hills Academy
- Elizabeth Lane Elementary School
- Elon Park Elementary School
- Harding University High School
- Highland Creek Elementary School
- Hopewell High School
- Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School
- Joseph W. Grier Academy
- Julius L. Chambers High School
- Kennedy Middle School
- Lake Wylie Elementary School
- Lebanon Road Elementary School
- Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School
- Metro School
- Mint Hill Elementary School
- Nations Ford Elementary
- Newell Elementary School
- Northwest School of the Arts
- Oaklawn Language Academy
- Rea Farms STEAM Academy
- Selwyn Elementary School
- South Academy of International Languages
- South Mecklenburg High School
- University Meadows Elementary School
- Westerly Hills Academy
- Whitewater Middle School

Rising Star Schools

- Beverly Woods Elementary School
- Crown Point Elementary School
- Dilworth Elementary
- Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School
- Endhaven Elementary School
- Hidden Valley Elementary School
- Idlewild Elementary School
- Irwin Academic Center
- Knights View Elementary School
- McAlpine Elementary School
- Merry Oaks International Academy
- Montclair Elementary School
- Pineville Elementary School
- River Gate Elementary School
- Sterling Elementary School
- Tuckasegee Elementary School
- Whitewater Academy
- Winget Park Elementary School

May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month, and again in October, as a time to elevate the importance of supporting the whole child. At Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, we remain deeply committed to nurturing our students' emotional wellness. We encourage families to learn more about the resources available and the trusted community partners we work alongside to support students – helping them thrive both in and beyond the classroom.

As we close in on the end of the 2025–26 school year, it's hard to believe how quickly the year has flown by. While the final bell is within earshot, there is still important work ahead.

Later this month, students will begin their end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) assessments. Families play a key role in helping students feel prepared and confident. Ensuring students are well-rested, arrive at school on time and feel encouraged can make a meaningful difference. Talking with your students about what they've learned this year – and reminding them that they are capable and ready – can help ease testing anxiety and build confidence.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is committed to providing every student with an excellent educational experience – one that inspires curiosity, fuels achievement and opens the door to endless possibilities. We believe deeply in the greatness that lives within each of our students, and we are proud to partner with families and the community to help that potential shine.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the children, families and staff of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. We are grateful for your partnership and honored to educate your children.

In service and partnership,

Crystal

Crystal L. Hill, Ed.D.
Superintendent