



September 2026

Greetings, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Families!

Thank you for a fantastic start to the 2026-27 school year!

To kick off the new year, I visited a dozen schools during our first week where I observed engaged and excited students learning in warm, nurturing environments that foster creativity and curiosity. They, of course, were being led by our amazing teachers who guide them with enthusiasm and provide personalized attention. It's these types of enriching environments that not only enhance academic performance but also inspire a lifelong love of learning.

As you and your students settle into the new school year, please make sure you download the three essential apps you'll need to navigate the school year:

- [ParentSquare](#) – two-way communication with teachers, emergency alerts and other important district news and information
 - [AlphaPortal](#) – bus tracking, notifications and route updates
 - [Infinite Campus](#) – student information and grades
- *Special reminder to our early and middle colleges and Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences families: Be sure to check Infinite Campus for your student's progress reports.

There also is still time to [apply for free and reduced-price meals](#). And if you haven't already, please provide your school with your student's [required](#)

[immunization information.](#)

September is Attendance Awareness Month, and every day a student walks through our school doors is a chance for them to learn, grow and feel a sense of belonging. When we make attendance a priority together, we help ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive and discover their endless possibilities, so let's work together to ensure our students understand the importance of good attendance.

As we look forward to the year ahead, we are taking time to celebrate our students' stellar academic achievements for the 2025-26 school year. On Sept. 2, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction released the 2025-26 State Accountability results. For the second consecutive year, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' (CMS) performance was outstanding:

CMS increased overall grade-level proficiency in every tested content area in 2025-26. Among the district's year-over-year gains:

- Reading – Grades 3-8: 56.7% proficient, an increase of 4 percentage points
- Math – Grades 3-8: 62.7%, up 3.5 points
- Science – Grades 5 and 8: 69.3%, up 7.6 points
- English II – 66.0%, up 6.8 points
- High School Math 1 – 42.0%, up 13.0 points
- High School Math 3 – 69.4%, up 2.8 points
- Biology – 58.4%, up 9.8 points

The gains are particularly notable in literacy: 76.9% of third grade students demonstrated proficiency through the state's Read to Achieve measure. Third grade reading proficiency on the state assessment increased 11 percentage points, from 46.3% to 57.3%.

CMS also outperformed the statewide grade-level proficiency rate in grades 3-8 reading, with 56.7% of CMS students proficient compared with 52.5% statewide. CMS improved four percentage points from the previous year,

compared with a 2.4-point statewide increase.

The progress extends beyond individual assessments to schools across the district. Nearly 79% of CMS schools earned an A, B or C school performance grade, an increase of approximately 8 percentage points from 2024-25 and 26 percentage points since 2021-22.

Additionally, 122 schools improved their numerical school performance grade score during the 2025-26 school year. At the same time, the number of CMS schools designated as low performing continued to decline. Twenty-eight schools received the designation in 2025-26, down from 31 last year and 50 in 2021-22.

The majority of our schools also continued to demonstrate strong student growth, with 83.8% meeting or exceeding expected growth.

CMS also saw meaningful progress among its graduating students. The district's four-year cohort graduation rate increased to 87.9% in 2025-26, up 3.3 percentage points from the previous year.

This progress belongs to our students, teachers, school leaders, staff and families, and these results show what is possible when we remain focused on strong instruction, high expectations and providing every student with the support they need to succeed. We are proud of the progress our students are making and remain committed to building on this momentum.

We also took time to celebrate our amazing [School Performance Area Principals of the Year](#). Congratulations to:

- **Elementary A** – Penni Beth Crisp, *Matthews Elementary*
- **Elementary B** – Bilal Tawwab, *University Meadows Elementary*
- **Elementary C** – Michelle Given, *South Pine Academy*
- **Elementary D** – Angela Grant, *Esperanza Global Academy*
- **Elementary E** – Shanna Rae, *University Park Creative Arts Elementary*
- **K-8** – Rolando Parkins, *Thomasboro Academy*
- **Middle School A** – Brian Slattery, *Community House Middle*
- **Middle School B** – Michael Jerrell, *McClintock Middle*

- **High School A** – Bob Folk, *Myers Park High*
- **High School B** – Kevin Sudimack, *West Mecklenburg High*
- **High School C** – Katy Coffelt, *Northwest School of the Arts*

This recognition reflects the exceptional leadership, professionalism and unwavering commitment these outstanding educators bring to their schools each day. Through their vision, dedication and focus on student success, they inspire excellence in their staff, empower their school communities and help create the conditions for every student to thrive.

In the coming days, I invite you to visit our district website at www.cmsk12.org to learn more about each of these outstanding leaders. We will name our district ***Principal of the Year*** next month.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. I know ***Endless Possibilities*** lie ahead for our students, staff, district and community.

In service and partnership,

Crystal

Crystal L. Hill, Ed.D.

Superintendent