



Communications and Engagement Department Annual Plan 2026-2027

Our Guiding Principles: The CMS Way!

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.

GUARDRAILS



Equity over Equality:
Reducing Achievement Gaps



Safety & Security



Attending to the Whole Child:
Wellbeing & Engagement



Staffing:
High Quality Teachers

FOUR PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE



Academic Excellence



People Excellence



Operational Excellence



Engagement Excellence

OUR COMMITMENT TO DELIVER **EXCELLENCE** WITHOUT EXCEPTION

Strategic Plan Overview

We are future-focused.

Our mission is to create an innovative, inclusive, student-centered environment that supports the development of independent learners.

We are community-driven.

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

Goals

Goals reflect our vision and will help us attain it.

Improved Early Literacy in Grades K-2	Improved Literacy Skills in Grades 3-8	Strengthened Mathematics Performance	Post-Grad Readiness
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Guardrails

Guardrails embody our values. These are not outputs, but ways of being at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

Equity over Equality	Safety & Security	Attending to the Whole Child	High Quality Teachers
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Pillars of Excellence

Academic Excellence Empower academic success	People Excellence Enable a thriving workforce	Operational Excellence Deliver efficient operations	Engagement Excellence Forge strong community partnerships
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2024–29 Goals and Guardrails

Student Outcomes Focused Governance

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has aligned our work to achieve the goals and guardrails below. These are a result of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education's commitment to Student Outcomes Focused Governance (SOFG), a framework for keeping a school board and a school district's leadership focused on investing time on goals and actions that directly move the needle for students' academic achievement and physical, emotional, and social well-being.





Academic Excellence

Pillar: Academic Excellence

Goals 1, 2, 3

Educating the whole child to world class standards by providing a standards-aligned comprehensive curriculum.

PRIORITY Ae3:	Eliminate the gaps in performance and opportunities between student groups.
STRATEGY Ae 3.003: Offer multiple opportunities for enhanced learning to students in need, coordinating with community partners as needed.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Expand and refine the Family Portal's reach by increasing active usage among CMS families from baseline 50% to 60% by June 2027.
Key Lever(s)	Expand engagement with the Family Portal by encouraging active use among CMS families and enhancing its features based on user feedback.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of communications shared per month Number of direct to school communications of Family Portal Number of resources shared with Specialists Resource, ParentSquare Analytics Website usage Analytics
Collaborating Departments	Communications and Engagement Educational Technology Learning and Teaching School Improvement and Data Integration Strategic Partnerships Student Services

Pillar: Academic Excellence

Goals 1, 2, 3

Educating the whole child to world class standards by providing a standards-aligned comprehensive curriculum.

PRIORITY Ae5:	Develop the well-being of the entire child, promoting positive behaviors, consistent attendance and building strong social-emotional skills.
STRATEGY Ae 5.002: Work with community partners to assess existing whole-child resources, and then actively network with families on these available services.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Increase the percentage of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools that have access to two or more partners aligned to a goal in their School Improvement Plan from 75% to 90% by June 2027.
Key Lever(s)	Increase student engagement by utilizing the live matching dashboard that connects school needs with community partner supports and facilitates active outreach to families on available whole-child resources
Performance Measure(s)	Percentage of schools with at least two aligned partnerships
Collaborating Departments	Family Engagement and Community Outreach Office of Academic Performance Strategic Partnerships Student Services



People Excellence

Pillar: People Excellence

Guardrail 4

Improving the employee experience inclusive of enhancing recruiting, retention, and training opportunities.

PRIORITY Pe2:	Develop the workforce with high-quality, rigorous professional learning that is competency-based.
STRATEGY Pe 2.004: Increase employees' skills on inclusive practices and develop systems to constantly refine these practices.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Expanding use of Kickup PD platform pilot with one School Performance Area and Theory of Change Specialist by June 2027.
Key Lever(s)	Support teacher retention by developing and promoting a total rewards website to highlight comprehensive compensation, incentive, and perk information
Performance Measure(s)	Number of data reviews conducted Percentage of approved Professional Learning attendance and feedback data on Power Bi Percentage of approved Professional Learning scheduled on the Professional Learning Dashboard
Collaborating Departments	All Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Departments Office of Academic Performance Professional Learning Technology



Operational Excellence

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee1:	Work collaboratively with community partners and governmental agencies to equitably meet the needs of our students and staff.
STRATEGY Ee 1.001: Cultivate authentic partnerships with community-based organizations, the business community and institutions of higher education to meet the needs of our students.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Increase the percentage of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools that have access to two or more partners aligned to a goal in their School Improvement Plan from 75% to 90% by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Percentage of schools with at least two aligned partnerships
Collaborating Departments	Family Engagement and Community Outreach Office of School Performance Strategic Partnerships Student Services

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Eel:	Work collaboratively with community partners and governmental agencies to equitably meet the needs of our students and staff.
STRATEGY Ee 1.002: Partner with all community entities required to ensure that Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools creates meaningful career opportunities and internships to advance students.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	100% CMS high schools offer internship or job shadowing opportunities supported by community partners by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of CTE courses with career partners Number of partnership MOUs Number of job shadowing opportunities offered Number of internship opportunities offered
Collaborating Departments	Career and Technical Education Family Engagement and Community Outreach Office of School Performance Student Services

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

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PRIORITY Ee1:	Work collaboratively with community partners and governmental agencies to equitably meet the needs of our students and staff.
STRATEGY Ee 1.003: Hold an annual partnership summit meeting with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Superintendent and our community partners.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Maintain Summit Attendance at 250 attendees in June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Attendance rates at quarterly meetings Attendance at Summit
Collaborating Departments	Family Engagement and Community Outreach Office of Academic Performance Student Wellness

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

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PRIORITY Ee1:	Work collaboratively with community partners and governmental agencies to equitably meet the needs of our students and staff.
STRATEGY Ee 1.004: Develop local and state coalitions consisting of parents, other school districts, education associations, and local community-based organizations to advance the district's advocacy priorities.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	100% of Community Opportunity & Access Committee subcommittees engages in 5 out of 8 monthly meetings aligned to the six areas of action by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Attendance at meetings Number of report outs of information regarding coalition updates/relevant information Tracking the cadence of meetings
Collaborating Departments	Family Engagement and Community Outreach Office of Academic Performance Strategic Partnerships Supplier Development

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

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PRIORITY Ee2:	Strengthen home-school partnerships to increase student academic achievement.
STRATEGY Ee 2.001: Support all school sites in: (1) developing a cohort of school volunteers and parent leaders that is truly representative of the school and (2) gaining access to targeted community partner resources.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	100% of schools having a volunteer ambassador and active cohort by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of engagements between district and school based volunteer coordinator Percent of schools that complete volunteer training Percent of schools with an identified ambassador
Collaborating Departments	Family Engagement and Community Outreach Office of Academic Performance

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

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PRIORITY Ee2:	Strengthen home-school partnerships to increase student academic achievement.
STRATEGY Ee 2.002: Develop Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools as a trusted source of valuable information for families with all things relevant to their children's educational needs and progress, including revamping and relaunching the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Family Academy to provide resources and support to families.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Increase the number of families engaged in in-person Family Academy programming aligned to Goals 1, 2, 3 or 4 from 2,399 to 4,500 by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Attendance for in person Family Academy hosted by district or schools Attendance from identified schools Number of collaborations between Specialists and Family Academy Positive feedback response rate focused on satisfaction and confidence Quarterly, level and goal aligned toolkit sessions
Collaborating Departments	Communications and Engagement Educational Technology Office of Academic Performance School Improvement and Data Integration Student Services

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee3:	Establish open dialogue for two-way communication between the district and community, providing clear information and listening attentively.
STRATEGY Ee 3.001: Maintain effective collaboration with media partners to share positive and uplifting stories of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and our students.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Increase the number of media pitch pickups from 160 to 175 by June of 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of picked up pitches
Collaborating Departments	All Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Departments

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee3:	Establish open dialogue for two-way communication between the district and community, providing clear information and listening attentively.
STRATEGY Ee 3.002: Continue to enhance and improve district and school websites, communication channels and social media.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Maintain media engagement at 440,000 and increase social media engagement to 900,000 by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Engagement Rate with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Brand Number of user engagements with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools content - Sprout Social Reports Google Analytics
Collaborating Departments	All Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Departments

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee3:	Establish open dialogue for two-way communication between the district and community, providing clear information and listening attentively.
STRATEGY Ee 3.003: Strengthen our customer service at every touch point, and institute a system for measuring our quality of service to inform improvements.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Onflo satisfaction rate will increase from 35% to 60% by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Average ticket report age maintained at ≤ 2.0 days Customer Experience (CX) Performance Comparison Report Internal Satisfaction Survey Pulse checks conducted regularly to monitor user experience and inform improvement Summer PD Feedback
Collaborating Departments	All Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Departments

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee3:	Establish open dialogue for two-way communication between the district and community, providing clear information and listening attentively.
STRATEGY Ee 3.004: Improve internal communication structures to ensure all employees receive timely district news and important information.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Increase the number of story idea submissions to the Good News portal from 250 to 275 with 50% of the submissions resulting in published articles by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of Good News Submissions Number of published stories resulting from submissions
Collaborating Departments	All Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools departments Office of Academic Performance Technology

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee3:	Establish open dialogue for two-way communication between the district and community, providing clear information and listening attentively.
STRATEGY Ee 3.005: Communicate with families in multiple languages and modes to best meet their needs.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Maintain ParentSquare contactability rate between 92% to 100% through June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of contactable people via ParentSquare Dashboard
Collaborating Departments	Office of Academic Performance

Pillar: Engagement Excellence

Fostering collaborative and inclusive community partnerships, ensuring consistent two-way communication to equitably meet needs, source funding, and create new opportunities for all.

PRIORITY Ee4:	Coordinate with community organizations and pursue new funding opportunities to provide the resources needed for our students and staff and to create new opportunities for them.
STRATEGY Ee 4.002: Increase the coordination of our efforts: (1) Within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools: Across the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Grants department, Partnerships, Family and Community Engagement, the Federal programs department and others as needed, and (2) Between Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Foundation.	
Wildly Important Goal(s)	Increase the number of active diverse suppliers' in our database from 350 to 445 by June 2027. Increase the number of grants received from \$3.3M to \$3.6M by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	District Grant Tracking Tool Number of reviewed and/or approved grants at the cabinet level Quarterly coordination meetings with cross functional team
Collaborating Departments	CMS Foundation Family Engagement and Community Outreach Grants

2026–27 Department Plans Index

Department	Board Communications and Strategic Planning
WIG(s)	Produce a minimum of one press release and pitch one piece of good Board of Education news in relation to the board's actions as an entity each month by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Media tracker Weekly media report
Department	Community Engagement
WIG(s)	Increase Instagram followers from 2,141 to 2,500 while maintaining an average post engagement rate of at least 4% by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Social Media Analytics
Department	Engagement and Partnership Impact
WIG(s)	Ensure 100% of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools schools have access to two or more partners addressing multiple tiers of student need by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Jotform Salesforce
Department	Engagement, Access & Supplier Development
WIG(s)	Expand the number of Proof of Concept Schools from 8 to 16 by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Jotform Salesforce

2026–27 Department Plans Index

Department	Family Engagement
WIG(s)	Using user feedback and community partnerships to strengthen access to family support services, increase active Family Portal usage among CMS families from 50% to 60% by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Family Portal usage analytics Family survey data
Department	Internal and Executive Communications
WIG(s)	Increase the number of story idea submissions to the Good News portal from 250 to 275 with 50% of the submissions resulting in published articles by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Communications Ambassador network Communications Hub and Google Analytics Strategies to increase Good News submissions Year-long content calendar
Department	Supplier Development
WIG(s)	Increase the number of active small businesses in our database from 350 to 445 by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Number of new vendors Small Business Enterprise Utilization (SBE) (% and \$) Social Media Analytics
Department	Video and Content Production
WIG(s)	Maintain media engagement at 440,000 and increase social media engagement to 900,000 by June 2027.
Performance Measure(s)	Sprout and Google Analytics Strategies to increase post engagement Year-long content calendar