



# THE FIRST 90 DAYS

**SUPERINTENDENT  
DR. CRYSTAL L. HILL**



# Letter from the Board of Education

## Chair Elyse Dashew

The members of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education are privileged to lead Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, serving 141,000 amazing students who possess the potential to achieve greatness. Our educators and staff are immensely talented, and their unmatched dedication is devoted to unlocking student potential for the highest achievement.

However, an exceptional team needs an exceptional leader.

Last spring, the Board began an extensive search for a new superintendent through multiple outreach sessions, seeking feedback from you – our families, staff and community members – on essential qualities required in a new district leader. Your input guided our search, which attracted an impressive pool of candidates. Among the 49 applicants were 19 sitting superintendents, a testament to the fact that Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is regarded as one of the premier districts in the nation.

From this exceptional candidate pool, one individual stood out as the best match – Dr. Crystal Hill. Her dynamic qualities and academic experience are precisely what our district needs as we, together with our nation, move past the pandemic and reset the learning process for student success. It is imperative that we make



significant strides in student outcomes, and Dr. Hill is prepared to do just that with excellence and a sense of urgency.

As members of the Board of Education, our role is to represent your vision for student learning, understand what you think is essential for students to know and be able to do, and safeguard the values our community holds dear. We must establish clear and high expectations. In fact, we are currently seeking your input in determining the next set of priorities that will guide our district in ensuring success for all students.

I envision a bright future ahead for our district. The entire Board of Education is united in our commitment to make Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools the best it can be. We are excited to partner with Dr. Hill, and we firmly believe she is perfectly positioned to take us to the next level.

Sincerely,

**Elyse Dashew**  
Chair

## Board Members



**Stephanie Sneed**  
Vice Chair, District 4



**Jennifer De La Jara**  
At-Large



**Lenora Sanders-Shipp**  
At-Large



**Melissa Easley**  
District 1



**Thelma Byers-Bailey**  
District 2



**Gregory "Dee" Rankin**  
District 3



**Lisa Cline**  
District 5



**Summer Nunn**  
District 6

# About Our District

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is the 17th largest school district in the nation and the second largest in North Carolina. Under the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Crystal Hill the district provides academic instruction and support to more than 141,000 students across Mecklenburg County.



## VISION

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

## MISSION

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

## GOALS

Increase the percent of Black and Hispanic third grade students combined who score at the College and Career Ready level in English Language Arts

Increase the percent of high school students who score at the College and Career level in Math 1

Increase the percent of graduates earning a state high school endorsement

Increase the percent of schools who met or exceeded expected Educator Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) growth

## GUARDRAILS

All students will be treated equitably

All students will have access to rich, diverse and rigorous course offerings

We will focus on students' social-emotional health and development

# Letter from the Superintendent



Dear Mecklenburg County families and community,

I am humbled and honored to serve our students, staff and community as the new Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools superintendent. I fell in love with teaching as a senior in high school when I had the chance to work in the same preschool I attended. I am a teacher at heart and family means the world to me. As your superintendent, I want you to know that your child's best interests are at the forefront of every decision I make.

When our seniors walk across the stage for graduation we want to make sure that they leave our district with the skills to be either enlisted, enrolled or employed. The Goals and Guardrails created by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education set a framework for us as a district to make achieving those skills possible. I am committed to aligning the Goals and Guardrails with the right tools and staff so that we're able to provide our students with endless possibilities — growing them academically, socially and emotionally.

As your superintendent, I want to assure you that I will lead by operating with clarity and candor. Excellence, integrity and interdependence are at the core of what I stand for. Therefore, as a district, we must all strive to get one percent better each day. My actions will match my words, and my work depends on the continued support and partnership with our students, staff and community.

This engagement plan reflects the goals, strategies and action steps I plan to take during my first 90 days as superintendent. I believe this plan reflects the priorities that will create a solid foundation as we begin this journey together. Within 30 days of the expiration of this engagement plan, a summary report will be published for the Board and community at large.

I'm excited to continue to push the district forward and we are going to do amazing things for our students — together.

With gratitude,

**Crystal L. Hill, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent



# Excellence Without Exception

## CMS Strategy

CMS leads the way, charting a pathway of endless possibilities (students and employees) through a connected ecosystem of families, community, and organizations (both public and private).

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is the 17th largest school district in the nation and the second largest in North Carolina. Under the leadership of Superintendent Crystal Hill, Ed.D. the district has established the practice of **Excellence Without Exception** for how it **plans**, how it **organizes** and how it **hires**. As we are educating more than 141,000 students across Mecklenburg County, in more than 183 schools served by more than 19,000 employees, Excellence Without Exception is a monumental task, and we are up for the challenge.

Our customers are our families and they want what's best for their children, and so do all of us. We pursue excellence, act with integrity, behave with mutual accountability and ensure students have a concrete path for possibility upon graduation, whether it be for enrollment, enlistment or employment.

To achieve **Excellence Without Exception** we strive to be 1% better every day by enacting the power of tiny gains. Over 365 days that 1% every day results in us being 365% better than we were when the year began. In our District Annual Plan we have established projects and initiatives to ensure we meet the Goals and Guardrails the Board of Education has set for us. Some of these initiatives, include the cleanliness and curb appeal of our physical buildings, the way we speak and interact with others, serving our customers who are our students and

families, as well as engaging with our district colleagues and community stakeholders in a timely, thorough and collaborative manner to ensure information and work show up integrated, and ready for implementation.

To further ensure excellence, all divisions, departments and schools are organizing their teams to create specific metrics for success for the 2023-24 school year. These metrics include longer term measures of impact aligned to the district goals and department core functions and include implementation measures that indicate whether we are doing the work as planned and doing it well. We are stabilizing our core practices at the district level, and at the school level, and are prepared to engage in continuous improvement. Think back to those 1% daily gains, we are seeking to consistently get better and better. The plans are all in place and we, as a district, are organized and doing the work on the path to excellence and we are better aligned to get there.

Excellence Without Exception is also demonstrated by our district and school leaders in how we set standards for professionalism, and train our teachers, administrators and staff to best serve the needs of our students. We want our leaders to drive toward excellence ensuring that they have control of the wheel and are steering in the right direction.

## About the Pillars of Excellence

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is a place where education thrives and our leaders are united in their commitment to excellence. During the summer of 2023, the district held its annual professional learning conference centered on the theme: **Excellence Without Exception**.

At Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, we are creating a CROWN experience. We are:

- C: customer-focused
- R: responsive and respectful
- O: optimistic
- W: welcoming
- N: needs-based service

We want people to see us as a district that delivers Excellence Without Exception, and providing a C.R.O.W.N. experience does just that. We are accountable to ourselves and others for consistently upholding high expectations to make decisions in the best interest of students through open and honest communication. We commit to inclusive, purposeful collaboration and effective communication in design, decision-making, and execution, to foster a positive culture throughout the organization. We support each other and each other's work through intentional and meaningful collaboration. We deliberately prioritize, develop, and invest in trusting relationships by creating an inclusive, transparent, supportive, and equitable culture.

We are Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and we are committed to Excellence Without Exception.

This theme is echoed throughout the district's 2023-24 District Annual Plan, which identifies four Pillars of Excellence: Academic Excellence, People Excellence, Operational Excellence and Engagement Excellence. These pillars serve as guiding principles for the work of our 20,000 employees on behalf of more than 142,000 students.



## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



## PEOPLE EXCELLENCE



## ENGAGEMENT EXCELLENCE



## OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

**Delivering a student-first environment by creating student and family services and experiences that are unparalleled**

At the heart of our pursuit of excellence is academic achievement. We understand that our core business is to provide an exceptional educational experience for all students, requiring leaders to recognize the importance of success beyond assessments. Academic excellence plays a key role in fulfilling the vision, mission, goals and guardrails, and represents our commitment to providing students with the knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to succeed academically, socially, emotionally and personally.

## GOAL

Increase equitable access to excellent learning and teaching experiences to raise achievement and eliminate achievement as well as opportunity gaps.

## STRATEGIES

Develop a process to accelerate achievement of the Student Outcomes Focused Governance (SOFG) goals

Collaborate with the Board of Education to develop the next set of goals and guardrails

Nurture a culture of belief and high expectations for all students

Establish universal processes and protocols to effectively address the needs of exceptional learners



# PEOPLE EXCELLENCE

**Build and strengthen culture and further our commitment of excellence for all employees**

People Excellence is demonstrated through the dedication, passion and professionalism of our 19,000 employees and involves recruiting, developing and retaining outstanding educators, staff and leaders who are passionate about their work, while maintaining a commitment to student success. Through a commitment to student success, continuous improvement and collaboration, our employees engage in professional development, seek opportunities for growth, and contribute to the development of a positive and inclusive work culture.

## GOAL

Build strong teams while nurturing a culture of excellence built on strong, trusting, co-dependent relationships.

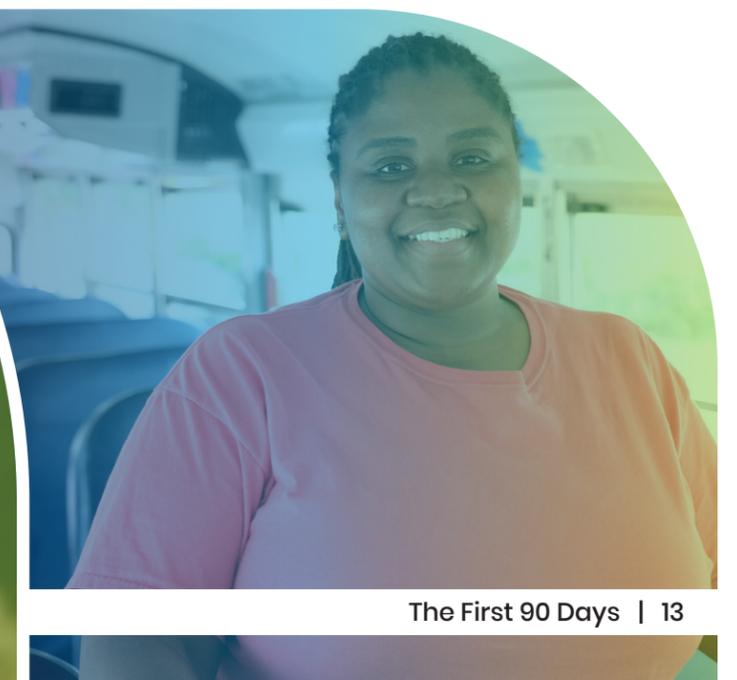
## STRATEGIES

Ensure alignment of leadership skills that effectively address school and district needs

Engage all Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools employee groups

Increase effectiveness and enhance systems to monitor required training/professional development

Enhance recruitment and retention strategies



# OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

**Optimize operational processes through aligned systems and tools that achieve desired results**

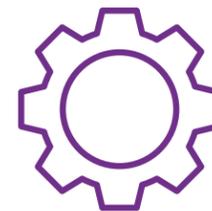
Operational Excellence is fundamental to our success as a district and represents our commitment to the efficient and effective management of resources and processes. The implementation of best practices, streamlined processes and other innovative approaches yield the responsible management of our resources, allocation of funds, use of technology, and compliance with our policies and procedures.

## GOAL

Increase operational efficiencies utilizing transparent processes

## STRATEGIES

Standardize processes and procedures



# ENGAGEMENT EXCELLENCE

**Leading the way through an interconnected ecosystem of families, community, corporations, and organizations.**

Future successes we will celebrate as a district cannot be achieved without the active involvement, communication and collaboration with, and among, students, families, employees and the community. Engagement Excellence extends beyond the walls of our schools and centers on fostering mutually-respectful, beneficial and positive relationships that value diverse perspectives, and create ongoing opportunities for meaningful participation. By building strong partnerships between schools, families and the community we promote a sense of belonging, ownership and shared responsibility that support the achievements of our goals and, in turn, support our overall success.

## GOAL

Nurture a culture of excellence built on strong, trusting, collaborative relationships

## STRATEGIES

Launch Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools customer service protocols

Strengthen relationship with individual Board Members and the full Board of Education

Enhance strategic partnerships





# Acknowledgments

## from the Superintendent

As I begin my journey as the superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, I want to express my deepest thanks to all those who have supported and inspired me along the way.

First and foremost, I want to thank my family for their unwavering support and encouragement. Your belief in me has been the driving force behind my dedication to education and serving our community. Your love and understanding have given me the strength and determination to take on this new role and responsibility.

To my peers, thank you for being a source of inspiration and guidance throughout my career. Your passion for education and commitment to our students have motivated me to continuously strive for excellence. I am grateful for the collaborative spirit that exists within our educational community and look forward to working with each of you to achieve our shared goals.

I am excited about the future that we will build, and the positive impact we will make in the lives of our students and their families. I firmly believe that, together, we will create a learning environment that nurtures the potential of every child and prepares them to be confident, independent, and successful individuals.





/CharMeckSchools



@CharMeckSchools

@CharMeckSupt



@charmeckschools

@CharMeckSupt



**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

P.O. Box 30035

Charlotte, NC 28230-0035