

As The Wheel Turns Transportation Newsletter

Transportation Team –

As we approach Love The Bus Week (February 10-14), I want to take a moment to express my gratitude for the incredible work you do each day. Our bus drivers, monitors, technicians, and support staff are the heart of student transportation, ensuring thousands of students arrive safely at school and home again. Your dedication, patience, and professionalism make a difference in the lives of our students and their families.

This is an opportunity to celebrate and recognize your hard work. Our area offices have special plans to show appreciation, and I encourage you to take part in the activities. Whether through a kind word from a colleague, a token of appreciation, or simply reflecting on the important role you play in education, know that you are valued and respected.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to safety and service. Let's take this time to celebrate each other and the essential work we do for CMS students.

With appreciation,

Joseph McAllister

Interim Executive Director of Transportation
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools



Love The Bus Week
February 10-14



SCHOOL BUS

EMERGENCY DOOR



2026–27 Academic Calendar Survey

Surveys open from January 28 – February 13

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is interested in your opinion on the two, traditional school calendar options for the 2026-2027 school year. These calendars are specific to elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and K-8 schools. These calendars do not apply to the CPCC or UNCC Early or Middle colleges.

Please review both Traditional School Calendar options and complete **this brief feedback** form to let us know your preference. This feedback form will be available from January 28, 2025, through February 13, 2025. The survey is available below in various languages.



CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES PHASE I OF COMPENSATION STUDY

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education voted to approve the recommendation to increase wages to \$20 for many Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) classified employees. This is the first compensation study undertaken and implemented by CMS in 18 years.

Classified employees primarily support the district's daily operations and play a vital role in ensuring the smooth functioning of schools and supporting student success.

The Classified Compensation Study is a review of pay for classified staff on pay grades 1-9, covering more than 390 unique job titles such as bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, clerical staff, and maintenance workers. The overarching goal is to establish a competitive pay framework that fosters equity and market competitiveness.

“This is a step in the right direction to become more competitive with other public organizations and the private industry that hire for similar positions,” states Chair of the Board of Education, Stephanie Sneed. “We will continue to make every effort now and into the future to compensate our CMS employees for their hard work in supporting our students both in and out of the classroom.”

There are three phases to this compensation study. Board-approved Phase I will be covered with available funds. Phase II and Phase III, which are dependent upon board approval and funding, are aimed at recognizing years of services and annual adjustments.

Under this phase of study implementation, 4,775 employees in pay grades 1-5 will receive an average raise of 13.9 percent to bring them closer to market rate. Another 325 employees in pay grade 6 and above will receive an average raise of 8.53 percent. Retroactive pay for hours worked (starting July 1, 2024) will be provided.

INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Transportation recognizes the link between student learning and the importance of on-time, dependable, and safe transportation to and from school.

The Bus Driver Attendance Incentive Program aims to ensure that our dedicated, professional driving staff supports the achievement and success of students.

This school year, CMS Transportation will pay an incentive of \$50.00 weekly to full-time drivers and \$25.00 weekly for part-time drivers for every week of work without an absence. Every week the employee has perfect attendance, they are eligible to earn the monetary incentive. This will accrue and be paid to the employee at the end of each semester. The employee must work ALL scheduled hours every day school is in session. The incentive will be paid to eligible employees in February and June of 2025.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Must report to work every day school is in session.
2. Must complete your entire shift every day school is in session.

Jury duty, military duty, death of an immediate family member, and high school graduations* are the only exceptions (must verify all exceptions). As an employee of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, you will be allowed a full day of release time on the day of your child's high school graduation to participate in program exercises and celebrate with family members. This privilege applies only to high school graduations scheduled during the work week; however, it is not restricted to graduation from a Charlotte-Mecklenburg school. In other words, if your child is graduating from a non-CMS high school in or outside Mecklenburg County, you may exercise this privilege.

A referral bonus of \$379 is in place for the 2024-2025 school year aimed at recruiting new CMS bus drivers. This bonus is only available if a new driver has completed at least 60 full-time work days. To claim the bonus, the new driver must report who referred them on the first day of bus class. Previously employed drivers and exempt employees are not eligible for this bonus. Thank you for helping us find skilled school bus driver to join our elite team!

CMS Transportation has partnered with Atrium Health to provide social and emotional well-being support to all Transportation employees. This service, whether virtual or in-person, will be available at no cost for all transportation area offices and central office support staff.

We understand the importance of mental health, and this partnership is a significant step toward ensuring the well-being of our CMS Transportation family. [Learn more about the offerings here.](#)

What concerns can the behavioral health services address?

You are encouraged to contact the behavioral health provider for whatever may be causing you any level of emotional distress. Feel free to reach out to discuss any of the following: Relationship and parenting issues, overcoming feelings of being stuck, developing coping strategies, goal setting and making action plans, anger, grief and stress, anxiety and depressed mood, substance use and additions, managing life's changes. Speak with your manager about scheduling an appointment.



Shenequa Thomas, a Winston-Salem State University graduate with a Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling, is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. With over a decade of experience in mental health, wellness, and community leadership & advocacy, she is dedicated to making a positive impact. Shenequa has experience in providing individual, couples, and group therapy to diverse populations.

On-Site Schedule:

- Mondays: 3901 Craig Avenue
- Tuesdays: 3101 Wilkinson Boulevard
- Wednesdays: 11751 Downs Road
- Thursdays: 4400 Northpointe Boulevard
- Fridays: 6520 Orr Road

2024-2025 WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS

1

We will maintain or exceed our morning on-time arrival rate from 91% to 93% and afternoon on-time arrival rate from 87% to 89% by June 2025.

2

We will maintain or continue to reduce our annual DPI inspection score from 48 points to 42 points by June 2025.

3

We will maintain or exceed our hiring and retention rates more than the previous fiscal year. (9% technician staff, 5% bus driving staff).

2024-2025 WIDLY IMPORTANT GOALS MONTHLY AVERAGES

1

Average January Morning OTA: **91.4%**
Average January Afternoon OTA: **90.0%**

2

Average Yearly DPI Score: **43.61**

3

Drivers Hired (January): **32**
Technicians Hired (January): **1**

2024-2025 WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS YEARLY PROGRESS

1

We will maintain or exceed our morning on-time arrival rate from 91% to 93% and afternoon on-time arrival rate from 87% to 89% by June 2025.

August	September	October	November
AM: N/A	AM: 90.35%	AM: 91.14%	AM: 92.80%
PM: N/A	PM: 86.83%	PM: 87.18%	PM: 90.08%

2

We will maintain or exceed our hiring and retention rates more than the previous fiscal year. (9% technician staff, 5% bus driving staff).

	July	August	September	October	November
Drivers	82 Applicants 10 Hired	83 Applicants 31 Hired	67 Applicants 12 Hired	48 Applicants 16 Hired	43 Applicants 3 Hired
Technicians (I & II)	8 Applicants 2 Hired	4 Applicants 0 Hired	5 Applicants 1 Hired	3 Applicant 2 Hired	3 Applicant 0 Hired

3

We will maintain or continue to reduce our annual DPI inspection score from 48 points to 42 points by June 2025.

Year-to-Date Average
48.84%

FEBRUARY CALENDAR UPDATES

February 10-14: Love The Bus Week

Monday, February 17: Teacher Workday

Wednesday, February 26: Early Release Day

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS AND UPDATES!

Want to be featured in the CMS Transportation Newsletter?

Email Tom Miner for more details and information!

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