



Greetings, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Families!

Congratulations are in order for the outstanding professionals selected as [finalists](#) for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Teacher of the Year, Teacher Assistant of the Year and Beginning Teacher of the Year. They were notified during surprise celebrations at their schools.

Teacher of the Year Finalists

- Elementary School Performance Area A – Ashleigh Holub, Villa Heights Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area B – Gregory Gabriel, Winterfield Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area C – Cathi Schulte, Endhaven Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area D – Kerrie Lalli, Sedgefield Montessori
- Elementary School Performance Area E – Angela Noonan, Pinewood Elementary
- Middle School Performance Area A – Holly Shelton, Quail Hollow Middle
- Middle School Performance Area B – Kalilah Smith, Mint Hill Middle
- High School Performance Area A – Michael T. Sanders, J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori
- High School Performance Area B – Steven Rusk, David W. Butler High
- High School Performance Area C – Aileen Lopez, Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences
- K-8 School Performance Area – Tina N. Handie, Mountain Island Lake Academy

Teacher Assistant of the Year Finalists

- Elementary School Performance Area A – Lisa Surber, Elizabeth Traditional Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area B – Latesha Spears, Lawrence Orr Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area C – Elizabeth Bundy Thomisser, Eastover Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area D – Mari Kirchner, Grand Oak Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area E – Rosa Elvira Coker, Sterling Elementary
- Middle School Performance Area A – Antawan Smith, Alexander Graham Middle
- Middle School Performance Area B – Jodi Holnagel, Jay M. Robinson Middle
- High School Performance Area A – Tangania Moffett, Myers Park High
- High School Performance Area B – Freddie Pinkney, Ardrey Kell High
- High School Performance Area C – Daniel B. Lannak, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Academy
- K-8 School Performance Area – Latasha Savage, Druid Hills Academy

Beginning Teacher of the Year Finalists

- Elementary School Performance Area A – Lillie Brock, Bain Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area B – Sean Bryant, Newell Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area C – Sarah Desmond, Selwyn Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area D – Lauren Devitto, Paw Creek Elementary
- Elementary School Performance Area E – Arjge Brothers, University Park Creative Arts Elementary
- Middle School Performance Area A – Isabella Westervelt, J.M. Alexander Middle
- Middle School Performance Area B – Deirdre Augustine, Jay M. Robinson Middle

- High School Performance Area A – Levi Erickson, Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology
- High School Performance Area B – Sean Mondichak, Rocky River High
- High School Performance Area C – Sandra Speight, Metro School
- K-8 School Performance Area – Raquel Rhodes, Oaklawn Language Academy

We will announce the Teacher of the Year, Teacher Assistant of the Year and Beginning Teacher of the Year at the [Gem Awards](#) next month.

I shared my 2025-2026 budget recommendation with the Board of Education last month. Our proposal reflects careful planning and strategic decisions to support student success by investing in the people and systems that have the greatest impact on learning. This budget resources our district's goals, maintains current operations, addresses long-standing compensation issues and addresses operational risks. It is strategic, responsible and focused on maintaining the student experience while investing in staff, students and technology.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is committed to aligning resources with our [Strategic Plan](#) and preserving the student experience. We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners, our partners and the entire Mecklenburg County community.

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

In service and partnership,

Crystal

Crystal L. Hill, Ed.D.
Superintendent