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**Report to
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools
Magnet Schools Review**



Magnet Schools of America
National Institute for
Magnet School Leadership

Submitted To:
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Executive Summary

In March 2024, a team of magnet experts from the National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL), a leadership development platform and technical assistance arm of Magnet Schools of America (MSA), conducted site visits at 59 magnet schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. A report was prepared by Magnet Schools of America that measured each of the magnet schools against the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence.

Using a multi-faceted system of data analysis, information from community focus groups, student focus groups, a community survey, district focus groups and school site interviews, a team of magnet experts conducted site visits in March 2024. At the sites, Magnet Schools of America conducted walk-throughs and interviews with staff, students, parents and community members. These components were used to determine if schools were attracting students and promoting achievement and diversity. MSA utilized the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence – essential attributes of successful magnet schools, officially adopted to assist magnet schools and districts as they strive to promote best practices for diversity, equity, access and academic excellence.

The following findings, recommendations and cycle of improvement opportunities are the result of bringing together MSA experts who lead, design and evaluate nationally recognized magnet programs throughout the United States. Using the MSA National Pillars and Standards of Magnet School Excellence, the review process was thorough, comprehensive and consequently, will yield many opportunities for the 59 schools that were reviewed in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to continue to improve the magnet school experience for students and families. The National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL) analyzed all the data collected during the review and developed a final report with its findings and recommendations. With diligent work and exercise, the implementation of the changes recommended in this report will serve as a cornerstone and a foundational document for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. It is the goal of MSA to promote opportunity, equity, transparency and preparation for all students, so they may have the skills to thrive in a global society.

The magnet review is designed to evaluate the existing magnet schools and programs within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. CMS wants to be able to use quantitative data to drive decisions at the school-level and develop scorecards to share with vested stakeholders about school quality. As a result of this magnet review, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools will have a rigorous, clear and written program of study for all of its magnet schools.

Every magnet school has its own story to tell. School-wide thematic instruction provides opportunities for profound and enhanced learning outcomes. When implemented with fidelity and in its most desirable state, these programs are often identified as high achieving and sustainable. The theme also influences the way a school system stays faithful to its vision by providing evidence-based indicators of success. Many factors in this report contribute to the overall narrative of the story in each magnet. The purpose of the review was to assess the 59 magnet schools' progress towards meeting the Magnet Schools of America Pillars and Standards of Magnet School Excellence.

Introduction

Charlotte-Mecklenburg School's awareness and commitment to diversity and choice should serve as a pillar of example for other districts that strive for equity and excellence for all students. Magnet schools were designed as a tool of desegregation in CMS and the district retains its commitment to diversity, equity and access in its student populations based on race, socioeconomic status, language and ability. During the 1992-

93 school year, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) took its first major steps toward using magnet schools as part of a new student assignment plan. The magnet programs were supported with local funds. In 1993-94, CMS applied for the federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) grant for start-up funding. The CMS MSAP grant project was awarded and they received MSAP grants in four subsequent cycles (each grant cycle lasted three years). These grants allowed the district the freedom and flexibility to maximize opportunities for proven, specialized programs, such as Montessori, foreign language immersion and International Baccalaureate. CMS has been a longstanding and active member of Magnet Schools of America.

Known for its rich and intricate history, Charlotte-Mecklenburg has forged a progressive mindset to ensure that the importance of optimal educational arenas exists in the community. The public schools inclusive of the magnet and choice options in this area have had a tremendous impact on the growth and economy of the region – as well as the thousands of individuals it has served.

The mission of the CMS Magnet office strives for excellence, equity and access by connecting students' interests and needs with high-quality themes and educational approaches. The vision of the CMS Magnet office is that all CMS magnet school students will be challenged, excited and equipped for excellence through access to innovative, integrated, theme-based learning experiences that advance equity, diversity and opportunity.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools recently contacted Magnet Schools of America to conduct a review of its magnet programs. The district has had several changes in leadership over the last several years, including a new superintendent. The new leadership is eager to get an assessment of the quality of its current magnet offerings, provide greater transparency to the community about their magnet programs and begin making school improvement decisions based on empirical evidence.

CMS asked for assistance from the National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL), a leadership development platform and technical assistance arm of MSA, to review the fidelity to the MSA Pillars and Standards of 59 of its magnet schools. The magnet program review examined how each school addressed the Five Pillars of Magnet School Excellence:

1. Diversity
2. Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development
3. Academic Excellence
4. Leadership
5. Family and Community Partnerships

Five Pillars of Magnet Schools of America

Incorporated and designated as a 501(c)(3) in 1994, Magnet Schools of America (MSA) is the national association of magnet and theme-based schools and serves school districts, individual schools and professionals who are members. Today, MSA sponsors programs, events, technical assistance, student scholarships, professional development and leadership through the National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL). There are approximately 4,300 magnet and theme-based schools across the U.S. which are experiencing a renaissance as districts reconsider magnet schools to attract new students, provide choice and innovation and turn around low-performing schools.

The mission of Magnet Schools of America is “providing vision, leadership and support for innovative programs that promote choice, equity, diversity, access and excellence for all students.” MSA supports and

serves the leaders and teachers of magnet and theme-based schools, while promoting the development of new magnet programs and public schools of choice. It also connects with other professional organizations and encourages partnerships to support magnet programs. More information can be found online at www.magnet.edu.

The theory of action behind magnet schools is based on the idea that all students, no matter where they live or who they are, are endowed with unique interests, talents and abilities. These interests, talents and abilities are especially cultivated in a learning community that nurtures and develops them over time. Staff, who often share interests in the themes of magnet schools, are able to create a community of learners who take greater academic risk and engage with other students they may not otherwise engage and learn alongside because they attend a school where others have also been drawn to by the magnet focus. When magnet schools are offered to students, they can then seek schools that are of interest to them. When transportation is provided, a diverse learning community emerges.

The research on magnet schools is robust and clear. Students who attend these schools are more likely to have positive interracial friendships, lower absenteeism, higher achievement and graduation rates, peer support for student achievement, demonstrate college and career readiness and much more.

The landscape of public-school education is shifting to a system of family choice and engagement, personalized education and innovative teaching practices. Magnet Schools of America's Board of Directors recognized a need to serve this new paradigm. Over the last several years, the board has spent a great deal of time thinking about its role as the national association for magnet schools and how it can best serve its mission. As a result, the organization has made a greater commitment to support the development of high-quality magnet programs and the provision of direct services to members that result in improved magnet schools. In addition, MSA has outlined Five Pillars (or critical features) of effective magnet programs: Diversity; Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development; Academic Excellence; Leadership; and Family and Community Partnerships. Using the pillars below, MSA compiled empirical data based on school visits, school artifacts based on the Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence, data supplied by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, interviews, teacher focus groups, student focus groups, parent/community focus groups and a community survey.

Diversity is a cornerstone that offers students a global educational experience, which includes equity and access for every child creating a foundation for successful magnet schools. Through marketing, recruitment strategies and a balanced selection process, schools strive to generate student populations that are reflective of their communities. School choice provides educational environments that model empathy, respect, and collaboration and inclusion of all cultures.

Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development is developed to assure theme-based curriculum is supported by appropriate pedagogy. Effective teaching strategies, emulating from best practices, are implemented through the inclusion of the school's theme. Curriculum is based on high-quality rigorous standards that prepare students for higher education and career success.

Academic Excellence is demonstrated through a commitment to multidimensional instruction focused on the learner's needs. Multiple assessment strategies are employed to monitor student learning, progress and success. High expectations are clearly articulated and personalized supports are in place to address the interests and aspirations of all students.

Leadership at the school and district level is demonstrated by a commitment to continuous collaboration and monitoring by administrators for effective magnet school organization and systemic improvements. Leadership is rooted in well-educated professional educators. Decisions about hiring, budgets, training and pathways are collaborative and focus on sustainability of high-quality instructional systems.

Family and Community Partnerships are mutually beneficial, offer a system of support, shared ownership and a caring spirit and are designed to enhance a theme integrated educational environment. Partnerships with parents are essential for a rich educational experience for students. Community partnerships include a diverse array of stakeholders including business, health and human services and policymakers to support the education of all students.

As our magnet school experts reviewed the data and toured the school campuses, they looked for indicators that Charlotte-Mecklenburg magnet schools incorporated each of these Pillars.

National Pillars of Magnet School Excellence as a Diagnostic Tool

An integral part of determining a magnet school or program's effectiveness is the design and use of a diagnostic tool that reveals details about practices that demonstrate student success opportunities. In preparation for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools Site Visits, school and district leadership attended a meeting conducted by Magnet Schools of America reviewing the process for the magnet school site visits and the MSA Pillars and Standards. MSA in conjunction with CMS developed criteria for purposeful interviews, walk-throughs, data analysis, focus group dialogue and a community survey. Most magnet schools provided artifacts before the site visits based on how they were implementing the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence. Based on multiple observations, empirical evidence and important connections to school successes, especially student achievement, the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence are designed to ensure all students are college and career ready.

Cycle of Continuous Improvement

MSA believes that each magnet school can and must improve no matter what levels of performance it has achieved in its past. An external team of consultants from NIMSL identified areas of success and challenge for the individual magnet schools. Using the criteria described in the Pillars and Standards, the school, district and CMS can identify what elements of practice must be addressed to guide the improvement. MSA recommends the district and schools use the findings in this report to inform magnet school improvement planning in CMS by bringing all the experts to the table to revisit processes and outcomes and revise plans as needed - to intentionally identify, problem-solve, address barriers and improve implementation.

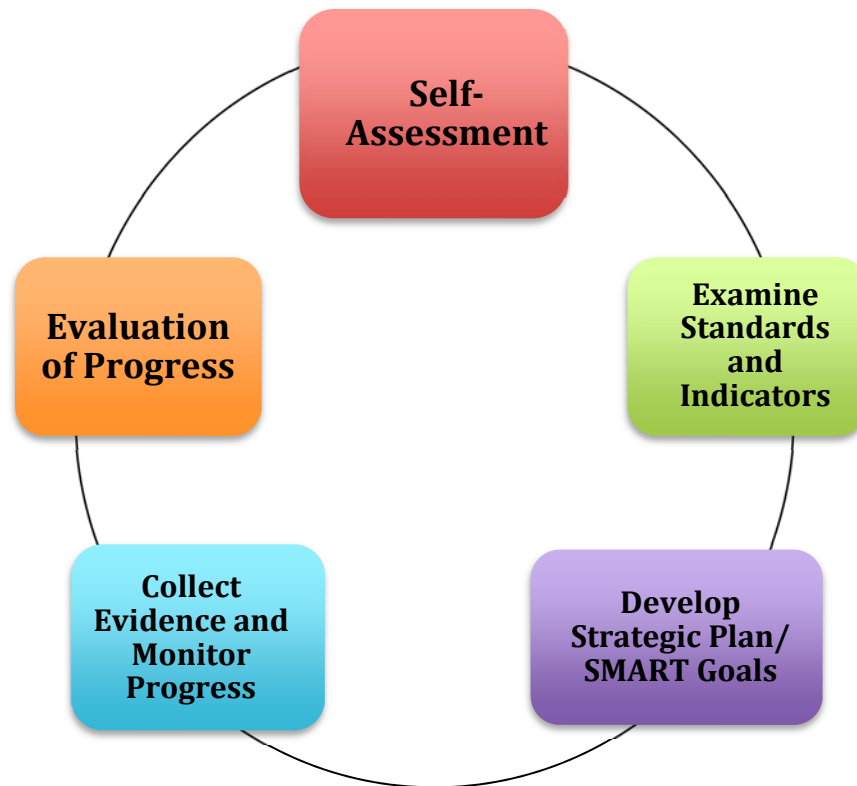
The Site Review

CMS welcomed the NIMSL team during the weeks of March 4-8 and March 11-15, 2024. The NIMSL team consisted of 14 highly trained magnet professionals from Florida, South Carolina, California, Nevada, Oregon, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Louisiana.

Standards folders with artifacts based on the MSA Pillars and Standards of Magnet School Excellence were asked to be completed by each school prior to the visit and reviewed by MSA to fine tune questions for the

site visits based on school needs. The team members visited each school campus arriving at each school site highly engaged with questions based on the Five Pillars and Standards of Magnet School Excellence and the protocols including a leadership interview, a walk-through, an intensive discussion based on each standard, a student focus group and a community focus group.

MSA and NIMSL would like to extend their gratitude to the school site leadership and staff for their hospitality.



It was evident that most of the schools thoroughly prepared for the visit, providing available information to support the protocol during a very busy time of year. We also want to thank staff for arranging and attending the focus groups that allowed stakeholders to give input and feedback in a non-intrusive setting and format. The focus groups and interviews brought additional insight to these reports and findings.

Methodology

The National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL) developed a methodology for the review of the magnet programs in CMS that would provide a multifaceted perspective on the success of their programs, especially related to the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence.

The methodology for this review included the following seven critical components:

1. **Quantitative data analysis:** We carefully analyzed the school-level data provided by CMS, to identify trends and opportunities in magnet school programs. This included the demographics of the magnet programs, magnet application data, school websites, North Carolina School Report Card data, North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey data, the National Center for Education Statistics website, etc. MSA magnet experts also carefully reviewed the artifacts uploaded to the School Standards folders prior to the visits.
2. **Site visits:** A team of fourteen magnet school experts from across the country spent ten days in CMS visiting 59 magnet schools. During the visits to each magnet site, the NIMSL reviewers conducted

interviews and walk-throughs focusing on protocols based on the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence.

3. **Parent/Community Focus Groups:** Parent/Community focus groups were conducted at most of the 59 magnet school sites. Parents and community members were allowed to provide their views of the magnet program at each school. The questions focused on suggestions for strengthening the magnet school, what parents see as unique about the magnet school, how business or community partners are welcomed into the school, how parents are engaged in the magnet theme and how the schools communicate with families.
4. **Student Focus Groups:** 58 student focus groups were conducted. Students were allowed to provide their views on the magnet program at their school. The questions focused on their favorite part of the school, what they would like to see changed, what was different from other schools in the area, how they felt about the academics at their school and what their future plans were.
5. **Interviews:** In both formal and informal interviews, school staff and administrators were asked a multitude of questions to provide context, history and perspective about the magnet schools in CMS and how they were striving to meet the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence.
6. **Community Survey:** A Community Survey was available for parents to complete from March 26-April 12, 2024 to reach a broader range of parents and community members than those in the Community Focus Groups. Parents and community members were allowed to provide their views on the Magnet Schools in CMS. Over 10,000 parents responded to the survey. The questions focused on the most important factors in choosing a magnet school, their thoughts on the magnet application process, other choice options they applied for and why, suggestions for ways to strengthen CMS magnet schools, other innovative themes/programs that would interest them and if they believed that CMS magnet schools offer high quality instruction.
7. **District Focus Groups and Interviews:** Four district focus groups were conducted virtually between March 25 and 28. The Early and Middle College District Focus Group met on March 25. The Superintendent's Cabinet District Focus Group met on March 27 and the Academic District Focus Group and the Operational District Focus Group met on March 28. District level personnel were asked a multitude of questions to allow them to provide their perspective about magnet schools in CMS.

Magnet Schools of America believes in a culture of continuous improvement and opportunities for acceleration. Through multiple previous reviews, MSA could combine the stated methodology with a vision for opportunities specifically designed for CMS magnet schools. The MSA community promotes this cycle of improvement and has ensured that the Pillars and Standards of Magnet School Excellence set forth a practice for schools and districts to provide optimal opportunities as designed from the Pillars and Standards as a diagnostic tool.

Best Practices

The National Magnet School Pillars include indicators related to diversity. Diverse magnet programs don't just appear; they are intentionally created through district recruitment practices and school policies that focus on equity of access to programs and services. The foundation of a diverse magnet program is the marketing and student enrollment plan. To achieve a diverse student population, it is critical to have a diverse applicant pool. Schools must actively, enthusiastically and strategically market magnet offerings to all racial,

socioeconomic, religious, linguistic, ability and citizenship groups. The second stage of diversity has to do with the school environment. Schools must be able to meet the needs of all students and set high expectations for all learners. Teachers must have the cultural proficiency necessary to design effective instruction for all learners. When magnet schools enroll diverse student populations and meet their academic needs, schools are able to eliminate racial achievement gaps and the disproportionality of student outcomes.

Magnet schools have a thematic curricular approach that is integrated throughout the school day and supported by an instructional focus such as inquiry, problem- or project-based learning, concept-based and interdisciplinary. Ongoing professional development, training and support for magnet school educators is essential to “magnetize” district curriculum and align standards to the theme and design learning structures.

The National Magnet School Pillars and Standards include indicators related to “magnetism.” For a school to attract students and families from outside its immediate community, it must offer something highly desirable. When magnet program offerings are exceptional, parents will seek them out for their children and send their students to those schools—regardless of the location of the school facility. In fact, many neighborhoods have been revitalized by the location of a strong magnet program that attracts middle-class families into what previously were low-income neighborhoods.

Magnet schools should be viewed as part of an ecosystem of schools and operate with the ability to be more flexible in how they deliver state and national standards, hiring of staff who may have or require specific training and fiscal flexibility to resource their schools in a manner that supports the theme. A greater level of autonomy should be paired with a greater level of accountability to the district, which should support schools with expertise and leadership to ensure they are meeting the goals and purpose of magnet schools for the district. Balancing these best practices with ever-changing demands placed on schools and districts take skill, commitment and leadership at the district and school level. Most importantly, it requires a commitment from community stakeholders, including families and their students. Being responsive to the changing needs of our economy while incorporating research-driven best practices will lead to sustainable and innovative magnet programs throughout the region.

Overall Findings

As a result of spending a day at each of the school sites, reviewing data, conducting interviews and focus groups, MSA made the following findings:

- The CMS community does not have a common understanding of the purpose of magnet schools in the district - teachers, parents, business partners, principals, district leadership, etc.
- The district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district strategic plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.
- CMS school administrators’ understanding of the purpose and goals of magnet schools varies greatly from program to program with some school leadership having minimal to no awareness concerning the specific purpose of a magnet school to reduce and/or prevent racial and socioeconomic isolation and that the magnet theme may promote school choice to change family enrollment patterns for the specific purpose to desegregate a school district.

- Although schools did not mention magnet schools being part of the district strategic plan, the overall feeling was that CMS values its magnet schools, but a variety of factors (financial, political, leadership changes over time) have presented challenges to sustaining magnet program integrity.
- 79% of people in the community survey agreed that diversity should be a goal of magnet schools.
- CMS made improvements to magnet transportation after adding additional magnet schools to the district and recommendations from a previous Magnet Schools of America (MSA) review in 2015.
- Due to recent county budget cuts, magnet transportation had to move to express transportation for high schools versus neighborhood transportation that they had previously and parents and students are concerned.
- Changes in start and end times of some magnet schools and as a result of the shift to express stops for all high schools created enough of a burden that some schools lost students and staff due to the increased traffic and the need for afternoon/early evening religious and extracurricular activities.
- Although express bussing has presented challenges at other schools, it has made West Charlotte somewhat more attractive to families because of the school's closer proximity to the city center in contrast to other IB magnet high schools.
- The district is divided into three transportation zones - violet, blue, green - with most magnet themes available with magnet transportation within each zone.
- Students receive transportation to magnet schools within their zone but can attend any magnet school if they provide transportation regardless of zone.
- In the community survey, parents and community members feel that many families are unaware of the numerous magnet programs available to them despite district efforts.
- According to some school staff, the shift in the CMS application timeline this year put limitations on some school's ability to recruit. Families who were considering school options were forced to make decisions earlier than they were used to.
- There is a need to simplify the magnet choice process so that parents can have a user-friendly resource that helps them determine what their neighborhood school would be and what their magnet options would be and how to access those options because many parents shared that the lottery process was confusing. In a community magnet school survey 64.57% of the respondents when asked "Have you ever applied to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools" answered "Yes." When asked "How would you describe the magnet application process?" 21% of respondents that answered that question said it was "Difficult to navigate" or "Very Difficult to navigate."
- Research shows open enrollment without consideration for student characteristics can further perpetuate segregation, therefore; it is a success the district lottery takes into account socioeconomic status to achieve socioeconomic diversity among schools.
- Selection criteria and processes, as well as school theme information and theme pathways are available via district-provided materials for the general public.
- The magnet selection priorities are not applied to open seats after the initial magnet selection period.
- A parent mentioned that the process for registering your child and applying for a program at the same time is confusing and should be separate.
- Allowing students to go to any magnet school in the district, if they provide their own transportation, favors higher socioeconomic parents who can afford to drive their students to the magnet schools they want and potentially negatively impacts socioeconomic and racial diversity.
- Non-magnet students in the neighborhood of magnet schools do not get a preference to get into the

secondary schools of their magnet pathways.

- It is unclear to what extent district and school-based practices such as recruitment and marketing and activities are designed to attract and retain students to support racial, ethnic and socioeconomic integration.
- The district primarily handles student recruitment and marketing, not the schools, beyond the CMS Magnet Fair held annually.
- According to the community survey, for the question "In addition to magnet schools, did you apply or consider any other school choice options available in the community?" 30% of respondents answered "Charter School" and 19% answered "Private School."
- In a community survey about magnet schools, when asked about attendance at: the District Magnet Fair, School Tours and Events, In-person District Information Sessions, and Virtual District Information Sessions 50% of respondents replied "Did not attend any magnet school events." However, in that same survey, for the question "How important were the following sources of information in your initial selection of particular schools of choice to visit?" the highest response rate for "very important" and "extremely important" was "School tours and/or virtual and in person school events" with a total of 5,256 responses followed by "Transportation Services/Level" at 4,410 responses.
- There is limited evidence of diversity reflective of the district in the enrollment of most district's magnet schools.
- No substantiated marketing plan for individual schools was consistently noted and targeted recruitment was virtually nonexistent for CMS magnet schools.
- In a community magnet school survey - for the question "Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply for a particular magnet school in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 5,351 answered. Ranking as "Extremely important" these were the top rankings (in order from most to least): School Reputation (2,327), Magnet Program Theme (2,116), Diversity of the School Community (1,652) and Type of Transportation Provided (1,647).
- According to the community survey, respondents said that it is difficult to find information about magnet schools on the district and school homepages, including English and Spanish language responses.
- Some parents perceive that the lottery process is unfair and unclear why they are not selected, perhaps because there is not clarity in the district about the purpose of magnets.
- There are geographic zone preferences for the Montessori and other magnet schools that could be impacting diversity goals at the schools.
- While some IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) schools have been making strong efforts to include all students at least somewhat in the MYP opportunities, only magnet students are part of the program and not the whole school which is a missed opportunity to create a schoolwide cohesive philosophy, enrich instruction, improve learning outcomes, etc.
- Increasing access to the Middle Years Programme (MYP) would increase access to the Diploma Programme (DP) and Career Programme (CP) in high school.
- While the district seems to be increasing their number of IB programs, there is not robust district support for IB training - a necessary component of being an IB school. In some cases families are fundraising for this training which is not a sustainable or scalable funding source.
- The Cambridge International Education program is being added to CMS and it is unclear how that program will be distinguished from the International Baccalaureate Program that is already in CMS as a global magnet theme.

- Some elementary and middle schools consider themselves “partial magnets” even though the district advertises that all K-8 school magnet themes are school-wide.
- There is confusion about the recent changes to not having entrance requirements at some magnet schools that the district has had for many years and some schools have adapted better than others.
- While there was excellent teaching and learning observed on some site visits, the Learning Immersion/Talent Development theme lacks a clear focus on innovation and primarily emphasizes best practices for learning. This lack of a distinct focus may pose challenges in articulating the theme effectively to attract students to the school to increase diversity.
- Learning Immersion/Talent Development magnet schools do not have a direct K-12 Pathway, they feed to IB secondary schools. Families want to stay together in a pathway beyond elementary school rather than go into the IB secondary magnet schools and some of the IB middle schools are very competitive to get into.
- Families at some of the magnet schools feel that magnets in CMS are the “haves” and the “have nots.”
- Parents are confused how CTE Academies operate versus magnet programs and which one you apply for through the lottery and which ones you only have access to at a certain high school.
- There is not an opportunity for teachers, principals or magnet coordinators in like-themed schools to collaborate and exchange best practices across campuses and grade levels.
- There is virtually no CMS principal and teacher training on magnet schools. Essential elements to high-quality magnet schools professional development in topics such as a school-wide, research-based instructional focus that supports the theme or integrated curriculum into the theme barely exist with the exception of several Montessori and IB schools.
- In the community survey 65% of respondents answered "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that Magnet Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg offer high quality instruction even though the survey, staff, student and family focus groups and site visits reveal the need for magnet theme integrated supports in magnet school classrooms.
- Principals have not been provided sufficient training to lead and support theme-based schools.
- There is inconsistency and a lack of transparency around some magnet schools having magnet coordinators to assist in theme implementation, marketing and recruiting. While some principals were creative in finding ways to fund this position, it was a challenge. Schools with these positions were much further ahead in their theme implementation.
- Compared to other districts with successful and sustainable magnet schools, the CMS magnet office is understaffed to serve the number of magnet programs, magnet school leaders and magnet students needing support with magnet theme integration, magnet theme professional development and marketing and recruiting.
- Currently, the district office does not have sufficient resources to provide leadership or training for magnet schools.
- The district has not developed and implemented a viable and sustainable financial plan for the magnet program.
- There is inconsistent financial support for magnet schools
- The schools overall do not “scream the theme” from the street or entrance to the magnet schools.
- District changes are sometimes done quickly and without a lot of communication to families. Families in many schools’ focus groups have said that while they love their school, they dislike that the district makes decisions without their input.

- There has been a lack of communication from the district around magnet realignment ex. Arts, Montessori.
- Early and Middle College principals are concerned about conversations going on in the district about middle colleges moving to be early colleges that the principals of middle and early colleges are not a part of.
- Principals are not specifically chosen to head magnet schools and magnet theme questions are not part of the interview process for hiring for magnet leadership.
- Sometimes more theme-based training is added for schools without helping the schools make the connections between the district-mandated curriculum and the theme-based curriculum.
- District leadership feels the need to take inventory of the magnet themes and determine what is part of the core experience that should be in all schools.
- Magnet theme curriculum fidelity varied widely by like-themed schools.
- District consideration of theme needs is secondary when placing teachers.

Overall Recommendations

Based on the above findings, MSA is making the following 37 recommendations. We believe that these overall recommendations should be taken in conjunction with the individual magnet school's recommendations as part of a larger district and school improvement process that will require additional planning and design.

1. Clarify the purpose, mission and goals of magnet programs in CMS. The entire community should know the purpose of magnets and the history of their inception - parents, business partners, principals, teachers, students, district leadership, etc. Create a community task force if necessary to help with this process.
2. Include the operation of magnet schools in the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools in creating racial and socioeconomic diversity.
3. Ensure that each magnet schools' School Improvement Plan includes specifics on how the school will address theme integration, targeted student recruitment to increase socioeconomic and racial diversity and professional development and training.
4. Ensure that every magnet school has a marketing plan detailing how the school will target student recruitment and marketing to increase socioeconomic and racial diversity.
5. Develop a strategic process for magnetizing, demagnetizing and determining the location and magnet theme of magnet schools to increase socioeconomic and racial diversity.
6. Offer similar and equitable programs in each transportation zone so that students do not have to leave their transportation zone and provide their own transportation for certain magnet themes.
7. Study the diversity and equity impact of allowing students to attend any magnet school in the district if they provide their own transportation.
8. Consider targeting under-enrolled magnet high schools for increased levels of transportation to improve enrollment and diversity.
9. Consider adjusting the geographic zone preferences of the Montessori magnet schools to help the Montessori magnet schools match the demographics of the district.
10. Develop a transparent, comprehensive financial sustainability plan for magnet programs that outlines dedicated funding sources, budget allocation and resource allocation strategies.
11. Create a framework for each magnet theme and what key positions, professional development, theme

essentials, etc. that each theme requires to be successful and make sure all magnet schools have access to the document for transparency.

12. Provide district financial resources for a dedicated magnet coordinator position at each school to oversee theme integration, marketing and recruiting.
13. Research applying for a federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program Grant (MSAP) during the next grant cycle that if awarded provides \$15 million over five years.
14. Create a budget plan to equitably provide teachers and magnet coordinators at each magnet school with professional development around the magnet theme and theme integration particularly but not limited to school themes with required training such as IB, Montessori, etc. to ensure that the magnet theme is implemented with fidelity.
15. Provide additional funding for magnet district personnel positions to support magnet school themes, professional development, recruitment and marketing.
16. Expand MYP across middle and high school MYPs for schoolwide implementation and not just for magnet students.
17. Simplify the magnet choice process so that parents can have a user-friendly resource that helps them determine what their neighborhood school would be and what their magnet options would be and how to access those options because many parents shared that the lottery process was confusing.
18. Consider having the magnet selection priorities applied after the initial magnet selection process to open magnet seats to ensure that the socioeconomic diversity achieved is not diluted.
19. Consider providing some kind of priority for non-magnet students in a magnet school to follow their magnet pathway.
20. Provide training to magnet principals, magnet coordinators and magnet teachers to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic and racial diversity goals and target enrollment and essential elements to high-quality magnet schools such as a school-wide, research-based instructional focus that supports the theme or integrated curriculum into the theme.
21. Create collaborative opportunities (for magnet theme and recruitment collaboration) for school leaders, magnet coordinators and master teachers to work with their colleagues at other CMS schools, including other theme alike magnet schools (horizontal planning) and other magnet schools in the K-12 pathway (vertical alignment).
22. Create a theme-based professional development plan that equips teachers with strategies for integrating their magnet themes across subjects. As a part of the plan, teachers should collaborate to develop theme-aligned lesson plans, units and projects.
23. Identify exemplary models of other magnet programs across the country to compare notes with and learn from and to ensure magnet schools are relevant and continually improving.
24. Ensure that all magnet school principals, coordinators and teachers are aware of the national organization for magnet schools, Magnet Schools of America (MSA), and the resources MSA provides for magnet schools such as professional development, networking, national conferences, etc.
25. Ensure that district hiring practices consider knowledge of the magnet theme, marketing skills and commitment to the purpose of magnets in the district when matching school leaders to schools.
26. Explore ways to make programs within schools, school-wide. Since all students are supposed to have access to the magnet theme in grades K-8, consider removing branding that refers to the schools as “partial magnet schools.” Despite some students attending on an application through the choice office, all students

- attend the magnet school and should have access to the theme and are therefore magnet students.
27. Provide flexibility and collaboration in relation to district mandated, scripted curriculum and instructional practices and support schools in how to integrate these practices into their magnet theme.
 28. Prominently display magnet schools' themes on school websites, in front of school buildings and street signage.
 29. It is difficult to find information about magnet schools on the district homepage and the school homepages. Consider making magnet school information more prominent on the district homepage and having magnet school leaders conduct school website audits to ensure the magnet information is prominent and inviting to families and the public.
 30. Provide district support to language immersion schools to ensure high quality curricular materials are available that are already translated into target languages to lessen the burden of language immersion teachers having to translate the district provided English materials.
 31. Review magnet themes for uniqueness and attraction versus what should be part of all students' core experience. As part of that process research what non-magnet schools in the district are doing so that magnet themes are unique from what non-magnet schools are offering.
 32. Review the LI/TD theme for its uniqueness and attractiveness to all students. Consider adding a parallel theme to the LI/TD theme such as world language, arts, STEM, etc.
 33. Study the impact that adding Cambridge programs to magnet schools will have on keeping International Baccalaureate magnet programs unique.
 34. As mentioned in parent focus groups and the community survey, consider getting community input before making significant adjustments in the magnet school application calendar as well as create a far reaching communications campaign. One comment in the survey "I never would have assumed that I needed to apply a full year before my children were old enough to get into the school. A lot of people do not know and miss out on these opportunities unless someone they know tells them."
 35. Develop and increase district-level marketing and recruitment materials.
 36. Ensure there is collaborative input from school leaders and families in district-wide change initiatives (ex. middle colleges moving to early colleges, moving magnet schools to new facilities).
 37. While many schools had family engagement and some had magnet theme-based partnerships, there was little to no district supported theme-based partnerships.

Statement of School Findings

Pillars Data

This report contains findings based on the protocols from the Pillars and Standards for each individual school. The findings in this report are provided to serve as a tool for the cycle of continuous improvement and not as a measure of quality in and of itself. This data should provide the school the unique capacity to identify and leverage their strengths and opportunities for improvement to significantly impact their magnet school program options and ultimately impact student college and career readiness.

Recommendation Priorities

The expectations for this review were clearly defined by CMS as measuring each of 59 magnet schools in CMS to determine how each school compares to the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet School Excellence:

1. Diversity
2. Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development
3. Academic Excellence
4. Leadership
5. Family and Community Partnerships

Albemarle Road Middle School - IB

Albemarle Road Middle School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The district uses socioeconomic status as a magnet selection criterion in order to better balance diversity across the schools. Selection criteria and processes—as well as school theme information and theme pathways—are available via district-provided materials for the general public, although the materials could be presented in a more user-friendly format.
- The International Baccalaureate (IB) K-12 pathway is available, with guaranteed entry to pathway magnet schools. The pathway is promoted in Albemarle Road Middle School magnet materials.
- The school participates in the district magnet fair and hosts open houses and tours. The school also visits some feeder elementary schools.

Challenges:

- Parents reflected that the IB pathway to East Mecklenburg High School should be better promoted at Albemarle Road Middle School to ensure that students follow the IB pathway and engage in the expanded academic opportunities afforded by the IB partner high school.
- The shift to express bussing has caused significant strain on many magnet families. Parents in attendance for the focus group expressed that they have determined ways of making the new system

work for their families, but they all know other families that have left magnet schools due to a lack of transportation, which is a significant issue for equity and access.

- Since 2019, each grade level has not filled magnet seats available, with a range of approximately 20-50 unfilled each year per grade level. The school and district need to clarify recruitment goals. For example, what are the targeted families, neighborhoods, focus elementary schools, etc.? Then, marketing to these targeted schools/families could be leveraged to ensure the school meets its recruitment goals. A recruitment and marketing plan could be enacted through social media, direct mail, school visits, etc., with additional district support for publications, promotional materials and postage.
- Compared to the overall district, Albemarle Road Middle School's demographics include a significantly larger percentage of Hispanic students (59% in the school vs. 31% in the district), a significantly smaller percentage of Caucasian students (4% in the school vs. 24% in the district) and a smaller percentage of Black students (25% in the school vs. 35% in the district).

Recommendations:

- Identify recruitment goals for SES, race, etc. And implement a recruitment plan to help reach those recruitment goals. Within these goals/plans, consider methods for attracting Caucasian students (which are underrepresented in school demographics) to the school through targeted recruitment, marketing and transportation realignment.
- Educate current Albemarle Road Middle School students on the benefits afforded by the high school IB programs in order to attract non-magnet students to join the magnet program in middle school and thereby access the IB high school opportunities in the pathway.
- Reconsider the recent changes to the magnet transportation system in order to emphasize equity and access for students who are unable to provide their own school transportation.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Magnet student demographics are nearly identical to overall school demographics.
- The student body represents approximately 30 countries of origin. 409 students have language background profiles that necessitated testing for entry to the multilingual program.
- School documents demonstrate an "IB for all" philosophy, including a Special Needs/Inclusion Policy, Language Policy, monthly newsletters highlighting the diversity of IB learners and a daily newscast featuring school and global diversity. The observed schoolwide newscast included African dance, a focus on social justice themes and diverse model risk-takers (the monthly IB Learner Profile trait).
- Students, parents, teachers and administration reflect that diversity is one of the highlights of the school overall, although one Caucasian student identified that she feels racially isolated.
- Numerous events highlight the diversity of the school events, including an International Festival, Black History Month events, Women's History Month events, African Dance Festival, etc.
- The school and all classrooms have numerous displays to emphasize successes of diverse individuals, often applied to IB Learner Profile characteristics.
- Teachers use multiple teaching/learning approaches to support students from numerous backgrounds.

Challenges:

- To meet IB requirements, students must take a world language and Spanish is the only one offered, starting at middle school level 1. A large percentage of students have Spanish as a heritage language, so the regular middle school Spanish course may not be the best fit for their needs.

Recommendations:

- Consider broadening World Language options, including a Spanish for Heritage Speakers course and other options to support diverse language learner needs.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The magnet theme is defined and generally integrated. IB lesson and unit plans are reflected on annually and emphasize the key IB concepts that are expected to be emphasized across the curriculum. Classroom bulletin boards display IB questions and concepts of the current unit plan.
- The IB Programme Development Plan emphasizes a schoolwide focus on the integration of the IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning.
- The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) theme is evident throughout the building, including the exterior signs, international flags hanging in the common areas, IB Learner Profile traits displayed in the library and in every classroom, etc.
- Some differentiation was evident through classroom grouping strategies and varied teaching/learning strategies.

Challenges:

- Due to teacher turnover, the school has lost some of its IB momentum and they are refocusing on the IB programme fundamentals—IB learner profile, Approaches to Teaching and Learning, etc., particularly for new hires.
- Although a variety of instructional strategies were observed, in most classes, there was little evidence during the limited observation of the deep inquiry, questioning, research and exploration that would align best with the IB philosophy.
- The teacher focus group reflected that they would like to have additional support in implementing strategies for more meaningful and impactful differentiation in order to target individual student needs for remediation, acceleration and enrichment.

Recommendations:

- Train new hires and guest teachers to implement the IB curriculum with fidelity.
- Emphasize higher order thinking and inquiry into the curriculum of all courses.
- Train staff on additional methods for differentiation to support individual student academic needs.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- School-based IB professional development takes place through professional learning teams, which meet twice weekly. These teams reflect on and update IB unit planners on an ongoing basis.
- Staff professional development workdays focus on vertical alignment among courses and on planning for interdisciplinary IB projects, which occur several times per year. Staff appreciate these projects for allowing them to collaborate with colleagues in other departments and for broadening student perspectives.

- The district provides funding for at least two teachers per year to work for one-two weeks in the summer to create and refine unit plans to integrate the IB into the state curriculum requirements.
- Teachers provide feedback and recommendations for professional development and teacher-leaders coach their colleagues on curriculum design and effective pedagogy. As was expressed both by teachers and administrators, administration carefully considers teacher reflection and feedback when finalizing professional development plans.

Challenges:

- As IB programs across the district have expanded, so has the need for teachers to participate in official IB training. However, training budgets have not expanded, so many Albemarle Road Middle School teachers who need to attend official, off-site IB training have not been able to do so. Although the school has done an admirable job filling in gaps when possible, the district needs to provide additional financial support to ensure that IB teachers are able to meet the training requirements from the IB.

Recommendations:

- Provide district funding to ensure that all IB teachers have met or exceeded minimal training/certification requirements for the IB.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school has established five realms of excellence for students: invested, engaged learner, respectful and scholarly, effective communicators and family. These themes are evident in the school philosophy and ongoing conversations with students, parents and staff. According to administration, these five realms of excellence form the “why” behind the implementation of the IB learner profile, Approaches to Teaching and Learning and IB lesson/unit planning.
- The school researches best practices. For example, on the day of the visit, a team of administrators took a portion of the day to observe flexible grouping strategies used at another school in the district.
- The school uses multiple forms of formative assessment data to track student progress toward meeting benchmarks in all subject areas; students who show growth/proficiency are celebrated on bulletin boards and the school announcements.
- Albemarle Road Middle has exceeded growth standards in reading for the past two years (2022 and 2023).
- The school uses effective documentation for IB unit planners that assist in the integration of the IB MYP theme throughout the curriculum.
- There are two interventionists on the staff and students additionally engage with interventions through multilingual programs and exceptional children programs. The school uses MTSS as a model for ensuring appropriate support for students.

Challenges:

- Based on student proficiency rates on state mandated exams, Albemarle Road Middle School has been rated as a D school by the state of NC each year since 2019 except during 2020 and 2021, when COVID-related waivers prevented reporting. The D-rating is based on 80% proficiency and 20% growth in student performance. Albemarle Road Middle has not met growth standards in math post-COVID and this is a primary focus of the School Improvement Plan.

- Multiple students are taking high school Math 2 through NC Virtual Public Schools because the school is unable to staff the course. The Math 2 course in middle school is very useful in providing access to the IB Diploma Programme and the NC Virtual course would not implement the IB goals and philosophy.
- Although there is a framework for effective IB learning, the IB philosophy of inquiry, research and global connections was not evident in classroom observations.

Recommendations:

- Emphasize skills, differentiation strategies and interventions that will lead students to achieve higher examination proficiency and growth scores.
- Provide an opportunity for students to take an MYP-focused Math 2 class within the school building in order to create access to more advanced high school math options, particularly at the partner IB high school.
- Deepen and enrich the IB philosophy embedded within all courses—beyond the basic terminology of the IB and more thoroughly into the processes of inquiry, research, transdisciplinary thinking and community engagement.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- In the past two years, all reported demographic subgroups have achieved growth overall on state exams due to exceptional growth on reading exam scores, which helps to overcome the lack of growth on math exam scores.
- The school implements a variety of assessment strategies beyond state requirements, including various project-based assessments and the IB Community Project.
- The school uses extensive data analysis protocols to track and improve student achievement.
- The school celebrates student growth and achievement in every subject area on bulletin boards, in school announcements and via prizes/incentives.

Challenges:

- Students have not demonstrated growth on math examinations.
- The most visible celebrations of student achievement successes are focused on state testing requirements through bulletin boards throughout the building and other public celebrations. Theme based achievement is somewhat visible but significantly less prominent.

Recommendations:

- Emphasize student proficiency, achievement and growth on state mandated examinations.
- Display further examples of student success with the magnet theme throughout the building and in all classrooms.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Foundational theme structures are in place, including IB unit planning and the use of IB terminology, as was evident in classroom observations.
- School leadership has implemented a very impressive cadre structure, in which all faculty members participate in school improvement processes.

- School leadership is very open to staff feedback via “open mic” events and anonymous surveys, which allow for open, honest feedback on school operations.
- The school has autonomy to hire staff to support the magnet theme, although qualified staff have been difficult to find.
- The IB coordinator and district specialist have worked with staff members/PLC leaders in the development of their unit planners.

Challenges:

- Theme implementation is occurring to a large extent but could be deepened to demonstrate further fidelity to the IB programme intentions, goals and philosophy.

Recommendations:

- Deepen engagement with the IB planning and implementation processes beyond the basic IB terminology to further extend and enrich student learning and focus on inquiry, global connections, research, collaboration, problem-solving and creativity.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for current IB magnet students into East Mecklenburg High School.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools.
- The IB magnet program within the school has a full-time IB specialist.

Challenges:

- The district financial plan does not appear to allow for the school to meet all teacher training requirements for the IB.
- District practices could clarify why magnet programs are placed at various schools and the underlying purpose for magnet programs.

Recommendations:

- Provide district funding to ensure that teachers meet or exceed IB training requirements.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- There are partnerships with various businesses, nonprofits, arts organizations and churches to support student achievement. Many of these organizations provide incentives to encourage student achievement.

Challenges:

- There is not a noted protocol for the establishment and sustainability of school partnerships.
- Partnerships are not theme-based and most of them do not provide direct academic support.
- It is not evident that the district helps to facilitate school partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Expand partnerships to enhance teaching and learning in the IB programs, including through universities, travel organizations, world language institutes, international businesses, etc.
- Create a partnership protocol to articulate partnership needs, guidelines and procedures and to ensure that partners receive program updates and can be involved in program implementation/improvement.

- Ensure that the district office encourages and facilitates partnership development.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school's climate is welcoming to families and engaging.
- Families receive information from the school via a texting program that the school can have translated into multiple languages.
- Staff respond quickly to messages within the communication platform and they are required to respond to emails within 24 hours.
- Families are invited to multiple events annually, such as various cultural celebrations. They are always provided with the opportunity to give feedback, which is reflected on by the School Improvement Parent Relations Cadre.
- School data and the School Improvement Plan are publicly accessible via the school and state websites.

Challenges:

- Although the School Improvement Team (parent connections cadre) has worked extensively to determine how to make it possible by trying various schedules and publicity techniques, there is no active PTA at Albemarle Road Middle School.

Recommendations:

- Develop an active PTA to ensure collaborative work and feedback from parents and families.

Overall Recommendations for Albemarle Road Middle School:

- Identify recruitment goals for SES, race, etc. and implement a recruitment plan to help reach those recruitment goals. Within these goals/plans, consider methods for attracting Caucasian students (which are underrepresented in school demographics) to the school through targeted recruitment, marketing and transportation realignment.
- Consider broadening World Language options, including a Spanish for Heritage Speakers course and other options to support diverse language learner needs.
- Provide district funding to ensure that all IB teachers have met or exceeded minimal training/certification requirements for the IB.
- Deepen and enrich the IB philosophy embedded within all courses—beyond the basic terminology of the IB and more thoroughly into the processes of inquiry, research, transdisciplinary thinking and community engagement.
- Develop an active PTA to ensure collaborative work and feedback from parents and families.

Billingsville-Cotswold Elementary School - IB

Billingsville-Cotswold Elementary School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development	X		

5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Research shows open enrollment without consideration for student characteristics can further perpetuate segregation, therefore; it is a success the district lottery takes into account socioeconomic status to achieve socioeconomic diversity among schools.
- Billingsville Cotswold ES received a Magnet Schools of America “School of Distinction Award 2024” and has used the award for marketing and recruitment.
- Billingsville Cotswold ES is a Magnet Schools of America “Certified Magnet School 2017 and 2022” and has used certification for marketing and recruitment.
- In 2017-18, prior to school merger, both school campuses were more racially isolated, for example: (Billingsville campus) Black 79.6%, Caucasian 1.9%, Hispanic 13.8 and (Cotswold campus) Black 27.3%, Caucasian 55.4%, Hispanic 11.9%, however; 2021-22 combined data shows after the merger: American Indian/Alaska Native 0.1%; Asian 3.9%; Black 44.3%; Hispanic 13.9%; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 0%; Caucasian 33.9%; Two or More Races 3.9%, demographics significantly closer to district demographics.

Challenges:

- Discussion with families reveals district provided transportation often prevents families from applying to specific magnet schools based on location which may be limiting district wide desegregation efforts.
- Review of the district’s school choice website shows once a magnet student’s grade level is complete, magnet students are automatically advanced to the next level of the magnet theme. However, neighborhood students must enroll into a magnet seat within their neighborhood school to receive the continuing guarantee and families have expressed the requirement as a barrier to magnet pathways K-12.

Recommendations:

- Reconsider transportation zones to ensure transportation barriers are not limiting factors to district wide desegregation.
- Reconsider enrollment requirements for neighborhood students. The neighborhood students are required to apply to magnet programs in their neighborhood schools to receive the magnet continuation guarantee.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Billingsville Cotswold ES has a diversity statement posted on its website: Billingsville Cotswold strives for students to become lifelong learners by actively pursuing social and academic excellence in a

rigorous curriculum and multicultural environment. Students are encouraged to be internationally-minded and develop understanding, acceptance and appreciation of diversity.

- Discussion with Leadership and Teachers shows training has taken place to support changes in student demographics and instructional practices, for example; professional development in cultural pedagogy, Multi-tiered Systems of Support, Juvenile Justice System-Dismantling Racism, Implicit Bias Training And Dr. Lewis Urban Ed Program diversity training.
- Review of recent demographic data shows the school merger of an IB magnet program is attracting families into the magnet program to assist with reducing racial isolation, specifically: Billingsville campus neighborhood students Black/African American 41%, Caucasian 34%, Hispanic 17% while Billingsville campus magnet students Black/African American 12%, Caucasian 71%, Hispanic 8% and Cotswold neighborhood campus students Black/African American 40%, Caucasian 36%, Hispanic 15% while Billingsville campus magnet students Black/African American 18%, Caucasian 65%, Hispanic 5%.

Challenges:

- While successful changes in student demographics have occurred, the school demographics do not reflect the district demographics.

Recommendations:

- Increase marketing and recruitment targeted to diverse student populations.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The IB Primary Years Program emphasizes a well-rounded education and as shown in School Report Cards for Art Education, at (Billingsville campus) 96.7% of students participate in music and 96.7% of students participate in Visual Art And at (Cotswold campus) 100% of students participate in music and 100% of students participate in Visual Art, both schools are above state percentages of 91.3% music and 90% Visual Art.
- The IB Primary Years Program requires external evaluation every five years for program implementation and it is evident through review of school artifacts the school continues to consistently implement and improve the magnet theme integration into subjects and across courses.
- As observed during classroom and school walkthroughs the magnet theme is consistently evident in all grade-level classrooms on both campuses, in hallways, playground areas, library and main office entrance area.

Challenges:

- The cycle of improvement to improve theme integration is limited by lack of sufficient IB certification training beyond minimal requirements to meet IB compliance.

Recommendations:

- Expand district financial resources to fund teacher attendance at higher-level IB certification workshops to support the cycle of improvement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Data in the (Billingsville campus) Report Card shows (Billingsville campus) has 91.1% experienced teachers, 8.9% beginning teachers and 100% non-provisional licensed teachers, reflecting an appropriately licensed faculty.
- Data in the (Cotswold campus) Report Card shows (Cotswold campus) has 85.1% experienced teachers, 14.9% beginning teachers and 94.9% non-provisional licensed teachers, percentages above district percentages.
- Review of school artifacts shows the school regularly provides theme based coaching and professional development between colleagues to ensure IB relevant training regularly occurs and provides an introductory IB program workshop to all new faculty.

Challenges:

- Review of school artifacts and discussions with leadership and teachers show Billingsville Cotswold ES teachers attend required IB certification training, however, resources are limited to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified workshops which would deepen IB implementation and strengthen IB sustainability.

Recommendations:

- Provide district budget allocations to ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to meet IB required teacher training as well as provide financial resources to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified training.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Review of school artifacts shows multiple modes of student learning are aligned to the IB magnet theme and are regularly used.
- Discussions with staff and review of artifacts reveal a strong multi-tiered system of support is in place to ensure students are successful with the theme.
- Classroom observations, review of artifacts and discussions with teachers reveal a consistent schoolwide philosophy of teaching/learning through differentiated instruction and magnet theme alignment.
- Discussions with students reveals multiple modes of learning are used to engage students and support diverse student learning styles.

Challenges:

- Discussion with teachers reveals state science standards will change next school year.

Recommendations:

- Provide thematic coaching to teachers to support aligning new state science standards to IB curriculum units and summative assessments.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Data in the Billingsville Cotswold ES Report Cards show Performance Grade Score History for overall school performance improved from 2022 45-D to 2023 59-C.
- Over the past eight years at the Billingsville campus, overall school performance improved from 2014 39-F to 2023 59-C.

- At the Cotswold campus, overall school academic growth improved from 2022 59.5% not met to 2023 80.9% met and in 2023 growth was met for both math and reading.
- Data in the Billingsville Cotswold ES Report Cards show Performance Grade Score gaps are decreasing between demographic groups in math, reading and science.
- English learners at the Billingsville campus met progress towards English language attainment at 52.6%, well above the district percentage at 28.8%.
- The school has a well-documented process showing by grade, by individual student, how a multi-tiered system of support and other interventions are used to address student achievement.

Challenges:

- Review of the School's Report Card shows while the school has improved overall and achievement gaps are decreasing between student demographics, achievement gaps continue to exist between student demographics.

Recommendations:

- Expand tutoring options to students through HEART and Help Tutoring community partnerships.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Observations conducted through classroom walkthroughs at both school campuses shows the IB PYP magnet theme is consistently implemented with fidelity as the Learner Profile, Approaches to Learning and Inquiry Units were evident in every classroom and student worked was displayed as evidence to show summative and formative assessment aligned to the theme.
- Teachers regularly meet to collaborate and make decisions for grade-level IB unit planning.
- The IB coordinator regularly facilitates and participates in thematic coaching among teachers and staff.

Challenges:

- District level IB collaboration between schools has decreased over the past two years.

Recommendations:

- Expand IB collaboration opportunities for IB teachers across IB PYP schools to support thematic instructional coaching.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Discussions with leadership reveal the district IB staff conducts IB theme meetings and facilitates discussions among IB school staff.

Challenges:

- Review of artifacts and the district website show the district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however; the district strategic plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.
- Review of the district's school choice website shows once a magnet student's grade level is complete, magnet students are automatically advanced to the next level of the magnet theme. However, neighborhood students must enroll into a magnet seat within their neighborhood school to receive the continuation guarantee and families have expressed the requirement as a barrier to magnet pathways K-12.

- Discussion with leadership reveals the Billingsville Cotswold Elementary School has a dedicated IB coordinator as a dedicated magnet coordinator, however, the position is funded by utilizing a school teacher position and always subject to change.

Recommendations:

- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.
- Reconsider enrollment requirements for neighborhood students. Neighborhood students are required to apply to magnet programs in their neighborhood schools to receive the magnet continuation guarantee.
- Provide resources for an IB elementary school magnet coordinator position to meet IB requirements.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Review of school artifacts and conversations with leadership, teachers and families show the school has a multitude of community partnerships supporting school wide initiatives as well as classroom instruction, examples; HELP and HEART tutoring, Team 24/7 Males to mentor 5th grade male students, the community Hub, YWCA, Myers Park High School students and many more partnerships.
- The school hosts a monthly community partnership meeting with all partnerships to discuss what the school has received and what partnerships can further provide to ensure support for all students.
- Community partnerships regularly participate in the annual IB 5th grade student exhibition which connects the community to the school.

Challenges:

- District supported partnerships aligned to the IB theme are minimal at the school.

Recommendations:

- Increase district supported IB theme community partnerships across all IB schools.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Chronic absenteeism (often an indicator of student engagement) is shown in NC School Report Cards for the Billingsville campus at 24.5% and for the Cotswold campus at 23.1%, both percentages are below the district 25.6% and state 26.7%.
- Discussions with members of the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) reveal a strong partnership between the school and families.
- The school's PTA actively recruits families to participate in decision-making opportunities to ensure all families from diverse backgrounds are represented.

Challenges:

- Discussions with families reveal PTA funds are used to send teachers to IB certified workshops.

Recommendations:

- Replace the use of PTA funds with district resources to meet IB program requirements.

Overall Recommendations for Billingsville Cotswold Elementary School:

- Reconsider transportation zones to ensure transportation barriers are not limiting factors to district wide desegregation.
- Reconsider enrollment requirements for neighborhood students. Neighborhood students are required to apply to magnet programs in their neighborhood schools to receive the magnet continuation guarantee.
- Expand IB collaboration opportunities for IB teachers across IB PYP schools to support thematic instructional coaching.
- Provide budget allocations to ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to meet IB required teacher training as well as provide financial resources to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified training.
- Provide resources for an IB elementary school IB coordinator position to meet IB requirements

Blythe Elementary School - IB

Blythe Elementary School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process.

Challenges:

- School reports that the neighborhood is experiencing growth due to new construction and the community school is the preferred school for families in the neighborhood.
- Transportation for students living outside of district transportation express stops is a barrier for attracting a diverse population. Parents report that hour-long bus rides before and after school are undesirable and impact family life and after school activities.
- There was no evidence of a written diversity plan or a recruitment plan.
- Current enrollment is not reflective of the district's diversity goals. Total school enrollment: .5% - American Indian/Alaska Native; 6.3% - Asian; 22.8% - Hispanic; 56.3% - African-American; 4.5%

multiracial; 9.5% - Caucasian. District enrollment: .10% - American Indian/Alaska Native; 7.20% - Asian; 30.60% - Hispanic; 28.80% - African-American; 3.600% multiracial; 23.80% - Caucasian.

Recommendations:

- Explore transportation options for students in targeted recruitment zones to meet diversity goals.
- Formalize a written diversity plan with targeted enrollment goals in alignment with the district's diversity goals.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Recognized by Magnet Schools of America as a Magnet School of Excellence 2024.
- School completed IB PYP certification in February 2024.
- School policy mirrors the IB Learner Profile which emphasizes the importance of student diversity.
- Ten Nationally Board Certified Teachers.
- With additional funding, 25 staff members were trained 2023-2024. Although all staff members are now IB trained, there is a need for refresher training for 25% of the staff.
- K-2, 3-5 Literacy facilitators; K-5 Talent Development (TD)/Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Facilitator, Magnet Theme Coordinator/3-5 Math Facilitator, bring support and resources by linking vertical standards.
- Student enrollment does not reflect the diversity of the community, however classes do reflect that of the student enrollment.

Challenges:

- Staff reports that they have not been intentional regarding horizontal planning.
- Lack of resources and time for horizontal planning.

Recommendations:

- Secure support and resources for school based horizontal planning time in alignment with the school improvement plan and theme goals.
- Formalize a written diversity plan with targeted enrollment goals in alignment with the district's diversity goals.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- All students have access to IB PYP.
- Leadership noted a trend in families returning from charter/private schools to Blythe because of the theme, rigor and school climate.
- Every classroom visited had IB Learner Profiles and unit lesson objectives posted and student work posted inside the classrooms and hallways.
- Monthly multicultural celebrations are held to highlight and honor the diversity within the school.
- Clubs and organizations activities are aligned to the magnet theme.
- The entire school "screams the theme" as noted by the reviewer and the parent focus group.

Challenges:

- Additional time is needed to collaborate beyond weekly PLCs and data dives.

- The magnet coordinator and 3-5 math facilitator is a split position. There is a need for a full time person in both positions.

Recommendations:

- Secure funding for a full time magnet coordinator and a 3-5 math facilitator to provide support for the theme and core subjects.
- Create time for additional planning time beyond weekly PLC's and data dives.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- All staff are IB trained.
- Theme based professional development, reflection, data dives and instructional planning occurs weekly during PLCs.
- Academic expectations and the magnet theme are visible throughout the school.
- Student focus group confirmed there were theme expectations in extracurricular activities.

Challenges:

- Budgeting limits training opportunities.

Recommendations:

- Standardize a plan linking professional development to the curriculum, theme and student academic achievement.
- Formally link extracurricular activities to the theme.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- IB Learner Profile Principles and strategies are fully implemented across the curriculum and within the theme.
- All students have access to theme based curriculum in core subjects and extended extracurricular activities.
- Through PLCs and weekly meetings, teachers review indicators for developing, proficient and accomplished students. Academic and Talent Development (TD) facilitators assist with planning and instructional strategies to meet students at their levels.
- Small groups with the support of teacher assistants, flexible grouping and MTSS support help address individual student needs and interventions.

Challenges:

- Staffing issues with the inability to deliver curriculum with fidelity.

Recommendations:

- Monitor instruction and interim assessments to determine adjustments to instruction and instructional support needs.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Curriculum integration, articulation and interventions are discussed in PLCs and grade level meetings along with MTSS meetings.

- Students identified as TD/AIG receive additional support for the TD/AIG facilitator in a ‘push in’ model adopted by the school. Feedback from the student focus group indicates students respond well to that model while feeling challenged and pushed to their highest potential.
- North Carolina academic student performance data show academic goals: *2018 - Not Met; 2019 - Exceeded goals; 2022 - Exceeded goals; 2023 - Not Met*. The school’s analysis noted contributing factors to the decline in scores were staffing issues following the pandemic where year-long substitute teachers were in grades 4 and 5.
- School improvement goals with accountability measures and staff training show an upward trend in student performance based on interim assessments.

Challenges:

- Staffing issues with inability to deliver curriculum with fidelity.

Recommendations:

- Monitor instruction and interim assessments to determine adjustments to instruction and instructional support needs.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- IB Learner Profile is prominent throughout the school.
- Theme integration is apparent in all classrooms observed by the reviewer including music and art.
- Leadership team including magnet theme coordinator and facilitators meet weekly and monthly with staff to review and collaborate on achievement goals, theme integration and school operations.
- Teacher focus group feedback noted the school climate is one of collaboration, celebrations, communication and recognition.
- Magnet and academic coordinators are in classrooms daily to provide support to teachers and students.

Challenges:

- Administration converted teaching units to magnet theme coordinator and academic coaches to provide support to address student achievement.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to get district support to fund a magnet coordinator.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear pathway for IB magnet themes K-12.

Challenges:

- Resources are not consistently available to support a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme.
- Transportation express stops have been noted by parent focus groups as a barrier to attending choice magnet schools.
- There is no district strategic plan or financial plan that includes magnets.
- Teacher focus groups noted limited district led curriculum support for magnets.
- Parent focus groups noted limited communication from the district office regarding magnet schools and district realignment of magnet schools.

Recommendations:

- Enhance the district communication and marketing plan to include social media, public television, radio and various media platforms to market magnet schools and update parents on magnet school plans and realignment.
- Review and analyze the magnet transportation plan to determine impact on magnet school recruitment, selection and retention.
- Resources are not consistently available to support a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- Thriving and sustained partnerships with the faith based community, Duke Energy, Girls that Run, Math Olympiad and Carolina Kids are among several community partnerships that support the theme, extracurricular activities, student needs and student/staff recognition activities.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of district supported partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Develop a protocol for establishing and evaluating the effectiveness of partnerships as it relates to supporting the curriculum and the magnet theme.
- Establish expectations and train staff on marketing efforts to enhance the academic and theme experience while building community relationships to support the theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- Student, staff and parent focus groups noted the climate as warm, caring, inviting and embracing diversity while delivering a quality, rigorous instructional program.
- PTA supports staff, students and the curriculum through fundraisers and family activities that promote family engagement, celebration of the school community, service learning and development of life skills. Most noted were the cultural celebrations including the trunk or treat with a cultural twist. Families decorated trunks to teach students about their heritage, country, language, food, traditions and cultural attire.
- Parents described communication as exceptional. There is a regular stream of information going to families regarding school activities and opportunities for parent involvement.
- School improvement plan and achievement data are available on the school and district websites accessible to parents and the community.

Challenges:

- Parent focus group suggested a goal of increasing parent involvement.

Recommendations:

- In partnership with PTA, develop a plan to increase parent involvement.

Overall Recommendations for Blythe Elementary School:

- Review and analyze the magnet transportation plan to determine impact on magnet school recruitment and retention.
- Develop a plan to get district support to fund a magnet coordinator.
- Develop a protocol including metrics for establishing and evaluating the effectiveness of partnerships as it relates to supporting the curriculum and the theme.
- Include in the school improvement plan goals to provide updated IB training for all staff.
- Enhance the student recruitment and marketing plan to include diversity goals and targeted recruitment in alignment with district goals.

Bruns Avenue Elementary School - STEM

Bruns Avenue Elementary School - STEM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school participates in the district's magnet fair, open house process and accommodates tours upon request.
- The school is moving to a new building next door. The new building is able to support triple the number of students as the current building.

Challenges:

- The word 'magnet' or anything theme-related is not a part of the school's name. The school's name has changed several times in recent years. The school served the K-8 population until 2 years ago.
- 95.5% of the students at the school are Black and 75.5% are considered Economically Disadvantaged according to the NC Report Card - not mirroring the diversity of the district.
- One of the principal's responsibilities listed in the staff handbook is "Magnet School Coordinator."
- Based on conversations with teachers, principals and parents, there is no clarity around what the plan is for the school since the new building is able to support triple the number of current students enrolled.
- The assistant principal and principal were both in place for months before knowing that the school they serve is a "partial magnet." There is no clarity with teachers/parents/administrators around what "partial magnet means" this means.

- Based on the parent focus group, there is no magnet acceptance notification. A parent reported that if her husband did not work for the school and had access to the secretary, then she would have had no idea that her child was accepted to the school.
- There is little clarity around entrance and assignment. Parent anecdote included a letter from the district stating that if her child applied to Piedmont (a highly sought after IB theme) that the district would support the family with transportation. When the principal was asked for clarification, he was unable to explain why the district contacted this family for entrance into a program on a different pathway in a different color zone.
- Classes do not reflect the diversity of the district or community. District is 34.7% Black/Bruns is 74.2%; District is 23.8% Caucasian/Bruns is 0.9% Caucasian; District is 30.6% Hispanic/Bruns is 21.6% Hispanic. District is 44.3% % of Economically Disadvantaged/Bruns is 75.5% according to North Carolina Department of Public Instruction public records.
- One parent made the statement that “Magnet schools in CMS are known as “the haves and the have-nots” and that “Bruns Avenue is a community school for the have-nots.”

Recommendations:

- Hire a magnet coordinator to support the work of targeted marketing and recruitment as well as support families in the choice process.
- The district should clearly communicate the school's magnet status (partial or full) and its theme/focus with all stakeholders. Principals, teachers and parents do not have an understanding of what it means to be a partial magnet.
- Create a targeted marketing/recruitment plan that includes marketing materials, promotional videos that show the theme, gaining input/involving individuals from the surrounding gentrifying neighborhood, etc.
- Ensure the selection process is clear, fair and equitable. Develop a transparent application and selection criteria that are clearer and understandable to stakeholders. Investigate the discrepancy regarding transportation support for specific programs.
- Partner with other schools in the district to create feeder programs or pathways and establish a clear magnet pathway for this theme.
- Build an online social media presence for marketing and recruitment.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

There is evidence that the teachers incorporate some inclusive teaching practices: professional learning around total participation techniques with follow-up and monitoring from school administrators, positive classroom culture on walkthrough and evidence of activities that help students develop social and emotional skills like self-awareness, relationship building and responsible decision-making.

Challenges

Teachers report no formalized training on teaching in diverse settings.

Recommendations:

Provide required, formalized training and ongoing support for staff on cultural competency, implicit bias and strategies for creating inclusive learning environments.

Review and adjust zoning policies if they contribute to segregation within the district.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- There is evidence of environmental sciences being periodically integrated into core instruction (pollinator books, bird design activity, aquaponics, outdoor learning).
- School has a Green Team focused on environmental sustainability.

Challenges:

- Principal/assistant principals/teachers are unsure of the overall vision/plan/timeline for the school in relation to theme essentials, theme-related curriculum, theme implementation and pathway. There is an overall lack of clarity of what this theme entails.
- The principal and assistant principal met with the magnet office and spent time researching different themes to provide input. They recommended becoming an arts magnet, since there is a nearby feeder arts magnet high school. The leadership team then became confused because the magnet office then told the school they had no choice but to become an E-STEM school, without additional input opportunities given to school staff.
- Teachers expressed that they need curricular support with implementing the theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a curriculum map that clearly shows how the magnet theme is integrated across all subjects and grade levels.
- Develop a clear definition of the magnet theme with common language for all stakeholders.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to clearly define, articulate and differentiate the theme.
- Provide professional development for teachers on integrating the magnet theme into their lessons.
- Regularly review lesson plans to ensure they effectively integrate the magnet theme. Provide constructive feedback to teachers for improvement.
- Integrate the magnet theme into the school environment through displays, signage and student artwork.
- Plan school events and activities that showcase the magnet theme and student work related to it.
- Embed E-STEM-related electives into the school day as a unique way for students to experience the theme.
- Include magnet program information on the school's website (ex. pictures of students engaged in the theme, mention of the theme in the "About Us" section of the website, etc.)

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Opportunities for professional learning have included EcoBricks and monthly planning meetings with The Dot.
- Teachers have attended STEM-related conferences, including NCTIES.
- There are regularly-scheduled PLC meetings during which teachers are able to meet to discuss academics.

Challenges:

- There is not a theme-based professional development plan.
- Teachers do not receive specific training or professional learning about environmental sustainability and social justice.

Recommendations:

- Design professional development sessions directly linked to the school's magnet theme. This could involve workshops on content knowledge, teaching strategies and resources related to the theme (such as NC Environmental Educator Certification, UTotes, Project Learning Tree, etc.).
- Implement a coaching and mentoring program where experienced teachers provide support and feedback to colleagues on implementing the magnet theme and differentiated instruction.
- Facilitate peer observation opportunities to allow teachers to observe each other's classrooms, share best practices and receive feedback on theme integration.
- Allocate dedicated planning time within the schedule for teachers across different subjects to collaborate on integrating the magnet theme and supporting diverse learners.
- Regularly review and update the professional development plan based on feedback and data analysis to ensure it remains aligned with the needs of teachers and students in relation to the magnet theme.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to create and implement theme-related professional learning.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school uses a variety of traditional and non-traditional formative assessments (Dibels, MVPA, classroom assessments, drawing, journaling, presentations, questioning, etc.)
- In 2022, all student subgroups exceeded growth.
- Multiple modes of learning were observed on school walkthrough.
- Overall, the school has met or exceeded academic growth.
- School uses MTSS with instructional coaches leading the work as a way to provide tiered interventions.

Challenges:

- The school has not met growth for Students with Disabilities (SWD) and Black students in 2023.
- The leadership team and teachers are unable to elaborate on the schoolwide instructional philosophy of teaching/learning.

Recommendations:

- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers on incorporating research-based practices into their lessons.
- Develop a clear school-wide teaching and learning philosophy that emphasizes theme integration, research-based practices, student collaboration and differentiation.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school met or exceeded academic growth for the last five reported years according to the NC School Report Card.
- District formative assessment results show narrowing of achievement gaps.
- The school hosts weekly PLCs with a data analysis protocol that includes looking at successes/challenges, lessons learned and instructional next steps that are connected to SIP goals.

Challenges:

- Letter grade of “F” on NC School report card.
- Not all subgroups met academic growth (Black/SWD).
- The school has chronic absenteeism and a high number of out of school suspensions.

Recommendations:

- Integrate career exploration activities throughout the curriculum.
- Continue to use disaggregated data from formative assessments to make instructional decisions (student grouping, curricular supports, etc.)

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- The principal has multiple awards related to instructional leadership (Leadership for Turnaround Middle School, Accredited Interscholastic Coach, etc.) and comes to the school with an excellent track record of academic achievement and district-level leadership experience. The principal has been in place for two and a half years.
- Teacher turnover has been low under the current leadership and the principal/assistant principal are actively working to retain current staff.
- The school has a larger percentage of experienced teachers as compared to CMS and NC.
- The principal provides teachers with regular opportunities for input and feedback. Teachers report feeling supported and included in decision making.
- Teacher interviews include instructional questions that relate to theme integration.

Challenges:

- The School Improvement Plan does not include magnet language or themes.
- The school is losing its North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Innovation Grant on 6/30/2024 and will lose its grant coach position.
- There is not a clear vision around what the theme is, how the program is structured to support the theme, or what core theme integration looks like.

Recommendations:

- As recommended by the Principal, utilize the uniqueness of the E-STEM theme to recruit and hire teachers.
- Once the theme is clearly defined, determine measures of fidelity of theme implementation.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The new school is set to open in August 2024.
- Artifacts show that the magnet office has met once with the school's leadership team and created a presentation for the roll out of the new magnet theme for the leadership team.

Challenges:

- According to administrators, teachers and parents, the overall plan/vision connecting Bruns to other schools in a magnet pathway has not been shared with any school stakeholders and the perception is that there is not a clear magnet pathway.
- The magnet program doesn't receive dedicated funding for improvement initiatives. All improvement funds are allocated at the school level, potentially neglecting the magnet program's specific needs. Multiple stakeholders expressed concerns about inequity in funding. One teacher came from Chantilly Montessori to Bruns and expressed concerns about inequity in funding across magnet schools as her previous school had an established, documented curriculum, a magnet coordinator and dedicated

curriculum professional learning. Teachers feel that there is less district support from the magnet office for STE/AM initiatives.

- The district's strategic plan lacks clear goals and objectives specifically related to the magnet program and its development.
- The district doesn't have a defined structure for developing or revising the magnet program's theme, hindering its potential for growth and innovation.
- The district doesn't provide dedicated resources or support for curriculum development specific to the magnet program's theme.

Recommendations:

- Utilize the new building/new school opening as an opportunity to pilot a K-12 magnet theme pathway from the ground up. This can serve as a model for future theme development and implementation across existing magnet schools.
- As recommended by the principal, include the voices of stakeholders that live on the street and the gentrifying neighborhood in which the school is located.
- Share the roll-out presentation for the new magnet theme with all magnet school stakeholders. This fosters transparency and encourages collaboration.
- Encourage collaboration between magnet program staff, parents and community members to advocate for increased district support.
- Encourage collaboration between magnet program staff, parents and community members to advocate for dedicated funding for the magnet program within the district's budget. Highlight the specific needs of the program and its potential impact on student achievement.
- Engage in discussions with the district regarding concerns about inequitable funding across magnet schools. Propose solutions that ensure all magnet schools have the resources necessary to deliver a high-quality program.
- Allocate funds for marketing/recruitment, curriculum development and ongoing support for core theme integration.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school collaborated with Bank of America and The Dot to host an Earth Week Event.
- The school is one of only two in the district to have a partnership with the Belk Foundation. All 5th grade students participate in this partnership that culminates with students performing downtown.
- School partners with HBCU-Johnson C. Smith University- to provide students with aquaponics experiences.
- Heart tutoring/Augustine Literacy partner with the school to provide tutoring in literacy and math.
- Principal shares theme-related news and raises awareness of the school and program in the newsletter that goes out to all partners, (ex. Bank of America, Rotary/Charlotte Area Fund)
- School has parents and business partners who sit as members of the SIP team.

Challenges:

- The school does not have a robust group of business partnerships that support the theme.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with partners to co-create curriculum units, guest speaker sessions or field trip opportunities that enrich the magnet theme.
- Explore ways to deepen existing partnerships like the Bank of America collaboration. Consider year-long environmental education programs or project-based learning opportunities.
- Utilize the existing partnerships with Bank of America, Belk Foundation and HBCU-Johnson C. Smith University as models for building new collaborations.
- Build an online presence showcasing the school's magnet theme and partnership opportunities as well as celebrate existing partnerships.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school has an active PTA.
- The school has a family advocate staff member who assists teachers in connecting with families and coordinating community resources and partnerships.
- School policy is for teachers to return parent phone messages within 24 hours. Parents report that the school and teachers are responsive.
- Multiple parents, students and teachers describe the school as having a family culture and a safe place to be.
- School and teachers use Class Dojo to communicate with families. Based on analytics, Class Dojo's social media-like built-in platform where the school and teachers share information about upcoming/ongoing events is popular with parents.
- Each grade level is expected to send home monthly newsletters with curricular updates, highlight a part of the curriculum and provide important dates.

Challenges:

- The grade level newsletter does not consistently highlight core theme integration.

Recommendations:

- Leverage the grade level newsletter as a way to highlight core theme embedment.
- Organize industry-specific events (workshops, career fairs) to connect with potential partners and families. Showcase student work and the school's magnet theme during these events and include families in the planning and implementation.

Overall Recommendations for Bruns Avenue Elementary School:

- Work to develop a well-defined magnet theme with a common language for all stakeholders. Create a comprehensive plan outlining the vision, goals and implementation strategies for the magnet curriculum and program.
- Provide targeted professional development and ongoing support on integrating the magnet theme into the curriculum. Develop or acquire a curriculum specifically designed for the magnet theme, ensuring alignment across all subjects and grade levels. Establish a system (walkthrough tool, alignment to NCEES, etc.) to monitor theme integration and make adjustments as needed based on data and feedback.
- Work collaboratively with the district to secure dedicated funding and resources (magnet coordinator, professional development) to support the magnet program. Advocate for the development of a clear district-wide pathway for establishing and revising magnet themes, ensuring

consistency and support for all schools. Advocate for equitable funding across all magnet schools to ensure all programs have the resources needed to thrive.

Chantilly Montessori School

Chantilly Montessori School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Chantilly has an excellent reputation in the community.
- Chantilly parents acknowledge that their school's racial demographics don't match the district's and are interested in exploring options to address it.

Challenges:

- Chantilly's current building is extremely old and in rough shape.
- Chantilly's new facility will be built in the next two-three years and the location will change, along with the possibility of its name.
- Chantilly's location within the city and the geographic preference within the lottery do not help the school match the demographics of the district.
- There appears to be a lack of awareness on the part of minority families about Montessori.

Recommendations:

- Consider hosting "pop-up" Montessori fairs over the summer. Target areas within the school's transportation zone with higher minority populations to recruit potential new diverse families prior to the beginning of the lottery season in the fall as a way to help potential families see the benefits and opportunities for their children through Montessori.
- Consider a strategic direct mailer in English and Spanish in zip codes within the transportation zone with high minority populations to promote Chantilly and the Montessori approach to education - include any school social media accounts and have a planned posting schedule to follow the mailer to engage with potential families.
- Review the geographic preference zone for the school to help improve diversity.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Chantilly Teachers have regular data meetings in which special attention is paid to the progress of various sub-groups with achievement and growth.
- There is a school-wide commitment to teaching all students and providing equitable opportunities for learning.

Challenges:

- While the Montessori Theme is highly compatible with and conducive to diversity and equitable instruction, it can sometimes be a challenge to connect CMS-wide professional development and strategies to Montessori practices.

Recommendations:

- Continue to utilize the CMS Magnet Montessori Playbook as a resource for the school to implement Montessori with fidelity in a way that supports and strengthens the CMS commitment to diversity and equity.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development**Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity****Successes:**

- The school's commitment to Montessori as a school-wide philosophy of learning is highly evident.
- Parents reported significant positive impacts on their children from having been at Chantilly due to its Montessori approach.
- CMS Magnets will pay for teachers to become Montessori certified.

Challenges:

- Recruiting and retaining licensed teachers with Montessori certification is a significant challenge - Montessori certification is an 18 month process and is also not recognized by the state of NC as a valid teacher training program.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with other CMS Magnets to offer Montessori certification to classroom assistants to help develop a pipeline of emerging and qualified teachers.
- Consider partnering with the Montessori organization to market CMS and Chantilly as one of the few public Pre-12 Montessori offerings in the US as a way to attract interested Montessori teachers.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- CMS recently launched a Montessori Symposium professional development day for all district Montessori staff at schools - with many sessions led by Chantilly Teachers.

Challenges:

- Teachers report needing additional Montessori professional development and training, especially for classroom assistants.

Recommendations:

- Consider hosting a virtual Winter Montessori Symposium with a stipend on a Saturday in January or February to provide additional Montessori specific professional development to Chantilly and other CMS Montessori teachers.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The CMS Montessori Playbook has provided a roadmap for all Montessori schools, including Chantilly for how to implement the theme with fidelity in the larger CMS context - one Chantilly Teacher called it the CMS “Rosetta Stone.”
- The school reports a supportive and highly collaborative Community Superintendent who partners with Chantilly on various ways to balance Montessori and CMS requirements.

Challenges:

- Chantilly faculty and administration report challenges with how to “Montessorize” various CMS requirements and instructional practices.

Recommendations:

Continue to leverage the CMS Montessori playbook as a roadmap for faculty and staff - consider revisions and updates every 2 years to accommodate any new adjustments necessary.

Consider partnering with CMS Language Immersion and IB school leaders to advocate for additional flexibility and/or autonomy for magnet programs that demonstrate consistent academic strength and achievement.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school’s academic achievement is strong and demonstrates the efficacy of the Montessori approach.
- Chantilly Teachers can articulate how Montessori addresses all content standards and explain how its order is different from the standard state’s scope and sequence.

Challenges:

- Parents report frustration with CMS mandated assessments that aren’t in alignment with Montessori’s scope and sequence - their student’s score was discouraging to them.

Recommendations:

- Consider scheduling teacher-student-parent “data meetings” each semester to show families the sum total of learning and progress made by students as a way to mitigate confusion from individual assessments not in alignment with Montessori.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The school’s dedicated Montessori facilitator has been a key component to Chantilly’s ability to implement and sustain its theme by directly supporting teachers, students and even parents.
- The school’s culture and climate is positive, supportive and collaborative.

Challenges:

- Chantilly reports that it has lost teachers to the high demands of the Montessori’s approach and certification process.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with CMS Magnets to offer Montessori certification to classroom assistants to help develop a pipeline of emerging and qualified teachers.
- Consider a word-of-mouth or social media campaign promoting that CMS offers Montessori certification as a way to attract interested out-of-district or current CMS Teachers at other schools looking for a change.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- CMS is planning to provide the school with a new building that is sorely needed.
- CMS Magnets will pay for any teacher to receive Montessori certification.

Challenges:

- The need for a dedicated pipeline of Montessori teachers.
- There is concern around the possibility that after building a new building the school will have to change its name.

Recommendations:

- Consider potential new name options for the school prior to the move or a hyphenated name to retain Chantilly (ex. Chantilly-Smith, etc...).
- Consider offering club sports or Montessori intramural athletics for 5th and 6th grade students at Highland Mill and the other three Montessori elementary schools.
- Review the geographic preference area for the school to help improve diversity.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Faculty report partnerships with a variety of organizations and businesses such as AAA, the Montessori Center for Teacher Education, the Charlotte Public Library and the Charlotte Public Water Alliance.
- A Chantilly family owns a gelato business and brings gelato to the school to surprise staff and students.
- A new Montessori reading program was paid for by a partnership between CMS and the school's PTA.
- Due to the school's proximity to the Bojangle's Center, a parking fundraiser for its annual Christmas Show provides significant fundraising for the school - in partnership with the Shriners.

Challenges:

- While many of the school's existing partnerships support Chantilly staff and school initiatives, the school has yet to identify a partner with the ability to support its ongoing efforts to recruit licensed and Montessori certified teachers.

Recommendations:

- Consider approaching community partners with expertise in aspects of the Montessori Life Skills modules: Professional Chefs, Garden Centers, Hobby-Craft stores and Custodial Services - to support and enhance the student experience and provide additional resources for teachers.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school's PTA has engaged with the Principal's CHEER program to provide monthly staff celebration awards and incentives.

- The school and PTA partner together to provide multiple ways for families to volunteer and participate - even if parents work during the day.
- Faculty and parents report satisfaction and support for the school's usage of Transparent Classroom.

Challenges:

- Despite efforts on the school's behalf to engage with working parents, parents report difficulty engaging with the school if they work full time outside of the home.
- During the parent focus group, one parent shared frustration with the school's current racial composition and lack of engagement with potential minority families.

Recommendations:

- Consider adding a "grants" position to the school's PTA leadership with the purpose of year long applications for small and medium sized grants to generate a discretionary fund to support school initiatives on an as-needed basis.
- Consider a targeted minority family focus group of Chantilly families to identify perceived barriers for minority families in applying to and engaging with the school.

Overall Recommendations for Chantilly Montessori School:

- Consider hosting "pop-up" Montessori fairs over the summer. Target areas within the school's transportation zone with higher minority populations to recruit potential new diverse families prior to the beginning of the lottery season in the fall as a way to help potential families see the benefits and opportunities for their children through Montessori.
- Consider a strategic direct mailer in English and Spanish in zip codes within the transportation zone with high minority populations to promote Chantilly and the Montessori approach to education - include any school social media accounts and have a planned posting schedule to follow the mailer to engage with potential families.
- Review the geographic preference zone for the school to help improve diversity.
- Consider partnering with CMS Magnets to offer Montessori certification to classroom assistants to help develop a pipeline of emerging and qualified teachers.
- Consider potential new name options for the school prior to the move or a hyphenated name to retain Chantilly (ex. Chantilly-Smith, etc...) OR partner with current and former families in advocating to CMS leadership for the school's name to remain Chantilly.

Charles H. Parker Academic Center - Learning Immersion/Talent Development

Charles H. Parker Academic Center - LI/TD				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	

6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school has a well-structured student recruitment plan that undergoes annual review for effectiveness, with revisions made each summer in collaboration with the school improvement team.
- According to staff, enrollment numbers indicate success, as evidenced by waitlists for prospective students across most grade levels.

Challenges:

- The school's demographics are not in alignment with the district. Black students 46.7% school/34.7% district, Caucasian students 9% school/23.8% district, Hispanic students 16.8% school/30.6% district.
- Transportation services are available exclusively to students residing within the school's designated zone, posing accessibility challenges for those outside this area.
- Feedback from the parent focus group highlighted dissatisfaction with the marketing of magnet programs, emphasizing a reliance on word-of-mouth communication for program awareness and application procedures.
- The school website lacks information regarding the magnet program.

Recommendations:

- Study if allowing students from outside the transportation zone to attend the school if they provide their own transportation is equitable.
- Develop and execute a recruitment strategy that targets populations that will help the school match the demographics of the district.
- Add the Learning Immersion Talent Development (LITD) program to the school website.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school's mission statement emphasizes the importance of diversity.
- Teachers are required to possess Academically and Intellectually gifted (AIG) certification or obtain it post-hiring.
- Differentiated instruction is implemented across all grade levels, offering students the opportunity to select how they demonstrate their learning, with evident utilization of project-based learning methodologies throughout the school.
- The LITD implementation tool provided by the Advanced Studies department is used to determine staff effectiveness in teaching the magnet theme.
- This school houses Learning Immersion and Talent Development and to ensure unity among students the students do not attend specials with their cohorts. Students from each program are integrated into all specials.

Challenges:

- A student in the focus group stated he did not like the integration of LI/TD students during specials.

Recommendations:

- Survey students to determine if others have these same thoughts and examine why this is an issue for students.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The Talent Development curriculum seamlessly integrates learning immersion and talent development across all subjects and courses. Diverse instructional strategies, including higher-level questioning techniques and differentiation, are employed to cater to the varying needs of all students.
- A collaborative teaching approach is embraced throughout all subjects, fostering extended thinking, facilitating problem-based learning and encouraging deeper exploration of concepts.
- Teacher unit and lesson plans go beyond K-12 education, preparing students for their future careers. Through inviting guest speakers from various professions such as chemists, architects and engineers, both in the classroom and through elective courses, students gain exposure to real-world applications and insights.
- College pennants are displayed throughout the school and classrooms as a way to showcase the various colleges and universities that students may aspire to attend.

Challenges:

- The school lacks the visibility of the magnet theme throughout the campus. Apart from student work displayed on hallway bulletin boards, evidence of the theme is not prominently displayed, which may hinder its recognition.
- The Learning Immersion/Talent Development theme lacks a clear focus on innovation and primarily emphasizes best practices for learning. This lack of a distinct focus may pose challenges in articulating the theme effectively.

Recommendations:

- Organize workshops for faculty, staff and students to brainstorm and generate ideas for integrating the magnet theme more prominently throughout the campus. Encourage creativity and collaboration to develop innovative ways to showcase the theme in various areas such as classrooms, common areas and outdoor spaces.
- Enhance the Learning Immersion model by incorporating a thematic focus. This will provide a tangible framework for innovation and advancement within the current educational model.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Documentation provided by the magnet coordinator includes professional development agendas, demonstrating effective training of teachers in thematic instruction.
- Collaborative planning schedules were shared, indicating the integration of embedded professional development and scheduled collaborative planning sessions.
- Active involvement of the magnet coordinator and TD (Talent Development) teacher is provided through classroom push-ins and model lessons, enriching teaching practices.

Challenges:

- Absence of a structured theme-based professional development plan poses a notable challenge, potentially hindering cohesive instructional strategies.

Recommendations:

- Create a professional development plan with targeted workshops or training sessions focused on thematic instruction.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The principal and leadership team consistently seek out resources and instructional strategies grounded in school data to enhance teaching practices.
- Classroom observations demonstrate student engagement fostered by small group instruction, promoting academic dialogue and collaboration.
- Tiered interventions are consistently implemented across all grade levels and subjects, with students receiving targeted support tailored to their individual needs for both extension and remediation.
- Teachers employ various forms of formative assessment to accurately assess and address instructional needs.

Challenges:

- The school currently lacks a unified philosophy regarding teaching and learning principles on a school-wide scale.
- Parents shared their wish for more hands-on learning to take place particularly in science class. Although some teachers provide these opportunities, they are not consistent across all classrooms.

Recommendations:

- Develop a unified philosophy of teaching and learning that reflects the collective vision of the school community. This philosophy should articulate the beliefs, goals and strategies that guide teaching and learning practices across all grade levels and subject areas.
- Organize and implement targeted professional development sessions for teachers focused on incorporating hands-on learning activities into their science curriculum.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school successfully met growth targets for every subgroup, except for Caucasian students, as confirmed by the principal.
- Students with disabilities achieved growth targets, leading to the school's removal from the list of underperforming schools in this area.
- The school effectively collects and analyzes student academic achievement through various indicators including DIBELS, MAPS, EOG and District Benchmark assessments.
- Targeted goals have been established to raise minority students' reading scores to the 50th percentile.

Challenges:

- School data reveals absenteeism as a prominent issue, which has been incorporated into the school improvement plan. The implementation of programs and incentives aims to mitigate absenteeism.
- Addressing the significant variance in academic performance among students poses a challenge, encompassing both those already performing well and those underperforming on assessments.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including teachers, administrators and students, to brainstorm potential changes or improvements after reflecting on the success of the absenteeism improvement program.
- Provide training and ongoing professional development focused on understanding students' diverse learning needs and designing instruction accordingly.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- Schools have been granted the authority to select educators who possess expertise in both the school's specialized thematic areas and effective pedagogical approaches.
- Teacher feedback underscores a culture of cooperation and inclusiveness, fostering active involvement in decision-making processes.
- Teachers and parents actively engage as integral members of the school improvement team, contributing to collaborative decision-making endeavors. Additionally, teachers play a vital role on the instructional leadership team.
- Demonstrable evidence of the implementation of the Learning Instructional Tool for Differentiation (LITD) in instructional practices has been provided.

Challenges:

- Assessing the fidelity of implementation of thematic content is challenging due to the absence of displayed student work that exemplifies thematic integration.

Recommendations:

- Showcase more student work that effectively illustrates the acquisition of relevant skills and thematic integration.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The Advanced Studies office allocates resources by providing the school with a dedicated Magnet Coordinator and Lead AIG for three days a week, supplemented by the school's contribution for one additional day.
- The Magnet Office provides a Magnet Specialist that is a liaison between the school and magnet office.

Challenges:

- Lack of continuity in the Learning Immersion and Talent Development magnet theme at the middle school level has resulted in students transitioning to an IB Magnet program.
- Parents from the focus group stated the IB program does not offer the same rigor as the LITD program for middle school students in the magnet pathway.
- The district's strategic plan currently lacks inclusion of magnet programs.

Recommendations:

- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in Learning Immersion and Talent Development, ensuring a smooth transition from middle to high school.
- Integrate magnet programs and their foundational standards into the district's strategic plan.
- Allocate adequate funding to support the development and sustainability of magnet programs.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school demonstrates evidence of strong alignment with curriculum focused and career-related partnerships.

Challenges:

- There is no established protocol for engaging all stakeholders in partnerships.
- Currently, no partnerships are supported by the district.

Recommendations:

- Create clear and comprehensive protocols for initiating, maintaining and evaluating partnerships with stakeholders. These protocols should outline expectations, responsibilities and communication channels for all parties involved, ensuring transparency and efficiency in partnership endeavors.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parental Feedback from the parent focus group indicates consistent communication from the school.
- The student focus group expressed their affection for their school and teachers stating they like how the school is run.
- The parent focus group also expressed their gratitude for the school and how well it had prepared their children for middle school and beyond. Several parents stated that they are a family.
- The school has an active PTA that participates in school operations.
- The school has two deaf students and several of their classmates have made an effort to learn sign language to be able to communicate with them. The school looks at it a step further and has posted various posters with sign language cues posted around the school for students to learn.
- There is strong evidence of commitment to engage families through magnet activities as explained by both the parent focus and teacher groups.
- The magnet program is included in the school improvement plan and the plan is posted on the school's website.
- The parent focus group has highlighted the highly engaged Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), which collaborates closely with the principal in decision-making processes.

Challenges:

- *Intentionally left blank.*

Recommendations:

- *Intentionally left blank.*

Overall Recommendations for Charles H. Parker Academic Center:

- Establish a seamless magnet pathway for students interested in Learning Immersion and Talent Development, ensuring a smooth transition from middle to high school.
- Develop and execute a recruitment strategy that targets populations that will help the school more diverse.
- Integrate magnet programs and their foundational standards into the district's strategic plan.

- Organize workshops for faculty, staff and students to brainstorm and generate ideas for integrating the magnet theme more prominently throughout the campus. Encourage creativity and collaboration to develop innovative ways to showcase the theme in various areas such as classrooms, common areas and outdoor spaces.
- Enhance the Learning Immersion model by incorporating a thematic focus. This will provide a tangible framework for innovation and advancement within the current educational model.

Charlotte East Language Academy

Charlotte East Language Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Charlotte East Language Academy (CELA) was strategically built in its location to serve the needs of a growing immigrant and refugee population in the community.
- The school's economically disadvantaged population is similar to the district.
- The location of the school makes it a convenient choice for families in its attendance zone.
- The school has a full-time Spanish Facilitator who helps families navigate the lottery and magnet application process.
- The surrounding community is naturally diverse and the student population reflects the community.
- The school opened as a partial magnet with grades K-1. This allowed for strong recruitment within the community.
- The school engages in community outreach and students participate in community events that showcase the school.

Challenges:

- The timeframe for the lottery process moved up without much notice or communication.
- The lottery process is tedious and confusing, especially for non-English speakers.
- According to the school's *Facts about CELA* slide deck, the student demographics are: 82% Hispanic, 9.1% Black, 9.1% Caucasian whereas the district is 30.6% Hispanic, 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian.

Recommendations:

- Ensure communications about the lottery process are timely and clear.
- Explore how to make the lottery process more accessible for non-English speakers.
- Explore opportunities to market the school in communities that are underrepresented at the school and create a targeted marketing plan to try to come closer to district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classrooms reflect the diversity of the community.
- The administration and leadership team have an intentional hiring process, looking for experiences to ensure teachers' ability to serve a diverse group of students.
- Teachers are involved in the hiring/selection process.
- Staff diversity is high, including teachers from other countries
- The school cultivates a culture of inclusiveness that is modeled and supported by the principal and magnet coordinator.
- Multi-classroom Leaders (MCLs) hold coaching conversations with teachers, looking at data weekly, asking teachers about their instructional practice and co-set goals.

Challenges:

- *Intentionally left blank.*

Recommendations:

- Consider including a statement emphasizing the importance of diversity to the school website.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school building was built with the intent of being a language immersion school, so the facility "screams the theme."
- Families report feeling very welcome, seeing reflections of their cultures (flags, quotes, artwork, etc.) displayed throughout the school.
- Vocabulary in math is taught in English and Spanish.
- Administrators and MCLs maintain a strong presence in classrooms to ensure integrity of the theme is maintained.
- MCLs seek out supplemental resources that are in both English and Spanish

Challenges:

- District-provided math and science materials are only in English, but content is taught in Spanish.

Recommendations:

- Pay teachers for extra time to translate instructional materials if they are not provided in Spanish.
- Provide an annual allocation for theme development and branding refresh of the theme for magnet schools.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school hosted a level-setting dual language professional development for English and Spanish teachers.

- There is monthly teacher leader-led professional development.
- Professional development for thematic instruction is job-embedded.
- There are daily PLCs, with time for Spanish and English teachers to work together to talk about how the standards look in the Spanish class and in the English class.

Challenges:

- There is no consistent professional development for thematic instruction provided by the district.

Recommendations:

- Design and implement a district-provided calendar and menu of professional development offerings for thematic instruction, theme integration, etc. for all magnet schools.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Evidence of a schoolwide instructional philosophy includes a consistent “I do, we do, you do” structure, differentiated small group instruction for all students (acceleration as well as intervention) and strategies for high engagement.
- There is use of universal screeners starting with data that clearly shows students’ needs.
- The school utilizes teaching assistants (TAs) who work with students all day (on-grade level and enrichment).
- MCLs model lessons and how to monitor and give feedback to students
- 3 times a year a full day is dedicated for teachers to look at data and form small groups.
- Walkthrough instruments have clearly articulated “look fors.”
- Teachers facilitate learning, but trust students to do the work.

Challenges:

- Although CELA is a dual language program (Spanish and English), district-provided assessments are only provided in English.
- In addition to their regular curriculum/assessment planning, teachers are translating materials and assessments so they can measure students’ growth/proficiency in Spanish as well as English..

Recommendations:

- Provide formative assessments in the target language as well as in English.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- K-2 literacy data is strong.
- The number of students needing intervention are shrinking.
- There is early intervention for students who are not proficient in either English or Spanish.
- Interventions are provided in both languages.
- Mastery Connect allows teachers to view data by subgroups and work with MCLs to implement timely interventions.
- Data-driven interventions for economically disadvantaged students are provided during the school day, curtailing barriers to lack of resources outside the school day.
- Data are used to inform use of Title I funds (ex. providing supplemental materials to use at home to extend learning).

Challenges:

- There are some foundational gaps in math (ex. problem solving).
- There has been stagnant growth for students proficient or advanced.

Recommendations:

- Consider if and how language is impacting problem solving in math and provide relevant support and resources as needed.
- Provide targeted enrichments to accelerate proficiency for students not needing interventions.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- The school's theme is implemented with a high level of fidelity.
- A tiered model of thematic instructional coaching is implemented (ex. veteran, new, etc.) and all receive different amounts of support based on observation trends.
- Thematic instructional coaching is formative, not punitive—described as “coaching, not catching.”

Challenges:

- Instructional units for dual language programs are allocated using the same formula as non-magnet schools, although their staffing needs are different.

Recommendations:

- Recruit more bilingual teachers to create a pipeline of bilingual educators for dual language programs.
- Provide a differentiated staffing allocation for magnet schools to address their unique needs.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The district provided a collaboration opportunity for dual language and world language teachers

Challenges:

- There are some disconnects in the pathway for magnet themes due to the size of the district.
- There is not a dedicated school-based magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all content areas.

Recommendations:

- Revisit and review the pathways for magnet themes to ensure optimal alignment and articulate the alignment for families and schools.
- Provide a full-time magnet coordinator for schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- A local bilingual preschool is a partner with CELA.
- The school held quarterly meetings with community partners for communication, review of information and collaboration.
- A process has been implemented to avoid duplication of efforts/resources from the multiple business partners and align resources to identified student needs and enhancement of the magnet theme.
- Business partners have one identified person in the school as their “go-to.”

Challenges:

- While there are numerous partnerships, not all are specifically aligned to enhancement of the magnet theme and there is some duplication of support from partners.

Recommendations:

- Explore career-related business/community partnerships that are aligned to the school theme and relevant for students in grades K-8.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Charlotte East regularly communicates with parents using the Parent Square platform.
- The school provides alternate ways for families to be engaged, informed and empowered including participation on the PTA and/or School Leadership Team.
- Parents support the school by facilitating school tours.
- Parents are invited to attend Coffee with the Principal to ask questions and share ideas in an informal setting.
- The school engages families as partners in supporting curriculum-based activities during and beyond the school day, including:
 - Field trips
 - Curriculum nights
 - Multicultural Fairs
 - EOG Game Night
 - Character Parade

Challenges:

- The school had a bilingual family advocate to encourage and support engagement with non-English speaking families, but the position was lost.

Recommendations:

- Provide a full-time bilingual family advocate for dual language program schools.

Overall Recommendations for Charlotte East Language Academy:

- Explore how to make the lottery process more accessible for non-English speakers.
- Provide an annual allocation for theme development and branding refresh of the theme for magnet schools.
- Provide a full-time magnet coordinator for magnet schools.
- Recruit more bilingual teachers to create a pipeline of bilingual educators for dual language programs.
- Provide a differentiated staffing allocation for magnet schools to address their unique needs.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Virtual School

Charlotte Mecklenburg Virtual School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	

3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The CMS virtual school participates in all CMS magnet fairs tracking that 100 students entered through the magnet fair effort. March 1st starts the transfer window and Virtual school is always open to all students in CMS regardless of zone.
- The virtual school demographics are closely mirroring that of the CMS community. With 48% Black vs. 34.7 % in CMS, 22% Hispanic vs. 30.6 % in CMS, 20% Caucasian vs. 23.8 % in CMS.
- Students can come from anywhere in the CMS school district and there are no restrictions by transportation zones.
- The school has developed criteria to outline what makes a successful virtual student and share this with parents and students so they can self-evaluate if virtual is a fit for them.
- The district provides a device for all students and hotspots for anyone who needs them.

Challenges:

- There is a criteria to be able to come to the virtual school. High school students must be on track to graduate. To get to sophomore year, students have to have six credits in high school. Attendance for all testing is required.
- The hot spots are only as good as the connection to T mobile and not always reliable.
- Transportation for testing is done through express stops and these do not provide easy access for all students. Not all the express stops are close to the student's homes. The school cannot remove the need to test in person.
- The Virtual school gets moved all of the time. Ideally they would be centrally located.

Recommendations:

- Build partnerships with the public libraries to have access to meeting spaces where the students could go if connectivity issues arise.
- Collaborate with the district to create a survey screener for students and parents to use as a reflection tool to help determine whether virtual school is right for them.
- Work to restructure the busing system as a district to meet the unique needs of all of the schools and families.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- CMS Virtual school teachers are committed to teaching in the natural diverse setting that their magnet school program requires. Because the virtual environment is unique, teachers must constantly be learning, evaluating practice, adjusting and reworking to meet the diverse needs of their students.
- The students who attend the CMS virtual school have unique individual needs that require the school to be flexible which naturally attracts and retains students who require this flexibility for various reasons. They have students who are performers, teen moms, have unique jobs, have traveling needs, have health issues, etc. Each of these unique needs are taken into consideration by teachers as a special kind of diversity their population carries.

Challenges:

- The school cannot guarantee the racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic integration of each of their courses due to extensive course offerings and the fact that there is just one teacher per grade level, per content area.
- There is a process for students who must be exited from the program. High school students have to pass six classes a year and middle school students have to pass three. The school keeps documentation of interventions and if they don't pass after interventions, students have to return to their home school.

Recommendations:

- Consider hosting events that expose and educate targeted groups that may not know about the benefits of virtual school, but may benefit from the theme, in order to increase diversity and district wide access.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The virtual magnet theme is, by design, integrated into all subjects, content areas and activities through its delivery.
- The virtual magnet theme has no choice but to be innovative and relevant in the instruction they deliver. Virtual educators must always be reinventing themselves to bring the latest technology tools, content delivery methods and real time assessment modes into their classrooms.
- The school uses a learning block model that combines synchronous and asynchronous learning with a focus on academic monitoring.
- The virtual environment forces student independence and academic accountability. Students learn to take charge of their own learning which helps to prepare them for life beyond high school.

Challenges:

- The Teams platform bought by and required by the district is a barrier to successful virtual learning. Just a few of the issues reported by students, teachers, parents and administrators are: 1. Students cannot share their screen, 2. They cannot all type in the chat, 3. The program crashes often.
- Virtual students are provided by the district with the same standard issued Chromebook that traditional school students are issued as a supplemental tool to instruction. The Chromebooks are not sufficient for everyday virtual instruction and larger, faster, and more extensive PC's are needed.

Recommendations:

- Consider updating the classroom meeting tool to Zoom in order to provide teachers and students with the extended collaborative tools needed for a collaborative virtual learning environment.

- Consider a budget update to include funding the virtual students with technology devices that match the workload they are required to do on them. These computers are the essential infrastructure of the virtual classroom.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school's weekly schedule allows for teachers to collaborate in grade level teams. Once a month the whole school has a data day to disaggregate data and plan for remediation.
- Half of the school has special accommodations, 18% with IEP's, 19.7% ML learners and 10% with 504's. The Exceptional Children's (EC) population has increased rapidly. Accommodations at a virtual school are different from brick and mortar and it has taken time to re-write IEP's to modify for the virtual learning.
- The district has supported the school by giving the allotments needed to have a large EC department. There has been lots of trial and error to design what the virtual EC classroom looks like.
- The principal used to send teachers to NCVPS for training in virtual learning but now the school has built enough capacity to do that training in house.

Challenges:

- The school has goals to improve co-teaching for EC push in and content overlap.
- Professional development has to be created for the virtual school as they go, there is not a curriculum to adopt or buy.
- Making things work in a virtual setting is not static, things are always changing. The adults are learning just as much as the students. They are learning and applying everything very quickly and this is challenging.
- Conflict between district mandates and the virtual classroom differences are always a hurdle.

Recommendations:

- Consider a budget update to include funding the virtual students with technology devices that match the workload they are required to do on the devices. These computers are the essential infrastructure of the virtual classroom.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The principal was able to use Title 1 funds to buy write on tablets for all of the 8th grade math and math 1 students. This was very helpful for them to show their work in class.
- The school has an MTSS coordinator. A district platform is used for managing the MTSS process. They have tier two and tier three interventions.
- Specific intervention times are set up for students in math and reading through the school day.
- Teachers have designed all of the courses to reflect the needs of the students.
- The school is using many technology tools that make student collaboration possible such as Google GTI and Canvas classroom.
- On school data days once a month teachers cross collaborate between subjects. They look at data to identify weaknesses and support each other in brainstorming ways to meet students' individual needs.

- Teachers are using Google LTI as a method to monitor progress and provide in the moment feedback to students.

Challenges:

- Sometimes identifying what intervention is needed for tier three kids is challenging because the students have to engage for the teacher to figure out their skill gap. Lack of engagement on the platform and students not showing up, does not give the data to implement the intervention with fidelity. Intervention is also on the platform, if they are not already on the platform for class they will not show up for intervention.
- ESSER funds were used to purchase guest teachers. These are going away after this year. These teachers are very specifically trained for the virtual school. They use these teachers for long term subs. Not just any sub can come in and teach a virtual class so these teachers are vital to the program success.
- The school has developed an audit tool to review all of our courses. They are starting to redesign the courses over time. It's a reflective process that is ongoing.
- Students are often using their personal devices because the Chromebook is slow, the screen is small, and does not have features they need in the virtual classroom.

Recommendations:

- Consider a budget update to include funding the virtual students with technology devices that match the workload they are required to do on the devices. These computers are the essential infrastructure of the virtual classroom.
- Provide the virtual school with the allotment to keep at least one of the guest teachers as an investment in the training they have received and the unique situation needed for substitutes in the virtual classroom.
- Develop a way for students to collaborate outside of school both for school related discussion and to form friendships.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school's 4 year graduation rate has increased and exceeded the districts. There are no racial gaps within the school's graduation rate. 94% graduation rate for Hispanic students, 92% for Black students, 87.2% for Caucasian students and 91.6% for economically disadvantaged students.
- The virtual classroom allows for real time assessment and real time feedback to happen in every class. Teachers have more time to provide re-teaching and modeling because they have asynchronous time to spend in small groups.
- The virtual school has an Occupational course of study class in which students get to learn life skills that are transferable to college and careers.
- Acceleration is a student choice built into the virtual theme. Students can take classes in the summer to accelerate and extend their learning. They can choose to graduate in three years and/or they can take dual enrollment classes and be ahead moving into college.

Challenges:

- Traditional gaps between Black students and Caucasian students are present in the school's data.
- Math is a weak point across all subgroups.
- Transportation for assessment is a challenge. In order to have solid data to analyze, students need to be present for testing.

- The curriculum that is being used in the district is not designed for virtual learning, rather it is intended for brick and mortar classrooms. This makes the adoptions especially hard to modify. The school spends a lot of time making the curriculum accessible in a virtual setting.

Recommendations:

- Work to restructure the busing system as a district to meet the unique needs of all of the magnet schools and families. Perhaps a new unique bus schedule for virtual testing days can be created after regular routes have finished for the morning.
- Ensure the district is flexible and supportive in allowing virtual teachers the autonomy to modify their instruction ensuring that the theme is implemented with fidelity.
- Document all modifications and tools credited by the virtual school as an example of the innovation that is taking place. Capitalize on this with a publication, presentation and/or showcase of the district's work on the cutting edge.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Leadership has scheduled walkthroughs and the instructional leadership team uses data collected to monitor high priority areas that are identified.
- Walkthrough forms are always shared with the teacher for feedback and coaching conversations are a regular occurrence.
- Leadership can easily monitor instruction through the class Canvas pages. There is a process for continuity in these pages, which ensures a high expectation for all courses across the school in grades 5-12.
- There is not the same teacher shortage for virtual as there is in the rest of the district. Many teachers flourished in virtual learning during the pandemic and enjoyed being on the cutting edge of education. They get to be choosy when hiring. Turnover is also not as prevalent in this school.
- The virtual school team (teachers and leaders together) work together to make decisions about how they will innovate to maintain and extend their program; this is an ongoing growth process.
- The principal has created interview questions to speak to the type of teacher who thrives in a virtual environment.
- NCVPS (North Carolina Virtual Public School) offers many courses that would not otherwise be able to be provided. This is an important partnership for the magnet program.

Challenges:

- The Teams platform and inadequate devices are the biggest barrier to implementation of the theme with fidelity. This is resounding from leadership, teachers, students and parents.

Recommendations:

- Explore new ways to highlight and reward the great commitment to innovation the teachers have every day. Find ways to highlight them, not just at school but within the district since virtual teaching can sometimes seem lonely.
- Ensure the district is flexible and supportive in allowing virtual teachers the autonomy to modify their instruction ensuring that the theme is implemented with fidelity.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The principal is grateful to have Title 1 funds to help support some of their financial needs. Some of the things he has been able to use this money for include: write on tablets, stylists and necessary program software. Without these funds they could not have implemented their school theme with fidelity.
- The district has a clear 5-12 pathway for the virtual program, guaranteeing space and acceptance for any student who is passing.
- The district supports several positions unique to and for the virtual school.

Challenges:

- The extra allotments given by the district were fought for, not given and there is always a fear that they will lose them.
- The school reports that the district treats the virtual school like a brick and mortar giving the same supplies that a traditional school would get despite their differences.
- The Teams platform and inadequate devices are the biggest barrier to implementation of the theme with fidelity. This is resounding from leadership, teachers, students and parents.
- The virtual school campus has been moved 5 times in the last 7 years.

Recommendations:

- Consider a budget update to include funding the virtual students with technology devices that match the workload they are required to do on them. These computers are the essential infrastructure of the virtual classroom.
- Provide the virtual school with the allotment to keep at least one of the guest teachers as an investment in the training they have received and the unique situation needed for substitutes in the virtual classroom.
- Reflect on allowing the virtual school the autonomy to purchase the software and programs needed to make their school successful, such as Zoom.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- The virtual school has an Occupational course of study class in which students get to work with local businesses such as Publix, Old Navy, Holiday Inn and a local Fitness Center. These businesses provide internships and jobs for high school students.
- NCVPS (NC Virtual public schools) offers many courses that otherwise would not be able to be provided such as, but not limited to World languages such as Russian, Japanese, German, French, Arabic, American Sign Language, Chinese, Spanish, etc.
- Central Piedmont Community College is a great partnership for the virtual school, through CPCC pathways are offered such as, but not limited to, marketing, graphic design, business, gaming development and software development. They are always working to increase these pathways.
- The nature of online courses and the exposure through these partnerships better prepare the students to be successful in a college atmosphere.
- Having two social workers has helped with creating partnerships. The counselors have been instrumental in bringing in the community to support families.

Challenges:

- Serving the whole CMS county gives the school an absence of a standard local community to pull partners from.
- The Virtual school campus has been moved five times in the last seven years which makes it hard to form local partners close to the location of the school.

Recommendations:

- Consider strengthening partnerships with technology based companies to capitalize on the interest in technology that these students have.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- All staff document on communication trackers to show when they send emails, have phone calls, etc. with parents. They take detailed notes so that all can see where the outreach and communication has happened.
- Parent square is used for communication and contact data is high. The school reviews data to see how posts and communication is getting to the parents. Parents and students can direct message anytime. The school purchased this tool before the district for the communication.
- The school has an in person orientation for families (all families) as a crash course in the summer and again for those coming in mid-year. This event is teacher led and teacher driven.
- The principal allocated Title 1 funds to hire a parent advocate who works with the social workers to provide specific help to students and families including, but not limited to tech issues, home barriers, connectivity, getting into Canvas, etc.
- The partnership in learning is different in virtual school. Parents are more involved and the school helps parents prepare for this. They have to support the virtual learning at home, set up a work space, prepare the technology requirements and help with time management and student accountability.

Challenges:

- Sometimes students go off the grid and keeping up with them is difficult so the school does home visits to find ways to draw them back in.
- PTA is a challenge. No one wants to lead it nor has the capacity to lead it.
- Occasionally the school deals with parents not being there to support their child. The middle school level is harder than high school. When an adult is not physically there to monitor learning, it is hard. Also when the parent is over active in their learning that is also sometimes an issue.

Recommendations:

- Develop a way for students to collaborate outside of school both for school related discussion and to form friendships.

Overall Recommendations for Charlotte Mecklenburg Virtual School:

- Reflect on allowing the virtual school the autonomy to purchase the software and programs needed to make their school successful, such as Zoom.
- Consider a budget update to include funding the virtual students with technology devices that match the workload they are required to do on the devices. These computers are the essential infrastructure of the virtual classroom.

- Collaborate with the district to create a survey screener for students and parents to use as a reflection tool to help determine whether virtual school is right for them.
- Work to restructure the busing system during testing to meet the needs of the virtual students and families.
- Document all modifications and tools credited by the virtual school as an example of the innovation that is taking place. Capitalize on this with a publication, presentation, and/or showcase of the district's work on the cutting edge.

Collinswood Language Academy

Collinswood Language Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Collinswood has experienced success with actively recruiting students who are new to the country and have previous education in Spanish, to continue a bilingual path while learning English.
- Although Spanish is the target language for the school, recruitment and outreach information is provided in a variety of languages.
- The principal is bilingual and the school has a full-time magnet coordinator who is bilingual.
- The magnet coordinator assists non-English speaking families navigate the lottery application process, which helps with recruitment.

Challenges:

- The school demographics are not in alignment with the district with Hispanic school 61%/district 30.6%, Black school 10%/district 34.7%, Caucasian school 25.3%/district 23.8%.
- School hours present a barrier to equitable access for students who live outside the attendance zone and rely on transportation.
- The application process can be difficult for families to navigate.

Recommendations:

- Explore transportation options with the district that can make start and end times for magnet school programs more convenient for families.

- Develop and execute a recruitment strategy that targets populations that will help the school match the demographics of the district.
- Collaborate with the International Center to provide information and support with the application process for non-English speaking families.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Collinswood is 100% magnet (no home school zone), so 100% of the diversity reflected in classrooms is due to the school's commitment and recruitment efforts.
- The school's mission and core values have statements that emphasize the value of inclusiveness (including educational equity, cultural competence and sociocultural consciousness.
- School leaders express a clear commitment to diversity and equity. (*"Families have choice, but we don't choose students. We welcome all. We are not gatekeepers to dual language."*)
- Educational Partners International (EPI) helps with staff recruitment so the school is fully staffed.
- The school has a high teacher retention rate.
- Clubs and extracurricular activities are offered during the school day, so all students can participate and transportation is not a barrier.
- In addition to racial diversity, the school reflects socioeconomic and linguistic diversity.
- The school places an emphasis on getting students to be global citizens.
- Leadership conducts frequent core action walkthroughs to monitor fidelity of thematic instruction and determine if/when there is a need for "reset" professional developments.

Challenges:

- *Intentionally left blank.*

Recommendations:

- *Intentionally left blank.*

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- School leadership has set an expectation for thematic articulation and alignment. ("We don't play bilingual school. We are a bilingual school.")
- Evidence of the school's theme is evident throughout the building.
- Teachers work collaboratively in weekly PLCs for theme integration. Teachers discuss and exchange examples of how to integrate the school's theme into lessons and specials.
- Teachers use curriculum materials provided by CMS, but make adaptations for curriculum integration, including translating materials that are in English only.
- Lack of materials for activities and projects in Spanish.

Challenges:

- Teachers invest a lot of time beyond their contractual hours translating district-provided materials that are in English only.

Recommendations:

- Provide district stipends for magnet school teachers engaging in thematic alignment and curriculum development that occur beyond the contractual school day.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school has provided its own professional development for thematic instruction (Dual Language 101- Reset)
- All staff participated in “Rethinking Dual Language Schools” professional development to uncover unconscious bias as well as support thematic instruction.
- Weekly PLCs are scheduled for collaborative planning.
- Clubs and other specials are provided during the school day so all students can experience theme-based extracurricular activities.
- Art, music and physical education teachers support interdisciplinary instruction in support of the theme.

Challenges:

- No specific professional development support for dual language theme integration is provided by the district.

Recommendations:

- Provide consistent professional development and support for thematic alignment and instruction from the district.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school’s philosophy is that “every teacher is a language teacher,” not just a teacher of content, so there is a strong vocabulary focus that is evident in classrooms.
- The school’s model for instruction emphasizes high engagement, collaborative structures, reciprocal teaching, small group instruction for differentiation, presenting content and curricula that allow students to see themselves and joyful teaching and learning.
- MTSS facilitator works with teachers to review data from formative assessments and screeners; students below 20% are targeted for the most intensive interventions.
- Small group instruction is implemented, focusing on particular standards—reteaching or extending.
- Collinswood consistently outperforms the district and state on i-Station data.
- The school met its overall academic growth goal for 22-23 and exceeded its reading growth goal.
- Collinsworth exceeded both CMS and the state in reading, math and science proficiency in 22-23.

Challenges:

- Having an A day/B day schedule (due to staffing) has cut the time of English instruction in half.
- Formative and EOG/EOC assessments are in English, although instruction is in Spanish.

Recommendations:

- Provide a differentiated staffing allocation to accommodate the unique need for additional teachers in dual language programs.
- Provide district formative assessments in both languages or pay a stipend for teachers to engage in translation of assessments.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school utilizes and analyzes various data sources to monitor learning and provide timely interventions (ex. M-Class, DIBELS, MAP).
- Teachers share data with students and engage them in goal-setting (academic, attendance, behavior) and progress toward goals is acknowledged and celebrated each quarter.

Challenges:

- There is a gap between most subgroups in math. According to the NC Report Card, grade level proficient students for the school is 64.4% with Economically Disadvantaged at 48.4% and Non Economically Disadvantaged at 80.3%.

Recommendations:

- Explore and implement activities for enrichment (ex. error analysis, strategic thinking, problem-solving), as well as remediation to accelerate learning and narrow gaps in math achievement.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- High quality, engaging thematic instruction is facilitated throughout the school.
- The instructional leadership team meets weekly for collaborative decision-making.
- The principal is experienced and knowledgeable and advocates for her students, teachers and fidelity of the magnet program at the school.

Challenges:

- Electives are hard to staff due to a standardized allocation model for all schools, regardless of magnet status.

Recommendations:

- Provide a differentiated staffing allocation for magnet schools to accommodate their unique personnel needs.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The school has a dedicated magnet coordinator who supports theme integration into all subjects.

Challenges:

- There is not a clear pathway for the school's 8th graders. The school feeds into a world language school, not a dual language school.
- There is no evidence of a strategic district financial plan for magnet schools.
- There is a perception of inequity in how schools are allocated funding for professional development/conferences

Recommendations:

- Revisit/refresh the district's strategic vision and plan for magnet school programs.
- Provide financial support to maintain the integrity of magnet programs and support high academic achievement of all children attending magnet schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has a partnership with Ernst and Young that supports college and career readiness by engaging students in authentic, practical problem solving, analysis, decision making and designing solutions.
- The school has more than ten business and community partners to benefit students and families.

Challenges:

- There is not an established partnership protocol and not all partnerships are directly focused on enhancing the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Explore and establish a partnership protocol for business partners for more intentional alignment to enhancement of the school theme and student learning.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The current principal started in August 2024 and is working to cultivate stronger partnerships with families.
- The school has a strong PTA and parents participate on the School Improvement Team to be involved in decision-making.
- The PTA provides financial support for curriculum materials, etc. aligned to the school theme.
- The Parent Square platform is used for ongoing, 2-way communication between home and school.

Challenges:

- There is not a clear understanding of if/how parents can support their child's learning and the school theme in classrooms.

Recommendations:

- Implement professional development to build teachers' knowledge and capacity for family engagement that is linked to learning, interactive, collaborative and developmental.

Overall Recommendations for Collinswood Language Academy:

- Review/revisit the pathway options for students in K-8 dual language programs through high school to ensure continuity with dual language opportunities, different than the current pathway which includes a World Languages Academy but not an immersive dual language experience in all coursework.
- Provide a differentiated staffing model for magnet schools to accommodate unique staffing needs.
- Compensate dual language teachers for additional time spent translating district-provided materials and resources that are in English only.

Coulwood STEM Academy

Coulwood STEM Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	

4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school participates in the district's magnet fair to market and recruit potential students.
- As part of their marketing and recruitment efforts, the school visits elementary schools to recruit 5th grade students by explaining what education they would receive at a STEM school.
- The school has open house marketing events (virtual and in-person), conducted by the leadership team, to showcase their magnet school to potential families.
- The school has brochures, photos and other materials to display and distribute to market their magnet program.

Challenges:

- Coulwood has 64.2% Black students, 3.7% Caucasian students. 25% Hispanic students versus the district's 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian and 30.6% Hispanic.
- Coulwood faces competition from Charter schools and other affluent schools in surrounding areas and seeks to attract neighborhood families back to the school. However, the principal noted the community's unfavorable perception of the school, with its Title 1 designation, is difficult to change.
- The school does not have any marketing/recruitment efforts to target demographic groups to match the diversity of the district.

Recommendations:

- Implement targeted marketing and outreach campaigns that highlight the unique strengths and advantages of the school. Create targeted marketing materials that appeal to the interests and needs of the neighborhood families you are trying to attract. Use engaging visuals, testimonials, statistics and success stories to reinforce the school's values.
- Forge partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, religious institutions and neighborhood associations to leverage their networks and promote the school within the community. Participate in community events, festivals and fairs to increase visibility and build relationships with potential families. Find ways to go to the community and not only offer events where they come to the school.
- Research what the charter and affluent schools are offering so that Coulwood can emphasize what the school has that is unique.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Teachers are PLTW (Project Lead the Way) certified.

- The school has a school-wide research-based annotation strategy for students to understand how to find the central idea of text. This is utilized in all subject areas.
- 100% of staff completed the district's insight survey.
- All students have access to the entire magnet program once enrolled in Coulwood.
- The school's mission and intention is for "all students to be successful and attain high academic levels in middle school. Our educational goal is to prepare students to become high-achieving lifelong learners."
- The principal stated that the teachers at Coulwood are "tenacious, absolutely focused, intentional and dedicated to our students."

Challenges:

Historically, the magnet seats do not fill up during the lottery process.

Recommendations:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with the school's underrepresented demographics.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The PLTW (Project Lead the Way) continuum was created to give all students the opportunity to experience various STEM electives. CTE originally funded positions, paid for training and supplies to get set-up initially. PLTW and Computer Science are part of their continuum.
- Every student takes Project Lead the Way.
- Electives are chosen for students to ensure STEM related exposure to all experiences.
- Students won a NASCAR physics competition with a prize of \$50,000 to purchase laser cutters, 3D printers, etc.
- The school's focus is to prepare students to be able to pursue any or all of the 3E's: employment, enlistment or enrollment.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a formal process to improve theme integration in subjects and courses.
- Student work is displayed throughout the hallways, however, the overarching magnet theme consistently visible throughout the entire school requires further development. One contributing factor may be the removal of bulletin boards.

Recommendations:

- Implement a structured framework for curriculum alignment and collaboration among teachers. This can be executed by creating interdisciplinary teams consisting of teachers from different subject areas who can collaborate on theme integration to ensure comprehensive coverage.
- Enhance the visual representation of the magnet theme by incorporating thematic signage, murals and artwork throughout the school. Collaborate with local artists, students and community members to create custom-designed murals and installations that reflect key elements of the magnet theme and contribute to a vibrant learning environment.
- Reinstate bulletin boards in key areas of the school to create focal points for displaying student work and highlighting the theme and empower students to take ownership of promoting the magnet theme

within the school community. Involve students in the design and creation of thematic displays, murals and interactive exhibits, allowing them to express their creativity and pride in their school's identity.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Coulwood has a documented MTSS Implementation Plan to ensure comprehensive support and intervention strategies are effectively implemented to meet student's diverse needs.
- Within the Master Schedule, planning is conducted by department, not grade level (ex. all math teachers plan together-across all grade levels).
- In-house professional development was conducted to inform teachers about the STEM resources available
- Last year 20 students exited from the ESOL program.
- ML students are divided by ability levels and placed in class to acquire the four language acquisition skills: language, reading, writing and listening. This has proved beneficial for ACCESS Testing as students are better prepared. The school's model is to work on social language first, then feed in academic language.
- PLTW provides ongoing training.
- Within the district, cohorts of teacher PLC's meet together to collaboratively plan.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a yearly theme-based professional development plan at the school.

Recommendations:

- Implement a yearly theme-based professional development plan at the school-level to provide targeted and relevant professional learning opportunities that support teacher growth, foster collaboration and advance school improvement goals. Begin by collaborating with school leadership, teachers and stakeholders to identify key focus areas aligned with the school's mission, goals and priorities for the upcoming academic year. Then, create a comprehensive professional calendar outlining specific workshops, seminars, training, and activities aligned with the identified themes.
- Integrate theme-based professional development into existing support structures, such as PLCs or grade-level meetings to ensure continuity and sustainability.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school's overall performance scores for the past five years are 2022-23 C/64; 2021-22 C/62; 2018-19 C/64; 17-18 D/54. Scores were on an upward trend before the onset of Covid-19. However, following the pandemic, there was a slight decrease in scores. Presently, scores are once again showing an upward trajectory.
- Based on the NC School Report Card, Coulwood exceeded academic growth for the past 3 years.
- The school utilizes Kickboard, which is a school-wide unified classroom behavioral and support system. The school has a Behavioral Management Team that monitors the system. Parents have access to track their child's progress.
- Data artifacts were provided using a variety of formative assessments.

- Coulwood offers Design Modeling, Art, Computer Science, Orchestra, Robotics, Green Architecture, Flight and Space, Medical Detectives, Coding and PLTW.
- Artifacts provided several problem-based projects throughout the year as well as projects aligned with the engineering design process.

Challenges:

- Coulwood's chronic absenteeism is higher than the district's and state's average with 22.52% for the school, 14.95% for the district and 15.04% for the state.

Recommendations:

- Consider implementing perfect attendance celebrations or acknowledgments to encourage students to come to school every day. Look at data for attendance when students have special areas such as Medical Detectives or Flight and Space or STEM experiences. If it shows an increase then the school can identify ways for thematic experiences as a way to incentivize attendance.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school collects and analyzes formative assessment data and tracks data trends per student.
- Based on EVAAS Data, 100% of students had a perfect growth score with grade level proficiency of 55%.
- Instructional time is set at 60 minutes, deviating from the standard 90-minute blocks typical of middle school with the intention of being more deliberate in instruction. Teachers have observed increased student engagement with this pacing.
- The school utilizes a master rotating schedule to allow students access to their courses at their peak learning times.

Challenges:

- Coulwood has a considerably higher short-term suspension and in-school suspension rate than the district and the state per 1000 students.

Recommendations:

- Conduct a thorough analysis of suspension data to identify patterns, trends and root causes contributing to the higher rates at Coulwood. Consider factors such as student demographics, behavior incidents, disciplinary policies and school climate indicators to gain insight into underlying issues. Implement a multi-tiered approach focusing on proactive strategies, restorative practices and targeted interventions.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Teacher retention is consistently about 90%. When the Principal arrived 11 years ago, Coulwood was an "F" school and not functioning. First, the Principal changed the belief system and had 17 teachers leave; the second year 22 teachers left. There are five original teachers still employed at Coulwood, and now the climate and culture is shifting to a more positive, student-centered environment.
- On the school's website, a partnership section allows families to shop at the various businesses and earn rewards on their membership store card.
- Coulwood has a School Improvement Team composed of the leadership team, instructional staff and parents for collaborative decision making.

- Instead of a hiring process, the principal employs a belief system. The principal stated that first, “we do not blame kids for failing” and secondly, “every day, we need to remove barriers so our students can be successful.”
- Students earn quarterly awards and are recognized for their achievements at an end of the year celebration.
- Strategic partnerships are reciprocal and meet the needs of the magnet.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a thematic instructional coaching cycle.

Recommendations:

- Develop a thematic instructional coaching cycle and create an action plan to implement and assess.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear pathway for STEM from K-12.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence that the district supports the magnet program in any school improvement efforts.
- It is unclear to what extent there is a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve magnets with latitude for decision-making, dedicated resource allocation and curriculum support.
- The district does not provide funding for a dedicated magnet coordinator at Coulwood.

Recommendations:

- As a district, when a magnet program is established, it is essential to not solely rely on the school to determine next steps.
- Work with the district to develop a plan where the district supports the magnet program in all school improvement efforts and includes magnet programs in the strategic plan.
- Work with the district to develop a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve the school with dedicated resource allocation, magnet coordinator and curriculum support.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Coulwood has a documented list of a wide range of community theme-based partnerships that enhance the magnet theme such as local churches, Sullenberger Aviation, STEM Camp Museum, NC Air National Guard, Crowder Construction Company, Starbase Charlotte and NASCAR. These partnerships help to enhance their magnet theme and benefit students.
- The school utilizes social media and their website to communicate with families and the community.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of an established process to welcome and involve businesses and organizations in decisions about theme implementation.
- There was no evidence of an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Create a formal protocol outlining the steps to welcome and engage businesses and organizations with the school. This protocol could include procedures for initial outreach, communication channels and

methods for building relationships. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for school staff involved in welcoming and coordinating partnerships.

- Foster a culture of continuous improvement by soliciting feedback from teachers, students and stakeholders on theme integration efforts. Use feedback to identify areas for improvement, refine integration strategies and make adjustments to the curriculum alignment process over time.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Coulwood has a School Improvement Team composed of the leadership team, instructional staff and parents for collaborative decision making.
- The SIP and the NC School Report Card are publicly accessible to parents and the community.
- The school utilizes Parent Square to communicate with parents.
- The principal described the school's culture as very positive, with high expectations and an academic focused environment.

Challenges:

- Continue to engage families through the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Leverage the School Improvement Team to seek feedback on the school's magnet related news/events. Conduct surveys and gather input on what is working well, areas for improvement and suggestions for future events or initiatives. Use this feedback to inform magnet related decision-making and continuously improve family engagement efforts.
- Organize family-centered activities and events that showcase and celebrate the magnet theme. This could include STEM-themed family nights, interactive workshops, guest speaker sessions or field trips to STEM-related sites in the community. Encourage families to participate actively and provide feedback on their experiences.

Overall Recommendations for Coulwood STEM Academy:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with the school's underrepresented demographics.
- Enhance the visual representation of the magnet theme to "scream the theme."
- Integrate theme-based professional development into existing support structures, such as PLCs or grade-level meetings to ensure continuity and sustainability.
- Create a thematic instructional coaching cycle and formulate an action plan for implementation and assessment.

Crestdale Middle School-Visual and Performing Arts

Crestdale Middle School - Visual and Performing Arts				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	

5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school participates in the annual magnet fair and hosts an open house for prospective students and their parents.
- The district utilizes the lottery system for placement of students at Crestdale.
- There are 300 seats reserved for magnet students and each year they fill those seats.
- Transportation is available for all magnet students. There are some parents who live outside the Green zone and choose to provide their own transportation thereby showing their commitment to Crestdale.
- The students all know where they are going when they leave Crestdale. Some of the students plan to apply and audition for Northwest and others will move to Providence or Butler which are their zone schools.

Challenges:

- The school enrollment does not reflect the diversity of the district or the community. The demographics at the school are 46% Caucasian, 24% Black, 21% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 40.1% economically disadvantaged versus the district at 23.8% Caucasian, 34.7% Black, 30.6% Hispanic, 7.2% Asian, 44.3% economically disadvantaged.
- There is no evidence of recruiting students to increase racial and socioeconomic diversity.
- There are three middle schools relatively close to Crestdale which may pull from the pool of potential magnet students.

Recommendations:

- Develop a recruiting strategy for Crestdale to target the student demographic needed for diversity.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school has a DEI division and they have monthly meetings.
- In the mission and vision of the school, diversity is at the center of everything.
- Students and parents both articulate that the opportunity to interact with a diverse group of students and teachers was a strong reason why they chose Crestdale and why they stay.
- Everyone at the school is included in visual and performing arts programming.
- The arts teachers and the core curriculum teachers work together to design academic programming for the students.
- The students were able to articulate how the arts and the core teachers work together (integration) to teach certain concepts and standards.
- Inclusive teaching practices were evident during classroom observations and in discussions with students.

Challenges:

- Parents report that there is a negative perception of the school. The term they often hear is that the school “is rough” or has “rough edges” and this affects recruitment.

Recommendations:

- Develop a student diversity policy that includes a recruitment plan for the targeted demographic.
- Use social media, the website, word of mouth and any other avenue available to tell the school’s own story and have parents tell the story as well. Get students involved in changing the narrative.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development**Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity****Successes:**

- According to teachers and students, arts teachers work hand in hand with core curriculum teachers to teach certain subjects or concepts. For example: When the students were in science learning about sound waves, the band teacher came in and did a lesson on sound using students to play the instruments that produce certain sounds.
- When you enter the school, the arts theme is evident. Beautiful (current) student artwork is on display (matted and framed).
- According to students and teachers, there is a focus on the theme and how learning in that theme can benefit students now and in the future.
- The theme is evident in all classes.

Challenges:

- When you drive up to the school, the outside does not “scream the theme”.

Recommendations:

- Use the painted pillars outside to highlight the different arts themes or the magnet pillars.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- Teachers are making thematic connections to their core classes for the benefit of their students' interests.
- The school has a professional development specialist who schedules collaborative planning, plans professional development opportunities, mentor/mentee relationships and helps the Relay coaches.
- Teachers meet weekly for collaborative planning.
- Professional development opportunities are determined based on the needs of the teachers from surveys, observation and feedback and support needs.

Challenges:

- There is no formal theme-based professional development plan at the school level.
- Teachers have not had formal thematic integration training (but are doing an awesome job of making it happen).

Recommendations:

- Develop a formal professional development plan that includes specific thematic integration learning opportunities for teachers.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The leadership team believes “All students can learn.” It is what they believe and they work to prove this every day.
- There is an expectation of greatness at the school for students and teachers.
- The teachers work to make themselves available to support students before school, during lunch bunch and for after school tutoring.
- Parents, students and teachers all agree that teachers are responsive to their needs regarding differentiated learning strategies.
- Crestdale uses exit tickets, unit tests, benchmark assessments and some performance based assessments.
- Students are encouraged to attend interventions during lunch or after school.

Challenges:

- During observations, the primary mode of teaching and learning was whole group instruction.

Recommendations:

- Employ other instructional strategies like small group instruction or turn and talk to provide for differentiated learning opportunities.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school has demonstrated evidence of improved academic achievement across most subgroups.
- The school is making progress with Multilingual (ML) and English Learners in academic achievement.
- The school has developed a discipline matrix to help everyone (students, teachers and parents) understand the consequences of behavior.
- Classroom observations indicate that there is an expectation of academic achievement and it was evident in the posted student work.

Challenges:

- The Black subgroup is the lowest in terms of academic achievement.
- Students report inappropriate language should be the targeted area for behavior support for students.
- Students are also beginning to feel as if student behavior is causing “cliques” in the cafeteria. Open seating is causing a rift between students.
- Students report that in the past, they had PAWS time to work on homework, catch up on reading or get extra support in areas where they need it. Now PAWS has been replaced with social emotional learning (SEL) time (which they say all students do not need).

Recommendations:

- Schedule PAWS time as an incentive for students.
- Develop a plan to accomplish open seating without some students feeling left out or that there are “cliques” within the cafeteria seating.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Although there is no formal training on theme integration, the school has done a great job of working together to integrate the theme whenever and wherever possible.
- Teachers feel as though they are included in decision making processes for the school.
- Instructional coaching occurs for all teachers. Arts teachers get instructional coaching as well.
- When teachers are hired, other teachers from the department are on the interview team and they make decisions about hiring.

Challenges:

- The theme is not implemented with fidelity but it is implemented.
- The instructional coaching is not thematic.

Recommendations:

- Work on implementing the theme with fidelity.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear magnet pathway for the students at Crestdale. Those who want to continue in the Magnet major can apply and audition at Northwest and those who want to stay in their zone schools will matriculate to Butler or Providence.
- The magnet office provides financial assistance in terms of needed items for the magnet program. For example: the Magnet office purchased guitars and pianos for the band classes upon request. The leadership team feels supported.
- The professional development specialist at the school is integral in providing for the magnet arts teachers as well.

Challenges:

- The district does not include magnets in its strategic plan.
- There is no magnet coordinator at the school.

Recommendations:

- Include magnet programs to the strategic plan
- Develop a plan to “scream the theme” from the moment a car turns into the parking lot.
- Work with the district to secure a magnet coordinator.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The art department has student work displayed in the coffee shop not far from the school and patrons are asking to purchase the artwork of the Crestdale students from the coffee shop.
- The students participate in theme related activities outside of school and during extracurricular activities.

Challenges:

- According to a former parent and the owner of the coffee shop, Crestdale has had a “rough around the edges” reputation for quite some time.
- There are no district supported partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Have an art show at the coffee shop and allow the students to sell their art. This could become an annual recruitment event.
- Develop a partnership protocol for all stakeholders inviting them to be an honorary wildcat.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Based on classroom observations, the climate and culture is amazing.
- The boosters support the school in operations decisions when it involves extracurricular activities or sports.
- The school uses ParentSquare, email, Powerschool and phone calls. Parents are thankful for the teachers who respond at all times on Parentsquare.
- Parents feel engaged and connected to the school through the monthly calendar, the online calendar, the phone calls and social media blasts.
- The school improvement plan is accessible to parents and all members of the community.

Challenges:

- According to the parents, the PTA has not really been able to “get off the ground.”
- Students voiced their concerns regarding those students who misbehave but all students get the consequence. They want teachers to punish only those who have behavior problems.
- Students also voiced their concerns about 8th grade teachers trying to instill fear in them regarding high school.
- Parents and community members feel as though all decisions are made without their input and they are not considered collaborative partners unless they work with one of the extracurricular activities.

Recommendations:

- Develop an active PTA for the school.
- Take 8th grade students on field trips to the high school to alleviate some of their fears.
- Use MTSS facilitators and the discipline matrix to determine discipline for students who misbehave.
- Allow the parents to “tell their story” on the school social media to encourage stakeholders to be a part of the school.
- Develop a parent advisory board to bring them into the conversation as decisions are made for the school.

Overall Recommendations for Crestdale Middle School:

- Develop a recruiting strategy for Crestdale to target the student demographic needed for diversity.
- Develop a professional development plan that includes specific thematic integration learning opportunities for teachers.
- Have an art show at the coffee shop and allow the students to sell their art. This could become an annual recruitment event.
- Develop a parent advisory board to bring them into the conversation as decisions are made for the school.
- Take 8th grade students on field trips to the high school to alleviate some of their fears.

Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy of Technology -

Computer Science STEM

Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy of Technology - Computer Science STEM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school participates in the district magnet fair for purposes of marketing and recruitment.
- Open House presentations for families outline the school program in a graphically-pleasing, clear and concise way.
- The building is clean with awards displayed in the entrance.

Challenges:

- Transportation is not available to all magnet students.
- Communication of the possible closure and/or possible merger of the school lessened the school's desirability to magnet families.
- Student demographics do not reflect the diversity of the district and community. 66% of students at the school are Black, whereas 34.7% of students in the district are Black. 3.8% of students at the school are Caucasian, whereas 23.8% of the students in the district are Caucasian. According to the Principal, the school's diversity mirrors that of the district, but data contradicts that.
- There is no evidence of a district and school-based recruitment plan.
- School enrollment has dropped considerably due to lack of transportation (19 buses last year/10 buses this year) for magnet students. According to the Principal, magnet parents do not choose to be in the violet transportation zones because of the delayed afternoon pickup.
- Aside from the principal and assistant principal, there is not a staff member or team dedicated to leading the work of marketing and recruitment.
- Parents feel the lottery process is stressful, according to their comments in a parent/community focus group.

Recommendations:

- Assess the current marketing and recruitment strategies to identify any biases or barriers that may be hindering student enrollment that mirrors that of the district.

- Develop a clear targeted marketing and recruitment plan to ensure the student demographics mirror those of the district (increase % of Caucasian students).
- Host community events, workshops and information sessions to foster connections and build trust with families from different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds to increase the number of Caucasian students to mirror the district's demographics.
- Include marketing information on the school's website.
- Include marketing as a part of the school's strategic plan, including goals, strategies and measurable outcomes.
- Continue to advocate for transportation that accommodates all magnet students.
- Hire a staff member to be a magnet coordinator and lead a magnet program marketing/recruitment team.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Program is a whole school magnet program.
- School mission statement mentions an equitable learning environment.
- Parent focus group members report that teachers care about their students.
- The counselor briefly mentioned restorative circles.
- The counselor provides specialized small groups with topics related to social-emotional learning (self-awareness, self-management, decision-making, problem-solving) once in each nine week quarter.

Challenges:

- Magnet Teachers receive no training around teaching in diverse educational settings.
- There is little evidence of staff and faculty implementing theme based training.
- In the administrative focus group, it was stated that "severe behavior issues disrupt program implementation."
- There is little evidence of inclusive teaching strategies.

Recommendations:

- Provide specific professional learning related to teaching in diverse settings, theme-based training and social-emotional learning strategies.
- Create a social-emotional learning committee that formulates systems and structures that support social-emotional learning.
- Implement comprehensive student support services, such as counseling, mentoring and academic intervention programs, to address the unique needs of students.
- Engage with the local community to promote the benefits of diversity and encourage families from diverse backgrounds to enroll in the school.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Teachers are meeting monthly with the consultant from The Dot for professional learning with the intended ultimate outcome of integrating the theme into all subjects.
- A quarterly focus has been established for each bucket of the computer science component of the theme according to school staff.

- The theme is visible in several classrooms (blank thinking maps posters) and areas of the school and in quarterly theme showcases.
- The lesson plan template includes thinking maps, AVID strategies and computer science as a reminder of the three components of the theme into the core.

Challenges:

- There is little clarity around whether the theme is an amalgamation of CS, AVID and thinking maps.
- Student knowledge, skills and abilities related to each bucket at each grade level are not articulated.
- There is limited evidence of core theme integration related to computer science in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.
- Lessons include computer science activities that are not connected to standards.
- Few lessons show preparation for beyond K-12.

Recommendations:

- Provide additional curriculum support and outreach from the district level.
- Increase professional learning time and funding related to all aspects (computer science, thinking maps and AVID) of core theme integration.
- Provide all teachers with training related to thinking maps and AVID.
- Develop a clear understanding around the definition of the magnet theme and what it looks like for students and teachers when the theme is integrated into all subjects and courses.
- Develop a plan for monitoring and assessing core theme integration.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to facilitate work related to core theme integration.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- According to the consultant from The Dot, some professional learning related to the computer science theme is differentiated.
- Some teachers are trained in AVID and some are trained in thinking maps.
- All teachers work with The Dot consultant once a month during PLC planning to focus on theme integration related to computer science.
- Collaboration time with colleagues and curriculum specialists is a weekly part of planning.
- There is scheduled collaborative planning amongst teachers.

Challenges:

- There is not a theme-based professional development plan.
- There is limited time/funding to provide adequate theme-based professional learning.
- Teachers have limited input on professional learning.
- All teachers are not trained in thematic instruction.

Recommendations:

- Develop a professional learning plan that supports theme implementation.
- Ensure that all teachers receive professional learning in all aspects of the program.
- Develop a plan for teachers to extend the learning in the once-a-month theme-related professional learning experience with The Dot consultant to enhance core theme integration.
- Develop theme-related professional learning for new hires.
- Develop opportunities for instructional coaches to collaborate with The Dot consultant to support teachers with integrating the theme into the core.

- Develop a walkthrough tool related to core theme integration.
- Align core theme integration with the NCEES teacher evaluation tool.
- Include more theme-related extracurricular learning opportunities for students. For instance, students recommended a coding club.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- There are multiple formative assessments at the school and district levels.
- Based on artifacts from prior lessons, first grade students recreating a model of the city of Charlotte and coding robots to “drive” in the city is an example of multiple modes of learning.
- The school uses MTSS for tiered intervention and provides interventions in small groups.
- The school has developed “data PLCs” and the principal has hired K-2 and 3-5 instructional coaches to address academic improvement challenges.
- NC School Report Card Academic Growth History: 2018- did not meet; 2019- did not meet; 2022- Exceeded Growth, 2023- Met Growth

Challenges:

- There is little evidence of a variety of formative assessments.
- The school’s graphic represents the magnet theme, but there is little evidence of a school-wide philosophy of teaching and learning.
- There is little evidence of research-based practices in learning and problem-solving.
- There is no evidence of differentiation of learning for students.
- Classroom walkthroughs showed little evidence of multiple modes of learning. In six classrooms, students were experiencing lectures with limited engagement and interaction.

Recommendations:

- Review and revise the curriculum to ensure alignment with the school's theme.
- Develop interdisciplinary units and projects that integrate the theme into all subject areas and provide authentic learning experiences for students.
- Collaborate with teachers, administrators and community partners to design curriculum materials that are engaging, relevant and aligned with research-based practices.
- Provide structures for PLCs to focus on theme-aligned instruction, research-based design and effective assessment practices that support student learning.
- Connect the work of the instructional coaches to core theme integration immediately with no additional needed funding.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- There is evidence of narrowing the achievement gap and eliminating racial predictability in reading and math as all subgroups met or exceeded academic growth for the last two years, as shown by the NC School Report Card.
- School collects formative assessment data that is disaggregated by subgroups.
- Academic achievement is an integral part of the school’s SIP goals.
- The school collects multiple progress monitoring data points.

- The school hosts bi-weekly PLC data days.

Challenges:

- Student achievement is not consistent (ex. Science in 2023-2024).
- PLCs are not analyzing disaggregated data.

Recommendations:

- Develop specific data review protocols that address adjusting and differentiating instruction for student subgroups, noting trends, improvements and sustained growth over time.
- Create norms/PLC commitments that focus on data.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The principal protects the time of K-2 and 3-5 instructional coaches.
- Teacher Leader Pathway Program has been successful- two teachers have been recognized for narrowing the achievement gap.
- Teacher interview questions relate to the theme.
- Multiple stakeholders are involved on the SIP.

Challenges:

- A core group of teachers left the school after the news of the possible school closure in the 2024-2025 school year.
- The principal is the only National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT).
- There is high teacher turnover due to news of the possible school closure, according to the principal.
- There is no measure of fidelity for theme implementation.

Recommendations:

- Instructional Coaches should collaborate to support planning related to core theme integration.
- Develop and implement a walkthrough tool that relates to theme implementation to measure fidelity of theme implementation.
- Develop systems and structures for onboarding new hires with relation to the magnet theme.
- Develop a common understanding of what theme implementation looks like.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear pathway for STEM magnet themes from K-12.
- The district provided a consultant from The Dot to lead monthly PLCs that relate to the computer science theme with the outcome of integrating the theme into all subject areas.
- The district provided \$8,000 for technology to support the theme in the 2022-2023 school year.

Challenges:

- There is not a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all subject areas.
- District financial support is inconsistent, which creates difficulty for planning related to the budget for the school program.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive financial sustainability plan for magnet programs that outlines dedicated funding sources, budget allocation and resource allocation strategies.

- Ensure that magnet schools receive sufficient funding to support their unique themes, initiatives and programming needs.
- Explore grant opportunities, partnerships and fundraising efforts to supplement district funding and support long-term sustainability.
- Provide dedicated curriculum support and development resources to assist magnet schools in designing, implementing and refining theme-aligned instructional materials and programming.
- Offer professional development opportunities, curriculum planning workshops and access to instructional coaches or specialists to support teachers in implementing innovative instructional practices that align with the magnet themes.
- Develop a comprehensive promotion and marketing strategy to raise awareness of magnet programs, attract prospective students and engage families and communities in the benefits of magnet schools.
- Ensure that magnet programs are fully integrated into the district's strategic planning process.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school boasts multiple curriculum-focused partnerships that enhance the magnet theme, including: DigiBridge, Microsoft, Drones, 100 Black Men, Build-A-Bear Engineering, Google Fiber, Ernest and Young, Drones Demonstration OutTeach.
- SMART Girls STEM Club is a way to leverage community partnerships to support the magnet theme.
- The school has a structured process for identifying, engaging and involving businesses and organizations in decisions about theme implementation.
- The school has a process for valuing stakeholders' input around theme-related information.

Challenges:

- Opportunities connected to the partnerships are limited to certain grade levels/clubs.

Recommendations:

- Leverage district-supported partnerships.
- Form an advisory board composed of representatives from businesses, organizations and community leaders to provide input, guidance and support for theme implementation and curriculum development.
- Provide career exploration activities and resources that expose students to a wide range of career options aligned with the school's theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parent Square is a way to communicate efficiently with parents and to include pictures of students engaging in the theme.
- The Thursday folder is a successful communication tool for parents.
- PTA is active and involved in providing feedback about the theme and hosting theme-related activities/events (STEM Night).
- Website is updated and social media is active.
- STEM newsletter is a communication tool to share theme-related items.
- Quarterly STEM showcases highlight theme-related learning activities.
- Parents actively engaged on the School Improvement Planning (SIP) team.

- SIP and the NC School report card are publicly accessible to parents and the community.

Challenges:

- Parent Square is new in implementation and information from PowerSchool needs to be verified.
- Parents need more notice of events.

Recommendations:

- Create a calendar to share with parents for communication.

Overall Recommendations for Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy of Technology:

- Advocate for transportation accommodations to address barriers to enrollment and enhance accessibility for all students with the goal of the school mirroring the diversity of the district.
- Provide ongoing curriculum support and professional development for teachers to effectively integrate the magnet theme into all subjects and grade levels.
- Develop a clear instructional framework that supports theme implementation and ensures consistency across the curriculum.
- Develop a comprehensive professional learning plan that supports theme implementation and enhances core theme integration consistently.
- Create a clear marketing and recruitment plan with the ultimate goal of the school mirroring the diversity of the district.

East Mecklenburg High School - IB

East Mecklenburg High School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process and a preference of students continuing in the IB pathway.
- The school reports that East Mecklenburg is the preferred school for families because there is generational loyalty to the school that is now celebrating its 75th anniversary.

- The school has 40% Hispanic students, 32% Black students and 20% Caucasian students compared to the district 31% Hispanic students, 35% Black students and 24% Caucasian students so is relatively in line with the demographics of the district.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of a written diversity, recruitment or marketing plan.
- Staff noted that “diversity has not been a priority for the district.”
- There is very little information easily accessible about the magnet theme on the school website.
- Transportation for students living outside of the district transportation express stops is a barrier for attracting a diverse population. Parents report that hour-long bus rides before and after school are undesirable and impact family life and after-school activities.

Recommendations:

- Formalize a written diversity, recruitment and marketing plan with targeted enrollment goals, metrics and opportunities for review in alignment with the district’s diversity goals.
- Increase the visibility of the IB magnet theme on the school website.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classes reflect enrollment diversity.
- It was evident during classroom visits as well as a review of PLC agendas and minutes, that there is reflection on practices, a review of student data and professional development sessions are tailored to individual staff needs when appropriate.
- Classroom walk-throughs and student achievement are used as indicators of success.
- 70% of teachers are rated effective or highly effective by North Carolina and district standards. There are 16 Nationally Board Certified staff members.

Challenges:

- Identification of neighborhood students who qualify for IB.
- Lack of resources to provide IB training for staff.

Recommendations:

- Evaluate, formalize strategies and provide professional development along with metrics to increase neighborhood student enrollment in IB classes.
- Seek assistance and district resources to provide updated IB training for identified staff.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- It is the expectation that all students have access to the International Baccalaureate (IB) theme-based instructional practices and courses.

Challenges:

- Adaptability of the district mandated curriculum to the IB curriculum.
- Lack of a magnet coordinator to support theme-based instruction.
- Lack of a structured protocol for classroom interventions.
- Lack of formalized protocols for classroom interventions.
- Marketing and visibility of the IB theme throughout the school and community.

- Time and resources required to enhance theme integration into subjects and courses.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with district staff to adapt and align IB requirements to the district mandated curriculum and assessments in core subjects.
- Work with the district to explore opportunities to add a theme-based magnet coordinator.
- Develop and implement a school-based protocol for classroom interventions.
- Include in the school's marketing plan goals and strategies to enhance theme recognition school and community-wide. Make the school "scream the theme."
- Submit a plan to district leadership requesting resources and time to enhance theme integration into subjects and courses.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Theme-based professional development is calendared monthly to support the theme and includes targeted professional development for students with disabilities and English language learners.
- Clubs and organizations are aligned to the magnet theme. Community service projects, internships and projects are aligned to IB theme requirements.
- Community partners, parents and teachers support academic and extracurricular experiences with financial resources and volunteer support.
- Currently there is a core of IB trained staff members who provide training to peers during monthly PLC meetings.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a formalized professional development plan.
- There is minimal district support of theme-based IB training.
- Less than half of the IB instructors have received updated formal theme-based training.

Recommendations:

- Standardize a plan with metrics linking professional development to the curriculum and student academic achievement.
- Formally link extracurricular activities to the theme.
- Submit a plan seeking district support and resources to provide IB training to identified staff.
- With district support and teacher leadership, initiate a forum for theme-based teachers to share ideas and resources.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- All students have access to theme-based courses and instruction.
- Academic growth history per North Carolina Report Card notes that students met or exceeded growth targets in the last four cycles. 2018 - 81.4% - met goals; 2019 - 87.0% - Exceeded goals; 2022 - 81.6% - Exceeded goals; 2023 - 77.7% - Met goals

Challenges:

- There is a need for consistent intervention protocols.
- ACT scores indicate an achievement gap among students.

Recommendations:

- Refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic success, theme fidelity and interventions.

Standard 6: Student Achievement**Successes:**

- Over a four year period:
 - 72.1% IB Diplomas were awarded.
 - Student academic performance goals met or exceeded goals.
 - There is an 81.1% graduation rate.
 - Per the school website, 95% EMHS graduates attend college.
- Selected course offerings can lead to CTE certifications.

Challenges:

- Narrow performance gaps on identified assessments.

Recommendations:

- Include in the school improvement plan goals and strategies to address deficits in identified performance indicators and theme-based assessments.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- Leadership and teachers report the IB Learner Profile elements are consistently implemented throughout the school.
- There was IB training for first year IB teachers in 2023.
- Decisions are made with input from teachers, parents and students.
- Teachers are involved in the interview process at the school.
- Teachers sought training from colleagues on “How Can I IB it?” Training was provided in monthly PLCs.

Challenges:

- Teachers note lack of district training or support for theme teachers.
- Lack of resources and time to provide Category 1 and 2 IB training.

Recommendations:

- Provide intentional district wide collaboration among subject specific IB theme teachers.
- Enhance district professional development training, ex. IB, AP grading, Theory of Knowledge, support for one of a kind course offerings in IB magnets.
- Provide support to align the CMS mandated curriculum and assessments to IB required content.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- There are K-12 pathways for the IB theme.

Challenges:

- Transportation is noted as a barrier for some families to access IB pathways.
- Lack of a magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all subject areas is a barrier.

- Discussion with leadership reveals school leadership has minimal to no awareness concerning the specific purpose of a magnet school to reduce and/or prevent racial and socioeconomic isolation and that the IB magnet theme may promote school choice to change family enrollment patterns for the specific purpose to desegregate a school district.
- The district financial plan does not appear to allow for the school to meet all teacher training requirements for the IB.

Recommendations:

- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socio-economic goals, racial isolation goals and target enrollment.
- Submit a plan to district leadership requesting resources and time to enhance theme integration in subjects and courses including formal IB training.
- Explore transportation options for students in targeted recruitment zones to meet diversity goals.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- School community and school alumni support school activities and academics.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a formalized protocol for soliciting community partnerships and metrics including a link to the theme.
- District supported partnerships are not evident.
- The parent focus group noted a need for enhanced marketing efforts to encourage more community engagement.

Recommendations:

- Establish a protocol with district approval for soliciting partnerships to include the magnet theme.
- Document the success of partnerships sustained over time and connect them to magnet theme support.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- There is an active PTA reflective of the school community.
- Parent focus group noted that the “school embraces diversity, is warm and inviting and a place for every kid to thrive. It is a hidden gem.” Parents like the number of offerings, rigor, extracurricular activities and state that the writing instruction is exceptional.
- Parent representatives support school improvement.

Challenges:

- Although parents were very supportive of the school and viewed themselves as being engaged, they suggested exploration of more options for family-friendly theme/curriculum based activities.
- Parents noted:
 - The districts’ English curriculum is subpar and suggests using the IB curriculum to add more relevance and rigor.
 - Communication needs to be improved.

- Student recognition is limited among students, parents and the community. Student accomplishments in clubs, extracurricular activities and academics are rarely recognized internally and publicly.
- An effort should be made to link more courses in IB to apprenticeships, internships and shadowing opportunities.
- Career paths should be weighted as IB courses.
- Grading policy should be reexamined.
- Transportation is a barrier for recruiting and retaining students from targeted areas.

Recommendations:

- Improve communication through an enhanced social media presence, podcasts and marketing to feeder schools and the community.
- Explore more options for family-friendly theme/curriculum based activities.
- Increase recognition of students internally and publicly.

Overall Recommendations for East Mecklenburg High School:

- Align and refine curriculum, assessments and theme continuum to align with both CMS and IB principles.
- Seek resources to provide IB training for school staff including the addition of a theme-based magnet coordinator.
- Enhance diversity and recruitment and explore transportation options for students in targeted recruitment zones to meet diversity goals.
- Establish a protocol with district approval for soliciting partnerships to include sustainability goals and linkage to the magnet theme.
- Leverage advocacy of the EMHS Parent Focus Group to address matters of concern: parent communication, curriculum rigor, student recognition, grading policy, weighted courses, IB course linkage to apprenticeships, internships and shadowing opportunities and family friendly school-engagement activities.

Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School - Leadership

Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School - Leadership				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process.
- Recruitment strategies include word of mouth, school tours and CMS magnet school fairs.

Challenges:

- School staffing does not include a magnet coordinator to assist with recruitment, marketing, theme implementation and community engagement efforts.
- School boundary lines changed about six years ago and a designated leadership pathway middle school was identified. Community members described the designated school as “less than desirable” because of poor academic achievement trends. The middle school received a North Carolina Department of Education “F” rating. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, the leadership pathway is designated K-5 with no middle school option.
- The SES increased to 71.5% as opposed to the district at 44.3% and is designated Title 1.
- School branding continues to be an issue even though the school has been in the neighborhood since 1912. ETES petitioned CMS to place signage on the school property identifying it as a CMS school.
- Staff reported trends of high student retention in grades K-3, however higher than average student withdrawals exist in grades 4-5 because parents are seeking more desirable pathways for students. Exit surveys indicated applications to IB or arts themed schools which would ensure transition into more desirable pathways.
- Transportation for students living outside of district transportation express stops is a barrier for attracting a diverse population. Parents report that hour-long or more bus rides before and after school are undesirable and impact family life and after school activities.
- There was no evidence of a written diversity plan and recruitment. The staff reported past enrollment trends of approximately 30% enrollment of Caucasian, Hispanic, and Black students while presently it is 8.60% Caucasian, 16.1% Hispanic and 67.8% Black.
- Discussion with leadership reveals school leadership has minimal to no awareness concerning the specific purpose of a magnet school to reduce and/or prevent racial and socioeconomic isolation and that the IB magnet theme may promote school choice to change family enrollment patterns for the specific purpose to desegregate a school district.

Recommendations:

- Formalize a written diversity plan with targeted enrollment goals and review the plan in alignment with the district’s diversity goals.
- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic goals and targeted enrollment goals.
- Collaborate with district officials to identify pathway options for leadership schools to make for a smoother transition within the magnet theme OR consider adding another more unique magnet theme to the Leader in Me theme to increase its attractiveness to target market families.
- In collaboration with the district, identify resources to add a magnet coordinator to ETES staffing to elevate and support recruitment, marketing, theme implementation and community engagement efforts.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classes do reflect the diversity of the school but not of the district. The Class Creator program is used to help build classes to ensure diversity and equity based on student needs, student strengths and abilities, behavior, special needs and other factors as outlined by the Student Lighthouse Team composed of teachers, facilitators, counselors and the administration.
- The school's mission and vision statements align with "Leader in Me" principles with an emphasis on diversity, leadership, achievement and community.
- Staff retention of 90% provides consistency in the implementation of Leader in Me principles and demonstrates overall commitment to teaching in diverse settings.
- Instructional facilitators and coaches work in classrooms daily to provide support to teachers and students with intervention, acceleration and Leader in Me strategies.
- Leader in Me protocols were evident throughout the school and during classroom visits which promoted inclusivity and leadership principles.

Challenges:

- The teaching staff is not reflective of the school's diversity.
- The theme of the school is not reflected in the name of the school. Traditional does not let parents know what the theme of the school is.

Recommendations:

- Evaluate, formalize strategies and provide professional development along with metrics to address the needs of high performing students.
- Include the theme of the school in the name of the school.
- Include in the staffing plan diversity goals for hiring teaching staff reflective of the student population.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Elizabeth Traditional ES is a certified Leader In Me Lighthouse School 2023.
- It is the expectation that all instructors are required to implement and integrate Leader In Me habits and strategies into all classes.
- Student work is indicative of the expectation of CMS required standards-based instruction aligned with Leader In Me habits. Student notebooks in each subject allow for reflection, indicators of standards mastery and progress monitoring. There was evidence of small group instruction, differentiation with coaches and teachers and 'push-in' practices to meet the needs of students at various levels.
- Extracurricular activities and clubs are scheduled with teacher, parent volunteers and support of the school's family and community advocate. On the day of the review, fifth graders left for a field trip to a symphony performance.
- Faculty and student leadership teams are formed based on the Leader In Me 8 Habits.

Challenges:

- Although there is common planning time, weekly PLCs and daily instructional coaching related to the theme, there was no written evidence presented of a theme articulated and differentiated presented to

the reviewer. The Leader In Me certification notebook was referenced, however, never presented to demonstrate the elements.

Recommendations:

- Formalize in writing articulated instructional practices, standards, units of instruction including theme integration by grade level.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Theme-based professional development supports the theme including targeted professional development for students with disabilities and English language learners.
- Professional development is provided by grade level and for individual teachers during weekly PLCs as required and as requested based on need.
- The Leader In Me (LIM) coach funded through the LIM/CMS contract provides professional development to the staff two times per year.
- Instructional facilitators assist teachers with articulation and differentiation strategies.
- LIM action teams address school culture, student focused 7 minute circles of control, WIGS - Wildly Important Goal Setting, mid-year assessments and leadership notebooks.
- Title 1 funding for substitute coverage allows for monthly Eagle Day half day planning sessions for teachers to review student data, collaborate on instruction and receive professional development.
- PLC agendas and minutes indicate a reflection on practices, a review of student data and that professional development sessions are tailored to individual staff needs when appropriate.
- Eight to ten teachers annually attend Leader In Me professional development in August funded by CMS.

Challenges:

- There was no written evidence presented of a theme articulated and differentiated.
- There is limited funding for annual LIM training for all staff.

Recommendations:

- Formalize in writing articulated instructional practices, standards, units of instruction including theme integration by grade level.
- Identify resources to enhance Leader In Me training for all instructional staff including new hires and members of the administrative team.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Data evidence was provided using a variety of formative assessments.
- Interventions and enhancements were evident through plans, coaching and intervention schedules and expectations daily of small group instruction by teachers and instructional facilitators
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies are infused into instruction through the LIM 8 Leadership Habits. Counselors, the social worker and family engagement advocates promote family engagement in the learning process.
- Title 1 funding is used to provide additional instructional supports.

Challenges:

- SIP academic growth goals were not met in 2023.

Recommendations:

- Standardize a plan with metrics linking the curriculum, student academic achievement and the Leader In Me program.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school met End of Grade targets in reading and math.
- There is a schoolwide commitment to using multiple modes of learning through lesson planning and curriculum delivery supported by coaching and PLCs.

Challenges:

- State assessments show downward trends in student achievement.
- Staff reports that with the increase in SES, student performance on state assessments declined from 91.4% exceeding goals to 69.7% not meeting goals.
- Data shows limited to no growth for high achieving groups and lowest performing students.

Recommendations:

- Refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic success.
- Develop a plan to address the academic performance of identified subgroups.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Collaborative decision making is central to the Leader In Me theme. Leadership teams are formed including teachers and students.
- Teachers are included in the recruitment, hiring and onboarding process for staff new to the building.
- Four instructional coaches provide support in classrooms, through PLCs and professional development.
- The leadership team reports that teachers are supportive, collaborative and vocal about needs in the school and readily take leadership roles in getting needs accomplished.
- Teacher recognition is done at community meetings and through social media.

Challenges:

- According to the parent and teacher focus groups, the school struggles to “scream the theme” within the community.

Recommendations:

- Develop a strategy to communicate more clearly the theme to future and current families outlining the theme, student expectations and roles and responsibilities of students, teachers and family.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- There is a district plan that currently includes targeted magnet realignment.
- There is district support of a standardized curriculum for all elementary schools in core subject areas along with limited professional development support for elective classes.
- The CMS/Leader in Me contract includes a professional development coach two times per year.

Challenges:

- Magnet school funding does not include a magnet coordinator for ETES.
- The K-5 leadership pathway is phasing out in 2024-2025. Parent and teacher focus groups reported that the current pathway to middle school was “undesirable” or limited because of the designated school’s academic performance.
- School leadership reported a lower student retention rate in grades 4-5 because of the absence of a clear pathway. Parents choose to enroll students in IB or another themed school that has a clear pathway and avoids the lottery process.
- Theme branding is limited in the neighborhood and word of mouth. The leadership focus group shared advocacy for branding on school signage to denote ETES as a CMS elementary school.
- According to parent and teacher focus groups, the school struggles to “scream the theme” within the community.
- Leadership and teachers report quality and frequency LIM contracted coaching is inconsistent.
- Transportation options for students in targeted areas are a deterrent to potential students.

Recommendations:

- Explore pathway options for leadership schools to make for a smoother transition within the magnet theme and avoid the lottery OR consider adding another more unique magnet theme to the Leader in Me theme to increase its attractiveness to target market families. It is often hard to have a leadership theme in middle and high schools that stands out from leadership that all schools promote.
- Provide opportunities for teacher focus sessions to gather feedback on student achievement, branding/marketing sessions and school operations.
- Explore transportation options for students in targeted recruitment zones to meet diversity goals.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- School administration, teachers and the family engagement coordinator assist with community involvement and partnership development.
- Partnerships are established with Heart Math, Charlotte Symphony, Children’s Theatre, Raptor Center, Force of Fire and the Community College.
- Grade level community service projects are generally aligned with local non-profits to areas of food insecurity, housing, animals - Pugs Animal Projects and sports related projects.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a formalized protocol for soliciting community partnerships and metrics including a link to the theme.
- District supported partnerships were not evident.

Recommendations:

- Establish a protocol with district approval for soliciting partnerships to include metrics and linkage to the theme.
- Document the success of partnerships sustained over time and connect to theme support.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The leadership team, students, and parents describe the school's climate as a safe and caring environment.
- PTA is actively involved as school volunteers in classrooms, extracurricular activities and fundraising events.
- There is a commitment to engage families in all school activities through phone, email, newsletter and social media.
- Title 1 funding allows student access to additional theme related activities.

Challenges:

- Access to the school improvement plan via the website was challenging.
- Theme branding is limited outside of the school community, however there is a strong community commitment to support ETES because it has been in the community since 1912.

Recommendations:

- Explore resource opportunities to support school activities.
- Work with the technology team to make student academic progress and school improvement plans more readily accessible.
- Enhance theme branding with marketing materials.

Overall Recommendations for Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School:

- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school, and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic goals, racial diversity goals and targeted enrollment.
- Ensure that the magnet theme is reflected in the title of the school. Traditional does not let parents know the magnet theme.
- Explore pathway options for leadership schools to make for a smoother transition within the magnet theme and avoid the lottery OR consider adding another more unique magnet theme to the Leader in Me theme to increase its attractiveness to target market families. It is often hard to have a leadership theme in middle and high schools that stands out from leadership that all schools promote.
- Formalize in writing articulated instructional practices, standards, units of instruction including theme integration by grade level.

First Ward Creative Arts Academy

First Ward Creative Arts Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		

9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Student enrollment projections are met.
- Student retention remains at approximately 90%.
- Magnet staffing retention exceeds 90%.

Challenges:

- Lack of a detailed and targeted recruitment plan with diversity goals in alignment with district goals. First Ward Creative Arts Academy, according to the NC Report Card has 70.2% Economically Disadvantaged students.
- Lack of magnet school staffing support, ex. magnet coordinator.
- Staff and parents noted transportation and duration of daily bus rides as barriers to attracting potential students to the schools in targeted zones.
- Community uncertainty of the First Ward location and designation as part of the CMS realignment of magnet schools.

Recommendations:

- Develop a recruitment plan with diversity goals and metrics to meet district enrollment goals.
- Work with school and district staff to address the transportation barriers.
- Develop a marketing plan to further capitalize upon the success of community student performances to include communication tools and metrics to attract students.
- Clarify district magnet realignment of magnet schools including First Ward.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classrooms reflect the diversity of the school community.
- Team planning and school's focus on data driven instruction and inclusion ensure attention to student needs and supports. Two reading specialists, one math specialist and one technology specialist provide instructional support within the classrooms.
- Theme staff retention traditionally has been over 90% thus ensuring consistency in magnet focus specifically music, dance, band, drama and art.
- First Ward has a designation of A+ from the North Carolina Arts Integration Program previously offered by the state.
- SEL is a focus for the counselor and social worker through classroom lessons and daily student routines ex. PBIS, Capturing Kids Hearts, Terrific Kids And Trauma Informed Schools.

Challenges:

- Theme teachers noted a need for additional resources and professional development to update equipment and facility and instructional needs.
- There is limited support from the district to provide targeted instructional and training support to theme teachers new to the role with curriculum framework and instructional strategies.

Recommendations:

- Seek support of district staff to provide training on theme based instructional standards and instructional strategies for new and existing teachers. In the meantime, consider working with other arts schools in the district to share best practices for onboarding new teachers into arts integration.
- Further document expectations of theme based instructional strategies throughout the school.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

- The staff seek grants to provide instructional support across the curriculum ex. NC Arts Council grant for Number Drummers - math, fractions; Arts Based Curriculum Nights supported by Title 1 funds; a community donor donated books for distribution to students during family nights with an SEL focus.
- The magnet theme is integrated into all subject areas by grade level.

Challenges:

- New hires to magnet positions require additional support on curriculum standards and instructional delivery from an arts based specialist at the district level.
- Opportunities for magnet teachers to collaborate with arts based specialists are limited so as to enhance theme integration within the school.

Recommendations:

- Provide additional instructional support and training to identified staff members in core and magnet theme positions.
- Ensure that theme-based standards align with grade level curriculum standards.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The staff routinely participate in district professional development activities.
- PLCs include training on intervention practices and small group instruction.
- Reading, math and technology specialists provide ongoing instructional training and support for core teachers.

Challenges:

- Lack of staffing support for the magnet theme ex. magnet coordinator.
- Lack of a formalized professional development plan based on student needs, staff needs, magnet theme and aligned to the school improvement plan.

Recommendations:

- Develop a professional development plan aligned to the school improvement plan, magnet theme, student achievement and staff needs.
- Expand teacher intervention and acceleration instructional support through professional development activities including talent development training.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Data dives and weekly PLCs are formalized to review student data and instructional practices. Reading and math specialists provide classroom support along with targeted professional development.

Teachers note that “data is top tier serious.” School-wide there is the use of the acronym GLEAM - Grade Level Engagement Affirming Meaningful as a common approach to teaching and learning.

- Accountability measures are in place to ensure instruction is meeting student needs.
- Student and parent conferences are scheduled to gain parent support and engage both students and parents in the learning process.

Challenges:

- Lack of resource support for theme teachers to provide interventions and differentiation.
- Need for consistent and structured professional development on interventions and acceleration.

Recommendations:

- Expand professional development opportunities focusing on intervention and acceleration.
- Strengthen monitoring efforts with a focus on student growth.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Reported student excellence in the arts and according to the NC Report Card, Participation Percentage for Arts Education of First Ward Creative Arts Academy exceeds the state average for participation in the arts. Music and Visual Arts is somewhat higher but Theater and Dance - with the state being less than 5% for both, while First Ward Creative Arts Academy is 100%.
- According to the NC State Report Card, academic growth was met in years 2019 through 2023 after not meeting the growth score in 2018.

Challenges:

- Student behavior issues were reported by students. Data trends show a decline in student referrals with the assistance of the social worker and the behavior specialist according to school staff.

Recommendations:

- While the school continues to show progress, refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic growth and theme effectiveness.
- Develop and implement a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps.
- Identify data sources and strategies to address concerns regarding attendance and behavior. Continue providing supports such as social workers and behavior specialists.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- There is staff representation in the recruitment and hiring process.
- There is a team of specialists with 80% having 10+ years on the school team.

Challenges:

- Lack of staffing allocations to support the magnet theme ex. magnet coordinator.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with the district to identify resources to support the magnet instructors with instructional support and curriculum alignment.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- There is a pathway for students in the arts in grades K-12.

Challenges:

- Transportation does not support the needs of students in targeted recruitment areas.
- There is inconsistent allocation of resources for school based magnet instructional support, marketing and recruitment.

Recommendations:

- Explore ways to provide subject specific instructional and curriculum support to new hires on an ongoing basis.
- Explore transportation options for students in targeted recruitment zones to meet diversity goals.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Twelve partnerships have been established with professional arts communities and non-profits.
- Guest artists are included in instructional planning and targeted instructional delivery.
- Student performances are scheduled throughout the school year to include magnet fairs, student showcases, family night, holiday/cultural celebrations and seasonal productions.
- Community partners award grants for instructional support and field trips.
- The non-profit partners support families with food insecurity, housing and essential needs,

Challenges:

- Lack of a formalized plan with metrics to expand and sustain community engagement and expectations.

Recommendations:

- Formally document data and resources from community partners.
- Provide a forum for collaboration among community partners to enhance the magnet school experience at First Ward.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents support student performances, family nights and curriculum nights.

Challenges:

- Parents note communication is limited and inconsistent.
- The parent focus group feedback noted the lack of parent involvement.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to increase parent involvement.
- Implement a schedule for parent communication.
- Work with the PTA to determine school needs and a plan of action to provide support.

Overall Recommendations for First Ward Creative Arts Academy:

- Expand the school improvement plan to include the magnet theme.
- Develop a communication plan for the district phased magnet plan to realign First Ward.
- Develop a targeted recruitment plan to address school and district diversity goals.
- Expand school professional development plan to include interventions and acceleration strategies along with targeted theme instruction and the onboarding of new staff.

- Develop a plan to increase parent involvement.

Governor's Village STEM Academy Lower and Upper Campuses

Governor's Village STEM Academy- Lower and Upper Campuses				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development			X
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Governor's Village STEM Academy prides itself on not only being the largest K-8 school in the county, but they are the county's only "Connected Village" - providing a STEM continuum from pre-K to 8th grade. The culture of a STEM mindset - including the Four C's (collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking).
- Most of the schools' 1500 students come from the surrounding neighborhood, with 25% magnet application students, but most of them live close to the school according to the staff.
- Students apply through a magnet lottery and at the site visit it was reported, "We will take them all if we have seats."

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent marketing, recruitment, entrance and assignment and transportation policies are designed to ensure equal access for all students and reduce socioeconomic group isolation. Governor's Village STEM Lower has 76.9% of students considered Economically Disadvantaged according to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.
- With over 75% of the student population coming from the community, it is very difficult to match the diversity of the district.

Recommendations:

- Target recruiting efforts to more closely mirror the demographics of the district socioeconomically and racially.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school celebrates diversity with its community connection videos they use to start the day which celebrates diversity.
- A theme of One Connected Village is embraced by the school community bringing both campuses and all students together to provide a STEM continuum from PreK to eighth grade.

Challenges:

- Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month are celebrated, but there are many other groups represented by the student's backgrounds that could be celebrated.
- There was no evidence of inclusive teaching practices although staff reports that some curriculum addresses different cultures and communities including the historical achievements of diverse scientists, engineers and mathematicians.

Recommendations:

- Celebrate all groups represented by the students' backgrounds. Invite families in to assist with the planning and implementation.
- Provide professional development and support for teachers' implementation of inclusive teaching practices.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- At the site visit it was clear the school's administrative team - administrators, multi-classroom leaders (MCLs) and facilitators as well as the classroom teachers are committed to theme integration. Their "Titanic" approach is a school-wide approach to cross curricular collaboration and theme integration.
- In April, the Upper Campus is planning to showcase a museum theme. Grade 6 students chose an African American historical figure, researched them, and became a "wax figure" of the person. Grade 7 students are creating a Harlem Renaissance Museum with their artwork. Families and Lower Campus students will tour the museum.
- The campus contains two gardens and a frog pond where students learn about horticulture and zoology.
- Classes on the Lower Campus facilitate students' learning about settling a new planet and body systems.
- PLCs occur twice per week where teachers collaborate cross-curricular.
- According to staff, 5th through 8th grade students have daily hands-on lab and project science experiences taught by certified science educators aligned to the North Carolina Course of Studies.
- The upper campus students also have the opportunity to take the following Project Lead The Way courses: Medical Detectives, Automation and Robotics and Design and Modeling. Other STEM-based electives include Computer Science Discoveries I through III. 7th and 8th graders can take high school credit math courses, Math I and Math II.
- The school provides various after-school STEM enrichment programs, including 3D Printing, Robotics, Coding and Digibridge Saturday STEAM Programming
- All students, K-8, participate in a STEM Fair that showcases their culminating STEM projects that incorporate all subject areas. Families, community partners, district and community leaders are invited to view the projects. Students in grades 3 through 8 are awarded prizes based on votes from attendees.

Challenges:

- The STEM theme is more visible on the Lower Campus, than the Upper Campus.

Recommendations:

- Develop a PBL and STEM integration culture on the Upper Campus to mirror that of the Lower Campus, so all students, K-8, have the same high quality learning experience.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Teachers have had opportunities to participate in professional development from Unbound Ed, VR Transfers and the Dot.
- Teachers attend National Science Teaching Association conferences and present at state and local science conferences.
- New teachers are assigned a veteran teacher as a mentor.
- Many teachers participated in Capturing Kids Hearts professional development. The goal is that the whole staff will participate in this professional development by the beginning of next school year.

Challenges:

- There are very few STEM professional development offerings from the district.

Recommendations:

- Increase the number of STEM professional development opportunities offered by the district for teachers and administrators.
- Network with other STEM school staff to share best practices in the district.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Teaching and learning focuses on theme-aligned instruction and research-based design. The school's "Connected Village" provides a STEM continuum from pre-K to 8th grade. According to staff, at the onset, students start practicing the Four C's - collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking. Students learn early on that failure is okay. There are lots of challenges, lots of opportunities for scholars to problem solve. *"Students may not follow the STEM path, but when they leave our school, they leave as problem solvers."*
- Content teachers have monthly data chats and share that information with their scholars. In the student focus group, students "spoke to their strengths" and "spoke to their challenge areas."
- Teachers differentiate instruction through station rotations - even in the upper grades.
- The school offers blended learning/WIN (What I Need) time everyday for 20 minutes.
- In the Upper Campus hallways, teachers highlight not only success in state-mandated assessments, they also highlight student growth.
- Students have access to after-school tutoring and Saturday academies.

Challenges:

- Although student growth is highlighted, it is unclear to what extent each student has a personal growth goal.
- Per the NC Report Card, although both the Lower and Upper campuses are both showing growth, the school grade for both campuses remains a D:
 - Upper Campus: Overall growth in 2023 - 83.5% and 2022 - 88%.
 - Lower Campus: Overall growth in 2023 - 81% and 2022 - 90.3%.

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for students to develop individual growth goals as well as action plans for achieving those goals.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school has a team of administrators, Multi-Classroom Leaders (MCLs) and facilitators who collaborate with teachers to design and implement behavior and academic plans to support students.
- Administrators and MCLs meet regularly with the weekly PLCs to help teachers monitor student performance trends.
- Academic achievement is measured using multiple indicators including MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) for reading and math, Dibels for reading and math analysis, Mastery Connect, as well as teacher-designed formative and summative assessments.

Challenges:

- Governor's Village Upper – Per the NC Report Card, although the school has shown growth in both 2022 and 2023, the school grade remains a D. It is unclear to what extent there is evidence of narrowing the gaps in student achievement.
 - Grade-level proficient scores in math have either stayed nearly the same or reduced somewhat from 2022 to 2023, with the only growth being among Caucasian students.
 - Math: Asian students: 73% (2023), 78.19% (2022); Black students: 28.4% (2023), 31.7% (2022); Hispanic students: 28.5% (2023), 30.6% (2022); White students: 58.3% (2023), 56.3% (2022); economically disadvantaged students: 25.0% (2023), 25.1% (2022); not economically disadvantaged students: 53.5% (2023), 44.4 (2022).
 - Grade-level proficient scores in reading increased for Asian, Black, and White students, but decreased for Hispanic students from 2022 to 2023.
 - Reading: Asian students: 75.6% (2023), 63.2% (2022); Black students: 40.8% (2023), 38.6% (2022); Hispanic students: 34.8% (2023), 37.4% (2022); White students: 72.7% (2023), 50% (2022); Economically disadvantaged students: 36.4% (2023), 29.7% (2022); Not Economically disadvantaged students: 57.6% (2023), 50.1% (2022).
- Governor's Village Lower – Per the NC Report Card, although the school has shown growth from 2022 to 2023, the school grade remains a D. It is unclear to what extent there is evidence of narrowing the gaps in student achievement in math, but data indicates narrowing the gaps in reading for all subgroups:
 - Grade-level proficient scores in math have decreased for all subgroups except for Not economically disadvantaged and Hispanic students.
 - Math: Asian students: 53.3% (2023), 75.0% (2022); Black students: 32.8% (2023), 39.9% (2022); Hispanic students: 40.7% (2023), 39.0% (2022); Economically disadvantaged students: 35.2% (2023), 39.8% (2022); Not Economically disadvantaged students: 50.8% (2023), 47.4 (2022).
 - Grade-level proficient scores in reading have increased for all subgroups except for Asian students.
 - Reading: Asian students: 50% (2023), 62.5% (2022); Black students: 33.3% (2023), 30.7% (2022); Hispanic students: 40.7% (2023), 26.9% (2022); Economically

disadvantaged students: 33.6% (2023), 31.3% (2022); Not Economically disadvantaged students: 49.2% (2023), 34.3% (2022).

Recommendations:

- Continue to work to develop a plan to reduce achievement gaps for all subgroups. Explore and implement activities for rigor with support (ex. error analysis, strategic thinking, problem solving) as well as remediation to accelerate learning and narrow gaps in achievement.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Decisions at the school are made collaboratively. The school employs an open door policy with the administration - teachers reported it was easy to send a text, an email, or even have a conversation in the hallway.
- Many teachers have been at the school quite some time and there is a strong rapport and sense of collaboration and theme integration. For teachers new to the school, it was reported that the multi-classroom leaders (MCLs) and facilitators were key factors in helping them implement the theme with fidelity.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the theme is implemented with fidelity in the upper grades. During the focus group, an eighth grader reported, *"We get a lot of STEM in Science and Math. Social Studies and English gives me a break from STEM."* That same student reported that she would like to see more connections for STEM in classes such as art, *"It would be nice if when we were asked to draw something, it might be an engineering drawing or something."*

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to implement the theme in all grades, in all subjects.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Magnet application students in the STEM pathway are guaranteed admission to one of the county's magnet high schools. The other students can apply through the lottery. At the site visit it was reported, *"Students typically apply to 2-3 schools and 90% get their first choice."*
- The school's multi-classroom leaders (MCLs) and facilitators support theme integration.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the district has a financial plan for the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Work with the District to develop a plan that will sustain and continuously improve the magnet theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school partners with the Cal Ripken Foundation to provide students with the opportunity to experience working in a race car pit and sit in a race car.

- The school partners with Hendrick Lexus, which provides volunteers for Field Day, sweatshirts for all students, guest speakers, pizza parties for classes and support for the Teachers of the Month.
- Elevation Church provides the school use of their facility for the grade 5 and 8 promotion ceremonies.
- The Dot provides the school with STEM professional development opportunities for teachers, guest speakers and STEM support.
- Local University libraries provide college and career readiness and creative writing workshop opportunities for students.
- DigiBridge supports the school's robotics program and STEAM Saturdays.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of district support for building STEM-based community partnerships.
- It is unclear to what extent the school has an established process to welcome and involve businesses and organizations in decisions about theme implementation.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with the district to secure local STEM-based community partnerships.
- Develop a process to welcome and involve businesses in decisions about theme integration.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Family members participate on the School Improvement Team and as STEM Fair judges.
- Over 300 families attend the STEM Fair.
- The school communicates with families through the website, email and social media.
- Students state that the school has a feeling of peace and joy when they walk in. Teachers and administrators are very kind and supportive.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent outside of a few family members participating on the School Improvement Team families' input is requested in decision making processes.
- The school website is out of date. The previous principal and her message are still shown on the About Us - Our Principal page. The events displayed on the homepage are from August 2023.
- Facebook is currently the only social media platform being used to communicate with families and community members and the school's Facebook page has not been updated.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate student and family input into the standard decision making process.
- Keep the school website updated with current and relevant information.
- Expand and regularly utilize social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to communicate with families, students and community members.

Overall Recommendations for Governor's Village STEM Academy- Lower and Upper Campuses:

- Develop a PBL and STEM integration culture on the Upper Campus to mirror that of the Lower Campus, so all students, K-8, have the same high quality learning experience.
- Continue to work with your team to develop a plan to reduce achievement gaps for all subgroups. Explore and implement activities for rigor with support (ex. error analysis, strategic thinking, and

problem-solving) as well as remediation to accelerate learning and narrow gaps in achievement.

- Incorporate student and family input into the standard decision making process.
- Work with the district to develop a plan that will sustain and continuously improve the magnet theme.

Greenway Park Creative Arts Elementary School

Greenway Park Creative Arts Elementary School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Greenway Park has actively attempted to engage and invite the surrounding community through direct mail, open-houses, attending Magnet Fairs and faculty have even visited various community hubs to post flyers promoting the school. Greenway Park also initiated a yard sign campaign.
- Greenway Park does consistently receive a significant amount of applications from families.

Challenges:

- Greenway Park's reputation in the neighborhood, while not an accurate representation of the actual school community, is not positive. This is compounded by the poor reputation of the area related to high crime and high rates of substance abuse.
- The majority of applicants to Greenway Park are Black and Hispanic students - who are also the majority of the school's current zoned student population.

Recommendations:

- While Greenway Park's various arts and science offerings are an attractive element for the school, consider other messaging points for marketing the school such as high rates of family satisfaction, low rates of teacher turnover and it's extra-curricular sports and cheering opportunities
- Consider hiring a fulltime magnet coordinator position to spearhead school marketing, community engagement and partnership development as a way to begin to change Greenway Park's current narrative and attract a more diverse set of families.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school faculty and administration are committed to and open to further development in how to best provide high-quality themed and theme-integrated instruction to all students.
- The school's A+ affiliation and training has contributed to faculty and staff commitment to the school's theme and its ability to benefit student engagement and learning.

Challenges:

- Funding for A+ supports ended in 2023
- While the faculty and staff are committed to providing all students with high quality culturally relevant instruction, the racial and ethnic composition of the school remains unchanged

Recommendations:

- Continue to build upon the foundational systems provided by A+ by providing seasoned teacher leaders with opportunities to mentor and coach new hires
- Leverage existing training and professional development on diversity and equity through CMS by having participating teachers lead and share learnings during 1-2 faculty meetings each year.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Thematic integration occurs in every class and grade level multiple times per month, normally centered on major units.
- Greenway Park has found many avenues for thematic integration with its ELA and Science curriculum.
- The School's Science Teacher has made the Science Lab "THE" signature student experience by incorporating hands-on, high energy and fun experiments and activities with multiple connections to grade-level standards and visual/performing arts concepts.
- Related Arts Teachers have a strong commitment to leveraging their activities and art concentrations to support core instruction.

Challenges:

- Logistical and lack of staff issues often get in the way of consistent cross-curricular planning and collaboration between grade-level and related arts teachers.
- Due to an unanticipated vacancy in 5th grade, the science teacher has recently taken on the open 5th grade position.

Recommendations:

- Consider a partnership with a local community non-profit to commit to bringing volunteers once per quarter for an afternoon of activities and games with students to give individual grade level and related arts teams time to plan and collaborate together more formally.
- Consider approaching a local University's Education Department to see if any Education Majors would be interested in coming for one day each month to cover a 5th grade class and allow the science teacher to re-open the science lab on a limited basis.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school's faculty desire to receive additional professional development and training to support theme-integrated instruction.

- The school’s faculty desire to collaborate more on ways to provide high quality theme-integrated instruction and do so formally and informally.

Challenges:

- Post A+ funding, the school has fewer options and resources for thematic professional development.
- Greenway Park was recently placed on the list of North Carolina’s low performing schools and as a result, has less operational autonomy over the training and professional opportunities for its staff.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the CMS visual and performing arts department and CMS magnet school office to develop an internal “CMS Arts Integration” playbook for art-integration instruction and unit design.
- Consider assembling all grade-level content standards for core-instruction and arts programs into one source, either online or in a printed binder, for each teacher at Greenway Park to provide staff with access to cross-curricular standards.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Thematic integration is an aspirational priority for faculty and there is widespread consensus on its value for student learning and engagement.
- Faculty are still leveraging practices and strategies acquired from prior A+ trainings and coaching cycles.

Challenges:

- Greenway Park’s status as a low performing school has added additional district and state mandated requirements for curriculum and instructional pacing
- The school’s almost 50% rate of chronic absenteeism and almost 40% mobility are significant barriers to genuine and on-going student collaboration and theme engagement.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the CMS visual and performing arts department and CMS magnet school office to develop an internal “CMS Arts Integration” playbook for art-integration instruction and unit design with additional options and strategies for CMS schools labeled as low performing.
- Consider approaching Communities in Schools North Carolina about the possibility of hosting a CIS Coordinator to strengthen the school’s community resource and family supports towards decreasing chronic absenteeism.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Greenway Park is on track to exit low performing status this year (SY 23-24).
- Greenway Park has recently adopted the Capturing Kids’ Hearts program for student and classroom culture support.
- Greenway Park has a low rate of teacher turnover and is able to combine educator experience with magnet innovations to impact student achievement

Challenges:

- Greenway Park's student population is high need/high poverty which creates additional variables and challenges with instruction.
- Student behavior has been a challenge and the school has relied heavily on school-based and district staff members for support.
- Greenway Park's chronic absenteeism is close to 50% and their mobility rate is close to 40%.

Recommendations:

- Continue implementing Capturing Kids Hearts with fidelity.
- Consider reviewing attendance data for students with arts majors in grades 3-5 to see if there is any connection between student attendance and days in which they have their arts major classes scheduled. Potentially additional time in a student's preferred arts class could have an impact on reducing their absenteeism.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Greenway Park has eight full-time related arts positions.

Challenges:

- The school's current instructional leadership is near its capacity for responsibilities and areas of oversight.

Recommendations:

Consider hiring a fulltime magnet coordinator position to spearhead school marketing, community engagement and partnership development as a way to bring additional leadership capacity to the school's administrative team.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- CMS has a long-term strategic K-12 Arts Pathway designed where Greenway Park is a central component as a feeder to Crestdale Middle.

Challenges:

- Major capital investments are being made by CMS and the school is slated for a brand-new building but there is a concern as it is included towards the bottom of the listed priorities for capital projects.
- The district Strategic Plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district Strategic Plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a FT Magnet Coordinator to support the growth and development of the magnet program and support the new emerging K-12 Arts Pathway at CMS.
- Include the operation of magnet schools in the district's Strategic Plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Local churches have committed to provide school supplies, food and other necessities for the students

and families at Greenway Park

- Local Dance studios and suppliers have committed to support and sponsor the school's dance and drama programs.

Challenges:

- While there are many examples of ways in which various outside groups have supported the school's magnet program and/or student needs, they are often one-time events as opposed to on-going partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a fulltime magnet coordinator position to spearhead school marketing, community engagement and partnership development.
- Consider approaching Communities in Schools North Carolina about the possibility of hosting a CIS Coordinator to strengthen the school's community resource and family supports towards decreasing chronic absenteeism.
- Consider hosting a community "Open House" where parents, community partners and businesses are invited to visit the school and see student performances during the day.
- Consider leveraging the upcoming new practice field being built for Charlotte Football Club across the street as an opening for a significant sponsorship and partnership opportunity.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Last month Greenway Park's "Big Game" event drew a record crowd of parent and family attendance.
- The school was buzzing over the upcoming "Brackets and Books" event to be held later this month.

Challenges:

- The overwhelming majority of Greenway Park families live in poverty and have irregular and unpredictable work schedules.
- The school has a high desire to schedule student performing groups to perform at various community events but are unable to attend due to family transportation issues

Recommendations:

- Consider hosting a community "Open House" where parents, community partners and businesses are invited to visit the school and see student performances during the day.
- Consider piloting a "School Exchange" store, sponsored by community partners to incentivize parents to prioritize attendance by exchanging credits for attendance for basic necessities.

Overall Recommendations for Greenway Park Creative Arts Elementary School:

- Consider hiring a fulltime magnet coordinator to provide leadership and focus to the school's magnet program, partnerships and marketing/outreach.
- Consider offering an "Arts Chair" stipend to one of the current related arts teachers to provide leadership and strategy for further arts integration and program growth.
- Consider approaching chronic absenteeism by incentivizing parents and students simultaneously.
- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's Strategic Plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.

Harding University High School - Computer Science STEM

Harding University High School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership and Educator Development	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school recruitment plan includes visiting all feeder middle schools, information sessions and school visits in addition to attending the district's Magnet Fair. They also host magnet nights for prospective families.
- Students apply to the magnet pathways via lottery.

Challenges:

- The school's demographics are 65% Black, 28% Hispanic, 4% Asian, and 2% Caucasian.
- It is unclear to what extent all district and school-based efforts for student selection including marketing, recruitment, entrance and assignment and transportation policies are designed to ensure equal access for all students and reduce minority group isolation. At the site visit it was reported, "There is no recruiting strategy for any specific demographic."
- The recent transportation changes are seen as a barrier for many families.
- It is unclear what the magnet theme is from the school website and if all students have access to the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a recruitment plan for increasing racial and socioeconomic diversity to bring the magnet program into alignment with the district demographics.
- Ensure that the school website "screams the magnet theme" and that it is easy to find out information about the school's unique magnet theme.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classroom demographics reflect the demographics of the community but not of the district.
- The school has an "ALL STUDENTS MATTER" banner displayed in the front office.

To meet the needs of their students, the administrative team and the instructional leadership team reviewed data and solicited feedback from students and parents and have made the decision to change its magnet pathway options. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program will be phased out (after all current students graduate) and the computer science pathway will continue and there will be new pathways in Law, Social Justice and Forensic Pathology. The new pathways are being piloted this year.

- Teachers have demonstrated a commitment to teaching in diverse settings. This year 21 teachers and staff attended the Engaging Black and Brown Males professional development at UNC Charlotte. In addition, all staff completed the Capturing Kids Hearts professional development this year.
- To determine staff effectiveness in teaching in a diverse setting, the school implements a whole school coaching model, with a walk-through/observation tool that is adjusted with new ‘look fors’ after each professional development session.

Challenges:

- Although the teachers demonstrated a commitment to teaching in diverse settings, it is unclear to what extent the focus is on the magnet theme.
- Although there are systems in place to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in a diverse setting, it is unclear to what extent those systems determine staff effectiveness in teaching the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Determine those skills and behaviors that define the magnet theme.
- Provide professional development to support all teachers - magnet pathway and non magnet pathway teachers - to integrate the magnet theme into their classes.
- To determine staff effectiveness with the magnet theme, add magnet theme implementation to the systems (walk-throughs/”look fors,” PLCs) that are already in place.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- There are 22 teachers on the school’s instructional leadership team.
- The school employs lesson/data internalization as part of its PLC professional development plan. Lesson/data internalization includes: 1) Looking at state standards and school-wide goals; 2) Lesson showcase - a teacher presents a lesson and receives feedback from the group (a glow, a grow, and a wonder) focusing on “Did the teacher/lesson meet each students’ needs?”); 4) the WAG (Week at a Glance) is created with an emphasis on what is being done to support each student, each day. “Lesson/Data internalization helps hone in on the specific needs of each student.”

Challenges:

- Although the magnet pathways are innovative, relevant and ensure student preparation beyond high school, it is unclear to what extent there is a magnet theme that is integrated into all subjects, monitored, differentiated, articulated between grades and is innovative, relevant, and ensures student preparation beyond high school.
- There is no theme visible throughout the school.
- It is unclear that the theme of the school is Computer Science STEM.

Recommendations:

- Develop a magnet theme that is integrated into all subjects, monitored, differentiated, articulated between grades and is innovative, relevant and ensures student preparation beyond high school.
- “Scream your theme” by making it visible throughout the school.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school has a professional development plan that supports all students including English language learners and those with disabilities and includes job-embedded training. Collaboration is a structured part of regular planning.
- PLCs meet twice a week. PLCs follow the Lesson/Data internalization cycle of continuous improvement.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent there is professional development aligned to a magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a school-wide magnet theme.
- Develop a plan that aligns professional development to the theme schoolwide.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Teaching and learning includes student collaboration and problem solving with tiered levels of intervention and formative assessments relevant to instruction that improves student achievement. Lesson/data internalization by the teachers helps hone in on the specific needs of each student. “Our core business in school is teaching and learning.”
- As part of lesson internalization in PLCs, teachers not only create an exemplar for every unit, they also create “exemplars along the way”. These “exemplars along the way” give students a roadmap to their final destination and help them answer the question, “What do we need to show at the end of the unit to show what we learned?” This in turn, allows the teachers to be intentional about their “look fors” as they monitor and support academic discourse, “I heard something you said that makes a lot of sense.”
- The regular practice of data internalization in PLCs helps each teacher hone in on the specific needs of each student.
- The school offers a number of advanced classes and electives including dual enrollment and AP classes. Students can also earn credentials in many of the CTE courses offered.

Challenges:

- Although the school has shown growth, it still remains a D school.
- The overall graduation rate for 2023 was 67%, down from 72% in 2022.
- The chronic absenteeism rate for the school is 45%.

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development with a focus on student engagement.
- Continue the practice of lesson/data internalization as a way to provide targeted support and intervention to ensure on-time graduation for students in all programs.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- According to the NC Report Card, all groups have shown growth in NC Math 1 and English 2 grade-level proficient scores. Grade-level proficient scores in math and reading have increased for all subgroups:
 - NC Math 1: Black students: 12.6% (2023), 12.3% (2022); Hispanic students: 12.4% (2023), 10.3% (2022); Economically disadvantaged students: 12.6% (2023), 10.6% (2022); Not Economically disadvantaged students: 19.6% (2023), 10.6% (2022)
 - English 2: Black students: 35.0% (2023), 25.1% (2022); Hispanic students: 34.6% (2023), 27.6% (2022); Economically disadvantaged students: 35.4% (2023), 24.5% (2022); Not Economically disadvantaged students: 34.8% (2023), 28.6% (2022)
- According to the NC Report Card, the high school graduation rate has improved for Black students and economically disadvantaged students:
 - Black students: 80.0% (2023), 77.0% (2022); Hispanic students: 52.0% (2023), 55.8% (2022); Economically disadvantaged students: 79.5% (2023), 76.2% (2022); Not Economically disadvantaged students: 54.3% (2023), 63.3% (2022)
- This year the school started to hold “First FriYays”. This student-led initiative, supported by the YMCA, offers a theme based party during the lunch period. Participation is linked to academic performance and attendance rates.
- The school has a “Rams Rally Rams” program where on half days, teachers pair up with another teacher to visit homes of those students who are chronically absent.
- The instructional leadership team changed the progression of classes in the software development pathway when the data revealed that students weren’t being successful and shied away from the classes because they didn’t have the necessary prerequisites.

Challenges:

- Although the school has shown growth, it still remains a D school.

Recommendations:

- Continue the practice of supporting student-led in-school activities where participation is linked to academic achievement and attendance as a way to improve academic growth for all students, increase the graduation rate and decrease chronic absenteeism. Consider having the instructional leader assigned to the social justice pathway work with the teachers and students to come up with a project-based learning opportunity to address these challenges.
- Showcase student success on your website. Consider using student voices - students telling their unique success stories.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The instructional leadership team meets with the administrative team weekly and each department meets monthly with their administrative and district liaison.
- The school implements a whole school coaching model - all teachers have coaches, all instructional leaders have coaches and all administrators have coaches.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent magnet school leadership recognizes exceptional instruction and staff is coached to ensure that the theme is implemented with fidelity. The school has had a high rate of leadership turnover. The previous principal had been at the school for less than two years and the current principal has been the principal for less than a week.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan with the principal to ensure the magnet theme is implemented with fidelity.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a pathway for the Computer Science STEM magnet theme from K-12.
- There is a dedicated instructional leadership team member for each of the magnet pathways.

Challenges:

- Although there is an instructional leadership team member for each of the magnet pathways, there is not a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all subject areas.
- Although there is a K-12 computer science pathway to apply to, it is not clear that the Computer Science Program exists K-12.

Recommendations:

- Determine the magnet theme in conjunction with the district and coach instructional leadership members to integrate the theme into all subject areas.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has a dean of culture that leads the school's partnership efforts.
- The CMS website provides a partnership process overview for prospective partners.
- The school partners with the YWCA and this year held a You Go Girl Expo where girls and female teachers could showcase their business and sell items.
- Two partnerships - ROC and Road to Hire support the unique needs of the school. They offer job readiness training, college preparation, apprenticeships, internships, job placement and scholarships.
- The Renaissance West Coalition currently supports eight students with workforce development skills.

Challenges:

- Although the school has a few career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships that benefit students, it is unclear to what extent those partnerships support the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Determine the school's magnet theme and work with the dean of culture to develop partnerships that will enhance the magnet theme and benefit all students.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school held a RAM Day party to engage families - they purposely called it a 'party' and had free food and music. It was very well attended.
- The school held an Impact Night to engage families and to support those students who had a D. Topics covered included graduation requirements and staff were on hand so that each student could meet with someone and leave with a plan for getting back on track.

- The school will hold a Magnet Night on March 27th, where they will welcome new families to the school and go over the expectations on how to stay in the magnet.
- Two parents are members of the School Improvement Team.
- Two-way communication occurs through ParentSquare and email.
- The leadership team has been successful recruiting alumni to partner with and support the school.

Challenges:

- At the site visit it was reported that parent engagement has been a challenge. There is not an active family or parent group that is involved in school operations.

Recommendations:

- Continue your efforts in supporting student voice by enlisting a group of students to tackle the parent engagement challenge. Consider pairing students with alumni to support this effort.
- Establish an active parent organization that is involved in school decision making.

Overall Recommendations for Harding University High School:

- Determine the school's magnet theme in collaboration with the district.
- Determine those skills and behaviors that define your magnet theme. Provide professional development to support all teachers - magnet pathway and non-magnet pathway teachers - to integrate the magnet theme into their classes and add magnet theme implementation to the systems (walk-throughs/look fors, PLCs) that are already in place.
- Develop a recruitment plan for the magnet theme for increasing socioeconomic and racial diversity and bringing the magnet program into alignment with the district demographics.
- Ensure that the school website "screams the magnet theme" and that it is easy to find out information about the school's unique magnet theme.

Hawthorne Academy - Military, Global Leadership and Public Safety and Health Sciences

Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership and Educator Development		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- School is receiving a grant for 26 million dollars from the Bloomberg foundation in conjunction with a number of partners.
- The CTE coordinators operate as magnet coordinators. They actively visit schools, recruit and provide support for the magnet theme.
- The school tracks the number of schools/students they visit and keep track of the effectiveness of the recruitment plan.
- Students come from all over the county.

Challenges:

- The diversity of the school does not reflect the diversity of the district.
- Historically, the school building has been used for “other” reasons. An alternative school, school for pregnant teens and a junior high school. Many people still associate Hawthorne with these previous schools so they don’t consider Hawthorne an option.
- Since the numbers are low, parents who want a small setting for students actually choose the school for that instead of choosing it for the true magnet experience.
- Transportation concerns have caused the school to lose about 80 students.
- There are staffing challenges in the Military/Global Leadership/Public Safety classes.

Recommendations:

- Create a targeted marketing plan to rebrand the school as a viable option for all students.
- Have a targeted recruitment event specifically for those students who are not Black and Hispanic to become more closely aligned with the diversity of the district.
- Strengthen the 9th and 10th grade dual enrollment options in an effort to get parents to remain at the school for 11th and 12th grades for the early college option.
- Have a teacher recruitment event specifically for public safety workers.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The faculty and staff are a very diverse group.
- The teachers build strong relationships with students that allow them to support the students selected magnet theme.
- There is a faculty book study “Grading for Equity” to support equitable grading.
- The author of “Ruthless Equity” - Ken Williams came to speak to the faculty after the last book study.
- One of the core beliefs on the school website states: Inclusive learning and heterogeneous academic instruction are integral to our mission.

Challenges:

- There is no formal written policy emphasizing the importance of student diversity.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive coaching model that specifically addresses the values learned from the Ruthless Equity book study.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The magnet theme is evident in the classrooms and common areas and they “scream the theme” once you walk in the door.
- Teachers report organically gravitating to other teachers for informal integration of courses.
- Many courses have career connections and internships to prepare the students for the future.
- The teachers seem to be intentional about working with each other to teach across the curriculum.

Challenges:

- The district mandated curriculum does not align with the magnet theme.
- It is a small school with a small staff so many of the PLC’s are singletons.
- There is not a singular focus, so thematic integration is challenging due to the small numbers of students and collaborative classes.

Recommendations:

- Consider allowing magnet schools to have the ability to either use a specified research-based curriculum or supplemental resources that support thematic integration.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- The school is a NAF Academy for Health Sciences Distinguished School.
- District coaches help all teachers on campus with teaching practices.
- The Health Occupation Student Association (HOSA) is a well-received extracurricular experience.
- The faculty has been trained in PBL and their coaching model includes the magnet teachers.

Challenges:

- The school is transparent about saying that they focus on academic excellence rather than the magnet theme instead of using the magnet theme to support academic excellence.

Recommendations:

- Consider using ZSpace to give students a virtual reality hands-on learning experience.
- Offer magnet thematic instruction professional development to support all courses.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence**Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity****Successes:**

- The school-wide philosophy to teaching and learning is “Whatever it Takes.”
- Learning is differentiated by levels making sure to give support to all learners low and high.
- MTSS strategies are successful at Hawthorne.
- The school has push in support for Exceptional Children (EC) and ML learners and they meet once a month to review data to identify gaps.
- The small school allows them to cross reference and check with teachers about supporting various students.

Challenges:

- Students are not doing well in AP classes so they are not getting as many college classes for the advanced coursework.

Recommendations:

- Partner with the community college to offer more dual enrollment classes where the students can get college credit without a culminating test.
- Add a space on the lesson plan for thematic integration where each core teacher will input a suggestion for support from the magnet teachers.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Black students are the highest subgroup for meeting expectations on math benchmarks.
- For the last two years, the faculty and staff have participated in book studies that highlight racial equity in grading and in practical learning.
- The school is a B school and has met or exceeded growth since 2014.

Challenges:

- Workkeys that measures workplace skills is low for Black students.
- There are some Hispanic students who do not have their legal papers so many of them do not have plans after high school.
- Workkeys is only taken at the end of the year.

Recommendations:

- Take Workkeys more often so students can have more opportunities to grow.
- Support Hispanic students in the pursuit of internships/externships to provide opportunities for postsecondary education.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The theme is implemented in some classes when the natural alignment exists. For example, the Biology teacher naturally collaborates with the Health Sciences teacher.
- It is evident from the walkthroughs that there is great teaching happening in all classes.
- Each instructional specialist or coach supports one of the magnet themes.

Challenges:

- There has not been a true training on thematic integration so they struggle with what it means to implement with “fidelity”.

Recommendations:

- Provide a true thematic integration professional development to help with the fidelity of instruction.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The teachers work together to support each other for integrating the theme.
- There are students coming from every zone in CMS to Hawthorne.

Challenges:

- The district does not have a strategic plan for the magnet program.
- There is no dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all subject areas.
- The district has a magnet fair but this is the only time the district highlights the magnet programs.

Recommendations:

Provide a dedicated magnet coordinator to support the magnet theme.

Develop a district financial plan for magnet programs.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has a partnership with HOSA (Health Occupation Student Association).
- There are also partnerships with Atrium Health, Carolina College Advising Corp – CCAC, Cooperative Innovative High School – Central Piedmont Community College, Mayor's Youth Employment Program, National Academy Foundation – NAF, Novant Health, Red Cross and Road to Hire.

Challenges:

- Partners and stakeholders state that they feel included and that their input is valued.
- The district does not provide support for obtaining partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Continue the partnerships the school currently has. The students feel as though these partnerships are a big part of their success.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school improvement plan includes administration, teachers, parents and students for a good cross section of supporters.
- From the front door, the climate in the school is welcoming.
- The school uses ParentSquare, email and weekly messages home by the principal to keep parents informed.
- There is a monthly Lunch and Learn for parents to learn about the curriculum, homework and meet teachers or whatever else they need. The parents truly feel included because of the Lunch and Learn.

Challenges:

- The school has had bad press over the years and some people still look at it as if it is the same school.

Recommendations:

- Rewrite the narrative for the school to be the “NEW Hawthorne.”

Overall Recommendations for Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences:

- Provide a dedicated magnet coordinator to support the magnet theme, theme integration and recruiting at the school.
- Provide a true thematic integration professional development to help with the fidelity of instruction.
- Develop a sustainable financial plan for magnet programs in the district
- Rewrite the narrative for the school to be the “NEW Hawthorne.”

Highland Mill Montessori School

Highland Mill Montessori School			
Standards of Excellence	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations

1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership and Educator Development		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Highland Mill reports having the most diverse student body within CMS Montessori schools.
- The school's racial make-up is around 40% Black, 35% Caucasian, 15% Hispanic, 5% AAPI and 5% two or more races - while not an exact mirror of CMS demographics, the school has successfully engaged with recruiting and retaining Black families.
- School Leadership is resolutely focused on attracting and retaining a diverse student body and are highly focused on making progress in attracting Hispanic families.
- Once accepted for the upcoming school-year, incoming students are invited to a Highland Mill "Beginners Day" that allows them to visit, observe and experience what attending the school will be like.

Challenges:

- The school's location is close to a CMS zone boundary (purple and green) and many families who live very close to the school do not receive the geographic preference when they apply.
- Helping minority families understand what Montessori is and isn't continues to be a challenge.
- There is confusion around and mixed messages for families with children who join the school after 1st grade.

Recommendations:

- Continue to dialogue with CMS Magnet and CMS Student Assignment to create additional flexibility for nearby families who want to apply but do not receive the geographic preference.
- Consider partnering with other CMS Montessori schools to host targeted focus groups with minority parents to understand what barriers exist with Montessori familiarity in their communities and brainstorm potential solutions or messages to better communicate the unique approaches of and benefits from Montessori.
- Consider advocating with CMS Magnets for a review of the late entrance policy and communication processes for when students in grades two to six join the school.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Highland Mill teachers, parents and administration serve on the school's JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) teams: Staff Development, Community Engagement, School Initiatives/Student Experiences and Systems.
- Faculty report consistent conversation on JEDI teams about instructional strategies for cultural competency, how to better market Montessori in underrepresented areas of Charlotte and how staff can assist interested families who have application questions.
- The faculty recently did a staff-wide book study on positive discipline in the Montessori classroom.

Challenges:

- Faculty report a desire to better engage with and support LGBTQ+ families but expressed challenges with how to do so in the current political climate.
- Faculty also reported a desire for more support in diversity and equity training from CMS.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the school's PTA to dialogue with existing LGBTQ+ families to brainstorm and imagine potential engagement opportunities led by the PTA.
- Consider collaborating with CMS behavior supports to develop additional classroom management and culturally responsive instructional strategies to the CMS Montessori Playbook.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school has embraced Montessori instruction and implemented it successfully within the Highland Mill context.

Challenges:

- In order to better prepare students for various standardized tests, the school adjusted the grade-bands to PreK-K, 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6 as opposed to the traditional model of PreK-1, 2-3 and 4-6. This has resulted in some teacher and parent confusion.

Recommendations:

- Continue to lean in with and celebrate Highland Mill's approach to Montessori instruction in a Public K-12 context as a "best of both worlds" strategy that leads towards increased diversity, student achievement and preparation for secondary opportunities.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- School staff and administration report that the annual CMS Montessori Symposium has been a valuable and collaborative experience for relevant thematic professional development for the school.
- The CMS Montessori Playbook continues to be an excellent resource for insight into Montessori best practices in the district context.

Challenges:

- Faculty report the need for a thematic Montessori Lead at the district level to provide additional targeted professional development and support for all schools.
- Faculty also report that most professional development received by teachers is self-developed and internal.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with Magnet Schools of America to identify four to five other districts in the country with Montessori Magnets to develop a Montessori Collaborative to share additional thematic professional development supports and resources.
- Consider partnering with CMS Magnets to approach the American Montessori Society and its partner institutions of Higher Education to see if any grant funding is available at the University level for their staff to visit and provide professional development for Highland Mill and other CMS Montessori schools.
- Consider joining the American Montessori Society as a way to provide school staff with additional professional development support and on-site Professional Development.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The CMS Montessori Playbook has provided a roadmap for all Montessori schools, including Highland Mill, for how to implement the theme with fidelity in the larger CMS context.
- Highland Mill's strong academics lend additional credibility to Montessori as an effective academic model for all students.

Challenges:

- The CMS scope and sequence for instruction, along with its assessment timeline and implementation does not align with the school's Montessori framework and timeline.

Recommendations:

- Continue to leverage the CMS Montessori playbook as a roadmap for faculty and staff and consider revisions and updates every two years to accommodate any new adjustments necessary.
- Consider partnering with CMS Language Immersion and IB school leaders to advocate for additional flexibility and/or autonomy for magnet programs that demonstrate consistent academic strength and achievement.
- Consider advocating with CMS Magnets for an additional Montessori Facilitator position to the school's instructional leadership team.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Highland Mill has an excellent reputation, due in large part to the school's academic progress and consistency.
- The school has been an A or B school and met or exceeded growth since 2014.
- The school's academic success has led to a greater sense of trust between the staff and families.

Challenges:

- School Leadership reports that many CMS instructional practices, strategies and interventions don't align well with Montessori fidelity or scope and sequence.
- Faculty report confusion around the funding for necessary Montessori supplies and manipulatives, for example, what can be paid for with school funds versus what can be paid for with PTA funds if school funds are not available.

Recommendations:

- Continue to lean in with and celebrate Highland Mill’s approach to Montessori instruction in a Public K-12 context as a “best of both worlds” strategy that leads towards increased diversity, student achievement and preparation for secondary opportunities.
- Consider partnering with the Highland Mill PTA to clarify the process for when PTA funding can and/or should be requested by teachers needing additional supplies and materials.

Pillar 4 Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The creation and implementation of Highland Mill’s JEDI collaborative groups have helped school leaders move stakeholders from basic participation to deeper engagement and shared leadership with the school’s mission and vision.
- Faculty report an improved culture and climate at Highland Mill under the present principal’s tenure as principal and specified positive leadership and a family atmosphere as indicators of a healthy faculty and staff culture.

Challenges:

- Recruiting and retaining qualified, licensed, Montessori teachers remains a challenge for the school as well as for the CMS Montessori magnet programs.
- Faculty report genuine frustration and/or confusion around the incongruity with CMS instructional and operational directives being required alongside the school’s Montessori requirements especially considering the school’s strong academic achievement track record.
- School administration reports a need for better supports and professional development for student behavior and classroom management in the Montessori context along with the need for more in-house personnel to provide behavior supports.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with CMS Talent Development to identify three to four University Degree Programs with Montessori endorsements as recruiting targets for new teachers highlighting Highland Mill and other CMS Montessori schools as one of the few public school districts with Montessori programs.
- Consider partnering with CMS language immersion and IB school leaders to advocate for additional flexibility and/or autonomy for magnet programs that demonstrate consistent academic strength and achievement.
- Consider identifying potential community and business partners to join Highland Mill’s JEDI collaborative as a way to broaden potential impacts of the work and to help involve additional stakeholders in spreading the word about and advocating for the school.
- Consider partnering with Magnet Schools of America to identify four to five other districts in the country with Montessori Magnets to develop a Montessori Collaborative to share additional thematic professional development supports and resources along with any behavioral and student self-regulation best practices.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- CMS Magnets will pay for any teacher to receive Montessori certification.

- The recent Community Superintendent over the school had an excellent track record of support, collaboration and partnership with Highland Mill.

Challenges:

- School leaders report a need to be in the building more often and more consistently in order to provide necessary coaching and support for teachers and staff.
- Highland Mill is without a dedicated Montessori Facilitator.
- Retaining 5th grade students to continue with the school into 6th grade is a challenge as many students and parents are interested in athletics and additional extracurriculars offered at student's home middle schools.
- Review of the district website shows the district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district Strategic Plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.

Recommendations:

- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.
- Consider partnering with CMS Leadership and Community Superintendents about establishing building leadership norms wherein outside of an emergency, principals and assistant principals cannot be out of the building at the same time in order to ensure school operations and supports remain intact.
- Consider offering club sports or Montessori intramural athletics for 5th and 6th grade students at Highland Mill and the other three Montessori elementaries.
- Consider a partnership between Highland Mill and CMS communications to feature the school consistently with various guests, state and national visitors and media requests. The school's excellent community reputation and interesting/unique theme could be a strong component of a broader CMS public relations strategy.
- Consider reaching out to the Public Montessori in Action Group for additional supports and advocacy suggestions for Montessori in a Public K-12 context.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The before and after-school care programs are popular and include many opportunities for student experiences and enrichment.
- The Farm Bureau partnership at Highland Mill supports an on-going Chicken Coop where fresh eggs are available for the school's cooking and life skills classes.

Challenges:

- Faculty report confusion around the process for volunteering at the school as a tutor, reading buddy or guest speaker.
- School leadership report concerns that the fees for before and after school clubs may be creating barriers for some Highland Mill students to be able to participate.

Recommendations:

- Consider empowering the school's JEDI Community Engagement Committee to (in consultation with school leadership) develop more formal Highland Mill volunteer and community partnership norms and procedures.
- Consider proposing a slight increase in club fees in order to provide an on-going scholarship fund to be made available for families interested in participating but unable to because of financial concerns or consider adding a scholarship donation option for families when they register for clubs and pay fees for their children.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents are involved in Highland Mill JEDI collaborative committees.
- Parents, administration and faculty all report high levels of trust and cooperation between the school and the PTA.
- There is strong desire on the part of school staff and leadership to better engage with and inform all families on Montessori and its benefits for their children.

Challenges:

- Faculty report internal tension and dysfunction within the school's PTA with regards to funding decisions and priorities.
- Parents report receiving regular communication from some teachers and infrequent communication from other teachers.

Recommendations:

- Continue to dialogue with and communicate Highland Mill's mission, vision and values to parents.
- Consider establishing communication norms between faculty and PTA potentially with one or two primary contacts for funding requests.
- Consider establishing communication norms and regular parent communication expectations leveraging the ParentSquare platform in order to provide more consistent teacher-parent communications.
- Consider proposing the addition of a "grants" position to the school's PTA leadership with the purpose of year-long applications for small and medium sized grants to generate a discretionary fund for the Principal to support internal school initiatives on an as-needed basis.

Overall Recommendations for Highland Mill Montessori School:

- Consider a partnership between Highland Mill and CMS communications to feature the school consistently with various guests, state and national visitors and media requests. The school's excellent community reputation and interesting/unique theme could be a strong component of a broader CMS public relations strategy.
- Consider partnering with other CMS Montessori schools to host targeted focus groups with minority parents to understand what barriers exist with Montessori familiarity in their communities and brainstorm potential solutions or messages to better communicate the unique approaches of and benefits from Montessori.
- Consider partnering with Magnet Schools of America to identify four to five other districts in the country with Montessori Magnets to develop a Montessori Collaborative to share additional thematic

professional development supports and resources along with any behavioral and student self-regulation best practices.

- Consider identifying potential community and business partners to join Highland Mill's JEDI collaborative as a way to broaden potential impacts of the work and to help involve additional stakeholders in spreading the word about and advocating for the school.

Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School - IB

Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Research shows open enrollment without consideration for student characteristics can further perpetuate segregation. The district lottery takes into account socioeconomic status to achieve socioeconomic diversity among schools.

Challenges:

- Review of artifacts and discussion with leadership reveals there is no school based recruitment plan to reduce racial isolation of Hispanic students.
- The district's school choice website shows once a magnet student's grade level is complete, magnet students are automatically advanced to the next level of the magnet theme. However, neighborhood students must enroll into a magnet seat within their neighborhood school to receive the continuation guarantee and families have expressed this is confusing and is often a barrier to magnet pathways K-12.
- Review of the NC School Report Card shows the school demographics do not reflect district demographics; Black -21.8% below district; Hispanic +41.6% above district; Caucasian -13.7% below district.
- Review of the NC School Report Card shows the largest magnet student enrollment is Hispanic at 49% which is the racially isolated student demographic in the school at 70%, therefore; the magnet student enrollment is not reducing racial isolation.

Recommendations:

- Develop a school level targeted recruitment plan to reduce the racial isolation of Hispanic students from 70% to closer to the district percentage of 30.6%.
- Research the continuation guarantee requirement which requires neighborhood students to apply as magnet students to their neighborhood school to see if there is a way to give neighborhood students some kind of priority to follow the K-12 magnet pathway.
- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic goals, reduced isolation goals and target enrollment.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Discussion with teachers confirms teachers are committed to teaching in diverse settings focused on the IB theme.

Challenges:

- Discussion with leadership reveals school leadership has minimal to no awareness concerning the specific purpose of a magnet school to reduce and/or prevent racial and socioeconomic isolation and that the IB magnet theme may promote school choice to change family enrollment patterns for the specific purpose to desegregate a school district.
- Review of magnet lottery information shows the Dual Language Spanish Strand (developed within the IB magnet school) is attracting more Caucasian diversity than the school's IB magnet program.

Recommendations:

- Develop a middle school magnet IB Program with a Dual Language option to encourage diverse enrollment into kindergarten.
- Target and recruit student demographics to increase the diversity of magnet student enrollment, such as; market to the school's preschool populations which are more diverse yet return to home schools for kindergarten and recruit other diverse populations of preschool students and private school students.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The IB Primary Years Program emphasizes a well-rounded education and as shown in the Huntingtowne Farms ES Report Card for Art Education, 93% of students participate in music and 93% of students participate in Visual Art, above state percentages of 91.3% music and 90% Visual Art.

Challenges:

- Observed in classroom walkthroughs and discussion with teachers the IB magnet theme integration is not consistently evident or visible throughout all subjects and courses.
- Discussion with leadership reveals teacher turn-over is limiting consistent implementation of the IB theme.
- Discussion with leadership, teachers and parents confirms the cycle of improvement to improve theme integration is limited by lack of sufficient IB certification training beyond minimal requirements to meet IB compliance.

Recommendations:

- Develop school wide expectations for all classrooms, hallways, and campus areas to creatively

highlight and showcase the IB magnet theme.

- Devote teacher planning time to specifically integrate and improve IB units.
- Provide district financial resources to ensure all new teachers receive IB certified training to support program implementation fidelity.
- Provide district financial resources to fund teacher attendance at higher-level IB certification workshops to support the cycle of improvement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Discussion with students reveals the school provides extracurricular experiences related to International Mindedness.

Challenges:

- Data in the Huntingtowne Farms ES Report Card shows the school has 81.7% experienced teachers, 18.3% beginning teachers and 100% non-provisional licensed teachers. The district percentage for experienced teachers is 84.2% and for beginning teachers 15.8%.
- Review of school artifacts and discussions with leadership and teachers show not all Huntingtowne Farms ES teachers have access to required IB certification training.

Recommendations:

- Provide district budget allocations to ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to meet IB required teacher training as well as provide financial resources to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified training.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Discussion with teachers and classroom observations show multi-tiered systems of support are consistently implemented to ensure students are successful with the magnet theme.
- Review of artifacts shows data is analyzed to differentiate instruction for each individual student.
- Classroom observations reveal students are pulled out for interventions and teachers push into classes to provide classroom interventions.
- Discussion with leadership, teachers and families show a school wide philosophy of IB teaching/learning aligned to a key IB component - International Mindedness.

Challenges:

- Discussion with teachers reveals there is a school wide philosophy of teaching/learning, yet due to teacher turnover and minimal training, communication about the IB magnet theme to interested or new families is not consistently articulated.

Recommendations:

- Provide professional development to teachers related to IB teaching/learning and how to communicate the uniqueness of the IB program to families.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The Huntingtowne Farms ES Report Card shows overall school academic growth met at 78.5% and growth was met for both math and reading.

- Review of the School Report Card shows English Learners at Huntingtowne Farms ES met progress goals towards English language attainment at 41.7%, well above the district percentage at 28.8%.
- Discussions with teachers reveal extensive professional development supporting multilingual students is provided to school teachers and staff.
- Discussion with leadership, teachers and parents confirms multi-tiered systems of support are consistently used to address academic and behavioral expectations.

Challenges:

- While the school made overall growth, data in the Huntingtowne Farms ES Report Card shows Performance Grade Score History for overall school performance remained the same from 2022 to 2023.

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement Multi-tiered Systems of Support to improve individual achievement and school performance.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Discussion with teachers confirms collaborative decision making regularly occurs in grade-level professional learning community (PLC) meetings.

Challenges:

- Discussion with Leadership and teachers reveal the IB magnet theme is not consistently implemented with fidelity due to teacher turn over.
- Discussion with teachers reveals thematic IB coaching does not regularly occur.

Recommendations:

- Provide new teachers IB certified training.
- Provide the opportunity for IB teachers to collaborate with other IB colleagues to receive regularly scheduled thematic coaching.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Discussions with leadership reveal the district IB staff conducts IB theme meetings and facilitates discussions among IB school staff.

Challenges:

- Review of artifacts and the district website show the district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district strategic plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.
- Discussion with leadership and teachers confirms the school does not have a funded IB magnet coordinator position for integrating the theme into all subject areas.
- Discussion with leadership confirms district resources and support are limited for the elementary school IB program.

Recommendations:

- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives, and action steps specific to magnet schools.

- Provide an IB magnet coordinator position to support theme implementation and thematic instructional coaching.
- Increase resource support for elementary school IB programs.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Discussion with community partnerships confirms the school has multiple school partnerships to support school events and activities, such as International Night.

Challenges:

- Discussions with leadership and teachers confirms the school does not have curriculum focused partnerships to specifically enhance the magnet theme.
- Discussion with leadership and community partnerships reveal district supported partnerships to enhance IB curriculum are not evident at the school.

Recommendations:

- Establish IB curriculum focused community partnerships to enhance the magnet theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Chronic Absenteeism (often an indicator of student engagement) is shown in Huntingtowne Farms ES Report Card at 24.3%, which is below the district 25.6% and state 26.7% percentages.
- Discussions with students and families reveal the school's culture of caring for students.
- Discussion with parents confirms the school's parent group received national recognition for Parent Teacher Association (PTA) diversity.
- Discussion with parents reveal the school engages families in the magnet theme through two-way communications; IB Core Tenants, IB School Newsletters and monthly IB Learner Profile student award ceremonies.
- Discussion with families reveal the school's improvement cycle focus for student engagement is publicly accessible to families.

Challenges:

- Discussion with families reveal some families struggle to access only computer generated communications between home and school.

Recommendations:

- Expand home to school communication to include hardcopy paperwork for families without computer access.

Overall Recommendations for Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School:

- Develop a school level targeted recruitment plan to reduce the racial isolation of Hispanic students from 70% to closer to the district percentage of 29.6%.
- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic goals, reduced isolation goals and target enrollment.
- Research the continuation guarantee requirement which requires neighborhood students to apply as

magnet students to their neighborhood school to see if there is a way to give neighborhood students some kind of priority to follow the K-12 magnet pathway.

- Develop a middle school magnet IB Program with a Dual Language option to encourage diverse enrollment in kindergarten.
- Develop school wide expectations for all classrooms, hallways, and campus areas to creatively highlight and showcase the IB magnet theme.
- Devote teacher planning time to specifically integrate and improve IB units.
- Provide district financial resources for an IB magnet coordinator position and financial support to ensure all new teachers receive IB certified training and experienced teachers receive higher-level IB certification training to support the cycle of improvement cycle.

Idlewild Elementary School - Learning Immersion/Talent Development

Idlewild Elementary School - Learning Immersion/Talent Development				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school benefits from the expertise of a dedicated magnet coordinator and lead AIG teacher who play vital roles in marketing, recruitment and seamlessly integrating thematic elements into the curriculum. These professionals provide robust support to teachers, model effective instructional strategies and actively engage with students through in-class participation.
- A district recruitment plan is in place, with evidence of its implementation.

Challenges:

- The school is not in alignment with the district demographics with the school having 48.2% Hispanic students, 26.1% Black students and 8.6% Caucasian students versus the district at 30.6% Hispanic, 34.7% Black and 23.8% Caucasian.
- The school's late schedule has posed significant challenges, leading to the attrition of both current students and potential families' interest. The later schedule inconveniences families regarding after-

school activities, such as religious events and extracurricular commitments. It has contributed to the departure of valuable staff members.

- Students outside the transportation zone are allowed to attend the school if they provide their own transportation.
- The school does not have a written recruitment plan but does participate in school led recruitment activities that focus on incoming kindergartners.

Recommendations:

- Work to transition the school from its current late schedule to a standard schedule would alleviate numerous challenges and enhance convenience for both staff and parents. This adjustment would facilitate smoother after-school arrangements and mitigate transportation concerns, ultimately fostering a more conducive learning environment.
- Research whether allowing students outside the transportation zone to attend if they provide their own transportation impacts the school meeting its diversity goals.
- Develop a school wide recruitment plan to target the demographics to help the school more closely match the district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Student population represents 28 different languages and 42 different countries, highlighting the school's commitment to cultural diversity.
- Feedback from both parent and student focus groups indicates that the diversity of Idlewild Elementary is a key factor in their decision to choose and remain at the school.
- The music teacher's participation in professional development on diversity has led to the integration of diverse cultural elements into the curriculum, including the selection of songs that represent the student population.
- The school utilizes a house system for their core behavior plan, featuring crests with traits represented in different languages, promoting inclusivity and cultural awareness.
- To accommodate parents who are not fluent in English, a QR code system has been implemented at the front office, providing translated forms for their convenience.
- The literacy classes strategically choose books that reflect the student population, allowing students to explore and share aspects of their own cultures.

Challenges:

- Despite the diverse student population, the school staff lacks diversity, with all leadership positions held by individuals who are Caucasian.
- Parents express a desire for more opportunities to learn about the various cultures represented at the school, indicating a need for increased cultural engagement initiatives.

Recommendations:

- Implement regular diversity nights as culminating activities to celebrate and learn about different cultures, fostering community engagement and appreciation for diversity.
- Develop a diversity plan for hiring teachers and staff, aiming to attract individuals from diverse backgrounds to better reflect the student population and enrich the school community.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Learning immersion and talent development are seamlessly integrated into all subjects and courses using diverse instructional strategies. These strategies employ higher-level questioning techniques and differentiation to cater to the varying needs of all students.
- A collaborative teaching approach is adopted across all subjects, fostering extended thinking, and facilitating problem-based learning, error analysis and deeper exploration.
- Teachers are briefed upon hiring about the high expectations set for all students, emphasizing the importance of extended learning opportunities.

Challenges:

- The learning immersion theme currently lacks a clear focus on innovation. Instead, it primarily emphasizes best practices for learning, which can be challenging to articulate as a distinct theme.

Recommendations:

- Enhance the learning immersion model by incorporating a thematic focus, such as leveraging the existing STEM lab to further enrich the learning experience, considering the impact that would have on other programs. This would provide a tangible framework for innovation and advancement within the current educational model.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- The school implements a theme-based professional development plan centered on enhancing instructional strategies to foster immersive learning experiences and nurture talent development.
- The school has scheduled collaborative planning sessions for all teachers. During these sessions, school-wide coaching is facilitated by subject matter experts across all levels, providing real-time professional development within the school environment, thereby allowing peers to observe and learn from each other's practices.
- Feedback from teacher groups underscores their appreciation for the collaborative planning structure and the robust support they receive, as well as the valuable opportunities to unpack standards and model lessons for one another.
- The district offers a comprehensive catalog of professional development opportunities tailored to cater to teachers' specific needs, ensuring ongoing growth and enhancement in their respective areas of focus.
- The school offers a new teacher mentor program providing needed support on a daily basis. This program is run by a classroom teacher who is a former principal.

Challenges:

- Although the school provides various professional development opportunities, very few address the magnet theme. The learning immersion and talent development theme does not lend itself to specific magnet professional development so teachers are developed in the areas of best instructional practices which is no different than a traditional school.

Recommendations:

- Provide professional development through STEM integration since the school has implemented a STEM lab.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence**Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity**

Successes:

- The school upholds a philosophy of maintaining high expectations for all students, a sentiment echoed by both teachers and parents during focus groups.
- The school employs best practices to increase student support, incorporating instructional strategies such as thinking maps.
- Classroom observations reveal active student engagement facilitated through small group instruction, fostering academic dialogue and collaboration.
- Each classroom is supplemented with additional personnel during small group sessions, enabling targeted interventions and extended learning opportunities for students requiring additional support.
- According to the principal, school data indicates that the school is on course to meet or surpass its predetermined targets.

Challenges:

- The leadership team expressed uncertainty regarding the criteria utilized by the state to determine the school's letter grade, highlighting a gap in communication regarding this aspect.

Recommendations:

- Provide a comprehensive explanation to school leaders regarding the factors considered in determining school letter grades. This clarity will facilitate a better understanding among stakeholders, aiding in strategic planning and goal-setting efforts.

Standard 6: Student Achievement**Successes:**

- Academic achievement is systematically evaluated using various formative and informal assessment methods, providing teachers with robust data sources for tracking student progress.
- Dedicated collaborative time is incorporated into teachers' schedules for comprehensive data analysis sessions, both intermittently throughout the school year and during half-day sessions.
- The school has met or exceeded growth since 2014.
- The school has been a C school since 2014.

Challenges:

- While there has been an overall increase in third-grade math performance on MAP assessments across all classes, there has been a slight decline in performance according to benchmark data from Fall 2023 to Winter 2024.
- Hispanic and Black students, while outperforming the district and state averages, continue to lag behind other subgroups on campus.

Recommendations:

- Maintain the utilization of data-driven insights to refine instructional approaches, with a specific focus on narrowing the achievement gap among student demographics.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- Teachers benefit from continuous support provided by the magnet coordinator, lead AIG teacher, MTTS personnel and math coach.

- Schools are empowered to hire teachers who are proficient in implementing the school's theme while employing effective instructional strategies.
- Each teacher is equipped with a coaching commitment plan outlining goals and success metrics.
- The school is dedicated to the 4E Experience under the Learning Immersion theme: enrich, engage, explore, empower.
- Teacher feedback indicates a sense of having a built-in support system from campus experts.

Challenges:

- Collaborative decision-making among teachers needs clearer facilitation.

Recommendations:

- Establish a streamlined process for teachers to engage in collaborative decision-making.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district magnet office allocates resources by providing the school with a dedicated magnet coordinator and lead AIG teacher for three days a week, supplemented by the school's contribution for the remaining two days.
- The district furnishes a comprehensive School Choice Lottery Campaign report, outlining strategies for marketing the lottery to the public.

Challenges:

- The absence of the learning immersion and talent development magnet theme at the middle school level leads students interested in this track to transition to an IB Magnet program for middle school.

Recommendations:

- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in Learning Immersion and Talent Development, ensuring continuity from middle to high school.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Parents demonstrate strong support and active participation, enhancing the school community according to the parent focus group.
- The school has an ongoing partnership with a local church that provides support in various areas of support. The church has rented an apartment in a complex where many of the students live. They provide tutoring services for students and English classes for families who speak other languages.

Challenges:

- The school does not have curriculum focused partnerships to specifically enhance the magnet theme.
- District supported partnerships to enhance the magnet theme are not evident at the school.

Recommendations:

- Develop avenues for parental input on key educational topics.
- Conduct surveys to identify areas for improvement in teacher communication.
- Establish theme focused community partnerships to enhance the magnet theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school boasts an actively engaged PTA, despite its small size.

- Parents perceive a strong sense of familial connection within the school community. Beyond student interactions, parents also enjoy meaningful relationships, fostering a unique bond among families.
- One parent highlighted the school's exceptional ability to cater to individual student needs. Despite stark differences between her two children, she noted that the school effectively accommodated both, emphasizing its inclusive approach towards students of all abilities.
- Parents expressed a high level of comfort in seeking assistance from teachers and administration, attributing it to the establishment of transparent communication channels within the school.
- Feedback from both parent and teacher groups highlighted the preference for ParentSquare as the primary communication tool. This streamlined approach fosters efficient and effective communication between school and families, enhancing engagement and collaboration.

Challenges:

- During the parent focus group it was stated that the school provides opportunities to engage in learning with their child but not many opportunities to share their input on important topics.
- Two parents said they would like to receive more communication from individual teachers about what is going on in class.
- While the school excels in offering a diverse range of extracurricular activities tailored to student interests, there appears to be a lack of opportunities for parental engagement in magnet activities.

Recommendations:

- Explore strategies to expand and strengthen the PTA, encouraging greater involvement and support from the school community.
- Create more parent involvement events where families can learn more about what students are doing in class. These events could include open houses, showcases or interactive demonstrations.

Overall Recommendations for Idlewild Elementary School:

- Form a parent advisory group focused on magnet programs, where parents can provide feedback, suggestions, and ideas for improvement.
- Develop a school wide recruitment plan to target the demographics to help the school more closely match the district demographics.
- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in learning immersion and talent development, ensuring continuity from middle to high school.
- Transitioning the school from its current late schedule to a standard schedule would alleviate numerous challenges and enhance convenience for both staff and parents. This adjustment would facilitate smoother after-school arrangements and mitigate transportation concerns, ultimately fostering a more conducive learning environment.
- Develop a diversity plan for hiring teachers and staff, aiming to attract individuals from diverse backgrounds to better reflect the student population and enrich the school community.

iMeck @ Cochrane Academy - Digital Marketing and Multimedia Design

iMeck @ Cochrane Academy - Digital Marketing and Multimedia Design			
	Does Not Meet	Meets	Exceeds

Standards of Excellence		Expectations	Expectations	Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Students have been working to rebrand the school with their business (iMeck -T-Shirts).
- Students are very strategic about going to speak to different 8th grade students across the Green and Violet zones to recruit.
- It is a very small school and many parents chose the school because of the class sizes.
- Transportation is provided for all students in the green and violet zones.

Challenges:

- Cochrane and iMeck are two different schools on one campus. The 6-8 middle school is a long-standing school that has made many shifts over the years in terms of what the school building has been used for (was for pregnant teens, was an alternative school for discipline etc.). Currently it is a traditional 6-8 school. However, iMeck is the 9-12 school that shares the same Cochrane campus and everyone tends to call them iMeck at Cochrane and iMeck believes this is what is hurting their recruitment efforts.
- The school's capacity is 400 magnet seats but they only have 240 filled.
- The high school is struggling with getting the district and others to recognize them as an independent school iMeck Academy.
- Students at Cochrane Middle School are not magnet students and do not get a priority to get into iMeck.
- Talk about moving the school has caused a drop in enrollment because parents were not happy about where the school would be housed.
- The diversity of the school does not reflect the diversity of the district. The school is 67% Hispanic, 26% Black and 2% Caucasian.

Recommendations:

- The district should refer to the school as iMeck Academy and not iMeck Academy @ Cochrane. This is confusing to many. The students say they do not feel valued or appreciated as iMeck students.
- Begin allowing some of the 8th graders on the Cochrane campus to participate in some of the classes at the high school as a way to recruit.
- Revise the selection and assignment policy to give students from Cochrane a priority to iMeck.
- Participate in targeted recruitment for underrepresented populations at iMeck.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The mission is to cultivate lifelong learners by providing meaningful, high quality instruction that is inclusive, engaging and rooted in a culture where students' unique experiences and talents are acknowledged and celebrated.
- The teachers report that they work at iMeck for the students who need them. They know diversity comes in many forms.

Challenges:

- Inclusive teaching practices are evident in the classrooms and in the student work displayed around the campus.
- Staff diversity does not reflect the diversity of the school or district.

Recommendations:

- Develop an aligned curriculum between the 6-8 grade curriculum at Cochrane and the 9-12 grade curriculum at iMeck.
- Recruit staff that reflect the district demographics in terms of diversity.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development**Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity****Successes:**

- During walkthroughs, it was evident that the theme is being implemented with fidelity.
- Core curriculum teachers use the arts and CTE classes to enhance their curriculum.
- Students report that they get to use some assignments with modifications in other classes because of how the classes are aligned with what they are learning in CTE.
- Teachers note the importance of making connections to the CTE (magnet) curriculum.
- This is the only CMS school that offers the First Generation curriculum this year as a pilot.
- Students create portfolios that they can continue to use throughout their post-secondary education.

Challenges:

- With such a small school, there are some teachers with three preparations.

Recommendations:

- Take the podcasting studio mobile and host a podcast at each school with some of the 8th graders so they can see what to expect in 9th grade.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- The innovation center will have all teachers trained in technology for a personalized learning experience in all classes using the theme.
- Students have a business making iMeck Shirts, the standards in all classes were aligned to the business from ELA (marketing) to Math and logistics.
- Some teachers have been trained in thematic instruction.
- All magnet classes are connected to an experience and all students have a role.

Challenges:

- Formal thematic integration training is a need for all teachers.

Recommendations:

- Provide Google certification for all teachers to elevate their practices with the students.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The philosophy for teachers and students is “Excellence or Nothing!”
- The school uses blended learning, small group instruction, pull out, co-teaching and PBL.
- The graduation cohort index is now 89.9%.
- There is an intentional focus on CTE classes for interventions related to the theme.

Challenges:

- According to the school, iMeck is the only 9-12 school in the district that does not have a true continuum of students from 6-8.

Recommendations:

- Work on a true continuum of students from 6-8 for iMeck.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- There are not many discipline issues, because discipline is relationship based. Since the school is small, the students build relationships with the teachers and different teachers work with students for issues.
- Students report that they can talk to their teachers when needed about academics and personal issues.
- Student EOC data show a narrowing of the achievement gap.
- The school uses certification data, EOC, EOY, work based learning, Workkeys and CCP data to measure student academic achievement and to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- The EC teacher co-teaches in every classroom. She uses multiple strategies to address learning needs of not just Exceptional Children students but all students in the class.

Challenges:

- Cochrane Academy is an F school and did not meet growth in 2023 and it is difficult to find separate school data for the iMeck Academy on the NC Report Card so it is very hard to know how iMeck students are doing academically.

Recommendations:

- Create a way for data to be collected separately for iMeck Academy on the NC Report Card if it is a separate entity from Cochrane Collegiate Academy.
- Make it clear if students apply to Cochrane Academy or iMeck Academy to reduce confusion.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- From observation and artifacts, it is clear that the theme is implemented with fidelity.
- Teachers, parents, and students report collaborative decision making at the school level.

Challenges:

- Collaborative decision making does not exist between the district and the school.
- Parents did not feel heard when the decision was initially being made to move the school to another “large” campus.

- The teacher shortage is continuing to affect this school.
- CTE teachers need more support because many of them are not trained educators so it takes more time to develop them.

Recommendations:

- Develop a class for new (to the profession) teachers to develop their skills as an educator.
- Provide all teachers with thematic integration coaching.
- Involve parents and students in conversations that involve the school community.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The iMeck Academy will be a part of the CMS innovation grant.

Challenges:

- The district strategic plan does not include magnets.
- There is no curriculum support for the magnet theme from the district.
- The school reports that the district is making decisions for the school but has not been to the school to see what is happening.
- There is no direct magnet pathway for students to the iMeck Academy either from Cochrane Academy or from another middle school.
- There was no transition plan for the move to another site. All parents are still not sure what is going to happen to the school.

Recommendations:

- Provide a magnet coordinator for integration of the magnet theme.
- Develop a professional development schedule to allow for all teachers to be trained in thematic integration.
- Design a pathway for the 6th-8th graders at Cochrane or another middle school to matriculate directly to iMeck.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has a number of exceptional partnerships and sponsorships.
- Students participate in career related partnerships afterschool and on weekends.
- Most partnerships have internships available for the students.
- Student strengths are put on display every chance they get.
- EC students get to participate in internships as well.
- Students are earning money for post-secondary education.

Challenges:

- Making sure each student has opportunities to participate in internships.

Recommendations:

- Hire a magnet coordinator to keep track of the many partnerships, sponsorships, internships, possible scholarships, and various other opportunities for students.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The climate and culture have been described by teachers, parents and students as supportive
- Parents feel engaged because teachers seem to really care about their students.
- The students report that the school is like a family
- Teachers report having to “switch gears” mid-week based on the creativity of the students and using teachable moments.
- Parents are always in the know about what is going on in the school.
- Students describe the school as “different” but there is no place they would rather be.

Challenges:

- No active PTA.

Recommendations:

- Develop a true PTA to help the school with planning events for recruitment and other ways to support the school.

Overall Recommendations for iMeck Academy of Global Influencers:

- Refer to the school as iMeck Academy and not iMeck Academy @ Cochrane to create its own identity.
- Revise the selection and assignment policy to give students from Cochrane or another middle school priority to iMeck and align the magnet to be 6-12 instead of 9-12.
- Participate in targeted recruitment for underrepresented populations at iMeck.
- Provide the school with a magnet coordinator to help with recruiting, marketing, and theme integration.
- Develop a plan to include parents in the conversation about moving the school to another site.

Irwin Academic Center - Learning Immersion/Talent Development

Irwin Academic Center - Learning Immersion/Talent Development				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The magnet coordinator, AIG lead and PTA collaborated during the summer to strategize marketing and recruitment efforts. This included distributing yard signs across the county and creating informative flyers with support from the Advanced Studies department.
- Enrollment figures reflect significant success, with each grade level boasting high numbers and a waitlist for prospective students.

Challenges:

- The school is 9.2% Hispanic, 55.4% Black, 20.5% Caucasian compared to the district 30.6% Hispanic, 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian.
- Absence of a formalized recruitment strategy at both the district and school levels poses a notable obstacle for an all application school.
- The policy permitting automatic admission for siblings and confusion around whether there are program requirements to get into the school.

Recommendations:

- Develop and implement a targeted recruitment plan to increase diversity at the school.
- Allocate a dedicated marketing and recruitment budget specifically for magnet schools to support promotional efforts effectively.
- Clarify whether there are program requirements to get into the LI/TD schools in CMS whether for siblings or for other magnet students.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Feedback from both student and parent focus groups highlights the significant role of diversity among students and staff in their decision to select and remain at the school.
- Differentiated instruction is implemented across all grade levels, offering students the opportunity to select how they demonstrate their learning, with evident utilization of project-based learning methodologies throughout the school.

Challenges:

- A policy or statement emphasizing the value of student diversity within the school is absent.
- There is a lack of incentives for teachers to pursue AIG certification, which is crucial for effective instruction in the talent development program.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive diversity policy or statement that articulates the reasons behind the school's appeal to parents and students.
- Implement incentive programs to encourage teachers to obtain AIG certification, recognizing its significance in enhancing the effectiveness of the talent development program.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Learning immersion and talent development are seamlessly integrated into all subjects and courses through diverse instructional strategies. These strategies employ higher-level questioning techniques and differentiation to meet the varying needs of all students effectively.

- Upon hiring, teachers are briefed about the high expectations set for all students, emphasizing the importance of extended learning opportunities. New parent meetings are held to explain the program and student expectations thoroughly.
- Student work displayed throughout the school and in classrooms showcases evidence of the cultivation of higher-level thinking, problem-solving skills, and creativity.
- The school provides numerous clubs and extracurricular activities based on student interests, allowing them to explore various areas. Additionally, students have the opportunity to participate in student-led activities, providing real-world experiences.

Challenges:

- The Learning Immersion/Talent Development theme currently lacks a clear focus on innovation and primarily emphasizes best practices for learning, which may be challenging to articulate as a distinct theme.
- The AIG lead teacher's position has transitioned to part-time, resulting in concerns from parents regarding the impact on high-performing students' achievement growth.
- Limited resources and personnel make it difficult to provide adequate support for AIG instruction.

Recommendations:

- Enhance the learning immersion model by incorporating a thematic focus, such as visual and performing arts since there are arts teachers already providing high level thinking in their classes. This will provide a tangible framework for innovation and advancement within the current educational model.
- Reinstate the AIG lead position to full-time status considering the concerns raised by parents and the importance of supporting high-performing students. This will ensure adequate support for teachers and students in AIG instruction, fostering continued growth and achievement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Teachers are required to possess AIG certification or obtain it post-hiring.
- Upon hiring, teachers undergo training on the talent development matrix.
- Teachers benefit from mentorship, support from math and literacy facilitators and have the option to request coaching at any time. The coordination among literacy and math facilitators, along with the magnet coordinator and AIG lead, aids in effective planning.
- Collaborative planning sessions are structured to be teacher-led, enabling discussions on data analysis and curriculum enrichment.

Challenges:

- There was little evidence showing professional development opportunities.
- Availability of theme-based professional development opportunities is limited compared to those focused on instructional strategies.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate more theme-based professional development opportunities.
- Allocate funding specifically for schools to facilitate theme-based professional development sessions.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school effectively employs evidence-based strategies, such as thinking maps, to enhance student support and learning outcomes.
- Classroom observations demonstrated high levels of student engagement through dynamic small group instruction, fostering robust academic dialogue and collaboration.
- Student work and group activities are thoughtfully differentiated and collaboration with MTSS personnel ensures comprehensive tiered interventions to address diverse student needs.
- The AIG Lead has initiated a pilot program for 5th-grade math students, utilizing data from the MAP assessment to tailor targeted extended learning opportunities. This initiative not only enhances math proficiency but also provides a pathway for students to advance into higher math tracks in middle school. Both the student and parent focus group brought this up and requested more opportunities across grades and subjects.

Challenges:

- Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the district revised the entrance requirements for the talent development program for 3rd to 5th-grade students. This alteration resulted in a wide spectrum of academic levels among students, challenging teachers to cater to both high-achieving students and those requiring additional support. Despite not being designated as a Title I school, the lack of additional personnel and resources impedes the school's ability to deliver magnet-themed instruction with the required fidelity.
- Feedback from parent focus groups indicates concerns regarding a consistent challenge level being provided to students.

Recommendations:

- Provide the school with supplementary resources, such as interventionists, to bolster support for students across all academic levels. This will help ensure that every student receives the necessary assistance to thrive academically and be appropriately challenged.

Standard 6: Student Achievement**Successes:**

- Improved Student Achievement: Analysis of student data from the College and Career Readiness (CCR) and End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments indicates notable advancements in both math and ELA for 4th and 5th grade students.
- The assessment framework includes diverse formative and informal evaluation methods, empowering educators with comprehensive data streams to monitor student advancement effectively.
- The AIG teacher has effectively utilized data from Maps to launch the single subject acceleration (SSA) initiative in 5th grade math, marking the inception of a successful pilot program. Expansion plans to incorporate 4th grade demonstrate promising potential.
- The parent focus group expressed high praise for the SSA program's effectiveness and advocated for its expansion across various grade levels and subjects.

Challenges:

- According to the school, modifications in program requirements have led to reduced gains in achievement, particularly among low and high-performing students.
- The wide-ranging levels of academic proficiency among students pose challenges in adequately addressing individualized learning needs, compounded by limited personnel and resources.

Recommendations:

- Allocate necessary resources to address the achievement gaps by providing essential personnel and resources.
- Sustain data-driven practices by continuing to leverage data-driven insights to refine instructional strategies, with a specific emphasis on narrowing disparities in achievement across student demographics.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- Teachers receive ongoing assistance from a dedicated team comprising the magnet coordinator, AIG teacher, MTTS personnel, Math facilitator and Literacy facilitator.
- Schools have the autonomy to recruit educators skilled in both the school's thematic focus and effective instructional methodologies.
- Feedback from teachers reflects a culture of collaboration and inclusivity, with opportunities for active participation in decision-making processes.

Challenges:

- While the talent development theme has been executed faithfully, it primarily facilitates higher-level thinking and problem-solving instructional strategies which are difficult to differentiate from a quality school that is not a magnet school.

Recommendations:

- Consider integrating arts into the higher-level thinking and problem-solving instructional strategies.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The advanced studies office has allocated resources to the school by providing dedicated personnel, including a magnet coordinator and a part-time lead AIG, for three days a week.

Challenges:

- Lack of continuity in the Learning Immersion and Talent Development magnet theme at the middle school level has resulted in students transitioning to an IB Magnet program.
- Parents from the focus group stated the IB program does not offer the same rigor as the LITD program for middle school students.
- The district's strategic plan currently lacks inclusion of magnet programs.

Recommendations:

- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in learning immersion and talent development, ensuring a smooth transition from middle to high school.
- Integrate magnet programs and their foundational standards into the district's strategic plan.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- Parents exhibit robust support and active involvement, enriching the school community.

Challenges:

- The school has only one established partnership with a local museum.
- There is no established protocol for engaging all stakeholders in partnerships.
- Currently, no partnerships are supported by the district.

Recommendations:

- Work to establish additional partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and institutions to broaden the opportunities available to students and enhance the school's resources. This could involve reaching out to potential partners in various sectors such as technology, arts and sciences.
- Create clear and comprehensive protocols for initiating, maintaining and evaluating partnerships with stakeholders. These protocols should outline expectations, responsibilities and communication channels for all parties involved, ensuring transparency and efficiency in partnership endeavors.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school boasts an exceptionally engaged PTA, providing substantial financial backing for nearly all extracurricular programming, clubs and school engagement events.
- Teacher retention rates are notably high, with educators expressing their satisfaction with working at Irwin Elementary.
- Students articulated their affection for the school, emphasizing their sense of being heard and accepted for who they are.
- Irwin School organizes numerous inclusive events, including Multicultural Night and Parent 101 Workshops, fostering a vibrant community spirit.
- Parents stay well-informed through channels like ParentSquare and teacher newsletters.
- The school and PTA leverage social media platforms to ensure widespread dissemination of important information.

Challenges:

- Some parents find the volume of information on ParentSquare overwhelming, highlighting the need for a more streamlined communication approach.
- Parents managing multiple children across different schools find navigating between each school time-consuming.

Recommendations:

- Implement a more user-friendly interface on ParentSquare, enabling parents to access information effortlessly.
- Explore options for integrating communication systems across multiple schools to alleviate the burden of managing multiple platforms.

Overall Recommendations for Irwin Academic Center:

- Develop and implement a targeted recruitment plan to increase diversity at the school.
- Implement incentive programs to encourage teachers to obtain AIG certification, recognizing its significance in enhancing the effectiveness of the talent development program.
- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in learning immersion and talent development, ensuring a smooth transition from middle to high school.
- Integrate magnet programs and their foundational standards into the district's strategic plan.

J.M. Alexander Middle School - IB

J.M. Alexander Middle School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school and district provide program and magnet recruitment information to families via a magnet fair, open houses, social media and other communications.
- There is an established K-12 IB pathway with an elementary and high school in close proximity to J. M. Alexander.

Challenges:

- The relatively recent expansion of charter and private school options in close proximity to the school have created greater competition and many Asian and Caucasian families have selected these other options.
- Compared to the overall district, J.M. Alexander demographics consist of significantly higher percentages of Black students (56.9%) and lower percentages of Caucasian (5.2%) students with 34.7 % of the district Black and 23.8% of the district Caucasian.
- From 2018-20 to 2020-21, the school filled nearly all of the available magnet seats. However, since 2020-21, a range of 12-47 magnet seats per grade level have remained unfilled.

Recommendations:

- Consider methods for attracting Caucasian and Asian students to the school through targeted recruitment and marketing. Marketing can focus on telling the school's "IB Story" and the enhanced opportunities afforded to all students from the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in addition to the overall benefits of the comprehensive school in arts, athletics, academics etc.
- Develop methods of enhancing the IB K-12 pathway to ensure that students who start the pathway at the feeder elementary school continue to follow it in middle school and high school.
- Ensure that base attendance zone families who wish to continue the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) at the partner high school are aware that they may need to have official magnet status in middle

school in order to participate in IB upon entering North Mecklenburg High School if North Mecklenburg continues to only offer the MYP to students who are officially granted magnet seats.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The IB diversity and inclusion policies emphasize the value of diversity in the magnet school/program.
- The school provides an “IB for All” experience instead of offering the IB only to students who have a magnet seat. For example, all classes utilize IB unit planning and all students complete the IB Community Project and service-learning expectations.
- Teacher leaders demonstrate a commitment to inclusive teaching practices, although district mandated curriculum provides significant constraints.
- Observed social studies classes demonstrated impressive inclusive teaching that appealed to diverse learners and a focus group of teacher-leaders from across the school demonstrated exceptional understanding and drive to provide inclusive strategies.
- Significant support and oversight for PLC lesson/unit plan development emphasizes the IB philosophy and practices.

Challenges:

- District-mandated, scripted curriculum in language arts and math is formulaic and highly monitored by the district. It lacks cultural relevance/responsiveness to the student demographics at the school.
- High teacher turn-over and a significant number of new teachers with no educational experience leave the school with the need to educate many teachers on how to work with, support and engage the diverse students who are in the classrooms. Although the school also has a cadre of highly experienced IB teachers, this process is a “heavy lift” for administration, facilitators and teacher-leaders.

Recommendations:

- Reduce pressure on the school to follow mandated curriculum in language arts and math in order to allow teachers/PLCs the flexibility to use the better aspects of the mandated curriculum while also integrating inclusive teaching practices that better align with the IB philosophy and will engage all learners more effectively.
- Educate new hires and lateral entry teachers on culturally responsive teaching practices, including curriculum/assessment strategies, classroom management techniques and student engagement strategies.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school is to be lauded for its efforts to implement an “IB for All” philosophy for magnet and base students.
- All students in the building engage in the IB Community Project and service learning. All courses utilize the IB unit planning process to emphasize key concepts, essential questions and global connections.
- The IB Learner Profile and IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning are visible throughout the building in displays and classroom activities.

- The school has implemented an IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning class period, which allows for flexible grouping, differentiation and acceleration based on individual student needs.
- Lesson plans, particularly in social studies, science and CTE courses, emphasize research skills, creativity and innovation, which promote college and career readiness.
- Continual work in PLCs ensures that the theme is continually improved and monitored.

Challenges:

- Significant teacher turn-over has made it challenging to maintain theme understanding and emphasis—but also offers an opportunity to update and create an improved vision.
- District mandated curriculum in language arts and math makes IB implementation significantly more challenging, particularly in designing transdisciplinary units and in integrating the more meaningful IB experiences related to inquiry and research within these subjects.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that new hires and lateral entry teachers understand and implement the IB mission and philosophy.
- Reduce pressure on the school to follow mandated curriculum in language arts and math in order to allow teachers/PLCs the flexibility to use the better aspects of the mandated curriculum while also integrating inquiry, research, creativity, action and global connections.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school provides a week of paid summer work for teachers to learn about IB, create unit plans and prepare for instruction in an IB school. This work is facilitated by the IB/magnet coordinator, administration, teacher-leaders and instructional coaches/facilitators, who have a deep and rich understanding of the IB mission, philosophy and instructional practices.
- PLCs meet twice per week in most subject areas and once per week for some “singletons,” facilitated by coordinators, instructional facilitators and administrators, to ensure IB theme alignment and implementation.
- Off-site, official IB training has been very effective for administrators and teachers who have had the opportunity to participate.

Challenges:

- Official IB training budgets have not expanded to meet the needs of additional programs and high teacher turn-over.
- Administrators and teachers have not had the opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues at other IB schools to better implement the IB theme within the CMS context.

Recommendations:

- Expand IB training budgets to ensure that teachers have participated in required IB training. In addition to subject-specific training, include workshops related to assessment, diversity/inclusion and IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning.
- Provide opportunities for teachers and administrators to collaborate with colleagues at other IB schools in the district in order to better implement program requirements within the CMS context. This work should occur both horizontally (with other MYP middle schools) and vertically (with the K-12 pathway schools). The district could provide these opportunities with funding for substitutes on regular school days or these could be alternative options on workdays. For example, a beginning-of-the-year

mandated workshop for middle school math teachers could have a targeted group specifically for math teachers at the MYP middle schools. Providing this opportunity may require further MYP understanding/training within the academics department that organizes current professional development. Additionally, collaborative meetings should take place for administrators/principals of all magnet schools (for general magnet theme and recruitment collaboration) as well as for magnet schools with a particular theme (such as the IB MYP).

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- School leadership and experienced teachers demonstrate a schoolwide IB MYP philosophy and are working diligently to ensure that this philosophy is carried into classrooms with new hires and lateral entry teachers.
- The school uses significant formative assessments to ensure student learning across the range of subject areas.
- There are multiple interventions available for students who need additional support in addition to opportunities for enrichment and acceleration. Some of these opportunities take place during the IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning class, which is an exceptional demonstration of school vision, focus, flexibility and strategy to ensure fidelity to the magnet theme and student achievement. The concept of this course is a model that other middle schools may wish to replicate.
- Although student achievement has remained low for several years, new plans in place have the potential to yield significant improvement.
- Students in the focus group noted that, compared to peers at other schools, they are more challenged and more prepared academically.

Challenges:

- District mandated curriculum in language arts and math reduces opportunities for teachers to provide the richest of IB MYP experiences, although, given the constraints, the school does laudable work to implement as well as possible.
- High teacher turn-over forces the school to continually educate and support many new teachers in IB MYP implementation.
- Additional positions are not provided to the school to support the MYP (aside from the coordinator), so course options are limited. Students reflected that they would like to have a math 2 course available on campus (instead of through NC Virtual Public Schools) in addition to more world languages options.

Recommendations:

- Reduce pressure on the school to follow mandated curriculum in language arts and mathematics in order to allow teachers/PLCs the flexibility to use the better aspects of the mandated curriculum while also integrating inquiry, research, creativity, action and global connection.
- Ensure that new hires and lateral entry teachers understand and implement the IB mission and philosophy.
- Expand magnet staffing in order to provide additional course options, such as math 2 and an additional world language.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school has a clear drive, plan and leadership in place to support student academic growth and achievement.
- PLCs meet frequently and purposefully to promote growth.
- Achievement is noted through student test scores as well as through IB projects, the IB Community Project, service learning and the success of co-curricular opportunities (Robotics, Future Cities, etc.).

Challenges:

- The school has not met NC exam growth expectations since 2014. The school was rated on the NC School Report Card as a C school in 2014. Since then, scores have declined and the school has been rated as an F school for the past two years. Zero subgroups met growth expectations in 2023 and only one subgroup met growth expectations in 2022 (students with disabilities).
- Students are missing class and not engaging in instruction. Short-term suspensions are 3.5 times the district average at 564 suspensions per 1000 students and chronic absenteeism is 10% higher than the district average.

Recommendations:

- Continue to engage in targeted work to improve student achievement and turnaround outcomes. The plans put in place by the new school leadership are both challenging and impressive and have the potential to bring about positive outcomes. The district needs to provide curricular/assessment flexibility in order to more effectively engage students with the magnet theme and be culturally relevant, which can additionally improve outcomes.
- Ensure that students are attending class and offer alternative behavioral intervention strategies to reduce suspensions.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- J.M. Alexander leadership structures are impressive, including the principal, IB/magnet coordinator, assistant principal, administrative intern and instructional facilitator.
- Decisions are made collaboratively and adults throughout the building have a clear and unified sense of direction/purpose.
- The district provides the school with autonomy to hire teachers, although it is difficult to find qualified teachers to hire. The hiring process is collaborative.
- Excellent coaching occurs through summer paid IB training and through effective PLC structures.

Challenges:

- Mandated curriculum constrains opportunities for teachers to take leadership over many aspects of their students learning.
- The lack of collaborative opportunities for IB leaders and teachers across schools limits brainstorming and problem-solving for IB and magnet implementation within the CMS context.

Recommendations:

- Provide flexibility in relation to mandated, scripted curriculum and instructional practices.

- Create collaborative opportunities for school leaders and master teachers to work with their colleagues at other CMS schools, including other IB middle schools (horizontal planning) and other IB schools in the pathway (vertical alignment).

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for current J. M. Alexander IB magnet students into North Mecklenburg High School's IB programmes.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools.
- The IB magnet program within the school has a full-time IB magnet coordinator.

Challenges:

- There is a need for more district support for enhancing teacher training opportunities and curriculum resources for IB.
- Collaborative professional development opportunities across the IB magnet schools, including middle schools (horizontal planning/alignment) and schools in the pathway (vertical alignment and community visioning) does not occur.
- District practices could clarify why magnet programs are placed at various schools and the underlying purpose for magnet programs.
- Review of artifacts and the district website show the district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district strategic plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.

Recommendations:

- Provide district funding to ensure that teachers meet or exceed IB training requirements and to ensure that schools have appropriate IB related teaching resources.
- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.
- Create collaborative opportunities for school leaders and master teachers to work with their colleagues at other CMS schools, including other IB middle schools (horizontal planning) and other IB schools in the pathway (vertical alignment).
- Ensure that the district has a unified, communicated and implemented vision for the placement of magnet schools and determination of their theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- There are a few partnerships with various businesses and nonprofits to support the school program.

Challenges:

- There is not a noted protocol for the establishment and sustainability of school partnerships.
- Partnerships could be expanded to be theme-based and provide direct academic support.
- It is not evident that the district helps to facilitate school partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Expand partnerships to enhance teaching and learning in the IB programs, including through universities, travel organizations, world language institutes, international businesses etc.

- Create a partnership protocol to articulate partnership needs, guidelines and procedures and to ensure that partners receive program updates and can be involved in program implementation/improvement.
- Ensure that the district office encourages and facilitates partnership development.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school is open and welcoming for families, which was observed throughout the visit and expressed by the parent focus group.
- Parents express that J. M. Alexander is a school where students are generally purposeful and want to learn, which was also evident in classroom observations. Students demonstrated pride in the school and appreciated the learning opportunities it has provided them.
- The school has a small PTA, which is very engaged and involved.
- There is effective two-way communication with families via email, phone, social media and text messages.
- The school engages with magnet families through magnet fairs, open houses, presentations at feeder middle schools and tours, all of which showcase student work.
- The school improvement plan and academic progress are available via the public website.

Challenges:

- Parents appreciate IB theme implementation and support within the school and they would like further clarification from the district regarding the application process, priorities and ways of ensuring the students have access to the full K-12 pathway.
- Additional marketing opportunities could be utilized to ensure the community is aware of the broad and rich program options available at the school.

Recommendations:

- Provide ongoing, further clarification regarding K-12 magnet pathway opportunities and the benefits of following the MYP into high school, followed by the IB Diploma Programme or IB Career-Related Programme.
- Create a schoolwide marketing campaign that celebrates the whole school program and emphasizes an overall vision/philosophy, including the IB, athletics, arts and other school celebrations.

Overall Recommendations for J.M. Alexander Middle School:

- Continue to engage in targeted work to improve student achievement and turnaround outcomes. The plans put in place by the new school leadership are both challenging and impressive and have the potential to bring about positive outcomes. The district needs to provide curricular/assessment flexibility in order to more effectively engage students with the magnet theme and culturally relevant materials, which can additionally improve outcomes.
- Coordinate collaborative professional development opportunities across the IB magnet schools, including middle schools (horizontal planning/alignment) and schools in the pathway (vertical alignment and community visioning).
- Ensure that new hires and lateral entry teachers understand and implement the IB mission and philosophy.

- Provide ongoing, further clarification regarding K-12 magnet pathway opportunities and the benefits of following the MYP into high school, followed by the IB Diploma Programme or IB Career-Related Programme.
- Create a schoolwide marketing campaign that celebrates the whole school program and emphasizes an overall vision/philosophy, including the IB, athletics, arts and other school celebrations to attract students that will help the school match the district demographics.

J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School

J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Based on informal administrative data and observations, over 90% of student enrollment at Williams are students matriculating through the Montessori pathway beginning in elementary school.
- Student retention exceeds 90%.

Challenges:

- The school demographics are significantly different from the district demographics with the school having 10.2% Hispanic students, 22.7% Black students, 59.7% Caucasian students, 18.5% economically disadvantaged students and the district having 30.6% Hispanic students, 34.7% Black students and 23.8% Caucasian students, 44.3% economically disadvantaged.
- Lack of a school based recruitment and marketing plan with specific goals and metrics.
- Transportation becomes a barrier for targeted recruiting. Administration reports this as a reason for declining enrollment.
- Seating capacity at upper grades is limited for potential students coming from outside the Montessori pathway.
- Limited school based leadership personnel to support magnet recruitment/marketing, student selection and instructional support.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive recruitment and marketing plan to increase racial and socioeconomic diversity that mirrors the district.
- Provide feedback and recommendations to the district office outlining challenges to current magnet transportation policies and the impact on the school's recruitment, marketing and student retention efforts.
- Advocate for additional personnel to focus on recruitment, marketing, student selection/support and instructional support to students, staff and the community.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classroom diversity is reflective of student enrollment.
- Montessori classroom "community standards" are consistently implemented.
- Instructional and accountability expectations are clearly outlined for staff and students.
- Student progress is a standing agenda item during all PLC discussions.
- SEL practices are evident in daily instruction, student expectations and restorative practices/circles.

Challenges:

- There is a need for ongoing school/district based instructional support and professional development following initial required training on the Montessori mode.
- Instructional staff diversity is not reflective of the demographics within the student population and that of the district and community.

Recommendations:

- Evaluate teacher proficiencies in various elements of the Montessori model to determine their ability to provide additional in house training on specific instructor needs.
- Expand PLC professional development opportunities by requesting additional district funding to support follow-up Montessori training.
- Work with the district to create an action plan to have staffing reflect the demographic diversity of the student enrollment, district and the community.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Total integration of Montessori principles across all grade levels and subjects. Expectations are outlined and monitored based on the CMS and Montessori model.
- Community service activities, clubs and organizations and intercessions support preparation for post-secondary opportunities. Data supports 82 students enrolled in AP classes, 13 in Career and College Promise and a 95% graduation rate. All students participate in intercession activities.

Challenges:

- Lack of personnel to enhance theme-presence and branding opportunities throughout the school.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to enhance branding opportunities for the school to "scream the theme" when walking onto the school grounds.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- District funds the initial Montessori training for all instructional staff.
- Students with special needs are receiving needed support through special education services because of school based staffing allocation and additional professional development resources.
- PLCs and staff community meetings provide a forum for enhanced instructional strategies, networking and student achievement discussions.

Challenges:

- Lack of a school based theme expert magnet coordinator to provide additional professional training.
- Expand job training to target students with disabilities, English language learners and AIG (Academically or Intellectually Gifted).

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to expand the role of the school's .5 FTE Montessori Lead/.5 math teacher to full time Montessori Lead to help provide theme specific professional development to the staff.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- According to the NC Report Card, the percent of students graduating in 4 years is more than 95%.
- Williams Secondary Montessori was listed among top performing high schools in the district and state in the U.S. News and World Report.

Challenges:

- The school lacks the additional support of a magnet coordinator to provide for theme-based interventions, acceleration and curriculum support for instruction.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with district staff to identify resources to fund a full time magnet coordinator and theme curriculum to provide support for the theme and core subjects.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The Montessori Model is implemented schoolwide.
- Differentiation, articulation and interventions are implemented and monitored based on student need.
- Advanced classes and electives are offered based on student interests and available resources.
- Based on required state assessments and rating scale, Williams maintained a B grade for the last four rating cycles.

Challenges:

- Based on state assessments, Williams did not meet expected academic growth targets in 2019, 2022 and 2023.

Recommendations:

- While the school continues to show progress, refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic growth and theme effectiveness.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Montessori protocols and instructional strategies are evident in classroom instruction and instructional practices.
- In alignment with district policies, school leadership is allowed to recruit and recommend hire for teachers who meet school needs and support the theme.
- The leadership team included the principal and assistant principal along with identified theme leaders who were involved in teacher recruitment and the hiring process.
- Instructional coaching and support are provided during weekly PLC meetings which includes data dives.
- The leadership team reports that teachers are supportive and collaborative regarding needs in the school and readily take leadership roles in getting needs accomplished.

Challenges:

- Although the Montessori model and instructional protocols are evident within the classroom setting, evidence of the theme and branding is limited outside the classroom and around school grounds.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to get district support to fund a magnet coordinator.
- Enhance the theme branding and marketing protocols.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear pathway for the Montessori magnet theme from K-12.

Challenges:

- Resources are not consistently available to support a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme.
- Transportation express stops have been noted by parent focus groups as a barrier to attending choice magnet schools.
- There is no evidence of a district strategic plan or financial plan that includes magnets.
- Teacher focus groups noted limited district led curriculum support for magnets.
- Parent focus groups noted limited communication from the district office regarding magnet schools and district realignment of magnet schools.

Recommendations:

- Enhance a district communication and marketing plan to include social media, public television, radio and various media platforms to market magnet schools and update parents on magnet school plans and realignment
- Review and analyze the magnet transportation plan to determine efficiency and impact on magnet school recruitment, selection and retention.
- Work with the district to allocate support to a dedicated magnet school coordinator for integrating the theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school reports community based partnerships are based on student interests and projects per the Montessori model.

- PTA and parent volunteers provide support and fundraising profits to support academics and extracurricular activities.
- School newsletters, social media, student showcases and parent conferences provide updates to families regarding school activities, celebrations and student progress.
- Scheduled meetings with parents and community partners provide avenues for support and engagement.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a formalized protocol for soliciting community partnerships and metrics including a link to the theme. While there was evidence of service projects and partnerships, most were based on student interests and teacher-led facilitation. There was limited evidence of sustained community partnerships.
- District supported partnerships were not evident.

Recommendations:

- Establish a protocol with district approval for soliciting partnerships with linkage to the magnet theme.
- Document the success of partnerships sustained over time and connect to theme support.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parent focus group feedback indicated student learning is highlighted through intercession projects, Rites of Passage activities, greenhouse and animal science activities, research projects, plant sales, community service projects, arts related programs and performances, camping experiences and Montessori walk research projects.
- Community clean up days were a highlight noted by parent and student focus groups.
- PTA provides support for classroom needs and student-led projects and opportunities.

Challenges:

- The parent focus group suggested a goal of increasing parental involvement.
- Although the school's PTA is very active, the leadership finds it difficult to recruit parents to help support its many events. Many working parents are unavailable and others live a fair distance from the school.

Recommendations:

- Survey families to determine how they would like to be involved. Consider surveying those parents who are attending the school's many academic events to determine how to involve them in the PTA.

Overall Recommendations for J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School:

- Work with the district to secure funding to support a dedicated magnet coordinator.
- Refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic growth and theme effectiveness.
- Work with the district to align plans to support the fidelity of theme, curriculum needs, extracurricular activities, enrollment/diversity goals, staffing, stakeholder needs including timely communication, recruitment efforts and theme pathways for feeder schools as the school prepares to transition to a new facility.
- Develop a school-based partnership protocol.

Kennedy Middle School - STEM

Kennedy Middle School - STEM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- According to school leadership, pre-pandemic, the school was running like a magnet program with a magnet coordinator funded at the school level, students attending approximately 10-12 field trips per year, and guest speakers from the community coming to the school to speak to students. The school had a strong robotics team and won 1st place in tech challenges. After year two of being a magnet, they were able to fill every lottery seat with a waitlist.
- The school has Open House marketing events to showcase their magnet school to potential students. They advertise this event with scrolling announcements on their school webpage
- The school sends a welcome letter to families by email to families who are accepted into the magnet program by lottery.
- Several demographics of Kennedy's reflect the diversity of the district: American Indian/Alaskan, Asian, Black, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Multi-Racial.
- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process.

Challenges:

- There is no clear school-level policy that emphasizes student diversity to attract and/or retain students.
- Compared to the overall district, Kennedy's demographics consist of significantly lower percentages of Caucasian students, 6.8% of the school and 23.8% of the district's Caucasian demographic.

Recommendations:

- Create a marketing and recruitment plan to target and attract more Caucasian students to the school.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The magnet theme is schoolwide and all students have access to the entire magnet program once enrolled.

- With approximately 1,000 students, about 300 choose into the school through the lottery process and about 700 come from the neighborhood and are zoned for Kennedy.
- Systems are in place where Exceptional Children (EC) teachers work with core teachers to either push-in or push-out to classes and work with either Multilingual Learners (ML) students and/or students with IEP's.

Challenges:

- Post-pandemic, when students were able to come back in the building, the school lost 12 integral staff members who initially started the magnet program. Their magnet coordinator, at the time, left for an assistant principal's position.

Recommendations:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with the school's underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes, recruitment events in the community. Find ways to go to the target market and not only offer events where the target market comes to the school.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Students have access to VEX plane elements where they build and design robotics to complete challenges for the year and then compete against other teams.
- The robotic teams and clubs utilize the two robotic playing fields in the front plaza. The school has funded over \$40,000 for Robotics and Flight/Space.
- The Project Lead the Way (PLTW) continuum was created to give all students the opportunity to experience various STEM electives. It is designed to expose students to various themes within STEM.
- Outdoor garden spaces were created by the Green Team Club.
- The school offers a wide variety of electives such as Spanish, band, orchestra, dance, drama and PE.
- Kennedy offers the following theme-related electives: Business Careers teaches students resume building, interview tips with mock interviews and speakers from the community come to speak to students. Green Architecture teaches students designing and constructing models using 3D printers. Medical Detectives teaches students investigative skills for them to investigate outbreaks and decipher where it began. Flight and Space teaches students the science behind aeronautics.

Challenges:

- The school is rebuilding their magnet program so the theme is not consistently visible throughout the school.
- Due to rebranding and rebuilding their magnet program, the theme is not currently integrated into all subjects and courses.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate the magnet theme into the decor and design of classrooms, hallways, common areas and other spaces within the school. This could involve themed artwork by students, photos of student work and/or designs, murals, displays and other visual elements that reflect the program's thematic elements.
- Continue providing training and resources for staff members to effectively integrate the magnet program theme into the curriculum, teaching materials and classroom environments. Have a platform

for teacher-led professional development opportunities with in-house teachers who successfully integrated STEM into a lesson/unit to build confidence and capacity with theme integration.

- Facilitate collaborative planning meetings among teachers to discuss and share best practices for integrating the magnet program theme into lesson plans and classroom activities. Encourage cross-curricular connections and interdisciplinary approaches to reinforce the theme across different subject areas.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Kennedy created a system for Exceptional Children and ML students with and without an IEP. Students are grouped based on group, EC or ML and follow their cohort. This allows EC teachers to move around to classes easier with their students and either push in or out to work with small groups to best meet their needs. During electives, all students are integrated together.
- The entire staff is exposed to the STEM Habits of Thinking during the opening staff meeting. This includes EC and ML staff members. EC extension students receive a specialized STEM elective. All other EC and ML students have the ability to sign up for PLTW elective classes.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) occur twice a week to look at data, curriculum and unpack the standards. Leadership attends every PLC to provide support, especially for new teachers.

Challenges:

- At the outset of the year, as part of their efforts to rejuvenate their magnet program, they introduced teachers to the STEM Habits of Thinking, however, as an initial step, they are currently in the process of familiarizing teachers with this framework and have not yet developed a professional development plan aligned with the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a tailored professional development plan that incorporates the STEM Habits of Thinking and aligns with the goals of the magnet program. This plan should include workshops, training sessions and ongoing support mechanisms to help teachers integrate these concepts effectively into their teaching practices.
- Foster collaboration among teachers by establishing PLC's focused on the magnet theme. These communities can provide opportunities for teachers to share best practices, resources and strategies for implementing STEM Habits of Thinking in their classrooms.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The district supports a full time MTSS Coordinator that is able to offer professional development on how to use intervention platforms such as iReady and Dreambox. The MTSS Coordinator also provides tiered intervention support.
- Two interventionists provide Tier 2 and 3 instruction and support core instruction.
- PLTW classes are scripted lessons created by PLTW that align to the given STEM themed class. This is a prescribed curriculum that includes assessments.
- During PLC meetings, teams look at data to see what small groups to pull and loop and what students they need to provide enrichment to.

Challenges:

- The school has consistently been a C/D school over the past five years. Scores were on a steady increase pre-Covid but post-Covid, scores decreased drastically and in 2022-2023 decreased by 4 points from the year prior.

Recommendations:

- Consider developing an extended day program to increase remediation time and hopefully increase student growth. Begin with students who are on the cusp of meeting academic goals.

Standard 6: Student Achievement**Successes:**

- Based on the NC Report Card, Kennedy met academic growth for the past 3 years.
- 2024 Benchmark assessment data shows all grade level Math and ELA classrooms showed growth in their College and Career Readiness percentages except for 8th grade ELA.
- PLC meetings are held twice a week to analyze and discuss data. Mondays and Fridays are for teachers to conduct parent conferences and planning.

Challenges:

- Chronic Absenteeism is slightly higher than the district's with Kennedy's average at 26.07% and the district's average at 25.64%.
- Although Kennedy Met Growth for the past 3 years, according to the NC Report Card Data, their Growth Range decreased in 2021-2022 from 83.4 to 70.3 in 2022-2023.

Recommendations:

- Consider implementing perfect attendance celebrations or acknowledgments to encourage students to come to school every day. Look at data for attendance when students have special areas such as Medical Detectives or Flight and Space or STEM experiences such as VEX challenges, if it shows an increase then the school can identify ways for thematic experiences as a way to incentivize attendance.
- Develop a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps.
- Leverage the magnet theme as a way to build buy-in for unity and teacher confidence and to address attendance.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- 75% of the staff has been at the school for five plus years.
- Leadership provides support, especially for new teachers, at every PLC Meeting.

Challenges:

- The principal stated that finding teachers vested in the STEM field is a challenge.
- At the school, there are currently four teacher vacancies at the school that are being covered by teachers, administrators, long term substitute teachers and guest teachers. There is an "all hands" approach with the principal teaching a math class. The entire teaching field has been impacted by the lack of teacher applicants.

Recommendations:

- Develop targeted recruitment strategies to attract qualified teachers with expertise and passion in the STEM field. This can include partnerships with universities, STEM-focused organizations and

professional networks to identify potential candidates. Advertise teaching positions in STEM-specific publications, websites and forums to reach individuals with a STEM background.

- Ensure that all stakeholders, including all teachers, administrators, students and parents, have a clear understanding of the goals, objectives and expectations of the magnet program theme. Clearly articulate how the theme aligns with the school's mission and vision.
- Review and align the existing curriculum with the magnet program theme to ensure coherence and consistency across grade levels and subject areas. Identify opportunities to infuse the theme into core content areas while maintaining academic rigor and standards.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- There is district support of a standardized curriculum for all elementary schools in core subject areas.

Challenges:

- According to the school, the K-12 pathway for Kennedy is no longer in place.
- There is no evidence that the district supports the magnet program in any school improvement efforts.
- It is unclear to what extent there is a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve magnets with latitude for decision-making, dedicated resource allocation and curriculum support.
- The district does not provide funding for a dedicated magnet coordinator at Kennedy. The school's Dean of Students is also unofficially the Magnet Contact and is not funded or compensated for the magnet work that is completed.
- There is no evidence of a district magnet financial plan.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop a plan where the district supports the magnet program in all school improvement efforts and includes magnet programs in the strategic plan.
- Work with the district to develop a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve the school with dedicated resource allocation, magnet coordinators and curriculum support.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- There are community relationships with the following organizations: Steele Creek Police and Fire, Steele Creek Residents Association, Arrowood Business Associates and several area churches.
- Kennedy leverages partnerships to enhance student learning experiences by inviting guest speakers to come speak to students and make real-world, authentic connections.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.
- There was no evidence of an established process to welcome and involve businesses and organizations in decisions about theme implementation.

Recommendations:

- Establish clear communication channels and protocols for sharing information, updates and opportunities related to partnerships. Utilize newsletters, websites, social media and regular meetings to keep stakeholders informed and engaged in the partnership process.

- Engage stakeholders in collaborative goal setting to define the objectives and outcomes of partnerships. Ensure alignment with the school's mission, vision and strategic priorities and seek input from diverse perspectives to foster ownership and buy-in in the school's magnet theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school website is updated consistently with scrolling announcements.
- Kennedy has an active School Improvement Team that meets monthly to develop and monitor the school improvement plan. The members consist of the administrative team, instructional staff, instructional assistant and parents. The meeting's minutes and agendas are posted on the school's website.
- Connect ED, Parent Square, Instagram and monthly newsletters are used to engage parents.
- Kennedy has hired three bilingual secretaries to ensure Spanish speaking families are engaged.

Challenges:

- Continue to engage families through the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Leverage the School Improvement Team to seek feedback on the school's magnet related news/events. Conduct surveys and gather input on what is working well, areas for improvement and suggestions for future events or initiatives. Use this feedback to inform magnet related decision-making and continuously improve family engagement efforts.
- Organize family-centered activities and events that showcase and celebrate the magnet theme. This could include STEM-themed family nights, interactive workshops, guest speaker sessions or field trips to STEM-related sites in the community.

Overall Recommendations for Kennedy Middle School:

- Integrate the magnet theme into the curriculum to develop interdisciplinary project-based learning (PBL) units that incorporate STEM concepts and skills while exploring real-world applications related to the magnet theme.
- Incorporate the magnet theme into the decor and design of classrooms, hallways, common areas and other spaces within the school. This could involve themed artwork by students, photos of student work and/or designs, murals, displays and other visual elements that reflect the program's thematic elements.
- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with the school's underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes, recruitment events in the community. Find ways to go to the target market and not only offer events where the target market comes to the school.
- Develop a tailored professional development plan that incorporates the STEM Habits of Thinking and aligns with the goals of the magnet program. This plan should include workshops, training sessions and ongoing support mechanisms to help teachers integrate these concepts effectively into their teaching practices.
- Ensure that all stakeholders, including all teachers, administrators, students and parents, have a clear understanding of the goals, objectives and expectations of the magnet program theme. Clearly articulate how the theme aligns with the school's mission and vision.

Lansdowne Elementary School - IB

Lansdowne Elementary School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Discussion with leadership confirms Lansdowne is a Magnet Schools of America “Certified Magnet School 2019” and over the years has used certification for marketing and recruitment in its marketing plan.
- Discussion with leadership reveals the school has an understanding about shifts in neighborhood diversity and has proactively planned for marketing and recruitment to diverse student populations within and outside of the transportation zone.

Challenges:

- Students being allowed to attend magnet schools outside their transportation zone if families provide their own transportation may be limiting district-wide desegregation efforts.
- Review of the district’s school choice website shows once a magnet student’s grade level is complete, magnet students are automatically advanced to the next level of the magnet theme. However, neighborhood students must enroll into a magnet seat within their neighborhood school to receive the continuation guarantee and families have expressed the requirement as a barrier to magnet pathways K-12.
- Discussion with leadership and review of the NC School Report Card confirm recent neighborhood changes (removal of a socioeconomically disadvantaged apartment complex in the neighborhood and a partial merge with a nearby school with high enrollment of Caucasian and socioeconomically advantaged students) has increased the Caucasian demographics to close to 19% above the district average.
- Review of the School Report Card and district website reveal the school’s demographics are closer to the district’s demographics in comparison to many other magnet schools, however; the school will need continued attention to remain diverse. Lansdowne ES Student Demographics 2022-23: American Indian/Alaska Native .17%; Asian 4.1%; Black 33.8%; Hispanic 12.7%; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 0%; Caucasian 43.1%; Two or More Races 5.9%.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that allowing students to attend any magnet school in the district if they provide their own transportation is not impacting district-wide desegregation efforts.
- Study enrollment requirements for neighborhood students where neighborhood students are required to apply to magnet programs in their neighborhood schools to receive the magnet continuation guarantee.
- Expand the school level targeted recruitment plan to attract diverse student demographics to ensure recent neighborhood changes (removal of a socioeconomically disadvantaged apartment complex in the neighborhood and a partial merge with a nearby school with high enrollment of Caucasian and socioeconomically advantaged students) do not create school demographics which mirror the district demographics.
- Research school mergers and removal/addition of new zones impact on schools' demographics and ensure that those changes are helping the district meet diversity goals.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Review of the school website shows the school has an IB vision and mission statement and school policy that emphasize the importance of student diversity.
- Classroom observations show inclusive teaching practices with students working in diverse collaborative teams.
- Discussion with students reveals students celebrate their cultures through the IB Learner Profile and monthly award recognitions bringing diverse students and families together.
- Discussion with teachers confirms the school uses a teacher coaching model among school staff to support effective inclusive teaching strategies.

Challenges:

- Discussion with leadership reveals school leadership has minimal to no awareness concerning the specific purpose of a magnet school to reduce and/or prevent racial and socioeconomic isolation and that the IB magnet theme may promote school choice to change family enrollment patterns for the specific purpose to desegregate a school district.

Recommendations:

- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic goals, reduced isolation goals and target enrollment.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The IB Primary Years Program emphasizes a well-rounded education and as shown in the Lansdowne ES Report Card for Art Education, 97.2% of students participate in music and 91.3% of students participate in visual art, above state percentages of 91.3% music and 90% visual art.
- Discussion with leadership and teachers reveal the new school building has been under warranty and constrained by a contractor to place bulletin boards and attach displays to walls, however, classroom

and hallway walkthroughs show the school has been creative in approaches to making the IB theme visible.

Challenges:

- Review of artifacts, classroom walkthroughs and discussions with the school show the theme is not consistently defined and integrated into all subjects and courses.
- Discussion with leadership, teachers and families confirms the cycle of improvement to improve theme integration is limited by lack of sufficient IB certification training beyond minimal requirements to meet IB compliance.

Recommendations:

- Expand district financial resources to fund teacher attendance at higher-level IB certification workshops to support the cycle of improvement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Discussion with teachers reveal the school uses a peer coaching model to ensure new teachers are introduced to the magnet theme.
- Discussion with leadership and teachers reveal dedicated time has been provided for teachers to reflect on theme implementation.

Challenges:

- Data in the Lansdowne ES Report Card shows the school has 85.1% experienced teachers, 14.9% beginning teachers and 95% non-provisional licensed teachers. The district percentage for experienced teachers is 84.2% and for beginning teachers 15.8%, making it a challenge to train all new teachers in the theme each year.
- Review of school artifacts and discussions with leadership and teachers show Lansdowne ES teachers attend required IB certification training, however, resources are limited to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified workshops which would deepen IB implementation and strengthen IB sustainability.

Recommendations:

- Provide district budget allocations to ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to meet IB required teacher training as well as provide financial resources to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified training.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Classroom walkthroughs, discussions with teachers and students reveal multiple modes of learning regularly occur.
- Classroom observations show tiered interventions consistently occur in small group instruction.
- Discussions with students reveal teachers provide students a variety of activities to learn math, reading, science and Spanish that are fun and exciting.

Challenges:

- Discussions with leadership and teachers reveal state science standards will change next school year.

Recommendations:

- Provide district IB thematic coaching to teachers to support aligning new state science standards to IB curriculum units.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- As shown in the NC School Report Card, over the past eight years Lansdowne ES has significantly improved from a school not meeting academic growth performance to a school exceeding academic growth performance.
- Review of the NC School Report Card confirms for the past two years Lansdowne ES has exceeded overall school academic growth, exceeded growth in math and meeting growth in reading.
- Review of the NC School Report Card confirms English Learners at Lansdowne ES met progress goals towards English language attainment at 47.4%, well above the district percentage at 28.8%.

Challenges:

Review of the School Report Card reveals while academic achievement has increased for each student demographic group, achievement gaps between student demographics continue to exist.

Recommendations:

Continue multi-tiered interventions to address individual student achievement and decrease achievement gaps between student demographic groups.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Observed in classroom walkthroughs, the theme is implemented with fidelity in classrooms with IB certified trained teachers.
- Discussion with leadership and teachers confirms there is consistent collaborative decision-making between teachers and between teachers and leadership.

Challenges:

- Discussion with leadership and teachers confirms the school relies on a teacher coaching model for IB thematic coaching which limits higher levels of IB professional development within the school.

Recommendations:

- Increase district IB thematic coaching at each individual IB elementary school campus and provide district IB staff coaching inside of IB elementary school classrooms.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Discussions with leadership and teachers reveal the district IB staff facilitates discussions among IB magnet elementary schools.

Challenges:

- Review of artifacts and the district website show the district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district strategic plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.
- Lansdowne ES does not have a sufficiently funded IB coordinator position.

Recommendations:

- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.
- Provide resources for an IB elementary school IB coordinator position to meet IB requirements.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Conversations with community partnerships and teachers reveal the Arts and Sciences Council regularly works with teachers and students to use music for test taking strategies and the development of curriculum.
- Conversation with community partners shows faith based partnerships provide weekly in classroom tutoring to students.

Challenges:

- District supported partnerships aligned to the IB theme are minimal at the school.

Recommendations:

- Develop district IB theme community partnerships across all IB schools to create a network across IB elementary schools.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Chronic Absenteeism (often an indicator of student engagement) is shown in Lansdowne ES Report Card at 14.9%, which is significantly below the district 25.6% and state 26.7%.
- Discussions with students and families confirm the school fosters a culture of inclusiveness and caring.
- Discussion with families confirms the parent group has a role in school decision making specific to school improvement.
- Discussion with students and families reveal families regularly participate in IB Learner Profile celebrations hosted by the school.

Challenges:

- Discussion with students, families and community partnerships reveal that while the school hosts many school events, the IB magnet theme is not regularly highlighted as the main focus of the event.

Recommendations:

- Increase school events to specifically define and celebrate the IB magnet theme.

Overall Recommendations for Lansdowne Elementary School:

- Research with district leadership the continuation guarantee requirement which requires neighborhood students to apply as magnet students to their neighborhood school.
- Expand the school level targeted recruitment plan to attract diverse student demographics to ensure recent neighborhood changes (removal of a socioeconomically disadvantaged apartment complex in the neighborhood and a partial merge with a nearby school with high enrollment of Caucasian and socioeconomically advantaged students) create school demographics which mirror the district demographics.
- Research school mergers and removal/addition of new zones impact on schools' demographics and ensure that those changes are helping the district meet diversity goals.

- Develop district IB theme community partnerships across all IB schools to create a support network across IB elementary schools.
- Increase district IB thematic coaching at each individual IB elementary school campus to provide district IB staff coaching inside of IB elementary school classrooms.
- Provide district financial resources for an IB/magnet coordinator position and financial support to ensure all new teachers receive IB certified training and experienced teachers receive higher-level IB certification training to support the cycle of improvement cycle.
- Increase school events to specifically define and celebrate the IB magnet theme.

Lincoln Heights Montessori School

Lincoln Heights Montessori School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school's demographics aren't an exact match of the CMS demographics but do show a diverse student population. The school's racial make-up is around 46% Black, 24% Caucasian, 13% Hispanic.
- The school's faculty is diverse.

Challenges:

- The school has recently relocated to a new area of town and is still a relative unknown to the new community. This has extra implications considering the school's lottery geographic preference zone.
- The area of town where the school is located is in the same vicinity of several private Montessori Schools

Recommendations:

- Consider emphasizing Lincoln Heights as a free public Montessori school in future community direct mail communications.
- Consider hosting "pop-up" Montessori fairs over the summer. Target areas within the school's transportation zone with higher minority populations to recruit potential new diverse families prior to the beginning of the lottery season in the fall as a way to help potential families see the benefits and opportunities for their children through Montessori.

- Consider a strategic direct mailer in English and Spanish in zip codes within the transportation zone with high minority populations to promote Lincoln Heights and the Montessori approach to education. Include any school social media accounts and have a planned posting schedule to follow the mailer to engage with potential families.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Faculty report a practice of holding “Child Studies” meetings with teachers to discuss the needs and opportunities with a particular emphasis on positive discipline for individual students.
- School leadership report working with faculty to shift from a fixed mindset for student development towards a growth mindset for student development.

Challenges:

- While CMS provides many annual diversity and equity trainings, there is still a perceived need for trainings that take Montessori implementation into account.
- School leadership report a need for positive discipline supports with appropriate cultural competency and Montessori adjustments.

Recommendations:

- Continue the practice of student-centered “Child Studies” meetings with positive discipline as a way to build capacity for staff and potentially develop additional possibilities for school-wide supports.
- Consider inviting CMS Behavior Supports to visit and tour the school and meet with teachers as a way to build rapport with and share the Montessori context with the aim of potential future CMS trainings with Montessori consideration.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Faculty report piloting new Montessori initiatives and projects from their PLCs and sharing them with other schools in the CMS Montessori cohort.
- Lincoln Heights’ counselor reports regular meetings and collaborations with other Montessori counselors.
- Faculty report an interest on the part of Lincoln Heights related arts staff to incorporate more thematic content in their classes.

Challenges:

- 60% of the current Lincoln Heights Staff are not yet fully certified as Montessori instructors.
- The school reports that sometimes faculty feel that due to multiple CMS mandates and other responsibilities that they are more implementing “Montesometimes” instead of Montessori.

Recommendations:

- Continue celebrating, supporting and championing current staff while undergoing Montessori Certification. Consider asking the PTA to provide an award and/or incentive when teachers complete the training.
- Consider inviting CMS Magnets and Montessori support personnel to use one of the available offices in the Lincoln Heights building to use as a satellite office in the West CMS region. Potentially with

more time in the building, additional supports and collaboration will be possible to begin to diminish Lincoln Heights “Montesometimes.”

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Veteran Lincoln Heights Teachers present at the CMS Montessori Symposium.
- 60% of Lincoln Heights Teachers are currently in Montessori Certification Training.

Challenges:

- Internal school capacity to deliver additional professional development supports in Montessori is limited.
- Parents report concern that the pace and scope of teacher responsibility is unsustainable and will lead to burnout.
- Faculty report a strong need for professional development for teacher assistants.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with Magnet Schools of America to identify four to five other districts in the country with Montessori Magnets to develop a Montessori Collaborative to share additional thematic professional development supports and resources.
- Consider partnering with CMS Magnets to approach the American Montessori Society and its partner institutions of Higher Education to see if any grant funding is available at the University level for their staff to visit and provide professional development for Lincoln Heights and other CMS Montessori schools.
- Consider utilizing available American Montessori Society on-demand professional development options.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Lincoln Heights’ leadership regularly consult data from assessments to inform practice and student differentiated work plans.
- Faculty report being intentional about incorporating CMS standards for mastery into planning and in developing student work plans.

Challenges:

- Faculty report frustration with CMS assessments that don’t align with Montessori implementation.
- The CMS scope and sequence for instruction does not align with the school’s Montessori framework and timeline.

Recommendations:

- Consider advocating for a dedicated school-based or cohort-based Montessori facilitator/coordinator to provide additional on-site supports for Montessori implementation in the CMS context.
- Consider partnering with CMS Language Immersion and IB school leaders to advocate for additional flexibility and/or autonomy for magnet programs that demonstrate consistent academic strength and achievement.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Lincoln Heights grade level proficient in science grades 3-5 is 75% compared to the district at 64.3% and the state at 67.7%.
- Three out of four tested grades saw growth in math while two out of four tested grades saw growth in ELA (one grade remained unchanged).
- The school met growth every year since 2016 and has been a B school every year since 2017.
- Parents report high levels of satisfaction with their child's learning and growth at Lincoln Heights

Challenges:

- Chronic Absenteeism is an issue.

Recommendations:

- Consider tracking student attendance against which days students have Science and/or other special electives. If there is a correlation between better attendance on days when students have science or other special classes there may be an opportunity to leverage that towards incentivizing better attendance.
- Consider advocating for a dedicated school-based or cohort-based Montessori facilitator/coordinator to provide additional on-site supports for Montessori implementation in the CMS context.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The Lincoln Heights (formerly Trillium Springs) staff has been a thematic leadership pipeline as teachers and assistant principals from the school have gone onto leadership roles in other CMS Montessori Schools.
- There is a strong sense of shared ownership at the school of the program and its future success.
- One faculty member reported "This principal kept me from quitting."

Challenges:

- The former Trillium Springs campus was a much beloved and well-remembered school. All stakeholders reported having mixed emotions about leaving for a new facility in a new location. School leadership report losing some families and staff due to logistical complications with the new location.
- Identifying, hiring and retaining licensed NC teachers with Montessori certification is a major issue for the school. Currently 60% of the faculty are working towards their certification while teaching.
- The capacity of the current school leadership is limited in their ability to provide additional thematic supports, coaching and program development.

Recommendations:

- Continue to point staff and families to the new possibilities and new opportunities at Lincoln Heights to reach new families and grow the school in a new community with a new and spacious facility.
- Consider collaborating with the school's PTA to contact other CMS Montessori school PTA groups to advocate together at the state and local level for greater supports for and recognition of Montessori as an accepted teacher licensure program at the state level.
- Consider inviting members from the NC State Senate and House, along with representatives from the NC Department of Education to visit and tour the school, meet students and see for themselves first-hand what Montessori education in a public school setting is like.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The new campus and facility at Lincoln Heights is a long overdue investment in the school and program.
- The available space at the facility creates multiple opportunities for trainings, satellite CMS offices and supports for the West region.
- The CMS magnet office covers the cost for faculty to receive Montessori Certification.

Challenges:

- Parents report significant concern for faculty burnout and program sustainability.
- The relatively new Lincoln Heights program is unknown in the community and the small enrollment creates funding and budgeting concerns.

Recommendations:

- Consider inviting CMS Magnets and Montessori support personnel to use one of the available offices in the Lincoln Heights building to use as a satellite office in the West CMS region. It's likely that additional facetime between staff and CMS Leaders will create more familiarity with the opportunities at the school.
- Consider placing all Montessori magnets under the same community superintendent in order to streamline communication and accountability between CMS and school leaders at all Montessori schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- The plans for the Lincoln Heights' outdoor green-spaces and gardens are a phenomenal example of school-district-community-family collaboration.
- The principal has walked the neighborhood with the pastor at the church across the street.
- Plans for upcoming meetings and collaboration between the school and the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association are being made.

Challenges:

- The school is still a relatively new and unknown presence in the community
- The concept of Montessori education is also an unknown for the community

Recommendations:

- Consider hosting one to two Lincoln Heights Community Open Houses to invite local businesses, neighbors and community stakeholders to tour the building and see the school in action.
- Consider inviting the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association to hold a meeting at the school where student performances and brief research presentations can be made in order to more familiarize the community with Montessori education.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- The school has attracted families who previously homeschooled or had their children enrolled in private Montessori programs.
- Parents reported a genuine friendly atmosphere and during my visit I met multiple parents volunteering in classes, the office and in overall school operations.

- A Lincoln Heights Parent is initiating a “Montessori Men” parent engagement program to help Dads find ways to get involved in the school.

Challenges:

- The new location has created a geographic barrier and additional distance for families who were previously involved at Trillium Springs.
- Many school initiatives are funded by the PTA and while families have a strong desire to support the school, they are concerned about the long term sustainability.

Recommendations:

- Continue to point staff and families to the new possibilities and new opportunities at Lincoln Heights to reach new families and grow the school in a new community with a new and spacious facility.
- Consider partnering with CMS, Charlotte Parks and Recreation and local businesses for a major celebration/ribbon-cutting when the new school greenspace and gardens are completed.
- Consider proposing the addition of a “grants” position to the school’s PTA leadership with the purpose of year-long applications for small and medium sized grants to generate a discretionary fund for the principal to support internal school initiatives on an as-needed basis.

Overall Recommendations for Lincoln Heights Montessori School:

- Advocate for a dedicated school-based or cohort-based Montessori facilitator/coordinator to provide additional on-site supports for Montessori implementation in the CMS context.
- Consider collaborating with the school’s PTA to contact other CMS Montessori school PTA groups to advocate together at the state and local level for greater supports for and recognition of Montessori as an accepted teacher licensure program at the state level.
- Consider inviting members from the NC State Senate and House, along with representatives from the NC Department of Education to visit and tour the school, meet students and see for themselves first-hand what Montessori education in a public school setting is like.
- Consider emphasizing Lincoln Heights as a free public Montessori school in future community direct mail communications.
- Consider hosting one to two Lincoln Heights Community Open Houses to invite local businesses, neighbors and community stakeholders to tour the building and see the school in action.

Long Creek Elementary School - Visual and Performing Arts

Long Creek Elementary School - Visual and Performing Arts				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement		X	

7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school is 100 years old and takes pride in that. There is a family legacy that brings a number of students back to the school generation after generation.
- The third, fourth and fifth grades have more magnet applications than there are available magnet seats, thereby creating a waitlist of applicants.
- There is a page dedicated to magnet programs on the school website, the creative arts are on display on social media.
- There is an informal plan to recruit students from the home zone whose parents have opted for charter schools.

Challenges:

- The school's diversity includes 64% Black, 19% Hispanic, 9% Caucasian, 5% two or more races, 2% Asian and 67.6% economically disadvantaged. This does not reflect the diversity of the district or the community of Huntersville where the school is located.
- The district or school does not have a written district recruitment plan.
- The school does not have a dedicated magnet coordinator to support recruitment and marketing for the school. They have an academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) lead who has the added responsibility of organizing all things magnet.
- Some parents report that the application process was hard or that the process took too long to get a response regarding magnet acceptance.

Recommendations:

- Develop a district and/or school-wide formal written recruitment plan that includes processes for expanding diversity within the school.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to work exclusively with the school staff, students and families - providing outreach and support for families needing help navigating the application process.
- Develop a recruitment plan to address the pockets of areas within the home zone where those students do not attend the school. Based on the information provided, if more community students chose to attend, the school population might be closer to mirroring the district.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school's mission and vision statements align with a diverse population. According to the leadership team, they are also a Cambridge School where students are encouraged to develop an understanding of global issues and perspectives as well as cultural awareness.
- Student work around the campus and the thematic decor highlight the diversity that exists in teaching practices.

Challenges:

- There is limited district support in supporting teaching the magnet theme in a diverse setting.
- There is a disconnect regarding the purpose of magnet education.
- The leadership team is unaware of MSA, certification, merit awards and the true meaning of thematic integration.

Recommendations:

- Develop an observation tool for teachers to self-assess or peer-review lessons on thematic integration in diverse settings.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Long Creek is part of the A+ network of schools that support schools with arts integration.
- There is a planning document shared between Encore (arts electives teachers) and core teachers for the theme to be integrated into all subjects and courses.
- The theme is articulated throughout the school.
- The annual arts showcase is highlighted online.
- Every arts class has a part in the annual production. For example, the dance students are working on the choreography, music students are working on the songs, theater students are either in the play or designing costumes or working backstage and the art students are making the set backdrops. Even reading levels have improved for students who are reading the scripts for the play.
- Every student receives arts.

Challenges:

- The mandated core curriculum courses are not taught through collaboration with the arts, but the teachers try to work together as much as possible for theme integration.

Recommendations:

- Make the annual show a cross-curricular event. In addition to what is already being done in the arts classes, allow the core curriculum classes to use the annual show as a teaching tool. For example, this year's annual show is Moana Jr. In social studies, depending on the unit, tie something from Moana into the lesson to gain the students attention and allow them to connect what is being taught in social studies to the show they are preparing for. This can be done with each core curriculum class.
- Develop an alignment professional development opportunity at the beginning of the year - a planning day to align arts themes with various standards of the core curriculum.
- Provide training for school personnel on how thematic integration is a two-way street and not just for the arts teachers to “figure out” how to integrate with core teachers.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- According to leadership and teachers, there is a theme-based professional development plan and it is revised based on feedback from teachers.
- The teachers were trained in thematic instruction this year.
- According to the teachers, this year has been much better than previous years in terms of scheduled collaboration between arts and core teachers.
- There are shared lesson plans for Encore teachers to support core classroom teachers.

Challenges:

- The arts teachers are unable to attend PLC's with core curriculum teachers due to scheduling.
- Teachers say there is not enough time to meet consistently to collaborate on thematic instruction.

Recommendations:

- Develop a schedule that will allow for a different Encore teacher to sit in on the weekly PLC of a grade level (or subject area) to discuss how they can support thematic integration.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence**Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity****Successes:**

- The faculty recently experienced a cross-curricular professional development opportunity where Encore teachers were immersed in thematic design for their respective disciplines. The teachers were very appreciative of the opportunity.
- The schoolwide philosophy to teaching and learning is Every Student, Every Day, Whatever it Takes, Doing What's Best for Kids.
- To inform their own instructional practices, the faculty and staff participate in book studies. Last year the book was Culturize.
- All interventions are instructionally based. Students get WIN time with teachers. WIN is What I Need. It is a built-in intervention where students can get support from a teacher with a specific strength. This might not be the student's classroom teacher.
- The school uses a variety of formative assessments as prescribed by the district. They utilize small group, flex grouping.

Challenges:

- The school has a highly transient population. Sometimes when zone parents move and they don't want to leave the school, they begin bringing children to school and many times they are late or don't come at all which impacts student attendance and therefore learning.

Recommendations:

- Continue to support the Encore teachers. They have a strong desire for theme based professional development and they are doing a great job.

Standard 6: Student Achievement**Successes:**

- The school's letter grade has increased from a D to a C. This is mainly because of the progress index.
- After COVID, 60% of the students remained virtual. The school was vigilant in getting them back in the building and back to engaging with teachers mentally and physically.
- Academic achievement is measured in a variety of ways: informal assessments, Benchmark Assessments (NVPA), data analysis sessions, exit tickets and common assessments. These are specifically listed in the school improvement plan with target dates.
- SEL is an important part of teaching the whole child.
- Restorative practices are used as alternatives to out of school time for discipline. The school firmly believes that students must be in school to learn.

Challenges:

- The Exceptional Children (EC) population has not made growth for a number of years.

- The actual assessment index is still low for many subgroups.
- According to students, behavior problems of some students are a barrier to teaching and learning.

Recommendations:

- Use the MTSS facilitator to train teachers on tiered interventions for behavior.
- Use High Dosage Tutoring to provide support for those subgroups with larger achievement gaps.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Walkthroughs indicate the theme is implemented with fidelity in the Encore classes.
- Students indicate that they are “happy” that the school asks their opinion and they are allowed to be a part of the decisions regarding the arts programming.
- Parents and students feel supported and valued during collaborative decision making processes.
- According to the leadership team, the current Encore staff has a very high retention rate.

Challenges:

- According to core teachers, they do not get to collaborate with arts teachers as much as they would like.
- There is no thematic instructional coaching occurring.

Recommendations:

- Pair an Encore teacher with a grade level teacher and allow them to develop a plan for thematic integration with fidelity.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a K-12 Pathway for the arts that Long Creek is part of but it is unclear how many students actually get to follow that pathway.
- The principal states that the district supports the magnet program with finances as needed.
- According to the principal, the district supports their magnet theme and is supporting them with the CMS Innovation Grant.

Challenges:

- The district’s strategic plan does not include magnets.
- The school does not have a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all subject areas.
- Students want the school to expand to middle school so they do not have to leave after 5th grade.

Recommendations:

- Include magnet programs specifically in the district strategic plan with specific goals and objectives for magnet elementary, middle and high schools.
- Develop a system by which elementary schools can have a magnet coordinator (even if they share one with another magnet school) to help integrate the magnet theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Long Creek has numerous theme based partnerships. Feeder home and magnet schools, Charlotte Ballet, Arts and Science Council, Children's Theater, CMS Foundation, Broadway Junior, Second Harvest Food Bank, the Huntersville police department and more.
- Partnership protocol includes what the school will do for the partner as well as what the partner does for the school. For example, with Assurance United Methodist Church, the school did a toiletries drive for those in need.

Challenges:

- There is no knowledge or partnership with partners that support magnet schools such as Magnet Schools of America.

Recommendations:

- Utilize community partners to help recruit students to diversify the school.
- Continue to recruit community partners that support the arts theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents and students both agree that the climate and culture of the school is what brought them to the school and it is the reason they stay.
- Long Creek has an active PTA that is “small but mighty.”
- Parents feel actively involved regarding communication through the use of ParentSquare, email and Mustang Message.
- Parents feel the faculty is amazing and truly care for the students.
- Parents were a part of the principal selection process, the school improvement plan and operational decisions.
- Students feel as though the school includes them in decisions. They feel valued even as children.

Challenges:

- Some parents report that due to their afternoon work schedules they cannot volunteer or participate in activities as much as they would like to.

Recommendations:

- Give parents a monthly list of dates, times and activities at different times of the day to allow them to be involved.
- Document the number of hours parents volunteer and at the end of the year give a parent volunteer award.

Overall Recommendations for Long Creek Elementary School:

- Develop a recruitment plan to address the pockets of areas within the home zone where those students do not attend the school. Based on the information provided, if more community students choose to attend, the school population might be closer to mirroring the district.
- Utilize community partners to help recruit students to diversify the school.
- Include magnet programs specifically in the district strategic plan with specific goals and objectives for magnet elementary, middle and high schools.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to work exclusively with the magnet school.

- After training on thematic integration, develop a schedule that will allow for a different Encore teacher to sit in on the weekly PLC of a grade level (or subject area) to discuss how they can support thematic integration.

Mallard Creek Elementary School - Learning Immersion/Talented Development

Mallard Creek Elementary School - Learning Immersion/Talent Development				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The Concord Mills area is booming giving the school an opportunity to recruit students in their zone to increase their diversity.
- The district provides transportation for magnet students in the zone that Mallard Creek is located. Students from other zones can apply but have to provide their own transportation.

Challenges:

- The school is 69.8% Black and 5.7% Caucasian and the district is 34.7% Black and 23.8% Caucasian.
- According to the 2022-23 NC School Report Card, the school is 73.2% Economically Disadvantaged compared to the state at 51.6%.
- The school being identified as Title 1 this year has created a negative stigma for recruiting.
- The student population has become more transient in the last several years creating problems in reaching diversity and academic goals. 45 new students have enrolled since January.
- According to the principal, the neighborhood population has changed rapidly over the past 8 years since she has been there due to children aging out of school and charter schools being more prominent in North Charlotte.
- Parents in the parent/community focus group said when asked “What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?” that they should focus on the curriculum and what separates the school from a traditional school and the school’s diversity.

- Parents shared that they were able to get more information from other parents than the magnet application process from CMS.

Recommendations:

- Target recruiting and marketing efforts in middle to high socioeconomic areas prioritizing the magnet zone but also other areas of the district where parents can provide transportation.
- Provide support from the district to help the school know where to target the middle to high socioeconomic areas of their magnet zone and the district.
- Provide the school with training on how to get the word out to students who will help the school reach their diversity goals and to fine tune their “elevator speech” capturing what is unique about their magnet theme.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- There is a very diverse and inclusive teaching staff at the school.
- Staff has access to a full-time Talent Development Coordinator and a full-time Magnet Coordinator to see them model rigorous lessons, get ideas and learn new teaching strategies to challenge students.
- Staff meets quarterly for a full day and a half day where they are provided substitutes.

Challenges:

- The classes reflect the diversity of the school but not of the diversity of the district.
- Teachers suggested more training and support for students around social emotional learning.

Recommendations:

- Continue to work on having a more diverse student body socioeconomically and racially so that classes will be more diverse.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- All students in K-2 are in Learning Immersion where they are provided a rigorous core curriculum. Grade 3-5 students who test or portfolio into Talent Development (AIG) have core classes with other Talent Development students and Non-Talent Development students are in Learning Immersion.
- The school has a National Honor Society in elementary school that not all elementary schools in the district have.
- Students in grades 3-5 have a variety of 2-6 week long multi-grade electives each year that they get to choose what to take (ex. Fashion design, friends of photography, comic books, etc.). The electives were one of the top reasons students liked the school according to the student focus group.
- Unit and lesson plans show preparation for beyond K-12.

Challenges:

- The theme is not prominently displayed on the website or the front of the school. The school does not “scream the theme.”
- It is not clear what students are getting different in the Learning Immersion/Talent Development schools than in all elementary schools with Talent Development support for gifted students other than being in a class with all other gifted students in grades 3-5.

- Students in the student focus group expressed interest in having more extracurricular activities from competitions to sports to Robotics.

Recommendations:

- Work to get signage at the front of the school, on the building and on the school website that identifies the magnet theme.
- Continue to refine and articulate what is different about LI/TD compared to what students would get at a traditional school with a lot of gifted students.
- Ensure that non-magnet staff at the district know that Learning Immersion/Talent Development is part of the theme and that is why the school is not following the district math and ELA pacing and curriculum guides sometimes.
- Provide funding to pay teachers to offer extracurricular activities for students after school.
- Find a program or components of a program for gifted students that only the LI/TD magnet schools will implement versus all schools in the district to make them unique.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Thinking Maps training occurs across all subject areas once a month during grade level planning
- The school aims to get as many teachers as possible AIG certified.
- All third grade teachers receive Junior Greatbooks training.
- The school is piloting YET University where all first graders at pilot schools are provided with consistent access and exposure to critical and creative thinking skills through the use of Primary Education Thinking Skills (P.E.T.S.) and lessons to help instill a growth mindset.

Challenges:

- The school can only send one Talent Development teacher to the NC AIG conference when before COVID several Talent Development teachers from the LI/TD schools could attend the conference.
- Mandatory professional development for low performing students takes away professional development time devoted to the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Build in time for professional development focused around the magnet theme during the school day rather than just the training for low performing students.
- Allow multiple LI/TD school teachers to attend NC AIG conferences to network and grow professionally.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Grade level collaboration occurs quarterly for one and a half days where substitutes are provided for teachers to talk about scholars' needs and twice a month during grade level planning and during PLC's weekly.
- Advanced studies math is used by Learning Immersion students as well as the Talent Development students.
- The Magnet Coordinator and Talent Development Coordinator support Math and ELA alignment.

- MTSS Facilitator leads the tiered levels of support with interventions.
- The master schedule reflects time for tiered instruction.
- The school analyzes MVPA formative district assessments to group scholars by what they need.

Challenges:

- While many exceptionally powerful instructional examples were observed on the school tour, a clearly defined schoolwide philosophy for teaching/learning related to the theme is not formalized.

Recommendations:

- Formalize a schoolwide instructional approach/philosophy for teaching and learning.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- According to the NC Report Card, the school has shown growth in both 2022 (78.9%) and 2023 (70.5%).
- Grade-level proficient scores in reading proficiency have improved for Black students.
 - Black students: 36.3% (2023), 31.6% (2022)

Challenges:

- The school grade remains a D and grade level proficient scores in math indicate a lack of reducing the achievement gap for all subgroups:
 - Asian students: 83.3% (2023), 73.9% (2022)
 - Black students: 34.2% (2023), 40.4% (2022)
 - Hispanic students: 15.4% (2023), 27.3% (2022)
 - Caucasian students: 77.8% (2023), 61.5% (2022)
 - Economically disadvantaged students: 29.9% (2023), 32.1% (2022)
 - Not Economically disadvantaged students: 56.8% (2023), 51.5 (2022)
- Grade-level proficient scores in reading proficiency have not improved for Hispanic students:
 - Hispanic students: 20.5% (2023), 41.3% (2022)

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement Multi-tiered Systems of Support to improve individual achievement and school performance.
- Display further examples of student success with the magnet theme throughout the building and in all classrooms.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Teachers spoke about collaborative leadership. They used an example of a teacher going on leave and the school leadership presenting an idea of what to do asking teachers for their feedback and then they all came up with a new plan.
- There is a feeling of camaraderie, community and support at the school.
- The hiring process includes teachers.
- The Magnet Coordinator is part of the interview process for new teachers to ensure that the teacher is open to adding rigor to their curriculum.

Challenges:

- Theme branding of the IL/TD theme is limited. In the student and parent focus groups, the IL/TD theme was rarely mentioned.

Recommendations:

- Enhance the theme branding and marketing protocols.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- There is a K-12 pathway with the LI/TD elementary school feeding to an IB middle and high school but it is not a direct common theme.
- A Magnet Coordinator full-time position and a Talent Development Coordinator half-time position are provided by the district. The principal spent COVID funds to make the Talent Development Coordinator full-time.
- LI/TD schools meet consistently with the Advanced Studies office. The morning is focused on all TD coordinators in the district and then in the afternoon all six LI/TD magnet schools meet.

Challenges:

- The absence of the Learning Immersion and Talent Development magnet theme at the middle school level leads students interested in this track to transition to an IB Magnet program for middle school.
- The district financial plan does not appear to allow for the school to meet all teacher training requirements for Talent Development.
- The district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however, the district strategic plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.

Recommendations:

- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in Learning Immersion and Talent Development, ensuring continuity from middle to high school.
 - Provide funding for teachers to receive adequate training in Talent Development to support their magnet theme.
 - Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's Strategic Plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.
 - Clarify why magnet programs are placed at various schools and the underlying purpose for magnet programs.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Stonebridge Church partners with the school to provide meeting space for teachers, a place for 5th grade graduation and to support the Fall Festival.
- Mallard Creek High School students come to the elementary school to work with the students.
- The school receives student teachers from UNC Charlotte.
- A partnership with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority provides The Childhood Hunger Initiative Power Pack which supplies students with food over the weekend and for extended breaks.

Challenges:

- None of the community partnerships are directly tied to the magnet theme.
- There are no district supported partnerships.
- There is not an established partnership protocol at the school.

Recommendations:

- Secure more theme specific community partnerships through the school and the district to help support the magnet theme.
- Establish a partnership protocol to attract and onboard new partners.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents in the parent/community focus group said parent/teacher engagement was what they liked best about the school.
- The school hosts Literacy Nights, Social Emotional Nights, Curriculum Nights and has a Fall Festival in conjunction with Stonebridge for parents to celebrate their students' success.
- The parent/community focus group said that there was good communication and transparency at the school and that parents could speak to multiple people about their child.
- Teachers use emails, phone calls and texts to communicate with parents usually faster than within 24 hours.
- There are weekly emails from the principal and a monthly principal chat with parents.
- The school utilizes Parent Square to collaborate with parents.

Challenges:

- Teacher retention has been an issue at the school like many schools across the country which impacts parent engagement.

Recommendations:

- Continue to build a strong school culture to minimize teacher attrition.

Overall Recommendations for Mallard Creek Elementary School:

- Target recruiting and marketing efforts in middle to high socioeconomic areas prioritizing the magnet zone but also other areas of the district where parents can provide transportation.
- Find a program or components of a program for gifted students that only the LI/TD magnet schools will implement versus all schools in the district to make them unique.
- Work to get signage at the front of the school, on the building and on the school website that identifies the magnet theme.
- Develop a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps and proficiency.

McClintock Middle School - STEAM

McClintock Middle School - STEAM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	

4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school has several Open House marketing events, held by the principal and magnet lead, to showcase their magnet school to potential students. These are held throughout the school year prior to lottery selection. They are held at two various times to accommodate families, one at 9am for parents and the other at 5pm so students have the opportunity to attend.
- The school sends out flyers and communication to schools in the green zones to market to elementary schools.
- Through a partnership with a local church, the school and church send out correspondence via social media and flyers to invite rising 6th graders to look at the school's elective options.
- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process.
- The school boasts this unique opportunity to attract new students: They are the only middle school in the district to offer the Nascar Ten80 as an elective class. Students have traveled to Miami and Houston to compete on a national level. They were able to take home first place in the national competition.

Challenges:

- The school has 44.3% Hispanic students, 35.2% Black students and 11.8% Caucasian students compared to the district at 30.6% Hispanic, 34.7% Black and 23.8% Caucasian.
- The school does not have any marketing/recruitment efforts to target demographic groups that will help the school match the diversity of the district for the whole school magnet.
- The principal stated the school competes with Charter Schools and other affluent schools in surrounding areas

Recommendations:

- Develop a clear targeted marketing and recruitment plan to target demographic groups that will help the school match the diversity of the district for the whole school magnet.
- Develop a marketing plan to go into communities and seek out families that are zoned for the school but opt to attend Charter schools and/or other schools in the surrounding areas.
- Leverage the unique Nascar Ten80 program as a way to attract more interest in the school.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Teacher retention is consistently about 80%.

- The program is a partial school magnet program. Approximately 22% are magnet students and approximately 78% are neighborhood “zoned” students. However, all students have access to the entire magnet program once enrolled in the school.
- The school has 300 magnet seats this year and are projected to have 350 seats next school year.
- McClintock’s mission statement mentions “challenging and supporting all students in grade level, engaging, affirming and meaningful instruction.”
- PTA parents acknowledge an area of focus this year is to include different cultures.
- The school provides MTSS and WIN Time to meet the diverse needs of students. Three to four staff members support intensive tiered interventions, along with classroom teachers supporting tier 1 and 2 interventions. WIN Time is an enrichment time for students to explore STEAM related activities. 40-45 minutes of remediation time for ELA or Math is provided for students.

Challenges:

- There is no clear policy that emphasizes student diversity to attract and/or retain students.

Recommendations:

- Leverage the PTA’s stated willingness to highlight other cultures as a way to involve families in the marketing and recruiting.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The magnet theme is integrated into a variety of subjects and elective classes through various projects throughout the school year. The magnet lead team-teaches with teachers and supports them through curriculum planning to implement their theme into state standards.
- McClintock offers Nascar Ten80, band, chorus, guitar, dance, visual art, computer science discovery, Project Lead the Way and orchestra.
- The school has an innovation lab called MILL (McClintock Innovation Lab and Library) that includes a variety of resources available for students such as: 3D printers, die cut machines, sewing machines, CO2 laser cutters, CNC routers and VR headsets.
- Innovative experiences are provided for students related to the magnet theme such as virtual reality headsets, circuit boards, career exploration, robotics, and coding.
- Thematic after-school clubs are offered to students once a week through McPIE (McClintock Partners in Education) which is a local church partnership. These after-school family event nights are called McPIE Nights and are held every Tuesday evening.
- WIN (What I Need) Time is scheduled for all grade levels and provides students with STEAM related activities.

Challenges:

- The magnet theme is not consistently monitored for success.
- The theme is not consistently visible throughout the school.

Recommendations:

- Create a plan to monitor the success of the school’s thematic implementation in all subjects and course areas, including electives.
- “Scream the theme” more consistently around the school, inside and outside of the building.

- Provide additional curriculum support and professional learning opportunities for teachers to integrate the magnet theme into their curriculum to build capacity. Possibly partner with local STEM-type businesses such as the CMS STEM department to help provide training.

Standard 4 - Professional Development

Successes:

- The magnet lead and media center specialist team-teach and develop much of the magnet curriculum for teachers.
- Tech-Tool is embedded in the professional development cycle.
- Training within the curriculum is embedded in PLC's which are held every Tuesday and designated by grade level.

Challenges:

- The principal shares an ongoing yearly leadership agenda with the school improvement team (SIT), however, there is no clear evidence of a professional development plan aligned to the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Embed the magnet professional development plan on the agenda linking professional development to the curriculum.
- Include and align the magnet theme in the school professional development plan.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- There is a schoolwide goal to infuse vocabulary in the curriculum to help support students' mastery of standards. Teachers support second language learners (Multi-Language Learners) with the vocabulary goal by providing pictures with each vocabulary word and differentiating their writing if necessary.
- There is a "Novice Learners" 8th grade classroom with a Spanish speaking teacher, dedicated to teaching math concepts to students who recently moved to the United States. The teacher is able to teach the math standards in English and Spanish to support students' transition to the English language and the content.
- To assess students' mastery of concepts in testing subject areas, there are Thursday checkpoints and on Fridays, teachers respond to data from checkpoints by reteaching concepts or working with a small group of students that need further assistance. There is evidence that the school uses the data from a variety of formative assessments.
- They have decreased office referrals, fights, and suspensions. This is attributed to a schoolwide mission to teach students PRIDE (Purpose, Responsibility, Integrity, Determination, and Excellence), along with their school mascot, SCOT, which teaches students how to govern themselves. SCOT stands for (Sitting up straight, Controlling your own impulses, (materials) Out of the way, and Tracking your speaker. These are explicitly taught along with teaching students how to self-regulate themselves accordingly.

Challenges:

- Although there is a common school philosophy with PRIDE and SCOT, there does not appear to be a schoolwide magnet theme philosophy/vision.

Recommendations:

- Articulate and share a schoolwide common philosophy that supports the wide range of the school's magnet theme to help create cohesion and a stronger sense of community. To help facilitate this process, consider sending a team to a magnet demonstration school with multiple magnet themes to learn about strategies for common philosophy creation and implementation.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school collects and analyzes formative assessment data and tracks data trends per student.
- Weekly PLC meetings are held by grade level to analyze and discuss data trends.
- The school has behavior and attendance goals to encourage a decrease in unwanted behaviors displayed by students and an increase in student daily attendance rate.
- In 2021-22 and 2022-23, all students, Black students, Hispanic students, Caucasian students and students with disabilities met growth and increased proficiency.

Challenges:

- According to the NC School Report Card the school's overall performance scores for the past 5 years are: 22-23 D/50; 21-22 D/49; 18-19 C/58; 17-18 C/55. Scores were on a steady increase Pre-Covid. Post-Covid, scores decreased drastically but are slowly increasing again.
- Chronic Absenteeism is higher than the district and state's average.
- In 2021-22 and 2022-23, Asian students, economically disadvantaged students and English Learners decreased in proficiency but all still met growth except for Asian students.

Recommendations:

- Consider implementing perfect attendance celebrations or acknowledgments to encourage students to come to school every day. Look at data for attendance when students have special areas such Ten80 to see if it shows an increase then the school can identify ways for thematic experiences as a way to incentivize attendance.
- Continue to develop a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps.
- Leverage the magnet theme as a way to build buy-in for unity and to address attendance.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The magnet lead is available to co-teach with teachers to ensure thematic integration is implemented. After the lesson, they reconvene and discuss pros and cons of the lessons.
- The magnet lead records "how-to" videos for WIN Time for teachers to use to assist with the introduction of STEAM lessons.
- To combat the teacher shortage, the school recruits using Indeed.com.

Challenges:

- The principal stated that "beggars cannot be choosy" with the state of education today and teacher shortages. In lieu of recruiting teachers that can support theme integration, the principal ensures candidates are going to treat students well, build relationships and hold them to high expectations. The principal stated that training them on theme integration will come later after the hire.
- Thematic instructional coaching cycles do not occur.

- There was no evidence of a measure of fidelity specifically for theme implementation other than learning walkthroughs by the administrative team.

Recommendations:

- Develop systems and structures for onboarding new hires with relation to the theme. Give the opportunity for new teachers to observe veteran teachers model thematic implementation to see the process in action in the first few months of their employment.
- Create a thematic instructional coaching cycle and develop an action plan to implement and assess.
- Develop and implement a walkthrough tool that relates to theme implementation to measure fidelity of theme implementation.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear pathway for magnet themes from K-12. McClintock continues the STEAM/STEM pathway for students who come from its three feeder schools.

Challenges:

- Although the district provides support for the magnet school and its pathways, it is unclear to what extent there is support for the theme.
- The district does not provide funding for a dedicated magnet coordinator at McClintock. The school has to fund their magnet lead position.
- There is no evidence of a district magnet financial plan.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to provide professional development opportunities, curriculum planning workshops and access to instructional coaches or specialists to support teachers in implementing innovative instructional practices that align with the magnet theme.
- Work with the district to advocate for dedicated curriculum support and development resources to assist magnet schools in designing, implementing and refining theme-aligned instructional materials and programming.
- Create a transparent district magnet financial plan.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has a wide range of community based partnerships that enhance the magnet theme such as NBA Cares, Charlotte Motor Speedway and McPIE. The McPIE partnership is meeting the unique needs of the magnet school in various ways such as providing academic support, family support with groceries/dinners, personal support with providing classes such as English class for Spanish speaking parents, resume building and race relations.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders

Recommendations:

- Establish a partnership protocol.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The local church partnership, McPIE, along with the PTA collaborate with school leadership to decide their community focus involvement for the year. McPIE stated originally their focus was to get more parents involved, thus, the McPIE Nights were formed to engage families with the school and provide resources for them such as tutoring, groceries, after-school activities for students and parents, enrichment activities, transportation to events if needed and daycare for non-school age children.
- The website is updated and the school is active on social media. The SIP and the NC School report card are publicly accessible to parents and the community.
- The school utilizes ParentSquare to communicate with parents.
- Though small in numbers, the PTA provides ongoing support and engaging activities for students and their families.
- Social media and school flyers provide updates to families regarding school activities and celebrations.

Challenges:

- Some parents have problems accessing and engaging with ParentSquare.

Recommendations:

- Offer ParentSquare check-ins during McPIE Night to support families and engage with the platform and understand it better.

Overall Recommendations for McClintock Middle School:

- Develop a clear, targeted marketing and recruitment plan.
- Develop and implement a walkthrough tool that relates to theme implementation to measure fidelity of theme implementation.
- Develop a clear instructional framework and detailed professional learning plan that supports theme implementation and ensures consistency across the curriculum.
- Continue to develop a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps.

Myers Park Traditional Elementary School - Leadership

Myers Park Traditional Elementary School - Leadership				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school was certified as a Leader In Me (LIM) Lighthouse School in 2023.
- Enrollment applications exceed the number of seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process. Student retention in grades K-5 average over 90%.
- The school diversity policy mirrors the Leader In Me Program which emphasizes the importance of student diversity, academic achievement, leadership development, community service and enrichment activities.
- Recruitment and marketing efforts include school tours, CMS magnet fairs, word of mouth, school's reputation and location.

Challenges:

- The Leader in Me (LIM) magnet slots are filled annually which is 100% of the total school enrollment of 664 students which does not reflect the demographics of the district. The school is 47% Caucasian, 34% Black and 8.4% Hispanic compared to the district at 23.8% Caucasian, 34.7% Black and 30.6% Hispanic.
- Parent and teacher focus groups indicate that lack of a clear leadership pathway as a deterrent to some families choosing the school.
- There was no evidence of targeted recruitment.
- The parent focus group and leadership expressed concerns regarding student retention in grades 4 and 5 because of the lack of a secondary pathway for a leadership theme.
- Transportation for students living outside of the district transportation bus stops is a barrier for attracting a diverse population. Parents report that hour-long bus rides before and after school are undesirable and impact family life and after school activities.
- The name of the school as "Traditional" does not reflect the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive recruitment and marketing plan with specific goals and metrics aligned to the district's diversity goals and outcomes.
- Provide feedback and recommendations to the district office outlining challenges to current magnet transportation policies and the impact on the school's recruitment, marketing and student retention efforts.
- Work with the district to add an additional unique theme to Leader in Me at MPTS that has a secondary magnet pathway. It is sometimes difficult for leadership to stand out as a magnet theme at the secondary level.
- Advocate for additional personnel to focus on recruitment, marketing, student selection/support and instructional support to students, staff and the community.
- Ensure that the magnet theme is reflected in the title of the school.
- Consider having a geographical preference zone if that would help the diversity of the school.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classes reflect diversity of enrollment. The principal welcome letter, school website, all social media platforms and communication emphasize the importance of student diversity.

- It is the expectation that all students have access to LIM instructional practices.
- Classroom walkthroughs plus student achievement are used as indicators of success.
- A LIM habit is adopted by grade level which consistently leads to success.

Challenges:

- Leadership reports the need for diversity training with the changing demographics of the school community and staff.

Recommendations:

- Coordinate diversity training for all staff as the demographics of the school change.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The principal advocated for MPTS to be a tour site for the Leader In Me Consortium held in Charlotte. Over two hundred LIM educators visited the school.
- School community partnerships and extracurricular clubs and activities are aligned to college and career readiness goals including a partnership with Queens University.

Challenges:

- Extracurricular activities are not necessarily linked to the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Work with district staff to request support and resources for school based horizontal planning time in alignment with the school improvement plan and the LIM theme goals.
- Formally link extracurricular activities to the magnet theme.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Theme based professional development is calendared for the year to support the theme including targeted professional development for students with disabilities and English language learners.
- Professional development is provided by grade level and for individual teachers during weekly PLC's based on need.
- Clubs and activities are related to the theme with five day specials rotation through art, music, physical education, science lab and media/technology/MakerSpace. Community partners, parents, and teachers support academic and extracurricular experiences with financial resources and volunteer support.
- The district provides Leader in Me professional development for new hires and professional development coaches two times each year.
- With additional funding from the PTA, 23 staff members attended Ron Clark training in Atlanta, GA.

Challenges:

- Although the majority of staff members have Leader In Me formal training, the administrators do not. CMS provides LIM training for new hires.
- The school leadership reports inconsistency in the quality of LIM coaching provided by the LIM contract.
- There is a lack of ongoing district based instructional support and professional development following the initial required training on the Leader In Me model.

- Professional development was scheduled throughout the year based on student data, staff needs, staff surveys, the school improvement plan, benchmarks and the Leader In Me Lighthouse status requirements but there was no evidence of a formalized professional development plan.

Recommendations:

- Evaluate teacher proficiencies in various elements of the Leader In Me model to determine their ability to provide additional in house training on specific instructor needs.
- Expand PLC professional development opportunities by requesting additional district funding to support follow-up Leader In Me training.
- Work with district staff to request funding to train administrative and instructional staff on the Leader In Me model.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Student work is displayed throughout the school and is indicative of the expectation of CMS mandated curriculum standards and the Leader In Me Habits.
- The school attained Leader In Me Lighthouse School status in 2023.
- The school is divided into houses by grade and each house adopts an annual LIM habit on which to focus.
- There was evidence of small group instruction, differentiation with coaches and teachers and ‘push-in’ practices to meet the needs of students at various levels.
- Administrators noted that despite increased SES enrollment data, the school is within 0.3% in science from achieving a B rating by NC standards.
- Extracurricular activities and clubs are conducted with teacher, parent volunteers and community support.

Challenges:

- The data shows limited growth for high achieving groups and the lowest performing students.

Recommendations:

- Refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic success.
- Develop a plan to address the academic growth of the highest achieving and lowest achieving students.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school was a C school in 2022 and 2023 and has met or exceeded growth since 2018.
- All students have access to theme based curriculum in core subjects, specials and extended extracurricular activities.
- Curriculum integration, articulation and interventions are discussed in PLCs and grade level meetings along with MTSS meetings.
- Differentiation, articulation and interventions are implemented and monitored based on student need during PLCs, grade level meetings, house meetings and MTSS meetings.

Challenges:

- The staff reports time restrictions limit focus on intentional horizontal curriculum planning.

Recommendations:

- While the school continues to show progress, refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic growth, achievement gaps, and theme effectiveness.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- All new MPTS teachers receive Leader in Me training.
- Administrative staffing goals include intentional diversification of the staff to reflect the student and community demographics.
- Staff reports LIM professional development through PLCs, MPTS leadership and instructional coaches.
- In alignment with district policies, school leadership is allowed to recruit and recommend hires for teachers who meet the school's needs and support the theme. Teachers are included in the recruitment and interview process.
- Collaborative decision making is evident.

Challenges:

- The school administration has not had LIM training.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that the school administration has theme-based training in LIM.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The district provides a LIM registration fee for teachers new to the school to attend LIM training. The PTA funds transportation and lodging for the training.
- The LIM contract provides coaching sessions two times per contract year.

Challenges:

- At the site visit, it was reported that teachers are struggling with aligning leadership standards to CMS mandated curriculum as well as finding appropriate resources to support the LIM program.
- Resources are not consistently available to support a magnet coordinator for integrating the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to secure funding for a magnet coordinator to support the magnet theme.
- Work with the district to add an additional unique theme to Leader in Me at MPTS that has a secondary magnet pathway. It is sometimes difficult for leadership to stand out as a magnet theme at the secondary level.
- Work with the district to fund a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- There are nine sustained partnerships supporting the theme and student activities including Queens College.
- The school improvement plan and achievement data are available on the school and district websites accessible to parents and the community.

Challenges:

- Community partners requested more time with students to fully implement their programs.

Recommendations:

- Develop a protocol including metrics for establishing and evaluating the effectiveness of partnerships as it relates to supporting the curriculum and the theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Student, staff, and parent focus groups noted the climate as warm, caring, inviting, embracing diversity while delivering a quality, rigorous instructional program.
- The parent focus group noted:
 - PTA raised \$150,000 in 2023 to support school programs.
 - Parents like the focus on leadership and life skills, critical thinking skills and giving students voice.
 - Staff members are passionate.
 - There are a lot of student opportunities to be involved.
 - There is strong parent communication and collaboration.
- PTA supports staff, students, and the curriculum through fundraisers and family activities that promotes family engagement, celebration of the school community, service learning, teacher grants, professional development support and development of life skills.
- The PTA in collaboration with school leadership developed a comprehensive folder for distribution at community activities and school tours which outlines the Leader in Me theme, student and school activities, recognition programs, monthly calendars, volunteer spotlight, community service activities, social media platforms, student achievement and student activities.
- Parents described communication as exceptional. There is a regular stream of information going to families regarding school activities and opportunities for parent involvement.

Challenges:

- The parent focus group indicated the following challenges:
 - Because there isn't a clear secondary pathway, it presents a challenge for families to find a continuum selection for students. Many parents transfer to another school with a clear pathway such as IB, arts or their neighborhood school.
 - The lottery is stressful with inconsistent communication from the district according to families.
- Although the school's PTA is very active, the leadership finds it difficult to recruit parents to help support its many events. Many working parents are unavailable and others live a fair distance from the school.

Recommendations:

- In partnership with the PTA, develop a plan to increase parent involvement.
- Work with parent focus groups to help clarify communication on application and enrollment protocols for magnet schools to include the lottery process.

Overall Recommendations for Myers Park Traditional Elementary School:

- Work with the district to add an additional unique theme to Leader in Me at MPTS that has a secondary magnet pathway. It is sometimes difficult for leadership to stand out as a magnet theme at the secondary level.
- Work with the district to secure funding to support a magnet coordinator.
- Work with parent focus groups to help clarify communication on application and enrollment protocols for magnet schools to include the lottery process.
- Work with the district to secure funding to train all administrative and instructional staff on the Leader In Me model.

North Academy of World Languages

North Academy of World Languages				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Because the school was newly constructed and scheduled to open in 2020 during the pandemic, all recruitment for students was done virtually.
- The school initially opened with 300 students and current enrollment is at 672 including grades K-3 and 6-8.
- The school is 26% Caucasian, 41.7% Black, 24.10% Hispanic and 6.8% Multiracial compared to the district at 23.8% Caucasian, 34.7% Black, 30.6% Hispanic, and 3.6% Multiracial. The school is 46% Economically Disadvantaged compared to the district's 44.3%. These demographics closely mirror the district's demographics.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent all district and school-based efforts for student selection including marketing, recruitment, entrance and assignment and transportation policies, are designed to ensure equal access for all students and reduce socioeconomic and racial isolation.

- There is limited school based leadership personnel to support magnet recruitment/marketing, student selection and instructional support.

Recommendations:

- Develop a targeted marketing and recruiting plan.
- Work with the district to secure a magnet coordinator to focus on recruitment, marketing, student selection/support and instructional support to students, staff and the community.
- Parents report that hour-long bus rides before and after school are undesirable and impact family life and after school activities.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process.
- To date, staffing goals to include recruitment of native speakers of world languages offered at the school, mirror the diversity of the student population, meet state licensing requirements and a demonstrated commitment to teaching in diverse settings were met. 95.6% hold non-provisional licenses, 92.5% are rated as effective or highly effective teachers, 70% are experienced teachers.
- With district support and collaboration, systems were established with international embassies to support teacher recruitment, specifically noted were the partnerships with France and Germany. Two universities work with North Academy of World Languages (NAWL) to provide interns to volunteer at the school for a semester in the language immersion classrooms.

Challenges:

- Although parents report their favorite things about the school are that the school celebrates diversity, offers a world view and provides a number of cultural opportunities for students and families, it is unclear to what extent all classrooms reflect the demographic diversity in the district and community.

Recommendations:

- Create an action plan to have classrooms reflect the demographics of the school and district.
- Work with the district to enhance efforts to recruit a diverse workforce to support the world languages instructional program.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- It is the expectation that all students have access to language immersion instructional practices. It was evident during classroom visits and a review of Professional Learning Community (PLC) agendas and minutes that there is reflection on practices, a review of student data and professional development sessions are tailored to staff needs as appropriate.
- Classroom walkthroughs plus student achievement are used as indicators of success.

Challenges:

- Although the school's innovative research-based language immersion theme is integrated into all subjects (K-3) and is monitored, differentiated and articulated between grades, it is unclear to what extent it ensures student preparation most specifically for 3rd grade state-mandated standardized tests. At the site visit, teachers revealed their concerns for their students who, after 3 years of language

immersion (with no English instruction until 3rd grade), were going to have to take standardized tests in English.

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for all stakeholders (teachers and parents) to learn about the research regarding language immersion - specifically how it works, how long it takes and how it supports student achievement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The administrative team is trained in world languages and provides support to the instructional staff.
- All K-3 instructional staff are licensed and are native language speakers, ex. Chinese, German, French and Spanish.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent teacher collaboration is a structured part of regular planning. Because the school is so new - only 3 years old - and there are 4 language immersion programs - Chinese, German, French and Spanish, the teachers spend a lot of their time translating the standards and searching for appropriate resources in their immersion language.
- There are limited district based resources to provide ongoing professional development.

Recommendations:

- As the school grows, begin to provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate. Develop a system where collaboration is a structured part of regular planning.
- Work with the district to ensure teachers are receiving ongoing professional development aligned to the magnet school theme.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Differentiation, articulation and interventions are implemented and monitored based on student need and language development.
- There is a schoolwide commitment to using multiple modes of learning through lesson planning, curriculum delivery supported by coaching, PLC's and professional development as evidenced by documented planning sessions and a professional development calendar.
- Multiple formative assessment strategies are used to gather student data.
- Interventions and enhancements were evident through plans, intervention schedules and expectations daily of small group instruction by teachers.

Challenges:

- Because of the amount of time needed to translate mandated curriculum into the immersion language, the teacher focus group reported the need for translation of resources into theme languages to maximize instructional time.

Recommendations:

- Refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic success. Develop a plan to address the academic performance of identified subgroups and grade levels.

- Work with district leadership to seek high quality curricular materials that align with the immersion languages.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Multiple indicators are used to show academic performance and are analyzed weekly during PLCs.
- Students met or exceeded academic growth goals in the first two years of state required assessments.
- Systems were developed to include one hour daily of English instruction in grade three to ensure mastery of curriculum standards aligned to language immersion standards.
- All students have access to theme based curriculum in core subjects and extended extracurricular activities.
- Curriculum integration, articulation and interventions are discussed in PLCs and grade level meetings along with MTSS meetings.
- Behavioral expectations are posted in every classroom and common areas including the cafeteria.

Challenges:

- Translating curriculum content for formative assessments.

Recommendations:

- While the school continues to show progress, refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to the school improvement plan to address academic growth and theme effectiveness.
- Work with district leadership to seek high quality curricular materials that align with the immersion languages.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Language immersion is prominent throughout the school.
- Theme integration is apparent in all classrooms and throughout the school including music and art.
- The leadership team meets weekly and monthly with staff to review and collaborate on achievement goals, theme integration and school operations. Teacher focus group feedback noted the school climate is one of collaboration, celebrations, communication and recognition.
- Administrators are in classrooms daily to provide support to teachers and students according to school staff.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent thematic instructional coaching occurs. The language immersion program is very specialized - with the four language programs seemingly working on their own.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan for instructional coaching and work to secure funding for instructional coaching to support the school's specialized language immersion program.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- With district support and collaboration, systems were established with international embassies to support teacher recruitment, specifically noted were the partnerships with France and Germany. Two

universities work with NAWL to provide interns to volunteer at the school for a semester in the language immersion classrooms.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent there is a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme into all subject areas. At the site visit it was reported that teachers are struggling with translating the standards as well as finding appropriate resources to support the language immersion program.
- Transportation express stops have been noted by parent focus groups as a barrier to attending choice magnet schools.
- A district strategic plan or financial plan that includes magnet schools was not available.
- Parent focus groups noted limited communication from the district office regarding magnet schools and district realignment of magnet schools.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to secure funding to support a dedicated magnet coordinator.
- Enhance district communication on the magnet school realignment.
- Review and analyze the magnet transportation plan to determine efficiency and impact on magnet school recruitment, selection and retention.
- With the addition of grade levels at NAWL, enhance efforts to support staffing of the language immersion classrooms with curriculum training and support.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Partnerships supporting the theme include:
 - Rotary Club supports school gardens and the French Club spelling bee.
 - The World Affairs Council of Charlotte facilitates school visits and student activities with various foreign embassies including but not limited to the French, German, Swiss and Honduras Consulate.
 - Bank of America supports the school through their International Education Division.

Challenges:

- Although the administrative team at the school is cultivating partnerships, it is unclear to what extent the school has an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Develop a school-based partnership protocol. This will support long-term sustainability for the school as well as enhance the magnet theme and benefit students.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Student, staff and parent focus groups noted the climate as warm, caring, inviting, embracing diversity while delivering a quality, rigorous instructional/language immersion program.
- The NAWL Parent organization is actively involved as school volunteers in classrooms, extracurricular activities and fundraising events. Some of the ways the parent organization supports NAWL include:
 - A teacher scholarship fund that allows teachers to apply for grants up to \$500.
 - Field trip funding is supported.

- Targeted classroom projects are supported.
- There is a commitment to engage families in all school activities through phone, email, newsletter and social media. Events for families include: Donuts with Dads, Muffins with Moms, Coffee with Counselors and Family Fun Night.

Challenges:

- Although the school's parent organization is very active, the leadership finds it difficult to recruit parents to help support its many events. Many working parents are unavailable and others live a fair distance from the school.

Recommendations:

- Survey families to determine how they would like to be involved. Consider surveying those parents who are attending the school's many academic/cultural events to determine how to involve them in the parent organization.

Overall Recommendations for North Academy of World Languages:

- Create an action plan to have classrooms reflect the demographics of the school and district.
- To support program sustainability:
 - Work with the district to secure funding to support a dedicated magnet coordinator.
 - Work with the district to secure funding for instructional coaching and curriculum translation to support the school's specialized language immersion program.
 - Develop a school-based partnership protocol.
 - Work with the district to enhance efforts to recruit a diverse workforce to support the world languages instructional program.

North Mecklenburg High School - IB

North Mecklenburg High School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The district uses socioeconomic status as a magnet selection criterion in order to better balance diversity

across the schools. Selection criteria and processes—as well as school theme information and theme pathways—are available via district- provided materials for the general public, although the materials could be presented in a more user-friendly format.

- School and International Baccalaureate Programme (IB) recruitment events are publicized on the school/IB website.
- The Middle Years Programme (MYP) magnet pathway with a feeder middle school is evident/publicized and guarantees entry to the North Mecklenburg High School MYP. Parent and student focus groups emphasized the strength and value of this pathway.
- The IB student population is significant, comprising approximately one-third of the overall student body in the Middle Years Programme (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-Related Programme (CP).
- Magnet recruitment strategies are successful in filling nearly all IB magnet seats annually for at least the past 5 years prior to this year.
- Magnet student racial/ethnic demographics are nearly identical to the demographics of the overall student body.

Challenges:

- Compared to the overall district, North Mecklenburg demographics are comprised of significantly higher percentages of Black students and lower percentages of Caucasian students, with 58% of the school and 34.7 % of the district Black and 6.3% of the school and 23.8% of the district Caucasian. Additionally, according to the NC Report Card, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is 61% and the district is 44.3%.
- Transportation is available to magnet students who reside in a zone of the county and base students. In the past year, magnet transportation has shifted from neighborhood bussing to express bussing with limited stop options in the attendance zone. According to the school, the district did not communicate changes effectively to families. The school lost 100 IB magnet students (and more magnet students in other program areas) as a result of the shift because the parents were unable to provide transportation to the express bus pick-up/drop-off spots. Lost magnet students due to transportation changes included 12th grade students who have been in the IB pathway since kindergarten and are unable to complete their final year.

Recommendations:

- Consider methods for attracting Caucasian students to the school through targeted recruitment, marketing and transportation realignment.
- Reconsider the recent changes to the magnet transportation system in order to emphasize equity and access for students who are unable to provide their own school transportation.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Students, parents, faculty and administration recognize diversity as one of the most important strengths of the school.
- The IB Diversity and Inclusion policies emphasize the value of diversity in the magnet school/program.
- IB classes are reflective of the overall diversity of the school.
- Teaching practices are inclusive and honor the diversity of the student body. For example, an observed English class addressed the relationships among race, morality and privilege through a series of

discussions and student presentations that included students' authentic perspectives and experiences. Door decorations throughout the building focused on themes that tie the curriculum of the courses in the classroom to Black History Month.

Challenges:

- Access to the Middle Years Programme (MYP) could be broadened, which would also increase access to the Diploma Programme (DP) and Career Programme (CP). For example, there may be opportunities to offer the IB MYP to all students (and not only IB magnet students)—either for the entire program or for individual courses within the program.

Recommendations:

- Consider ways of broadening access to the MYP, either through the whole program or through individual courses that all students take (such as English). Broadening access to the MYP will then create further access to the CP and DP, thereby creating new pathways to college and career readiness.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Artifacts demonstrate extensive curriculum development around key IB concepts and skills across the range of grade-levels and subjects that are included within the IB programs.
- The IB theme is articulated, differentiated and innovative, as evidenced through extensive unit planning and assessment documents, which are reviewed annually by professional learning communities as they move through the curriculum. These plans are monitored by the school IB coordinator.
- As was evident in the artifacts and observed in classrooms, MYP and DP lessons emphasize research, writing, collaboration and creativity, which will serve students effectively as they move beyond high school.

Challenges:

- There is a concern from teachers that increasingly standardized, district-mandated curriculum and assessment requirements will limit opportunities for teachers to collaborate on and implement the IB theme with fidelity.
- The IB theme could be more visible throughout the building (hallways, classrooms, shared spaces, etc.) to emphasize the IB philosophy, learner profile and approaches to teaching and learning.
- The IB philosophy could be better integrated in non-IB courses, including through the IB learner profile and IB approaches to teaching and learning, as these are effective strategies for all students.
- The new IB CP could be better articulated to ensure that CTE themes/magnet options can be utilized for the IB CP career credential area. This is currently a missed opportunity to create intersections between the diverse magnet themes.
- There are few arts course opportunities within the IB DP. Currently, students can take IB Visual Arts, but there are no IB performing arts options (music, theater or dance), although there are music and theater classes/teachers in the school (just not in the IB Programme).

Recommendations:

- Ensure that district curriculum leaders recognize that magnet school teachers and the school need to be afforded some flexibility over curriculum and assessment requirements in order to implement their theme with fidelity.

- Demonstrate the IB magnet theme throughout the building via posters, banners and bulletin boards demonstrating IB learner profile materials, approaches to teaching and learning materials, etc.
- Conduct teacher training and classroom utilization expectations across the school related to fundamental IB materials that are relevant to all students/classes, such as the IB learner profile and IB approaches to teaching and learning.
- Collaborate with district CTE leadership to integrate CTE magnet pathways into the IB CP course/pathway options for students.
- Develop additional IB DP arts classes in order to engage additional students within the program and to emphasize the importance of the arts in the global human experience.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Teachers engage in significant, ongoing and purposeful collaborative teacher planning throughout the school year to emphasize IB key concepts and curriculum requirements. This planning takes place at least on a weekly basis within professional learning communities.
- The school's master schedule is designed to ensure collaborative planning time, with common planning periods organized by department.
- New-hires engage in a strategic and useful IB orientation process, which was evident both in new teacher orientation documents and described by new IB teachers.
- Teachers provide feedback and recommendations for professional development and teacher-leaders coach their colleagues on curriculum design and effective pedagogy. As was expressed both by teachers and administrators, administration carefully considers teacher reflection and feedback when finalizing professional development plans.

Challenges:

- As IB programs across the district have expanded, so has the need for teachers to participate in official IB training. However, training budgets have not expanded, so many North Mecklenburg teachers who need to attend official, off-site IB training have not been able to do so. Although the school has done an admirable job filling in gaps when possible, the district needs to provide additional financial support to ensure that IB teachers are able to meet the training requirements from the IB.

Recommendations:

- Provide district funding to ensure that all IB teachers have met or exceeded minimal training/certification requirements for the IB.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school demonstrates an IB-focused philosophy within the IB programs. The philosophy involves a focus on student-driven research, collaboration, communication, creativity, action, service-learning and global awareness.
- Multiple modes of learning were observed during the evaluation day, including student discussions, presentations, problem-solving, and writing/expression. Through all observations, there was an apparent focus on inquiry and the development of critical thinking skills.
- Summative assessments are varied and include state-mandated examinations, IB examinations

(CP/DP), the MYP Personal Project, the DP Extended Essay, etc.

- The school's IB programs provide extensive formative assessment support for students as they work toward summative assessments.
- The school ensures that students who have IEPs, 504 Plans and multilingual learners can access and participate in IB programs.
- IB assessments have a high level of differentiation, driven by student interest as they create their own research questions and topics for exploration/experimentation. Additionally, classroom observations demonstrated multiple forms of differentiated teaching/learning to appeal to students with a range of interests and learning styles.
- In grades 11 and 12, all IB magnet students are engaged in advanced coursework (IB Diploma Programme courses) across a wide range of subject areas (Literature, History, World Languages, Psychology, Sciences, Mathematics, etc.), which can lead to advanced university credit.
- The school met or exceeded NC growth expectations/standards each year since 2019.

Challenges:

- Although there is a common philosophy within the IB magnet program, there does not appear to be a schoolwide magnet/theme philosophy/vision. Although this philosophy/vision can be difficult to create with such diverse magnet themes, it would be helpful to create unity and a common sense of purpose. This need was evident in focus groups with students, parents and teachers.
- Students raised significant concerns that some upper level classes (such as IB DP world languages and Immersion Program world languages) are mixed in the same class period, with teachers attempting to satisfy the needs of highly differing student groups simultaneously.

Recommendations:

- Articulate and share a schoolwide common philosophy that supports the range of magnet student programs in order to create cohesion and a stronger sense of the academic community. To help facilitate this process, consider sending a team to a demonstration school with multiple magnet themes to learn about strategies for common philosophy creation and implementation.
- Consider the ways that staff can be allotted differently in order to provide classes that are targeted to the students' academic level and experience rather than mixing multiple (but differing) advanced classes together.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school met or exceeded growth expectations overall on required state exams for the past three years.
- The school met or exceeded growth expectations for every demographic subgroup on state exams for the past two years. (This metric was not made available by the state prior to that time.)
- Academic achievement and growth is evident through state examinations, district benchmarks and the full battery of IB-required assessments (External Assessments, Internal Assessments, Extended Essay, etc.)
- IB candidates all demonstrate college and career readiness as they complete—and are successful on—university-level IB examinations and are highly successful in colleges and universities after high school

Challenges:

- Graduation rates have been relatively stagnant for several years (around 86%) in the school overall, but

rates are significantly higher within the IB magnet program.

Recommendations:

- Continue to offer targeted support and intervention to ensure on-time graduation for students in all programs.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- According to a school-based survey, almost no current teachers plan to leave the school for the 2024-25 school year.
- Hiring is directed by the school and principal to ensure that teachers are selected who will effectively implement the IB theme.
- The school has worked extensively to ensure that teachers have common planning periods by departments and engage at least weekly in theme-focused collaboration.
- The theme is implemented with fidelity, as evidenced by multiple artifacts and classroom observations.
- The administration welcomes new ideas and innovations from faculty. This characteristic was noted both by the faculty focus group and by administration.
- A focus group of teachers meets monthly to make recommendations to administration for school improvement. The teacher leader of the team expressed that the committee's ideas are taken into account for general school operations.
- The school has an outstanding IB/Magnet Coordinator who provides coaching to individual teachers, professional learning teams and departments as they implement the theme. The faculty focus group was highly complementary of her expertise and continual ability to assist.

Challenges:

- There was an unusually low participation on the last (2022) Teacher Working Conditions Survey (46%). Although there are additional modes of teacher feedback, this survey would provide rich data to inform a wide range of school improvement strategies.
- Teachers on the team making recommendations for school improvement would like to focus more extensively on curriculum and instruction and less on general school operations.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that all staff provide feedback, such as via the NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey and that the feedback is reflected on by the administration, School Improvement Team and other leadership groups to ensure appropriate adjustment and implementation.
- Ensure that staff members who are on the teacher school leadership recommendation team have some focus on curriculum and instruction during their reflective discussion and feedback sessions.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for current IB magnet students into North Mecklenburg from the feeder magnet middle school/program.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools.
- The IB magnet program within the school has a full-time IB coordinator who works with all three IB programs.

Challenges:

- The demands of coordinating three distinct IB programs, including curriculum, instruction, teacher training, marketing, recruitment, university relations, etc. may exceed the capacity of one (very capable) magnet/IB coordinator in the school and may not be sustainable as the new IB CP grows.
- The district financial plan does not appear to allow for the school to meet all teacher training requirements for the IB.
- District practices could clarify why magnet programs are placed at various schools and the underlying purpose for magnet programs.

Recommendations:

- Consider splitting the IB coordinator position into two jobs.
- Provide district funding to ensure that teachers meet or exceed IB training requirements.
- Ensure that the district has a unified, communicated and implemented vision for the placement of magnet schools and determination of their theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- The school's IB program has had a couple of useful partnerships over the years, including the local university library and Wells Fargo, which has provided financial support for a service-oriented science/solar energy project.

Challenges:

- Partnerships could be expanded significantly to enhance additional aspects of teaching and learning.
- A partnership protocol could be developed for potential partners to share program-related information in order to engage with them consistently.
- It is not apparent that the district facilitates community partnership development.

Recommendations:

- Expand partnerships to enhance teaching and learning in the IB programs, including through universities, travel organizations, world language institutes, international businesses, etc.
- Create a partnership protocol to articulate partnership needs, guidelines and procedures and to ensure that partners receive program updates and can be involved in program implementation/improvement.
- Ensure that the district office encourages and facilitates partnership development.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- The school is open and welcoming for families, which was observed throughout the visit and expressed by the parent focus group.
- Parents express that North Mecklenburg is a school where students are purposeful, engaged and want to learn. Students demonstrate pride in being North Mecklenburg students and refer to the school as a "community" and "family."
- Parents participate on the School Improvement Team and various boosters organizations. They have an active PTA.
- There is effective two-way communication with families via email, phone, social media and text messages.

- The school engages with magnet families through magnet fairs, open houses, presentations at feeder middle schools and tours, all of which showcase student work.
- The School Improvement Plan and academic progress are available via the public website.
- The IB Magnet Coordinator was specifically identified by parents as being an excellent communicator on behalf of the school and highly engaging and responsive.

Challenges:

- Parents appear to be less active in IB theme implementation and support, beyond the basic understanding of program expectations/requirements.
- Parents expressed that they receive strong communication from the school and teachers about events and planning. However, they recommended a “marketing campaign” to ensure that the parents and community are aware of the successes occurring at the school overall—and not just in the individual magnet (IB) program.

Recommendations:

- Invite IB parents to participate in learning showcases and other events/opportunities to learn about the program and offer support.
- Create a schoolwide marketing campaign that celebrates the whole school program and emphasizes an overall vision/philosophy, including all magnet programs, athletics, arts and other school celebrations.

Overall Recommendations for North Mecklenburg High School - IB

- Provide district funding to ensure that all IB teachers have met or exceeded minimal training/certification requirements for the IB.
- Articulate and share a schoolwide common philosophy that supports the range of magnet student programs in order to create cohesion and a stronger sense of the academic community.
- Reconsider the recent changes to the magnet transportation system in order to emphasize equity and access for students who are unable to provide their own school transportation.
- Expand partnerships to enhance teaching and learning in the IB programs, including universities, travel organizations, world language institutes, international businesses, etc.
- Create a schoolwide marketing campaign that celebrates the whole school program and emphasizes an overall vision/philosophy, including all magnet programs, athletics, arts and other school celebrations.

North Mecklenburg High School - World Languages and CTE

North Mecklenburg High School - World Languages and CTE				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	

7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Very informational flyers with pictures of students in action exist for each magnet theme.
- Multiple information nights, both in person and virtual, are held for families throughout the lottery process.
- All of the magnet programs include an interest-based only lottery for selection.

Challenges:

- The informational flyers cannot be found on the school or district website. The school's website does not include any information specific to the school's magnet programs. The only magnet link leads to the district magnet website. It is difficult to gain information about the school's specific magnet programs.
- Compared to the overall district, North Mecklenburg demographics are comprised of significantly higher percentages of Black students and lower percentages of Caucasian students, with 58% of the school and 34.7 % of the district Black and 6.3% of the school and 23.7% of the district Caucasian. Additionally, according to the NC Report Card, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is 61% and the district is 44.3%.
- Over 100 students were forced to withdraw from North Mecklenburg HS this school year due to difficulty with the new transportation policy. Five of those students were entering their final year of the IB Diploma Programme.

Recommendations:

- Include site specific magnet information on the school's website to aid in recruitment.
- Consider methods for attracting Caucasian students to the school through targeted recruitment, marketing and transportation realignment.
- Review the transportation policy to allow all students access to a magnet school education.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Classes reflect the diversity of the school population.
- The school has a very diverse staff and administrative team.

Challenges:

- A policy or statement that emphasizes the importance of student diversity was not evident.

Recommendations:

- Establish and publicly display a policy or statement that emphasizes the importance of student diversity.
- Include a diversity statement in the school's mission or vision statements.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The CTE programs are designed so students can go into the industry immediately after graduation.

Challenges:

- With so many different magnet programs, a consistent, schoolwide theme is not evident or cohesive.

Recommendations:

- Establish and publicize a single theme that intertwines all of the various magnet programs at the school.
- Develop and implement a theme-related common instructional framework.
- Establish clear theme integration guidelines with ongoing support and professional development.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Each department has common planning time that teachers utilize for structured PLC's twice per week.
- CTE teachers participate in regular program specific professional development to retain their professional license.
- Teachers lead monthly Viking Teacher Academy, which includes a variety of professional development offerings designed by teachers for teachers.

Challenges:

- CTE and world language teachers are required to find out-of-district content-specific professional development.

Recommendations:

- Provide district-based content specific professional development for CTE and world language teachers.
- Add theme-based professional development to the Viking Teacher Academy.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Student achievement in all areas and demographic groups has consistently exceeded the national and state averages.
- Many classrooms incorporate the IB methodology of inquiry-based learning.

Challenges:

Tiered intervention, differentiated learning or varied formative assessment were not evident.

Recommendations:

- Provide professional development to support the implementation of tiered intervention and differentiated learning modules throughout the school especially as the team works on deeper theme-integrated curriculum.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Over the past three years, achievement gaps have been narrowed in reading and mathematics.
- Based on assessment and observation data, racial predictability is minimized at the school both academically and behaviorally.

Challenges:

- It is not clear which, if any, data sources are utilized to impact student learning.

Recommendations:

- Establish a clear process for utilizing data to positively impact student learning.
- Work with the district for the autonomy needed for magnet theme-implemented and inquiry based teaching and learning. Teachers are anxious about the implementation of district mandated scripted curricula that could force teachers to abandon effective inquiry-based learning strategies.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Teachers and administration agreed that a collaborative decision making process is consistently implemented.
- Teachers trust the principal and feel the trust is reciprocated.
- The school has a large percent of retained staff each year.
- CTE teachers have many years of relevant industry experience.
- New teachers receive onboarding regarding school mission and magnet themes prior to the school year.

Challenges:

Teachers hired during the school year do not receive the same extensive onboarding as teachers hired prior to the beginning of the school year.

Recommendations:

- Design and implement an onboarding process for all new teachers, regardless of hire date.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- A dedicated specialist exists at the school for the CTE program and is very effective at supporting the CTE programs.

Challenges:

- The coordinators for world language (and IB) programs are teachers with only a small portion of their days dedicated to supporting the magnet programs.
- Magnet schools are not referenced in the district strategic plan.
- It is not clear if the district has a magnet financial plan.
- Teachers are anxious about the implementation of district mandated scripted curricula that could force teachers to abandon effective inquiry-based learning strategies.

Recommendations:

- Invest in full-time magnet coordinators at the school to support the IB and world language programs.
- Highlight magnet programs in the district strategic plan.
- Establish or publicize the district magnet financial plan.
- Provide flexibility for teacher autonomy in implementing scripted curricula.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The automotive program has established very strong community partnerships including a robust advisory board and internship opportunities for students.
- The culinary and cosmetology programs partner with the local community college to assist students in completing their required practice hours prior to apprenticeship.

Challenges:

- A truly collaborative relationship with community partners only exists with the automotive program.

Recommendations:

- Establish community partner advisory boards for the culinary and cosmetology programs, or one advisory board that includes industry partners in each of the program areas.
- Establish a partnership with BMW, VW, Mercedes to incorporate the automotive and German programs.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents are involved in the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and School Improvement Team.
- The PTSA supports the entire school, not just a particular program.
- The school “over communicates” with parents, so parents are well informed about school activities.
- There are multiple opportunities throughout the school year for parents to interact with the teachers and staff.
- Teachers and staff are very responsive to parent emails.

Challenges:

- The school needs a public relations campaign to highlight the great things happening at the school.

Recommendations:

- Establish a parent volunteer committee to design and implement a public relations campaign to publicly highlight the successes of the students and school.

Overall Recommendations for North Mecklenburg High School - World Languages and CTE

- Establish and publicize a single theme that intertwines all of the various magnet programs at the school.
- Invest in full-time magnet coordinators at the school to support the IB and world language programs.
- Consider methods for attracting Caucasian students to the school through targeted recruitment and marketing.
- Establish community partner advisory boards for the culinary and cosmetology programs or one advisory board that includes industry partners in each of the program areas.
- Review the transportation policy to allow all students access to a magnet school education.

Northeast Middle School - Computer Science

Northeast Middle School - Computer Science			
Standards of Excellence	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations

1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Transportation is available to all magnet students.
- The school uses the district lottery system to fill magnet seats.

Challenges:

- The school demographics are 45% Hispanic, 41% Black and 10% Caucasian which are not in alignment with the district at 23.8% Caucasian, 34.7% Black and 30.6% Hispanic.
- It is unclear to what extent district and school-based selection policies including marketing, recruitment, entrance and assignment and transportation policies, are designed to attract and retain students to support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration.
- Although the school does attend the magnet fair, includes magnet and lottery information on its website, and offers school tours when requested, the school is not actively recruiting for its magnet program. According to the school, “Recruiting is not our first priority.”
- The school said “Three out of four teachers are so new they wouldn’t even know how to answer questions about a magnet.”
- The Computer Science (CS) theme is not considered unique to the school anymore as Computer Science courses are being taught at all middle schools in the district.
- The school currently has 20-25 magnet application students, but the numbers are skewed because students in its Extensions Program (for students who have significant cognitive difficulties) are included in the schools’ magnet numbers.
- The school regularly has open magnet seats, but does not have the staff capacity to accept new students according to staff.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to create a marketing and recruitment plan to support racial and socioeconomic diversity.
- Create ways to make the Computer Science theme at the school unique and different from courses offered at neighborhood schools.
- Ensure staff capacity is not limiting accepting students that would help the demographics of the school meet the demographics of the district.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The classes visited reflected the diversity of the local community.

Challenges:

- Although there is evidence of inclusive teaching practices, it is unclear to what extent all teachers are using these practices with fidelity.
- It is unclear to what extent there are systems in place to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in a diverse setting.

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development with a focus on inclusive teaching practices. Consider adding this to PLC discussions on a regular basis.
- Develop a system to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in diverse settings. Consider adding peer observation opportunities as well as including inclusive teaching practices as part of teacher observations and walk-throughs.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development**Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity****Successes:**

- The schools' partner, Dr. Sharon Jones from *the dot* consulting (computer science education) has been able to support theme integration in some of the ELA classes. She and her colleagues come to the school once a month and work with the ELA teachers, helping them integrate the curriculum, implement activities and model lessons.

Challenges:

- The site visit revealed that although the magnet theme is defined (computer science) and there is theme integration in some of the ELA classes, it is not consistent or visible throughout the school.
- Although there are PEACE (Pride, Expectations, Acceptance, Consideration, Enthusiasm) and Strive for 5 EAGLE (Engage, Achieve, Grow, Lead, Excel) posters as well as social contracts in each of the classrooms visited, there is very little student work displayed in the halls of the school or in the classrooms.
- Only one teacher at the school is trained in PLTW (Project Lead The Way).

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development with a focus on theme integration.
- Create theme-based messaging and displays that “scream the theme” in the “Mall” area of the school, where “Most kids walk through here at least once a day.”
- Work with the district to secure funding to train at least one additional PLTW teacher.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- Collaboration is a structured part of regular planning. PLCs are held twice a week - one day a week for data chats and the other for planning.

Challenges:

- Although there is scheduled collaborative planning amongst teachers (twice a week) for them to plan and review data, the collaborative planning does not address the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan for theme implementation and integration.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- All staff (except the one newest hire) have been trained in the Capturing Kids Hearts program.
- The school's WIN (What I Need) intervention block is held daily for 40 minutes for all students.
- Students at the school can participate in sports, drama, band/orchestra, theater and advanced math students can take Math 2 at the high school next door.
- Weekly data chats in PLCs look at benchmark data, cool downs, do now's and exit tickets.
- To address academic improvement and attendance challenges, the school has instituted a program where participation in extracurricular activities is directly linked to each students' absences and grades.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent teaching and learning focuses on theme-aligned instruction and researched-based design. Computer science (CS) is taught in the designated CS classes and integrated in some of the lessons in ELA classes. Although all staff at the school have received Capturing Kids Hearts training and the principal reports it is successful, it is unclear to what extent teachers are implementing the program with fidelity. "The teachers have bought in, but are not doing it."
- The school was not assigned a MTSS facilitator, "We don't have one, we're a small school." The principal traded funds to acquire an MTSS facilitator who progress monitors those students who need intensive interventions.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to keep the Capturing Kids Heart program at the forefront. Consider including it as a regular agenda item during PLC time, provide opportunities for teachers to peer observe their colleagues who are implementing the program with fidelity and include it as part of the teacher observation/walkthrough tool.
- Work with the district to develop a plan to provide sustained MTSS support.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Teachers participate in weekly PLCs where they analyze data from multiple sources. These data chats are supported by the academic facilitator.
- Data from the NC Report Card indicates growth among black students and economically disadvantaged students in both math and reading.
- All groups except Hispanic students have shown growth in math grade-level proficient scores.
 - Math - Asian students: 45.5% (2023), 35.3% (2022); Black students: 23.2% (2023), 21.8% (2022); Hispanic students: 21.6% (2023), 21.7% (2022); Caucasian students: 50.7% (2023), 34.2% (2022); Economically disadvantaged students: 24.3% (2023), 21.4% (2022); and not economically disadvantaged students: 34.1% (2023), 26.4% (2022).
- All groups except Caucasian students have shown growth in math grade-level proficient scores.

- Reading - Asian students: 34.8% (2023), 29.4% (2022); Black students: 32.4% (2023), 29.4% (2022); Hispanic students: 28.3% (2023), 27.8% (2022); Caucasian students: 45.7% (2023), 50% (2022); economically disadvantaged students: 29.9% (2023), 24.2% (2022); not economically disadvantaged students: 42.1% (2023), 37.7% (2022).

Challenges:

- Although according to the NC Report Card, the school has shown growth from 2022 to 2023 the school remains a D school. The school was a F school in 2022.
- It is unclear to what extent there is evidence of narrowing the gaps in student achievement.
- Hispanic students make up the largest percentage of chronically absent students.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan that provides targeted support and intervention for all subgroups. Consider working with your community partners to support reading and math achievement through tutoring and mentoring as well as incentive attendance.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The school has a successful partnership with Dr. Sharon Jones from *the dot* (computer science education consulting). Dr. Jones comes to the school once a month and provides lesson plan support and modeling in theme integration for some of the ELA teachers. Dr. Jones' partner organization, the *Dottie Rose Foundation*, provides summer STEM camps for girls.

Challenges:

- The theme is not implemented with fidelity, and there is no coaching to ensure the theme is implemented with fidelity.

Recommendations:

- Develop a professional development plan for theme implementation as well as providing sustained coaching support.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway for the computer science magnet theme.

Challenges:

- Although the district provides magnet school option information for families as well as a Magnet Fair, it is unclear to what extent there is support for the magnet program at the school level. There is an academic facilitator at the school, but she has many duties outside the realm of magnet.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop a plan to support the magnet program - including providing support for a dedicated magnet coordinator to help integrate the theme into all subject areas.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school's partnership with Dr. Sharon Jones from *the dot* enhances the magnet theme and benefits students.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the school has an established process to welcome and involve businesses and organizations in decisions about theme implementation.
- The site visit revealed the school has the one partner, Dr. Jones from *the dot*.
- It is unclear to what extent the district supports and facilitates career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships that enhance magnet themes and benefit students. No such partnerships were mentioned at the site visit.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop a plan to establish partnerships that will benefit the school's students and support the magnet theme..

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The recent Soul Night was a big success. Students in the focus group reported, "It was fun and lots of parents came." It was run by one of the school counselors and featured music, careers, HBCUs, JROTC, and food.
- There is always a great turnout for Open House where families can meet the teacher and walk the school.
- The one parent in the focus group commented, "We get emails from the school everyday with information. We get fast responses from teachers."

Challenges:

- The school has a PTA, but the site visit revealed they do not meet regularly and there is minimal impact.

Recommendations:

- Reach out to the families who attended Soul Night to see if you can recruit some who would be interested in participating in the PTA. Consider enlisting the support of the guidance counselor or some of the students who enjoyed the program.

Overall Recommendations for Northeast Middle School:

- Create a marketing and recruitment plan to support racial and socioeconomic diversity.
- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development with a focus on inclusive teaching practices. Consider adding this to PLC discussions on a regular basis.
- Develop a system to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in diverse settings. Consider adding peer observation opportunities as well as including inclusive teaching practices as part of teacher observations and walk-throughs.
- Work with the district to provide timely, relevant, standards-based professional development in theme-aligned instruction.
- Work with the district to develop a plan to support the magnet program - including providing support for a dedicated magnet coordinator to help integrate the theme into all subject areas.

Northridge Middle School - Computer Science

Northridge Middle School - Computer Science				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school uses a lottery to fill its 80 seats per grade level (it is a partial magnet) and there is always a waiting list. Total school enrollment is 1085.
- Transportation is available to all magnet students.
- The school's new family advocate is bilingual and was previously the school's attendance clerk. She is able to leverage her close relationship with the Hispanic community and help new families apply and adjust to the school.

Challenges:

- Although the school and the many classes visited reflect the diversity of the local community - demographics are 30% Hispanic, 59% Black/African American, 5% Asian and 5% Caucasian which is not in line with the demographics of CMS. It is unclear to what extent district and school-based policies and activities are designed to attract and retain students to support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration.
- At the site visit, it was reported "There is no targeted recruiting, no recruiting to reduce racial or socioeconomic isolation."

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to create an action plan to reduce racial and socioeconomic isolation at the school.

Standard 2 - Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The family advocate is a new position this year. The family advocate directly supports the ML population at the school (326 students) as well as new and existing Hispanic families. There is chronic absenteeism at the school with the highest rates among the ML and Hispanic population. The family

advocate translates school messages (both oral and written), leads parent sessions and works with students and families to reduce absenteeism.

- There is some evidence of inclusive teaching practices. At the site visit, inclusive practices were displayed by three of the veteran teachers, including one veteran magnet theme teacher.
- The administrative team is diverse - 2 Black males, 1 Caucasian male, 1 Caucasian female and 1 Hispanic female.
- Grade level administrators provide culturally responsive teaching practices support to new teachers by pairing new teachers with an experienced veteran teacher.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent teachers demonstrate a commitment to teaching in diverse settings that focus on the magnet theme. Staffing is a big challenge. 20 plus staff transition in and out of the school every year. In addition, there have been three principals since 2019. The current principal has been at the school since 2022. Two of the three magnet theme teachers (computer science/coding) are brand new (to teaching and to the school) and one position remains vacant.
- Although the school admits to a strong start with SEL (it used to be 20 minutes/day) they have shifted their priorities to academic interventions in preparation for the EOGs.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop school-based policies and activities that are designed to attract and retain students to support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration.
- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development, with a focus on inclusive teaching practices. Consider adding inclusive teaching practices to PLC discussions on a regular basis as well as including it as part of the school's walk-through/teacher observation system.
- Develop a system to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in diverse settings. Consider adding peer observation opportunities for teachers as well as including it as part of teacher observations and walk-throughs.
- Determine which SEL strategies will be a priority for the school and develop a plan for implementing those strategies all year to intentionally create a culture of wrap around support.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school's strong relationship with Dr. Sharon Jones from *the dot* consulting (computer science education) has been very successful in supporting theme integration in the ELA classes. She and her colleagues come to the school once a month and work with the ELA teachers. They work with the teachers planning standards-based lessons, modeling and facilitating activities. Across the board, administrators, the magnet coordinator, teachers and students reported great success with the program. The program has been so successful, the school is using school-based funds to get additional visits from Dr. Jones and her team.

Challenges:

- The site visit revealed that although the magnet theme is defined (computer science/coding), it is not consistently integrated into all subjects and courses.
- There is currently no certified PLTW (Project Lead the Way) teacher at the school.

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development, with a focus on theme integration.
- Consider identifying computer science/coding skills/behaviors the school wants to instill in students. Consider three to four skills per grade level, scaffolding those skills from one grade to the next. Align those skills with the AVID WICOR strategies the school has introduced this year. Provide professional development that will allow teachers to embrace, practice and implement these strategies with fidelity.
- Work with the district to secure a certified PLTW teacher.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Collaboration is a structured part of regular planning. The site visit revealed there is some collaboration that addresses the magnet theme in ELA classes (with the support of Dr. Jones from *the dot*) and in some math and science classes. Science and math teachers report that it has been easy to connect their content to computational thinking.
- Modeling, practicing and reflecting are consistent strategies used in school-wide professional development. The leadership team regularly “shouts out” when they see excellent instruction happening in the classroom. Peer observations are also a regular part of professional development for teachers.
- Collaborative planning focuses on addressing academic excellence. This quarter the teachers are sharing successful strategies for working with small groups in their PLCs. School leadership has included “small groups” as a look-for item on their walk-through/observation tool.

Challenges:

- Although teachers reported they do share ideas about how to connect computer science and coding to their content, it is unclear to what extent a theme-based professional development plan exists, whether all teachers are trained in thematic instruction or if embedded theme-based professional development and reflection occurs.

Recommendations:

- Develop a professional development plan that will provide timely, relevant theme-based, job-embedded training and reflection. Work with the district to secure sustained funding for this professional development.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school has an MTSS Facilitator who progress monitors those students who need intensive interventions. Teachers look at data weekly in their PLCs and make plans for their intervention block.
- Per the NC Report Card, all students in the school are showing growth (grade level proficient scores) in math and most students are showing growth in reading.
- The school is working to embed AVID WICOR strategies in every lesson.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent teaching and learning focuses on theme-aligned instruction and researched-based design. AVID WICOR strategies have been introduced this year, but it is unclear to what extent

teachers are implementing the program with fidelity, especially with the large percentage of teachers (30%) who are new to the school this year. In addition, some core classes have uncertified guest teachers as their classroom teachers.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to provide timely, relevant, standards-based professional development in theme-aligned instruction.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Although according to the NC Report Card, the school has remained at a D score (47) for the past 2 years, they are showing growth (grade-level proficient scores) especially among Hispanic students in math:
 - Math: Asian students: 51.4% (2023), 35.5% (2022); Black students: 27.7% (2023), 26.8% (2022); Hispanic students: 34.7% (2023), 26.8% (2022); Caucasian students: 50.0% (2023), 40.0% (2022); economically disadvantaged students: 29.1% (2023), 23.0% (2022); and not economically disadvantaged students: 39.0% (2023), 32.1% (2022).
- To address academic improvement and attendance challenges, the school has instituted a program where participation in extracurricular activities is directly linked to each students' absences and grades.

Challenges:

- According to the NC Report Card, all groups have declined in reading:
 - Asian students: 42.9% (2023), 45.2% (2022); Black students: 35.8% (2023), 37.5% (2022); Hispanic students: 34.8% (2023), 35.1% (2022); Caucasian students: 52.9% (2023), 55% (2022); Economically Disadvantaged students: 31.6% (2023), 34.9% (2022); and not economically disadvantaged students: 51.0% (2023), 40.5% (2022).
- Although there is evidence of academic improvement and narrowing the achievement gap for Hispanics in math, it is unclear to what extent there is evidence of narrowing the achievement gap for all demographic groups in math and reading.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan that provides targeted support and intervention for all subgroups.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership

Successes:

- Strategic partnerships are cultivated to meet the unique needs of the magnet. The school has strong relationships with the Dottie Rose Foundation, *the dot* and Stay Plugged In. Both the Dottie Rose Foundation and Stay Plugged In provide unique career exploration opportunities for students at the school.
- Teachers reported that decisions are made collaboratively. One teacher reported, "If we need help, we get help."

Challenges:

- Although the leadership recognizes exceptional instruction - "Shout Outs" and "Celebrations" are a part of the culture - it is unclear to what extent the staff is coached to ensure the theme is implemented with fidelity.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to implement and integrate the magnet theme.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The district supports *the dot* providing the school with magnet theme implementation support.
- The magnet coordinator is a key player in partnership development and providing career exploration opportunities for students.
- The district has a K-12 computer science pathway.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent there is district curriculum support for theme integration.

Recommendations:

- Provide district support to the school to include professional development, coaching and sustained funding for a Magnet Coordinator to integrate the theme into all subject areas.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- The school has many career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships that enhance the magnet theme and benefit students. The magnet coordinator has fostered strong relationships with the Dottie Rose Foundation, *the dot* and Stay Plugged In. Both the Dottie Rose Foundation and Stay Plugged In provide unique career exploration opportunities for students at the school. The Dottie Rose Foundation funds field trips to Microsoft where students get to see what a day in the life of an Microsoft employee looks like as well as the path they took to get there. Dottie Rose also brings many career networking events to the school with their many partners such as Stay Plugged In, Dell, Charlotte ITP, Digibridge, Honeywell, as well as Women in Tech. UNC Charlotte students come in to help teachers with computational thinking concepts. In the focus group, both teachers and students reported how much they value these opportunities.
- 200 students participate in Junior Achievement's Biz Town experience each year where each student is assigned a career and has to work through all the conditions associated with a particular career - responsibilities, resources, budgets, etc. Students in the focus group reported that this experience was very worthwhile.
- The magnet coordinator works closely with the partners to make adjustments. Partners from the Dottie Rose Foundation and Stay Plugged in attended the focus group during the site visit.
- Both the district and the school support the partnership with *the dot*. After reviewing its success, the principal appropriated school-based funds to support more opportunities for teachers to work with *the dot* on theme-based integration.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent there is an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Develop an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- The school holds well-attended virtual parent meetings.
- The current PTA president is the parent of a sixth-grader with other children on their way to the school, so she is expected to stay in the position for quite some time. The PTA meets once a month and supports the school with fundraising for teacher appreciation and school-wide events and decorations.
- The school has a very strong parent-athletics group.
- Parents are invited (and many attend) the quarterly academic awards ceremony.
- Families are engaged through email and ParentSquare. Both the one parent in the focus group as well as the teachers interviewed at the site visit reported success with the school's policies and process for two-way communication.
- The creation of the new position of family advocate demonstrates the leaderships' commitment to engage families and support the schools' ML and Hispanic population.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent there is a representative parent group that participates in school operation decisions.
- Although the school improvement plan is publicly accessible to the parents and the community, it is unclear to what extent it is easily accessible for parents whose native language is not English.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to include parents in school operation decisions.
- Work with the district to make data such as the school improvement plan and academic progress not only publicly accessible but also easily accessible, especially for those families or community members whose native language is not English.

Overall Recommendations for Northridge Middle School:

- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development, with a focus on theme integration.
- Work with the district to develop school-based policies and activities that are designed to attract and retain students to support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration.
- Develop a system to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in diverse settings. Consider adding peer observation opportunities for teachers as well as including it as part of teacher observations and walk-throughs.
- Consider identifying those Computer Science/Coding skills/behaviors you want to instill in your students. Consider three to four skills per grade level, scaffolding those skills from one grade to the next. Align those skills with the AVID WICOR strategies the school has introduced this year. Provide professional development that will allow teachers to embrace, practice and implement these strategies with fidelity.

Northwest School of the Arts

Northwest School of the Arts			
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X	

2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations		X	
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school has a strong legacy and excellent reputation as an excellent arts magnet school and an innovative and family-friendly audition website and all materials are translated for non-English speaking families.

Challenges:

- The school's upcoming transition from a 6-12 is not popular with current families and faculty and while the school has done excellent work to make the audition process as easy as possible for applicants, it may provide more barriers for interested families when the school is 9-12 only.
- The school's racial and ethnic diversity is a real strength, however, over 75% of the current student body is female.
- Northwest School of the Arts student demographics are 45.8% Black, 31.4% Caucasian, 15.2% Hispanic and 39.6% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic, 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the emerging CMS all-arts middle school and current arts elementary schools to hire an independent marketing firm to help craft a K-12 arts pathway marketing campaign.
- Leverage incoming new technical arts offerings such as film, A/V engineering and creative media as attractive options for all students, but especially for boys. There are several CTE courses approved by the state of North Carolina connected to emerging creative arts careers such as gaming and art design. This would also potentially provide additional funding.
- Consider providing additional ways to "join" NWSA outside of a traditional audition process.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school's Principal has developed strong processes such as the four domains of excellence and the equity triangle that have created new opportunities for real-time teacher feedback and collaboration.

Challenges:

- The upcoming transition from 6-12 to 9-12 is a major concern for faculty and impacts every aspect of their practice.

Recommendations:

- Once there is clarity around how the transition will occur and what the process will look like, schedule brainstorming and strategic planning sessions with faculty to explore how they can ensure their systems and priorities remain in place to serve students while at the same time imagining what new opportunities would be available to the school as a 9-12 High School.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school is very open to and has had some initial success with cross-curricular collaboration and training in the arts.

Challenges:

- Until recently, each subject and arts discipline were siloed as independent teams.

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a thematic curriculum coach or specialist to help bridge instruction and arts in order to build on emerging systems of high quality instruction.
- Consider developing an all arts concentration vision for both student artistic growth and school-wide instructional collaboration.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The faculty recently experienced a cross-curricular professional development opportunity where an arts discipline was used to drive an instructional practice. It was well received and there is a genuine openness on the part of the staff for more.
- There is a strong instructional professional development plan that could be strengthened with additional thematic supports.

Challenges:

- The current faculty and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) composition doesn't have the operational bandwidth to facilitate regular and intentional thematic integration into core instruction.
- Embedded theme-based professional development has occurred a few times recently but is not yet a school-wide on-going practice.
- Collaborative planning amongst teachers for them to address the magnet theme is not systemized but due to a positive school faculty culture, some organic theme integrated collaboration occurs.

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a magnet coordinator to help bridge instruction and arts in order to build on emerging systems of high quality instruction.
- Create collaborative planning opportunities that focus on interdisciplinary arts integration both in the regular school schedule and professional development days (or partial days).

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- There is a common academic language and regular on-going data meetings.
- The school-wide teaching and learning philosophy uses multiple modes of learning and research-based practices in student learning and problem solving.

- Tiered interventions are utilized school-wide and the school's principal has brought in several new systems of coaching and instructional professional development that emphasize differentiated instruction.

Challenges:

- Students in upper grades can experience an arts-focused "Senioritis" where they become less motivated with the academic coursework in favor of their arts concentrations.

Recommendations:

- Continue to build upon the new systems of instruction and academic rigor and explore potential supports that reinforce individual student growth and achievement.
- Continue to work on school-wide theme integration to engage students in academic rigor.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- NWSA's High School Graduation rate is higher for all subgroups than the state and district average.
- According to the NC School Report Card, the school has exceeded growth expectations the last 4 years

Challenges:

- The upcoming transition from 6-12 to 9-12 will create budgeting and staffing challenges that could lead to some supports being removed as funding levels decrease.

Recommendations:

- Consider bringing AVID as a strand to NWSA to build upon the new systems of instruction and academic rigor.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership

Successes:

- The school's Principal has redefined the culture as one of collaboration and growth for all staff.
- Many of the current faculty are highly sought-after professionals with major artistic credentials.

Challenges:

- There is a need for additional arts concentration leadership and coordination.

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a magnet coordinator to help bridge instruction and arts in order to build on emerging systems of high quality instruction.
- The magnet coordinator position could serve as an arts department chair for the faculty.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- CMS has a long-term strategic K-12 arts pathway designed where NWAS is a central component.

Challenges:

- Major capital investments are being made for NWSA but there is a concern that additional investments are needed beyond new facilities.

Recommendations:

- Consider adding a “grants” position to the NWSA PTA to seek additional funding opportunities to support on-going needs for the school.
- Secure funding to hire a dedicated magnet coordinator who assists with magnet theme integration into all areas of the campus, assists with marketing and recruitment and supports magnet theme experiences for students.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Partnerships with Carolina Opera and the Charlotte Symphony and Steinway have provided high quality supports to many of the school’s performing arts concentrations. The school has an established partnership protocol.
- According to the parents in the focus group and faculty the school values input from all stakeholders.
- The district assists with arts partnerships.

Challenges:

- NWSA has excellent thematic partners but is in need of additional supporters and patrons who can leverage their resources to support the school.

Recommendations:

- Consider leveraging existing Pro Care days and invite community partners and potential supporters to attend shows and showcases as a way to expose them to the opportunities at NWSA.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- There is an active and supportive PTA and booster community for all arts concentrations with multiple events and resources.
- The school culture is described as “Positive, future-focused and scrappy.”
- The school uses ParentSquare to communicate with families often.

Challenges:

- The PTA is transitioning from a more “events for the sake of events” philosophy to one of strategic collaborative events.

Recommendations:

- Consider adding a “grants” position to the NWSA PTA to seek after additional funding opportunities to support on-going needs for the school.

Overall Recommendations for Northwest School of the Arts:

- Continue building academic rigor in instruction while leveraging arts integration as a strand for this strategy. This includes: building in additional opportunities throughout the year for cross-curricular collaboration to continue the process of breaking down team and department silos between arts and academics and considering strategies such as AVID to complement the art theme and support students in rigorous arts integrated curriculum.
- Consider hiring an outside marketing firm to develop a marketing campaign for the new NWSA High School and K-12 arts pathway in CMS.
- Consider hiring a dedicated magnet coordinator to oversee theme integration, marketing and recruiting.

Oakhurst STEAM Academy

Oakhurst STEAM Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school has an overview of marketing/recruitment, entrance/assignment and transportation policies outlined, including participation in the district's magnet fair, open houses and tours.
- The STEAM theme began in 2015 when the building was reopened after being closed for several years and multiple stakeholders reported the community's excitement when the school reopened.
- The assistant principal and principal have raised awareness of the school program at local churches and developed a relationship with the STEAM feeder middle school.

Challenges:

- Leadership team, parent representatives and administrators say that not enough community members know about the program. According to school staff the school is considered a "partial magnet."
- Several parents expressed confusion about the lottery process and what it means to be a 'partial magnet.'
- While the school has outlined marketing/recruitment, entrance/assignment and transportation policies, there are no identified indicators of success.
- Oakhurst STEAM Academy demographics are somewhat close to those of the district: 38.1% Black, 14.6% Caucasian, 36.4% Hispanic and 56% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged. Students attending the school through the magnet application are 44.9% Black/African American, 17.9% Caucasian and 23.7% Hispanic.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen efforts for marketing and recruitment. As recommended by the leadership team members, include additional magnet information on the website, including pictures/videos of students engaged in theme-related learning and a student-created promotional video.
- Hire a Magnet Program Coordinator to assist with targeted marketing/recruitment.

- Get clarity around “partial magnet” and the district assertion that all K-8 magnet schools are full-school theme implementation.
- Establish systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of efforts to promote equal access and reduce racial and socioeconomic group isolation and make adjustments as needed based on feedback and data analysis.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Multiple teachers report that the school culture supports reflection on teaching practices for improvement.
- The open house presentation includes diversity and information related to the magnet theme.
- The district has policies that emphasize the importance of diversity.
- The school offers marketing materials in Spanish.
- The school offers “SEL Skill Classes” and Capturing Kids’ Hearts.
- The principal is continuously working to “foster a culture of respect, acceptance and belonging where diversity is celebrated and valued as a strength.”

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of formalized training or support in effectively teaching in a diverse setting, leading to some challenges in addressing the needs of students from various backgrounds and promoting inclusivity in the classroom.

Recommendations:

- Provide consistent and ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers focused on inclusive teaching strategies, culturally responsive pedagogy and creating a supportive learning environment for all students.
- Collect data on student outcomes, experiences and perceptions related to inclusivity and use this information to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement and make data-driven decisions to support all learners.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school hosts a STEAM fair. Students work on projects for the fair in multiple core/elective classes. (media research, math-analyze the data they collected, ELA- read text related to their project).
- Students complete different projects with different technology tools and different grade levels.
- The school has created its own Engineering Design Process (according to the assistant principal) that is on posters on classroom walls throughout school.
- Students experience a STEAM special class every 6 days in which the teacher connects the learning to standards (ex. on the walkthrough, students were using stop motion software to tell a story that connects to literacy standards).
- Fifth grade hosts Science Day and utilizes interdisciplinary instruction to help students prepare for the event.
- The school takes multiple STEAM-related field trips.

Challenges:

- Multiple stakeholders were not able to articulate exactly what it means to be a STEAM school and are unable to make connections to the school's engineering design process.

Recommendations:

- Make intentional connections between all clubs and the magnet theme.
- Work to expand Science Day to all grade levels and include business/community partners.
- Work towards full core theme integration. Follow the principal's recommendation of finding smaller, simple ways for teachers to integrate STEAM into the core daily (ex. common language around STEAM, etc.).
- Clearly define what it means to be a STEAM school. The NC STEM School Progress Rubric from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is an excellent starting point.
- Analyze existing curriculum standards and identify areas where the theme can be naturally integrated across subjects.
- Involve local businesses, universities, or community experts in curriculum development to connect learning to real-world applications.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school builds in club time for multiple STEAM-related clubs to enhance extracurricular experiences.
- Teachers meet with consultants from *the dot* for monthly STEAM planning to collaborate around integrating STEAM into the core curriculum.
- The school has a culture of teamwork and support where teachers can learn from each other and collectively improve their teaching practices.

Challenges:

- When asked about theme-related professional learning, one leadership team member said, "There's just so much out there with STEAM and so much more that we could be doing. How do we get buy-in from staff? Where do we start? How do we keep our technology tools updated? How can we better connect STEAM to the real world?"
- The main focus of the school's professional development plan is on classroom management and standards-aligned instruction to meet the needs of the 76% of the staff members who are new.
- There is no required onboarding for the theme or for teaching in a diverse setting.
- Outside of the once-a-month STEAM planning with *the dot*, there is no ongoing, job-embedded, theme-related professional development.
- Collaborative planning among grade levels and subject areas does not occur.

Recommendations:

- Create intentional connections between North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and STEAM.
- Hire a STEAM coach/magnet coordinator or design opportunities for the current STEAM teacher to facilitate training for core teachers related to using technology tools to enhance core instruction and support marketing and recruiting for the STEAM theme.
- Create a theme-related professional learning plan.
- Advocate for district support for theme-related professional learning.

- Incorporate theme-related, job-embedded training opportunities into the professional development plan. This could involve mentoring programs, coaching sessions, peer observation and feedback, or collaborative planning sessions that focus on core theme integration.
- Examine and leverage the schedule to ensure collaborative planning opportunities are created for magnet theme integrated planning to occur - both across grade levels and vertically.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school uses MTSS for tiered support.
- When asked about the schoolwide instructional philosophy of teaching/learning, leadership team members reported that the school “leverages STEAM to focus on the whole child.”
- The school leverages “Boost Time” for intervention led by K-2 and 3-5 Literacy Coaches and 2 ESL Teachers.
- Grades 3-5 are departmentalized for the purpose of differentiating student learning.

Challenges:

- Parents, students, leadership team members and administrators all report that students are spending too much time with traditional newly-mandated district formative assessments.

Recommendations:

- Establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) where teachers from different subjects can collaborate to develop theme-aligned lesson plans and projects. This cross-disciplinary approach strengthens connections and student understanding.
- Provide professional learning on research-based teaching strategies that support theme integration.
- Explore methods like project-based learning, cooperative learning and technology integration.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- All subgroups met or exceeded academic growth for the last two years, according to the NC School Report Card.
- Students set goals related to data.
- School has an established process for reviewing, analyzing and adjusting instruction based upon disaggregated data.
- According to conversations with teachers, leadership team and administrators, the school has developed a strong network of support for analyzing behavior data and implementing behavioral interventions (ex. Ignite program).
- The school has quarterly reading, math and science academic data dive days where disaggregated data is presented to all PLCs and to the learning community.
- The school has developed a protocol for reviewing individual student data.

Challenges:

- The school is a Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school for consistently underperforming subgroups (Students with Disabilities -SWD- population not meeting growth).

Recommendations:

- Continue to closely monitor and adjust instruction for the SWD subgroup.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Theme-related teacher interview questions are used in hiring.
- The principal has a personal goal of retaining 75% of the staff for next year and had to fill 11 positions after being named in July.
- Evidence of collaborative decision-making exists (ex. multiple teachers on leadership/SIP teams, teacher surveys, making adjustments based on teacher feedback, etc.).
- The school has a STEAM committee to focus on core theme integration, extracurricular activities and STEAM-related events.
- Regular opportunities exist for sharing core theme integration-related successes among grade levels.
- A complex instructional coaching framework exists. All Coaches sit in on STEAM planning.
- The principal is open to and eager for professional learning on the STEAM theme.

Challenges:

- The school walkthrough tool does not include core theme integration.
- The principal is new to the school (started in July) and 26 of 34 teachers are beginning teachers and teacher retention was noted as an issue by administrators and leadership team members.
- There is no evidence of onboarding for new magnet teachers from the school or district level.

Recommendations:

- Ensure all coaches who participate in STEAM planning translate those strategies into their coaching sessions with new teachers. This provides targeted support for theme integration in the classroom.
- Revise the school walkthrough tool to include explicit observations of theme integration in lessons.
- Create a comprehensive onboarding program specifically for new magnet teachers. This program can introduce them to the school's theme, successful integration strategies and relevant resources. Consider involving experienced teachers as mentors. Explore partnering with the district to develop a system-wide onboarding program for magnet teachers.
- Showcase successful examples of theme integration within the school (across grade levels) by highlighting teacher accomplishments (staff shout outs in faculty meetings, newsletter, website, peer observations, etc.).

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district supports some magnet travel and expenses.
- The district has established magnet pathways.

Challenges:

- There is little consistency with district funding to maintain the needs of the magnet program. Some examples include: iPads were removed from the STEAM special by the district, a request to the magnet office for Ozobots was made to replace old Ozobots without a response, Lego robotics are outdated, VR Goggles need RocketLab to function and are no longer usable.
- There is not an opportunity for principals/teachers from theme-alike schools to network.
- Magnets are not included in the district's strategic plan.
- The school does not have a dedicated magnet coordinator for integrating the theme.

Recommendations:

- District funding is needed to keep the STEAM program current and innovative.
- Provide theme-alike networking, professional learning and onboarding opportunities for principals, magnet program coordinators and teacher leaders.
- Analyze and advocate for equitable distribution of resources across schools within the district to ensure all programs are attractive options for a diverse student body.
- Develop a comprehensive financial sustainability plan for magnet programs that outlines dedicated funding sources, budget allocation and resource allocation strategies.
- Explore grant opportunities, partnerships and fundraising efforts to supplement district funding and support long-term sustainability.
- Provide dedicated curriculum support and development resources to assist magnet schools in designing, implementing and refining theme-aligned instructional materials and programming.
- Offer professional development opportunities, curriculum planning workshops and access to instructional coaches or specialists to support teachers in implementing innovative instructional practices that align with the magnet themes.
- Develop a comprehensive promotion and marketing strategy to raise awareness of magnet programs, attract prospective students and engage families and communities in the benefits of magnet schools.
- Ensure that magnet programs are fully integrated into the district's strategic planning process.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The principal describes the PTA as “small but mighty.” PTA has a strong social media presence and informational bulletin board at the entrance of the school.
- The school has theme aligned partnerships, including: 100 Gardens and *the dot* as well as additional partnerships unrelated to the theme: SWIRL, Clay Works, local community helpers, Augustine Literacy, Heart Math.
- The school hosts a STEM Career Day centered around vehicles.
- *the dot* hosts SMART girls for every 5th grade girl that affords opportunities for participation in STEAM-related activities.
- The school has partners who are hungry to have more participation in the PTA or forming a business advisory committee. Community partners in the focus group noted that the school emphasizes the importance of authentic partnerships where business and community partners engage with the students.

Challenges:

- The school has multiple partnerships but few are directly aligned with the magnet theme.
- The school does not have an established protocol for welcoming stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Develop a clear process for forming theme-related partnerships.
- Create a welcoming protocol for incoming stakeholders (parents, community members, businesses). This could involve introductory packets, informational workshops or designated staff members to answer questions.

- Explore the possibility of forming a "Theme Advisory Committee" with representatives from businesses, organizations and community experts relevant to the theme. This committee can provide valuable feedback and support theme-related initiatives.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school culture was described by partners with these words: "potential," "diverse," "integrating," "vivacious" and "caring."
- The school has a PTA that is actively involved in School Improvement Planning (SIP) and supports the school with the theme (STEAM Block Party, STEM night, etc.).
- ParentSquare is used as a parent communication tool.
- Each grade level produces a regularly distributed newsletter with theme-related information- Oakhurst Observers.
- Multiple theme-related activities exist to engage families: STEAM Night, Science Day, STEAM Fair, STEAM showcases.
- The school is working on building additional partnerships for supporting after school activities.

Challenges:

- Connect the work of the PTA to the school's theme.

Recommendations:

- Establish regular joint planning meetings between school leadership and the PTA.
- Encourage teachers to use parent-teacher conferences as an opportunity to discuss the theme's relevance to individual student learning.
- Expand on existing events like "STEAM Night" by rebranding them as "STEAM Family Fun Nights." This emphasizes the family aspect and encourages broader participation. Design activities suitable for various age groups and family members to learn and have fun together around the theme.

Overall Recommendations for Oakhurst STEAM Academy:

- Clearly define what it means to be a STEAM school and leverage that definition in marketing materials and recruitment strategies. Highlight successful theme integration in classrooms.
- Create a theme-based professional development plan that equips teachers with strategies for integrating STEAM across subjects. As a part of the plan, teachers should collaborate to develop theme-aligned lesson plans and projects throughout the curriculum rather than in one isolated monthly STEAM planning.
- Advocate for district funding to maintain the STEAM program's currency and innovativeness.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to assist with targeted marketing/recruitment and ongoing theme integration efforts.

Oaklawn Language Academy

Oaklawn Language Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		

2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development			X
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations		X	
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Oaklawn provides multiple tours and informational sessions throughout the year.
- Oaklawn's brochure lists "skills needed," to help parents identify how it may be a fit for their child.
- CMS has a school choice lottery.
- There is guaranteed transportation for families within the school's transportation zone.

Challenges:

- Oaklawn's location requires a significant drive for families outside its attendance zone. This may be a deterrent to attracting families that could reduce racial and socioeconomic group isolation.
- Oaklawn is the only dual language school that does not have a new/newer facility.
- The school demographics are 25.9% Black, 8% Caucasian, 63.8% Hispanic and 65.4 % economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Consider providing a shuttle stop from the Huntersville area to Oaklawn with no other stops.
- Consider including a new facility for Oaklawn in the CMS capital outlay fund.
- Develop diversity goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Oaklawn has a clearly articulated vision statement emphasizing the importance of student diversity.
- All classes visited reflect the diversity of the community.
- Staff composition reflects the diversity in the community and the district according to school staff.
- Teachers express a strong commitment to their students and to each other and the teacher retention rate is high. There are no teacher vacancies.
- Some teachers loop with their students, fostering strong relationships and trust.
- Teachers bring their own children to the school.
- There was evidence of inclusive teaching practices in each classroom visited during the school site visit.
- The teacher and parent focus groups spoke of the value of diversity at the school.
- Oaklawn successfully recruits highly qualified international teachers through sponsorship and visa

programs.

Challenges:

- International teachers must be replaced once their Educational Partners International (EPI) ends or their HB-1 visa expires.

Recommendations:

- Implement a district process for assisting teachers with HB-1 visas to receive a green card, so their temporary status in the U.S. can become permanent. If not a district process, provide autonomy for schools to provide this support for their international teachers.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Evidence of the magnet theme permeates the school, including common areas, offices and classrooms.
- The theme is articulated within and between grade levels K-8.
- Oaklawn has three Multi-Classroom Leaders (MCLs) who provide ongoing support to teachers for alignment and improvement of theme integration in all classes and subjects.
- Teachers and MCLs have been resourceful in identifying and acquiring supplemental instructional materials that support integration of the theme in reading and math.

Challenges:

Some district-mandated materials do not support or are not aligned with the school's magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Provide magnet schools with autonomy to use alternative high-quality, theme- and standards-aligned curriculum materials that support their unique school theme.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Training and support for theme integration are provided by the school's MCLs.
- Teachers are provided coverage so they can engage in job-embedded professional development, observing in each other's classrooms.
- Teachers meet weekly in PLCs using a structure that pairs those who teach content in Spanish with those who teach content in English. This facilitates collaboration in planning for theme integration.
- Teachers provide professional development for each other on topics of interest and choice.
- Art, physical education and music teachers engage in professional development to identify academic content that can be extended or reinforced through specials.
- Oaklawn's theme is embedded in every school event, such as learning about Afro-Latino connections during Black History Month.
- Teachers receive professional development on content (ex. math), pedagogy (ex. Teach Like a Champion) and intervention programs (ex. i-Station) in order to support the learning needs of all students.

Challenges:

- *Intentionally left blank*

Recommendations:

- Consider developing a calendar specifically for theme-based professional development, perhaps in collaboration with the CMS Magnet Office.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school has adopted the Teach Like a Champion instructional model, which provides equitable access to the curriculum through engaging, responsive and adaptive instruction.
- Teachers engage students in Socratic seminars.
- Middle school teachers incorporate AVID strategies to support college and career readiness.
- MCLs support all teachers in PLCs and in classrooms to review data quarterly and make curricular adjustments and implement timely interventions.
- All middle school ELA and math courses are honors, with the exception of 8th (because the district scope and sequence has honors math in 9th grade).

Challenges:

- District-provided curriculum and intervention materials provide only limited support for differentiation and tiered interventions.
- MCLs and teachers have to make numerous adaptations and create their own materials for differentiation and intervention, which is time-consuming.

Recommendations:

- Provide professional development from the district on alternate assessments and interventions within theme-based instruction.
- Provide magnet schools with autonomy to use alternative high-quality, theme- and standards-aligned curriculum materials that support their unique school theme.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Per the NC Report Card Oaklawn exceeded its academic growth goal for math and met its growth goal for reading in 22-23.
- Per the NC Report Card the percentage of Oaklawn students demonstrating proficiency in reading, math and science exceeded both CMS and the state in 22-23.
- Oaklawn's college and career-ready rate exceeded CMS and the state in 22-23.
- In addition to annual proficiency and growth data, Oaklawn also monitors and reviews progress monitoring data (ex. DIBELS) and behavior and suspensions to inform school improvement strategies and action steps.

Challenges:

- The NC Report Card data do not appear to match trend data provided by the school. Per the NC Report Card, English learner proficiency is trending downward.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that target proficiency levels are being met in the classroom.
- Cross-check NC Report Card data with school-generated data to determine accuracy.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The theme is being implemented with a high level of fidelity throughout the school.
- Teachers are empowered to make instructional decisions that best meet the needs of their students, within the “non-negotiable” expectations for high quality instruction and theme fidelity.
- Instructional walkthrough and evaluation tools are focused on building teachers’ instructional capacity and leadership.

Challenges:

- Although Oaklawn has been very successful at recruiting and hiring exceptional guest teachers (those with HB-1 or J-1 visas), these teachers are available for a limited time.

Recommendations:

- Implement a district process for assisting teachers with HB-1 visas to receive a green card, so their temporary status in the U.S. can become permanent. If not a district process, provide autonomy for schools to provide this support for their international teachers.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The district has clear K-12 pathways for students in dual language magnet programs.
- Like other magnet schools reviewed, the staff report feeling that CMS values its magnet school programs, but their variety of factors (financial, political, changes in leadership) have sometimes posed challenges to sustaining program integrity.

Challenges:

- Oaklawn no longer has a dedicated magnet coordinator.
- The district has not recently provided any professional development support for magnet theme integration, planning, monitoring, etc.

Recommendations:

- Consider including a full-time magnet coordinator in the staffing model for all magnet schools.
- Make available district-provided professional development on theme development, theme integration and other topics specific to magnet schools.
- In partnership with district staff, design a sustainability plan to align supports to ensure program integrity including but not limited to financial resources.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- Oaklawn has numerous business sponsors that provide resources and supports for students’ academic, social and emotional benefit.

Challenges:

- There is not an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and School Improvement Team (SIT) to develop a partnership protocol, with a focus on partnerships to enhance the magnet theme and student learning.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Oaklawn has a large and very active PTA, with members committed to inclusive practices that engage all families in ways that meet their unique situations.
- Oaklawn has a thriving SIT that builds the capacity of parents to participate in informed decision making in collaboration with school staff.
- School improvement plans, data, action steps and progress are shared and discussed with parents during SIT meetings.
- The PTSA align their support to priority initiatives and needs for student achievement that are identified during SIT meetings.
- Oaklawn's parents utilize ParentSquare and other social media platforms as a tool for communication and networking with the school and each other.
- Parents partner with teachers to bring relevance to lessons by sharing their expertise and experience on various topics in the classroom.

Challenges:

- *Intentionally left blank*

Recommendations:

- *Intentionally left blank*

Overall Recommendations for Oaklawn Language Academy:

- Develop a consistent, comprehensive district plan to address retention of highly qualified, highly effective guest teachers (international) for dual language magnet programs.
- Provide magnet schools with autonomy to use alternative high-quality, theme- and standards-aligned curriculum materials that support their unique school theme.
- Make available district-provided professional development on theme development, theme integration and other topics specific to magnet schools.
- In partnership with district staff, design a sustainability plan to align supports to ensure program integrity - including but not limited to financial resources.

Park Road Montessori School

Park Road Montessori School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		

9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- While its current demographics do not match the district's, the school is proud of recent progress made in adding families to the school who move them closer to their diversity goals.
- There is a strong belief at the school that Montessori is an excellent option for every child.

Challenges:

- The current CMS Lottery process, along with sibling preferences and the school's geographic preference zone tend to skew accepted lottery applications towards the surrounding community which is largely Caucasian. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students at the school according to NC Report Card data is 16.9%, much lower than the district's 47.3%. The school demographics are 15.7% Black, 60.4% Caucasian and 8.2% Hispanic whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian and 30.6% Hispanic.
- All stakeholders report a lack of awareness on the part of minority families of Montessori as an option within CMS.
- Parents report significant frustration with the CMS lottery and application process, multiple parents stated their perception that the entire process was "rigged."

Recommendations:

- Develop diversity goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.
- Consider partnering with other CMS Montessori schools to host pop-up Montessori Fairs with info on the programs and lottery application assistance for families in majority minority communities.
- Consider a demographic study on the racial and ethnic make-up of the school's new geographic preference zone in the new neighborhood where the school will relocate to next year.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Faculty report general satisfaction with the level of diversity and cultural competency training and support. School staff reports that recently the entire faculty underwent a year-long professional development provided by the Winters Group on cultural competency as well as participating in CMS anti-bias training. The staff reports having held several book studies and discussion groups on the subject.
- Park Road hosts various Montessori regional conferences in which diversity is a major topic of discussion and learning.

Challenges:

- School leadership reports a desire to attract a diverse staff of teachers to the school and uncertainty around best practices to identify and recruit teachers that would help with their staff diversity goals.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with CMS Talent Development to identify three to four University Degree Programs with Montessori endorsements as recruiting targets for new teachers - highlighting Park Road and other CMS Montessori schools as one of the few public school districts with Montessori programs.
- Consider partnering with CMS Curriculum and Instruction to have high capacity Park Road teachers present and share at various CMS trainings on Montessori strategies and interventions that translate into CMS general instruction as a way to raise the visibility and effectiveness of Montessori with educators throughout the district.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- All Park Road classroom and many related arts teachers are Montessori certified and the majority of the faculty have long tenures at the school.
- One teacher reported being inspired years ago to get her teacher's license and undergo Montessori certification after seeing the impact of the program on her own children when they were enrolled at Park Road.
- The faculty report that the success of JT Williams as a thematic continuation of Montessori for grades 7-12 has resulted in better parent satisfaction and supports knowing that their child has an excellent Montessori next step after Park Road.

Challenges:

- Faculty report significant challenges and frustrations with various aspects of mandated CMS curriculum and assessments being out of alignment with the Montessori philosophy.
- Parents also reported concerns around their child's experience at the school with the discrepancies between Montessori and CMS - particularly with testing.
- Two long-time members of the Faculty with significant Montessori experience and influence are retiring at the end of this year.

Recommendations:

- Consider scheduling annual teacher-student-parent "data meetings" to show families the sum total of learning and progress made by students as a way to mitigate confusion from individual assessments not in alignment with Montessori.
- Consider partnering with CMS Talent Management to propose to Park Road's outgoing (due to retirement) faculty part-time or "120-day" positions as thematic coaches for the CMS Montessori Cohort as a way to leverage their significant experience and insight towards great supports for all Montessori schools as well as giving them the flexibility of schedule with less hours in the work week.
- Consider the potential of seeing if the outgoing faculty could become certified AMS or CGMS Montessori trainers with the ability to provide direct Montessori certification for CMS staff as a way to streamline, expedite and potentially simplify the process for staff to receive their Montessori certification while teaching in CMS.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school has traditionally hosted various area and regional Montessori conferences in past years.

- The school is regularly able to use PTA funds to send teachers to annual Montessori conferences and trainings. The school has a long history of PTA supported supplemental opportunities for staff to have access to Montessori professional development.
- The faculty report that the Lead Montessori Teacher also provides specific coaching and supports the school's teaching assistants.

Challenges:

- Despite the many opportunities for varied and unique thematic PD supports at the school, almost all opportunities outside of professional learning communities (PLCs), book-studies and the annual symposium are funded by the school's PTA.
- The upcoming retirement of two long-time faculty with significant Montessori expertise will potentially create a knowledge and experience gap in the faculty.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with CMS Talent Management to propose to Park Road's outgoing (retiring) faculty part-time or "120-day" positions as thematic coaches for the CMS Montessori Cohort as a way to leverage their significant experience and insight towards great supports for all Montessori schools as well as giving them the flexibility of schedule with less hours in the work week.
- Consider hosting a virtual winter Montessori symposium with a stipend on a Saturday in January or February to provide additional Montessori specific professional development to Park Road and other CMS Montessori teachers.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Park Road leadership, in conjunction with faculty, have developed a rubric for walk-throughs and observations centered on CMS standards and scope/sequence through a Montessori thematic approach and framework.
- Parents reported during the focus group, despite frustration with the CMS testing frequency, an appreciation for the need for academic benchmarks as an objective measure of student progress.
- The schoolwide philosophy of teaching and learning uses multiple modes of learning and it is likely that due to the Park Road faculty's depth of knowledge and experience that the school has the highest rate of Montessori implementation across the district due to their ability to leverage the many aspects of Montessori to differentiate specific individualized instruction to all students.
- The school uses a variety of formative assessments and tiered interventions to ensure student success with the theme through teacher-student collaborations on work-plans and the school's coordination of the CMS MTSS framework.

Challenges:

- The frequency of CMS adjustments, testing and non-aligned mandates create a heavy work-load for staff to continue calibrating and re-calibrating for Montessori implementation.

Recommendations:

- Continue to lean in with and celebrate Park Road's approach to Montessori instruction in a public K-12 context as a "best of both worlds" strategy that leads towards increasing diversity, student confidence and hands-on real-world learning experiences.

- Consider scheduling annual teacher-student-parent “data meetings” to show families the sum total of learning and progress made by students as a way to mitigate confusion from individual assessments not in alignment with Montessori.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Park Road has a strong track record of academic achievement leading to a well-earned reputation as a school with excellent academics (earning A or B status from NC each year since 2014).
- Students of all demographics consistently demonstrate higher levels of achievement than those same subgroups across the district and state.
- Park Road faculty recently completed Positive Discipline professional development with an emphasis on its implementation in Montessori and uses attendance in all MTSS processes.

Challenges:

- Faculty report significant concerns with the impact of COVID-19 and the resulting uncertainty and on-going isolation on current students and families in regards to mental health, screen/device dependence and increasing difficulties in self-advocacy.
- Faculty also report concerns with a growing sense of deteriorating boundaries between students and parents (ex. parents doing more and more while students do less and less).

Recommendations:

- Consider identifying one-two community mental health providers as potential partners for faculty and staff training
- Consider contacting fellow CMS Magnet School University Park for information on their school’s Family Mental Health Night held earlier this year.
- Consider leveraging current Park Road family commitments to strong academics at various family events and showcases through discussions and presentations.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Students report a strong sense of relational connections with their teachers.
- Faculty report that their input and opinions are regularly requested for many decisions - including scheduling.
- The school has a strong tradition of Montessori experience and capacity - the former principal is now the principal at JT Williams.

Challenges:

- There are significant concerns, at Park Road and throughout the CMS Montessori cohort, around identifying, recruiting and retaining qualified, licensed and Montessori certified teachers.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with CMS Magnets to offer Montessori certification to classroom assistants to help develop a pipeline of emerging and qualified teachers.
- Consider partnering with the Montessori organization to market CMS and Park Road as one of the few public Pre-12 Montessori offerings in the United States as a way to attract interested Montessori teachers.

- Consider partnering with CMS Talent Development to identify three to four University Degree Programs with Montessori endorsements as recruiting targets for new teachers - highlighting Park Road and other CMS Montessori schools as one of the few public school districts with Montessori programs.
- Consider inviting members from the NC State Senate and House, along with representatives from the NC Department of Education to visit and tour the school, meet students and see for themselves first-hand what Montessori education in a public setting is like.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Park Road will be moving to a newer building location as part of a district-wide realignment. The school's current facility is in rough shape and all stakeholders shared agreement that the new building was long overdue.
- Parents reported strong enthusiasm for their students to continue onto JT Williams.

Challenges:

- There is a high degree of ambiguity around how magnet and non-magnet funding are and are not available to the school.

Recommendations:

- Consider placing all Montessori magnet schools under the same Community Superintendent in order to streamline communication and accountability between CMS and School Leaders at all Montessori Schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Service, generosity and a desire to give back to the community is a strong and vital component of the school's culture.
- The faculty report a strong desire and interest in the possibility of identifying and building strong, mutually beneficial and Montessori-supportive partnerships - especially once established in their new location.
- Faculty even reported excitement around the idea of encouraging students to imagine and initiate new community partnerships to complement and enhance their own learning.
- It is likely that this could very easily become a strength for the school.

Challenges:

- There is ambiguity around what a community partner/partnership is.
- There is likely confusion around what Montessori is among the surrounding community and area businesses.

Recommendations:

- After moving into the new location, consider hosting one to two Park Road community open houses to invite local businesses, neighbors and community stakeholders to tour the building and see the school in action.
- Consider collaborating with CMS Magnets around developing a common language and definition around the concepts of community partnership, sponsorship and service.

- Consider piloting a 6th-grade student-led community partnership collaborative where students identify a practical skill or real-world concept they want to learn more about and contact an expert or practitioner in the community to meet with and learn from.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- One parent reported during the focus group “This school literally saved my family - my oldest has special needs and would have gotten lost without this school. They are seen and loved - not challenged and squashed.”
- School leaders and faculty consistently referenced the multiple ways the PTA has financed, funded and provided supports for the school, its faculty and its students.
- Parents reported feeling strongly protective of and having a high desire to continue supporting teachers.

Challenges:

- According to staff, the school has become a victim of its own success because of its long history of strong academics and positive reputation. Once their child is enrolled many parents go on auto-pilot and disengage because they assume the school will simply “work its magic.”
- While parents had a high opinion of and commitment to Park Road, they reported a less favorable opinion of CMS, the overall magnet lottery and of long-term commitments to the Montessori cohort.

Recommendations:

- Consider leveraging high levels of parent participation and attendance at school performances and show-cases by including Montessori education and orientation in the programs (ex. songs - then parent updates - then more songs).
- Consider proposing the addition of a “grants” position to the school’s PTA leadership with the purpose of year-long applications for small and medium sized grants to generate a discretionary fund for the principal to support internal school initiatives on an as-needed basis.
- Consider partnering with CMS Communications to make Park Road a “CMS Highlight” school where regular Superintendent interviews, media requests and visits from state and national guests include Park Road as a way to raise the school’s profile and leverage its reputation to lend additional credibility to major CMS initiatives.

Overall Recommendations for Park Road Montessori School:

- Develop diversity goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.
- Consider partnering with other CMS Montessori schools to host pop-up Montessori Fairs with info on the programs and lottery application assistance for families in majority minority communities.
- Consider a demographic study on the racial and ethnic make-up of the school’s new geographic preference zone in the new neighborhood where the school will relocate to next year.
- Consider partnering with CMS magnet schools to offer Montessori certification to classroom assistants to help develop a pipeline of emerging and qualified teachers.
- Consider partnering with the Montessori organization to market CMS and Park Road as one of the few public Pre-12 Montessori offerings in the US as a way to attract interested Montessori teachers.
- Consider collaborating with the school’s PTA to contact other CMS Montessori school PTA groups to advocate together at the state and local level for greater supports for and recognition of Montessori as

an accepted teacher licensure program at the state level.

Paw Creek Elementary School - Computer Science STEM

Paw Creek Elementary School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school hosts open houses multiple times a year to market and recruit magnet families. Families are able to meet staff, learn about the school's magnet program, ask questions and see students working in real time on STEM activities.
- The principal reports that the school accommodates families who request tours outside of scheduled open houses.
- The school distributes fliers and brochures to pre-schools in the violet zone.

Challenges:

- The school does not have a formalized marketing and recruitment plan. The school demographics are 51.4% Black, 7.4% Caucasian, 33.1% Hispanic and 56.1% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.
- The principal reports that many community members are unaware of the purpose of magnets in the district and, therefore, do not realize that they are an option.
- The principal feels that Title I status negatively impacts the attractiveness of the school for prospective parents.
- The principal reports that location is a challenge to diversity.
- The district's goal is to have an elementary STEM pathway in every color zone. The pathways are unclear and confusing to parents and leadership.
- School leadership has expressed the need for district support in regards to marketing and recruitment and messaging related to the lottery process.
- Parents in the focus group described the lottery process as stressful and confusing.

Recommendations:

- Develop a clear targeted marketing and recruitment plan to ensure the student demographics move

closer to mirroring those of the district.

- Assess the current marketing and recruitment strategies to identify any biases or barriers that may be hindering student enrollment that mirrors that of the district.
- Include marketing information on the school's website.
- Include marketing as a part of the school's strategic plan, including goals, strategies and measurable outcomes.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to lead a magnet program marketing/recruitment team.
- Advocate for additional district support for marketing and recruitment.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Some staff have been trained on GLEAM- implementing instruction that is grade-level, engaging, affirming and meaningful.
- The school offers multi-language flyers and recruitment letters for diverse families.
- The district has a policy statement that emphasizes the importance of student diversity.
- It is clear that the teachers have a focus on teaching in diverse settings that focus on the magnet theme. There are multiple artifacts at multiple grade levels that illustrate inclusive teaching practices/strategies (ex. affirmations wall, collaborative learning, norms/expectations, flexible instructional strategies, supportive classroom environments, individualized support for students).
- One of the CMS core values is diversity. One of the Paw Creek documented core values is family: "Everyone is valued and respected."
- All students participate in the magnet program.
- School has a diverse teaching staff.

Challenges:

- There is not a clear system in place to measure the effectiveness of teaching the magnet theme in a diverse setting.

Recommendations:

- Provide mandatory diversity and inclusion training for all staff, including teachers, administrators and support personnel.
- Include diversity in the periodic classroom walkthroughs already happening to assess the representation of diversity in curriculum materials, classroom displays and instructional practices.
- Use data to identify areas of need and track progress towards achieving integration goals.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Technology tools are integrated into all subjects and grade levels. During the site visit, students were using Spheros and Finch robots to solve math problems, Scratch coding to create pollinators, legos to build birds, etc. Students were utilizing the engineering/design process to engineer a zipline for PeterPan to get to Neverland. Technology tool usage was connected with standards in all instances.
- Collaborative learning was occurring throughout the school and students were actively engaged in learning.
- Each teacher is assigned a bulletin board that must reflect the computer science theme.

- Specialists collaborate with core teachers for planning and infuse STEM-related activities that connect to core standards.
- The school uses regular student focus groups as a tool for evaluating theme implementation.

Challenges:

- A common understanding of what it means to be a STEM school is not evident. Leadership team, teachers and students were able to name technology tools used to support learning, but were unable to articulate the knowledge, skills and abilities related to the STEM theme for each grade level.
- It was difficult for students to elaborate on what makes the school a STEM school, outside of using robots and hands-on learning.

Recommendations:

- Create formalized learner profiles that explicitly articulate knowledge, skills and abilities related to the STEM theme for each level (ex. by the end of Kindergarten, STEM learners will be able to...).
- Create a clear definition of STEM learning to support core theme integration so that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of what it means to be a STEM school. The NC STEM School of Distinction Rubric is a great resource to support this work.
- Create formalized curriculum documents that illustrate how the theme is integrated into subject and grade levels.
- Include more theme-related signage and theme-related visuals throughout the building (like the Legos around the front hallway door).
- Explicitly include core theme integration into the SIP and accompanying plan.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) meet with the Science Facilitator weekly to plan and collaborate on upcoming lessons. The facilitator dives into the lessons, models and adds ways to embed computer science content into existing lessons. Grade levels meet with Dottie Rose Consulting. Along with the STEM facilitator, teams collaborate with the consultant to plan computer science lessons and special projects that are embedded into math and literacy.
- There is quarterly school wide professional development related to STEM (ex.. Discovery Place).
- The school excels at having students utilize technology tools to support standards-aligned learning (ex. Book Creator for 3rd grade EL unit on Frogs, Finch robots for Math, etc.)

Challenges:

- The school does not have a formalized theme-based professional development plan.

Recommendations:

- Teachers are trained in utilizing technology tools, but need professional learning related to other aspects of STEM (Inquiry Based Learning, Project Based Learning, Connecting Learning to the Real World, etc.) once a clear, common definition of STEM is formalized and established.
- Create interdisciplinary planning time with the specific purpose of core theme integration.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school has multiple systems for tiered instruction that reflect the computer science theme.

- Multiple modes of learning were evidenced in the school tour, including: hands-on learning, collaborative learning, visual cues-anchor charts, technology-enhanced learning, etc.).
- There are multiple pieces of evidence that show a variety of formative assessments (comic books, journaling, small group assessments, conversations, exit tickets, think-pair-share, etc.)
- Multiple formative assessments are used to look at subgroup performance at least one day per week for each PLC.
- There is evidence of tiered intervention that supports the theme.
- According to the NC School Report Card, the school has exceeded growth for the last 5 years.

Challenges:

- While many exceptionally powerful instructional examples were observed on the school tour, a clearly defined schoolwide philosophy for teaching/learning related to the theme is not formalized.

Recommendations:

- Formalize a schoolwide instructional approach/philosophy for teaching and learning.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Teachers use a weekly planning agenda to analyze assessment data and benchmarks, then differentiate their plans and flexible groups based on the data.
- Multi-classroom lead teachers and administrators meet with grade levels weekly to discuss assessment data. These discussions are used to make decisions about flexible groups across the grade level.
- Each teacher has a data tracker and *students* analyze their data, goals and growth.
- For the last two years, all subgroups met or exceeded academic growth.
- Multiple formative assessments, including a new district formative assessment (MBPAs), iReady, school assessments, etc. are used to measure students and determine instructional action steps, including expanding the Read to Achieve (RTA) model across grade levels.
- The school has an established clear data protocol that includes disaggregating student data (including discipline/attendance data) and being transparent about sharing that data collaboratively among various teams/stakeholders in the school.

Challenges:

- Students and school leadership report an excessive number of tests.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with other schools or districts to share best practices and expertise in data-driven decision-making and achievement gap closure.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The principal was the 2022-2023 CMS principal of the year.
- Multiple teachers expressed leadership's support of instructional risk-taking and innovation.
- Questions about computer science/STEM integration are a part of the teacher interview process. Teachers participate in the interview process for new hires.
- The school hosts regular student focus groups that guide decision-making

- There is a low teacher turnover rate and the administrative team works to build internal leadership capacity as evidenced by guest teachers, supporting teacher assistant staff with moving into teaching roles, retirees from the school returning to teach, etc.
- The school leadership team includes teachers, administrators, parents and students.
- The school has four instructional coaches where coaches connect with teachers four days a week during planning.
- Each grade level has a STEM lead teacher.
- The principal has built in relationships and trust with the staff through regular communication, accessibility and visibility.

Challenges:

- There are not formalized processes in place to ensure the theme is being implemented with fidelity.

Recommendations:

- Leverage instructional coaches to intentionally support core magnet theme integration.
- Create a walkthrough tool with clear teacher/student look-fors related to the magnet theme. Use the walkthrough tool as a way to measure theme implementation.
- Provide regular opportunities for the STEM lead teacher from each grade level to connect.
- Advocate for the district to provide opportunities for theme-alike connections with leaders in STEM programs for networking and idea-exchange.
- Hire a magnet coordinator to support core theme integration.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has pathways established for magnet themes from K-12.
- The principal has been savvy with the school budget to ensure necessary components (specials related to the theme, before school clubs related to the theme, etc.) of the program are in place.

Challenges:

- The district strategic plan does not include magnets.
- The principal reports more district theme-related support is needed.
- The principal was not aware of the district's magnet funding request form.
- Historically, the middle school in the pathway has had a negative stigma according to the Principal.
- The principal loves to attend and take the leadership team/teachers to the Magnet School of America annual conference. According to her, multiple school representatives were supposed to attend this year, but then the district abruptly pulled the funding.
- According to the principal, funding from the magnet office has been inconsistent year-to-year which makes it difficult for program planning.
- The school is losing staffing allocations based on socioeconomic status of students next year and needs those funds to continue offering theme-related specials in STEM and Science.

Recommendations:

- Analyze and advocate for equitable distribution of resources across schools within the district to ensure all programs are attractive options for a diverse student body.
- Develop a comprehensive financial sustainability plan for magnet programs that outlines dedicated funding sources, budget allocation and resource allocation strategies.

- Ensure that magnet schools receive sufficient funding to support their unique themes, initiatives and programming needs.
- Explore grant opportunities, partnerships and fundraising efforts to supplement district funding and support long-term sustainability.
- Provide dedicated curriculum support and development resources to assist magnet schools in designing, implementing and refining theme-aligned instructional materials and programming.
- Offer professional development opportunities, curriculum planning workshops and access to instructional coaches or specialists to support teachers in implementing innovative instructional practices that align with the magnet themes.
- Develop a comprehensive promotion and marketing strategy to raise awareness of magnet programs, attract prospective students and engage families and communities in the benefits of magnet schools.
- Ensure that magnet programs are fully integrated into the district's strategic planning process.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has established multiple partnerships that enhance the magnet theme and benefit students, including UNCC, Mecklenburg Soil and Water, NC Science Festival, Duke Energy, Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Library, Dottie Rose Foundation and All State Internet Safety.
- UNCC created the STEM Panther path on campus- an outdoor learning path with various STEM stations.
- The school has an active PTA that supports theme-related events (ex. Grilled Cheese STEM Fraction event, Science Program, STEM Career Day, etc.)
- The school has partnered with OutTeach to create outdoor learning spaces.

Challenges:

- It is unclear if the district effectively communicates the magnet theme and its potential benefits to businesses and organizations.
- There is no formalized process for establishing and welcoming business and community partners.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district while simultaneously seeking out additional partnerships.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of partnerships and make adjustments to ensure they remain mutually beneficial and sustainable.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school's website includes links to active social media sites.
- Each grade level plans and conducts an evening of STEM, literacy and learning.
- All parents have access to ParentSquare.
- The school hosts multiple events- curriculum night, family fun night, parent breakfasts, etc.
- The school has a monthly PTA newsletter and there are weekly grade level newsletters that include STEM.
- STEM-based early release day is a way the school showcases the theme.

- Parents reported positive school culture and climate, as they described it with words like: “unbelievable, village, community, etc.”

Challenges:

- Parents are unclear about when certain events are happening.
- Parents raised concerns about lack of funding for the magnet program and staffing.

Recommendations:

- Create a calendar of events that is regularly scheduled.
- Work to streamline parent communications.

Overall Recommendations for Paw Creek Elementary School:

- Develop targeted marketing and recruitment plans to reflect district demographics.
- Incorporate diversity training for staff to ensure classrooms mirror community diversity.
- Utilize data to track progress towards integration goals and enhance inclusive teaching practices.
- Formalize a school-wide instructional approach for magnet themes, emphasizing interdisciplinary planning and professional development beyond technology tools.
- Develop clear curriculum documents and learner profiles to articulate theme integration across subjects and grade levels.
- Advocate for equitable resource distribution and a sustainable financial plan for magnet programs within the district's strategic planning. Ensure dedicated curriculum support and professional development opportunities for theme integration.

Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology - STEM

Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X	X	
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Phillip O. Berry's (POB's) strong reputation as a highly sought after STEM school of choice in the district is consistently meeting its enrollment goals of 1500 students (500 new students each year).
- All students in the district who have an interest in one or more of POB's pathways have an

opportunity (through a lottery) to attend the school.

Challenges:

- Transportation is a new challenge this year. The district now has 24 express stops where students have to travel to their home high school. Previously, students were picked up in their neighborhoods by the 54 buses. POB has lost close to 100 students this past school year. This challenge is echoed not only by the administration, but also by the parents and students. Parents who work face difficulty in meeting the bus schedules and for students, they often have to miss extracurricular activities and some report having to walk long distances in somewhat dangerous conditions (ex. busy roads and no sidewalks).
- It is unclear to what extent school-based efforts for student selection are designed to reduce minority group isolation. During the site visit it was reported that recruitment efforts primarily focus on filling vacant pathway seats. The school demographics are 62.6% Black, 2.7% Caucasian, 28.6% Hispanic and 64.5% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district on improving transportation to the school.
- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- POB's recruitment efforts are successful in continuing the STEM pathway for students who attend its five feeder schools.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent district and school-based policies and activities attract and retain students to support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration. Classrooms at POB do not appear to be reflective of the demographic racial diversity in the district and the community. Although the Hispanic student population at POB is reflective of the Hispanic population in the district (30.6%), the Black student population at POB is nearly double the Black population in the district (63% at POB and 35% in the district). The Caucasian student population at POB is exceptionally low (2.7%) whereas in the district it is close to 24%. This was seen at the site visit and echoed by students during the focus group.
- Although POB appears to be achieving its mission, "To provide an education centered on a rigorous and relevant curriculum with focused human relations between students, parents, staff and the community", it is unclear to what extent the school emphasizes the importance of diversity.

Recommendations:

- Determine if demographic diversity is a priority for the school and if the designation of POB as a magnet school is the most appropriate designation for the school.
- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics - ensuring that classroom demographics also mirror the school community.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- POB is meeting the district's Magnet Program's Compact, "to prepare students for post-secondary study and the 21st century workforce." POB's eight career pathways include advanced manufacturing and engineering, automotive, biomedical science, carpentry, game art design, graphic/digital design, software development and sports/event marketing.
- POB's students earn industry certifications in Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) and Maintenance and Light Repair (MLR- G1) as well as Adobe. Students are also required to complete 120 hours in work based learning such as internships, job shadowing, mentorship, service learning and volunteer work.
- Students in the focus group stated they came to POB for the pathways and felt very supported by the school. The seniors in the group indicated they felt very prepared for post-secondary study. Parents in the focus group echoed the student's sentiments.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the magnet theme is defined and integrated into all subjects and courses. Classroom visits revealed inconsistencies in posted learning targets and essential questions related to the theme.
- The current walkthrough tool is not designed to measure the district's expectations, "STEM education is an approach to teaching and learning that integrates the content and skills of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Along with content knowledge, a strong STEM program establishes student behaviors, which include engagement in inquiry, logical reasoning, collaboration and investigation."
- In the focus group, students indicated the themes for certain pathways were not integrated into all subjects and courses - for example in the gaming art design pathway.
- It is unclear to what extent the STEM theme is consistent and visible throughout the school.

Recommendations:

- Define what makes POB a STEM school and what makes a POB student a STEM student. Determine what your common STEM content, skills, behaviors are - for everyone in every class - and use that criteria as part of your continued effort to "magnetize" the school.
- Expand cross curricular planning to include opportunities to connect with those identified STEM skills and behaviors. Provide opportunities for teachers to share in their PLCs. Add these attributes to your walk-through form.
- "Scream your theme." Display your common STEM content, skills and behaviors in the entryway and other common areas of the school - as well as in every classroom in the school.
- Determine if POB Academy of "Technology" is the most appropriate name for the school.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- There are regularly scheduled collaborative planning amongst teachers. The administrative team includes a coordinator for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway Development and a facilitator for CTE instruction that directly support common planning among grade bands and content areas. Teachers meet (with administrative support) twice a week - one meeting is dedicated to planning and the other to reviewing data.

- There is a new school-wide effort to “magnetize” POB. This includes cross-curricular planning and mini professional development offerings provided by teachers for teachers.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent all teachers are trained in thematic instruction.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to train all teachers in thematic instruction.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- POB teachers utilize portfolios and projects as well as district assessments to gauge student success.
- Teachers meet weekly to examine and analyze student data.
- POB offers a number of AP classes as well as electives in Spanish, French, Fine Arts, Band, Orchestra and JROTC.
- POB implements MTSS. It has a regularly scheduled Cardinal Block - intervention/tutoring time that is held biweekly. This school-wide intervention time provides MTSS supports/tutoring as well as SEL supports.
- The trend for student achievement has increased over time, absences and suspensions have decreased and graduation rates have improved.

Challenges:

- Although POB implements Project Lead The Way (PLTW) in its biomedical science pathway and elements of project-based learning in other classes/pathways, it is unclear to what extent student projects get displayed to authentic audiences. In the focus group, students stated that the only ones who saw their projects were their teachers.

Recommendations:

- Create opportunities for students to display their projects/products to authentic audiences.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Teachers meet regularly (once a week) to examine and analyze student data. Teachers analyze project and portfolio data, CTE proof of learning data, as well as district assessment data to improve graduation rates and ensure college and career readiness.
- Data from the North Carolina School Report Cards indicates narrowing the gaps in student achievement (Academic Growth) for Black students (from 73.6% in 21/22 to 84.2% in 22/23) and economically disadvantaged students (from 73.0% in 21/22 to 83.2% in 22/23). Cumulative data for both years shows 85.5% for all subgroups in 22/23, up from 82.6% in 21/22.
- In an effort to provide wrap around support, POB has implemented a school-wide, biweekly Cardinal Block. This dedicated intervention time provides MTSS supports/tutoring as well as SEL supports.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent STEM skills and behaviors are assessed.

Recommendations:

- Develop and implement a plan to assess STEM skills and behaviors.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The school improvement team meets monthly. In the focus group, parents reported that decisions are made collaboratively.
- Teacher employment practices allow POB leadership to hire all teachers at the school - including pathway teachers.
- All teachers in the biomedical science pathway have been PLTW trained.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the STEM theme is implemented with fidelity.
- It is unclear to what extent thematic instructional coaching occurs.

Recommendations:

- Expand your initial efforts to “magnetize” POB. Define, integrate and “scream your theme.”
- Define what excellent thematic instructional coaching looks like and develop an action plan to implement and assess.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has clear pathways for magnet themes from K-12. POB continues the STEM pathway for students who come from its five feeder schools.

Challenges:

- Although POB has a dedicated team to support the pathway programs, it is unclear to what extent they have been able to integrate the theme into all subject areas.
- Although the district provides support for the magnet school and its pathways, it is unclear to what extent there is support for the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop a clear theme and a plan to integrate the theme into all subject areas.
- Collaborate with the district to design a strategic plan to build and sustain your magnet theme and magnet experiences for students.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Two partnerships - ROC and Road to Hire support the unique needs of the school. They offer job readiness training, college preparation, apprenticeships, internships, job placement and scholarships. These partners are part of the school improvement team (SIT).

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent POB has an established partnership protocol for all stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Develop a partnership protocol.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- POB utilizes ParentSquare to facilitate two-way communication with families.

Challenges:

- Although one of the parents in the focus group stated she attends and participates in school improvement team meetings, it is unclear to what extent there is a representative parent group that participates in school operation decisions.
- Students in the focus group reported they do not have access to ParentSquare and subsequently miss a lot of school information.
- It is unclear to what extent families are engaged in magnet activities. In the student focus group, two of the students mentioned they knew of the STEM night, but three students had never heard of it.

Recommendations:

- Develop a process to track and evaluate family engagement activities.
- Develop a plan for communicating with students similar to ParentSquare.
- Consider enlisting the help of students in the sports marketing pathway.
- Work with the district to develop a process for making academic progress data publicly accessible to parents and the community via the school's website.

Overall Recommendations for Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology:

- Work with the district on improving transportation to the school.
- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.
- Define, integrate and “scream the theme.”

Piedmont Middle School - IB

Piedmont Middle School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development			X
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- 45.1% of the school's students are economically disadvantaged and the district is 44.3% so Piedmont is in almost exact alignment with the district.

- After many years of having entrance requirements to the school, the district has removed these requirements, making the school more accessible to all.
- CMS has a tri-zoned transportation policy that divides the district into three transportation zones. Students can choose to go anywhere within their transportation zone and are provided transportation. If outside of their zone, they must provide their own transportation.
- Piedmont has a number of recruitment and marketing events throughout the year to bring information to prospective students and families including: attending the district's magnet fair, open house nights (five a year) both in person and virtually, going in person to speak to elementary school students and parents, sending flyers home with surrounding elementary schools and allowing students to complete shadowing days at the school.
- Piedmont has no problem filling all of their magnet seats with a significant waiting list of candidates who desire to come to the program.
- Piedmont leadership has a process to collect and analyze demographics of students they are receiving from throughout the district. They monitor trends over time and have seen a decrease in minority group isolation with an increase in English Language Learners in the last three years.

Challenges:

- The percentage of Black students is higher than the overall district (Piedmont 57.9%/ district 34.7%) and Hispanic (Piedmont 13.6%/ District 30.6%) and Caucasian (Piedmont 17.5%/ district 23.8%) are lower than the district numbers. Though numbers have been trending towards mirroring the district demographic data over the past three years, numbers are still showing a pocket of minority group isolated students.
- Parents report that bus transportation, though accessible, is not always timely. Some students have to be picked up as early as 7:30AM for a 9:30AM school start time, riding the bus for a very long time. Other parents say buses are late and they end up having to drive their students if they want them to be on time to school.
- With new proximity guarantees the school has received students after magnet seats have already been filled, thus overcrowding their school and increasing class sizes to 30-40 students in many classrooms. This could pose issues with access to individual teacher support and put a tax on the program fidelity.

Recommendations:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes, recruitment events in the community and visiting targeted schools where Caucasian and Hispanic students attend. Find ways to go to the students, not only offer events where they come to the school. Work to alleviate transportation issues.
- Work to increase teacher allotment to balance class sizes.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Piedmont's 6th grade counselor maintains a database yearly to be used when scheduling students. This helps to ensure diversity (race, gender, ability) in classes. The school also continuously readjusts home room blocks to ensure balance remains throughout the year/s.
- Observed both in classroom visits and echoed in all discussion panels (teachers, students and parents) is an obvious respect for the students as individuals with strengths that are to be drawn out and

highlighted. This school has a strong culture of commitment to teaching to the diverse needs of their students and it is evidenced in their lesson delivery.

- Many observed systems have been put in place by the leadership team to both support teachers and determine effectiveness in teaching the magnet theme in a diverse setting. High standards for teachers is an obvious cultural norm at the school.
- Both teachers and parents identify that flexible and supportive leadership can be attributed to successful culturally relevant teaching. Teachers feel they are supported by leadership when modifying lessons, filling in gaps in the curriculum and adding relevant content specific to their population of students.
- Required district SEL training (Caring Schools) for implementing social emotional learning strategies (2020) spawned a SEL lead team at the school that helped to compile SEL strategies for teachers to use in their classrooms.

Challenges:

- Piedmont's recruitment team has identified that language barriers of under-represented groups may impact their demographic numbers. Classes are created by looking at various data points (gender, race, test scores, previous school).

Recommendations:

- Work to translate all recruitment documents, magnet policies and theme information into several different languages.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Piedmont's IB magnet theme was very obviously integrated in all classrooms visited. Several IB unit plans were observed in action which highlighted the integration of (International Baccalaureate) IB into various content areas including related arts teachers, world language and Exceptional Children (EC) classes. These IB unit plans are submitted and reviewed at least four times a year in peer reviews and by the leadership team.
- Extended Day is offered yearly to students below the 50th percentile as an intense differentiated intervention strategy based on data. Leadership evaluates the effectiveness of this program yearly and adjusts accordingly.
- There is an overwhelming agreement from the leadership, teachers, students and parents that the structure of the IB theme allows the school to hold students to their highest individual standard both challenging and scaffolding support for the students when needed.
- The community project journal, created by Piedmont's IB committee in 2014, is unique to the school and supports the preparation and execution of the 8th grade community projects that all students complete in their final year. Students and their supervisors evaluate the work in this document throughout the year. This journal has been evaluated and adjusted several times since its original creation.
- The IB theme is consistently implemented through the grade level progression and this structure supports the development of skills needed for life beyond K-12.

Challenges:

- Some of the building's aesthetics and internal signage do not "scream the theme."

Recommendations:

- Work to bring the rich experiences that are going on in classrooms to the walls of the building in order to better visually scream the theme. When walking up to the building or walking throughout the hallways of the school, the theme should be able to be identified, even though it is very evident within classrooms.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- The school has a plan for professional development related to their magnet theme. There are structures in place that allow teachers to collaborate and plan for the integration of the theme. Some examples of these school structures are: whole faculty professional development once a month, new teacher training once a month, departments meeting with the IB coordinator for quick IB training updates and professional learning communities (PLCS) in both grade levels and departments are scheduled to meet every week.
- With little teacher turnover there are many trained in IB and who have multiple years of IB in action experience at the school. Anyone who is new or struggling gets job embedded training through strong mentor/mentee relationships.
- IB learner profile traits are a common language and can relate to all content areas. These learner traits are a way to connect all learners no matter their level or label. Everyone at the school is a learner practitioner.
- Peer observations are a common practice at Piedmont, with teachers being able to observe exemplary teaching and theme integration on a monthly basis.
- Piedmont fills many of their vacancies with UNCC students who have completed their student teacher requirements in Piedmont classrooms. These students have already had a level of IB training through the collaboration and observation of their cooperating teacher. This alleviates some of the challenge of being a new teacher who is new to the profession and new to the theme.

Challenges:

- Piedmont is frustrated by the lack of district support for their magnet school leaders to attend the Magnet Schools of America national conference. They are receiving a Merit award and had submitted and had accepted a proposal to present. They are not able to fund their own attendance with school funding.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each IB school in the district. It is difficult to market a school as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence**Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity****Successes:**

- Piedmont’s teaching and learning philosophy is strongly rooted in their IB theme. They are embodying and implementing the IB method with fidelity and rigor.
- Collaboration and problem solving was evident as a standard in classroom visits and unit planners.

- Teachers report that formative data is constantly collected formally, but mostly informally through observation and performance based assessments. A teacher said during the site visit, “We teach our kids that they can express their thinking in different ways and honor their unique thinking. Thinking critically is valued much more than multiple choice testing at Piedmont.”
- Teaching and learning at Piedmont is extensively modified for each individual student. They have several systems in place to support students of all levels and labels. Some examples are Multilingual Learner (ML) pull out instruction based on domains, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) used for tiered intervention, several honors classes are offered and extended day intervention is offered to all students below the 50th percentile.
- Piedmont’s MTSS team reflects annually as part of a continuous improvement model. Reviewing data for effective adjustments and EWI’s (Early Warning Indicators).
- A sixth block has been added to the daily schedule that focuses solely on academic enrichment which is specific to each student’s needs. Some are in accelerated classes at this time, while others are receiving remediation.
- Students are very aware of their own data and set goals for themselves. Each child receives a personalized measures of academic progress (MAP) report after each of the three MAP tests. The report is available for the parents and students to review and analyze the data to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses.

Challenges:

- Large class size is the biggest challenge to instructional fidelity and academic excellence at Piedmont with many classes holding 35-40 students on their roster.

Recommendations:

- Work to increase teacher allotment to balance class sizes.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Piedmont’s “Norms and Procedures” require teachers to meet in professional learning communities (PLCs), collaboratively plan and analyze and review formative data weekly.
- Following the school counseling curriculum outline, Piedmont counselors push into various content courses to conduct activities which are intended to provide students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to academic, career and personal/social development. This curriculum is also delivered during homeroom advisory time each morning.
- Piedmont’s school improvement plan has a focus on eliminating gaps of disproportionality among subgroups. This is reviewed and adjusted several times throughout the year.
- The disaggregated end of year (EOY) data shows that Piedmont students show growth in many categories and are above the district and state averages in all areas.
- Piedmont’s state-issued school report card shows they exceeded growth overall and growth in underperforming groups.
- The IB theme is consistently implemented through the grade level progression and this structure supports the development of skills needed for life beyond K-12.

Challenges:

- Over-enrollment and large class sizes pose a threat to the long-term ability of the school and staff to maintain their high academic standards and performance.

Recommendations:

- Consider displaying examples of student success with the magnet theme throughout the building and in all classrooms.
- Continue working with the district on staff allotment and student enrollment numbers to balance the student to teacher ratio in classrooms.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- Piedmont not only has a very strong, full time, fully trained IB coordinator but their leadership team has two additional academic facilitators who are fully trained and provide much support for the IB program.
- Piedmont has a strong IB committee composed of leadership team members, PTA members, school counselors, teachers and students. Within this committee the program is evaluated regularly and decisions are made collaboratively.
- The leadership team creates school-wide interdisciplinary activities for half days which are reflected on and adjusted after each implementation.
- Piedmont leadership has developed and is using a core action walk through form to ensure that the theme is implemented with fidelity and as a starting point for coaching conversations with teachers.
- Teachers report that flexible and supportive leadership allows them to modify their instruction to ensure that the theme is implemented with fidelity.
- Piedmont leadership has set a standard for visual support being available for both teachers and students. Posters of IB criterion, approaches to learning, the design cycle and learner profile traits are hanging in every classroom in the building.
- Piedmont has a long standing reputation in the community as being a great place to learn and work. Many teachers report that Piedmont is their dream school to work at and teacher turnover is nearly non-existent.

Challenges:

- The over enrollment and large class sizes pose a threat to the long-term ability of the school and staff to maintain their high academic standards and performance.

Recommendations:

- Explore how the strengths of Piedmont can be capitalized on and bring them to other schools in the district. Use some of Piedmont's work as examples to create tools that can be used by other IB schools in the district.
- Address allotments so that over-sized classes do not hinder learning.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for current IB magnet students into East Mecklenburg High School.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools.
- The IB magnet program within the school has a full-time IB specialist/magnet coordinator financially supported by the district.

Challenges:

- The district financial plan does not appear to allow for all teachers to be fully trained in IB.
- The district has made efforts to “calibrate” their IB programs, which has caused Piedmont to lower their standards in some areas of implementation.
- While the district's calibration of IB is an effort to equalize opportunities across the district, more could be done to support and maintain a standard of excellence with IB in the district.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each IB school in the district. It is difficult to market a school as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Create, in collaboration with all IB coordinators, supporting documents and templates for the implementation expectations of IB throughout the district and a system for evaluating the success of each program.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Piedmont prides itself on maintaining alumni contacts and partnerships. Piedmont has been able to secure and retain many strategic partnerships with alumni students and parents to meet the unique needs of their magnet.
- Piedmont has developed multiple community partners over the years to assist students in fulfilling their IB service requirements. These contacts are listed on the school webpage and updated regularly so that students can easily find ways to complete required volunteer hours.
- Piedmont’s partnership with UNCC supports the development of future teachers, as well as allows Piedmont teachers to be reflective practitioners in their practice. Through the student teaching experience at Piedmont UNCC students gain IB experience and are often hired at Piedmont or are marketable for other IB schools in the district.
- Piedmont’s proximity to downtown offers a lot of opportunities for curriculum focused partnerships that are within walking distance to their campus. Teachers and students are able to take advantage of this proximity to go on walking field trips close by which enhance their studies and theme.
- Parents and community partners report that they feel their voice is heard and respected at the school. They have seen suggestions made and implemented based on their feedback.
- The district maintains a dedicated space on their webpage for all partnership and volunteer opportunities and procedures.

Challenges:

- While partnership and community involvement is strong at Piedmont, families report the need for sustainability and succession plans to be made. Families are only there as long as their student is and it is important to build the next generation of their community.
- Stakeholders identify a need for a succession plan for leadership. They have been lucky to have transitions in leadership remain positive and long standing strength in the principalship, however they

want to make sure that Dr. Barone is training someone to be her predecessor and keep the progress moving without skipping a beat.

Recommendations:

- Consider involving current dedicated families in the welcoming of incoming and prospective parents to build a network and share family leadership best practices in the school. This can continue the legacy that is so well established with the next generation.
- Consider leveraging the strong community support that Piedmont has to create a legacy fund to support additional IB training and keep the tradition strong.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Piedmont has an active School Leadership Team (SLT) and PTA. These groups meet monthly and are involved in school operation decisions. Piedmont's culture and climate is resoundingly positive coming from leaders, teachers, students, parents and partners.
- Both parents and several community partners were present at the stakeholder panel and all reported that they feel welcomed and valued by Piedmont teachers and leadership. They are all on various committees at the schools such as PTA and School Improvement Team (SIT).
- Piedmont invites parents, families, community members and district leaders to their annual student IB Community Project Showcase. They also encourage families to provide feedback on IB activities.
- Yearly, Piedmont's counselor does a needs assessment survey which is shared with families. Counselors use the input and feedback to meet the needs of all stakeholders.
- Parents credit Piedmont with creating a culture of servant leadership in both the students and the families through the IB community service requirements. Parents and partners work in collaboration on these service projects and are better for it.
- Parents say that the Piedmont community is an invaluable resource to their children both while at Piedmont and after graduation. Many connections are continued and the school community is able to assist in their child's success in life beyond K-12.

Challenges:

- While partnership and community involvement is strong at Piedmont, families report the need for sustainability and succession plans to be made. Families are only there as long as their student is and it is important to build the next generation of their community.

Recommendations:

- Consider involving current dedicated families in the welcoming of incoming and prospective parents to build a network and share family leadership best practices in the school. This can continue the legacy that is so well established with the next generation.
- Consider leveraging the strong community support that Piedmont has to create a legacy fund to support additional IB training and keep the tradition strong.

Overall Recommendations for Piedmont Middle School:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes, recruitment events in the community and visiting targeted schools where Caucasian and

Hispanic students attend. Find ways to go to the students, not only offer events where the students come to you.

- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Create, in collaboration with all IB coordinators, supporting documents and templates for the implementation expectations of IB throughout the district and a system for evaluating the success of each program.
- Consider involving current dedicated families in the welcoming of incoming and prospective parents to build a network and share family leadership best practices in the school. This can continue the legacy that is so well established with the next generation.

Randolph Middle School - IB

Randolph Middle School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection			X
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Randolph adheres to CMS districts entrance and assignment policies, which are clearly laid out on both the CMS website as well as the school’s website.
- Randolph’s enrollment numbers are nearly matching that of the district’s enrollment with 7% Asian in the district vs. 12% at the school, 30% Hispanic in the district vs. 27% at the school, 34% Black in the district vs. 27% at the school, 23% Caucasian in the district vs. 29% at the school and 44.3% economically disadvantaged in the district vs. 46.4% at the school.
- After many years of having entrance requirements to the school, the district has removed these requirements, making the school more accessible to all.
- CMS has a tri-zoned transportation policy that divides the district into three transportation zones. Students can choose to go anywhere within their transportation zone and are provided transportation. If outside of their zone, they must provide their own transportation.
- Randolph has a number of recruitment and marketing events throughout the year to bring information to prospective students and families including: Open house events at the school (four per year all at

various times), two virtual info sessions, presentations at two different neighboring elementary schools and dates for campus tours.

- Randolph has no problem filling all of their magnet seats with a significant waiting list of candidates who desire to come to the school.

Challenges:

- Parents report that bus transportation, though seemingly accessible to all, is still a barrier for their families. With middle school having the latest start time in the district, buses coming off previous routes are often not timely. This causes students to arrive at school with little to no time to get to class. This late start also excludes many working parents from being able to utilize the district transportation because they do not want to leave their students alone in the morning hours before they are picked up.
- The leadership team reports a desire to increase the access and reach of their recruiting efforts to include more elementary schools, however visiting them all is difficult.

Recommendations:

- Share input and work with district transportation to address the unique needs of your students and families.
- Create a district template for inputting enrollment numbers, tracking where students are coming from and setting more targeted recruitment efforts that can be utilized by all magnet programs. Use the template data to review recruitment and marketing efforts and determine their successes in creating a more balanced school selection.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Randolph leadership goes to great lengths to strategically balance all classes to be a diverse mix of all demographics, socioeconomic status, genders, ML learners and exceptional children. This was evident visually in classroom visits, as well as mentioned as a positive from both students and parent/community members.
- Teachers reflected on diversity in the classroom with pride and positivity, many claiming that the diversity was a deciding factor in them taking a teaching position at Randolph.
- Students also note the diversity as a strength of their school and identify it has a positive impact on their learning.
- Several parents identify the diversity of the school as a key factor in them choosing and remaining at the school. They are also aware of the benefits it brings to their student's learning.

Challenges:

- When the district removed the entrance requirements for students applying to Randolph it increased not only diversity in demographics, but academic needs as well. Both Randolph leadership and teachers share that the increase in Exceptional Children (EC), Multilingual Learners (ML) and generally lower performing students has been a challenge, especially in their all honors courses.
- As an extension to the above challenge, teachers are finding it difficult to meet the diverse needs of all of their students, while upholding the higher standard of International Baccalaureate (IB) expectations and honors courses.
- Leadership feels that without entrance requirements many students are coming to the school not understanding the level of rigor they will see in honors and high school level classes, causing them to struggle academically.

- There are not clear systems in place to determine the effectiveness of teaching the magnet theme in a diverse setting.

Recommendations:

- Review the honors classes taught at Randolph, from honors, to math 1, 2 and 3 high school courses for effectiveness. A new system will have to be put in place to support the large gaps between students' academic needs.
- Establish a culture in the school that reinforces high student expectations along with the belief and support that students can achieve the high expectations.
- Create new (or find existing, within the International Baccalaureate Organization) systems for determining effectiveness of the magnet theme in diverse settings.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- There is a general definition of the theme amongst the staff. They have an appreciation for the theme and what it can do for their students. The majority of teachers have the desire to integrate the theme more within their content.
- Randolph has a dedicated IB theme coordinator who works to support the teachers and students in the articulation and implementation of IB into all subjects and courses. This coordinator has done a wonderful job reinvigorating the theme after several years of inconsistent leadership and theme support. There is an overwhelming gratitude for her support from teachers, students and parents.
- The IB coordinator is working to put sustainable supports in place to support teachers with the integration of the theme, such as a google drive folder of resources for teachers, unit planning support with each department, meeting with beginning teachers once a month, infusing IB into whole school professional development and having information nights for parents.
- This year the school has added IB items to their walk through tool in order to support a cycle of improvement with theme integration in the classroom.

Challenges:

- The current IB coordinator is the fifth coordinator in five years. With the transience of this key position, the theme and curriculum fidelity have suffered. This lapse in magnet leadership has caused an inconsistency in expectations and support for the integration of IB and many teachers have relaxed on their implementation. Teacher buy-in for the rejuvenation of the theme is inconsistent.
- High teacher turnover has left the school with only a handful of teachers remaining who have been officially trained in the IB method.
- Teachers feel underprepared to implement the magnet theme without the training and knowledge in which to do so. One teacher says, "How can I teach students something I don't completely understand myself?"
- The IB training is expensive and the school budget does not allow for the principal to send many teachers to be trained, if any. Leadership says that they will not receive any funding to train teachers from the district as a new IB school is opening and all funding will go to training those teachers.
- Teachers feel overwhelmed with larger class sizes (30-40 students in a class), disbursements (extra students sent to their class because substitutes are not available), an increased gap in academic needs (due to lack of entrance requirements to high level classes) and district mandates that compete with

implementation of the theme with fidelity (ex. pacing guides unit sequence does not match IB unit guide sequence).

- Parents and students also identify lack of magnet training as an issue. Students say sometimes they know more about IB than their teacher and parents say that the PTA is trying to raise money to send teachers to IB training.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each IB school in the district. It is difficult to market a school as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Increase communication and supports between district IB leaders and teachers to ease the pressures of teachers keeping up with both district curriculum mandates and IB theme integration.
- Develop school wide systems that help define what theme integration at Randolph looks like and use these systems to plan for, implement and then monitor the implementation of IB. The leadership must set a standard for all and hold the teachers accountable for striving to meet that standard. The IB coordinator can come in with the supports, but the bar must be set from the leader.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The leadership starts the year with a professional development plan which is referred to and augmented throughout the year as teacher needs are identified through walk through observation data and student data.
- IB unit planner training was asked for and provided through the district IB director. Teachers cited this training as extremely helpful in understanding how to plan for IB in their classroom.
- Teachers meet in grade level specific content teams to collaborate and plan weekly. Leadership and the IB coordinator push in to support.

Challenges:

- Teachers are still struggling to integrate the magnet theme into the curriculum because they lack training on the most basic of IB components.
- Teachers report challenges in meeting the needs of the English Language Learners and Exceptional students while also holding to the IB, honors and high school level expectations.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each IB school in the district. It is difficult to market a school as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Develop school wide systems that help define what theme integration at Randolph looks like and use these systems to plan for, implement and then monitor the implementation of IB. The leadership must set a standard for all and hold the teachers accountable for striving to meet that standard. The IB coordinator can come in with the supports, but the bar must be set from the leader.
- Take on in house IB training one small step at a time, building the staff knowledge base and then monitoring how this training makes it back to the classroom.

- Consider giving Randolph staff members the opportunity to visit other IB schools where training has been provided and implementation is happening at a high level.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Randolph has clearly laid out teacher expectations and key practices in the instructional philosophy statement that is shared with all teachers and parents. This includes a variety of assessment expectations including: formative, summative, standardized and IB performance portfolios.
- Classroom observations show collaboration and problem solving in each classroom visited. Teachers report that classroom seating is changed often to ensure students are able to collaborate with all students in their classes.
- Randolph uses MTSS as a research based system for tiered levels of intervention. There is an expectation that teachers go beyond common 2 and 3 tiered supports such as Dreambox and I-Ready and allow for interventions through small grouping to achieve direct teacher support.
- Randolph has a unique commitment to upholding rigorous standards of learning through the class offerings. All classes are honors level classes, with offerings of several high school level classes including Math 1, 2 and 3 and ELA 1 and 2.

Challenges:

- When the district removed the entrance requirements for students applying to Randolph it increased not only diversity in demographics, but in academic needs as well. Both Randolph leadership and teachers share that the increase in EC, ML and general lower performing students has been a challenge, especially in their all honors courses.
- As an extension to the above challenge, teachers are finding it difficult to meet the diverse needs of all of their students, while upholding the higher standard of IB expectations and honors courses. There is a large gap between the Talent Development students and EC students in the classroom, making differentiation and individual support very difficult for teachers.
- Leadership feels that without entrance requirements many students are coming to the school not understanding the level of rigor they will see in honors and high school level classes, causing them to struggle academically.
- Randolph's level of instruction, while aligned with the high standards of the theme of IB, seems to be taxing both students and teachers to a point of nonproductive struggle.
- Teachers report a growing gap between students' needs and a struggle to meet these needs while maintaining both district and IB expectations.
- Students report a feeling of always being behind, having to teach themselves at home to catch up to the higher standards and make up for lost learning skipping from 5th grade math to 9th grade math when taking Math 1.
- Lack of formal IB training for teachers makes it difficult for teaching and learning to remain focused on theme-aligned instruction and the fidelity of the magnet theme is inconsistent across the school.
- Randolph has not met their achievement growth goals since 2016 except for 2022 where they met.

Recommendations:

- Review the honors classes taught at Randolph, from honors, to Math 1, 2 and 3 high school courses for effectiveness. If the school is to continue without entrance requirements, a new system will have to be put in place to support the large gaps between student's academic needs.
- Offer differentiation training to teachers to develop skills to work with a diverse set of learners.
- Ensure that teachers receive culturally responsive teaching training (CRT) and are able to implement these strategies in their classrooms.
- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each IB school in the district. A school cannot be marketed as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a "train the trainer" investment to build sustainability for the IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Develop school wide systems that help define what theme integration at Randolph looks like and use these systems to plan for, implement and monitor the implementation of IB. The leadership must set a standard for all and hold the teachers accountable for striving to meet that standard. The IB coordinator can come in with supports, but the bar must be set from the leader.
- Take on in house IB training one small step at a time, building the staff knowledge base and then monitor how this training makes it back to the classroom.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Teachers have data trackers and spend time in PLCs looking at data, dissecting it and planning instruction to meet student needs.
- Students with disabilities are meeting growth targets in all grades and subjects.
- 8th grade students within all subgroups are meeting expected growth targets in all subjects.

Challenges:

- Teachers are seeing that success within traditional data does not always lend itself to successes in IB. IB skills are less able to be tracked by numbers.
- School data shows that students in 6th and 7th grade are struggling in math across the board regardless of subgroup.

Recommendations:

- Review the honors classes taught at Randolph, from honors to Math 1, 2 and 3 high school courses for effectiveness. If the school is to continue without entrance requirements, a new system will have to be put in place to support the large gaps between student's academic needs.
- Explore successes in EC classrooms to examine any practices that could be brought over to the general education classrooms.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The principal recognizes the efforts of the IB coordinator to improve school morale and make teachers feel appreciated for their hard work.
- The principal states that he recognizes teachers and encourages their development through positive reinforcement such as shout outs at faculty meetings, emails, glows and grows, feedback protocols and honoring them with leadership opportunities.

- Leadership is using the Get Better Faster model to coach teachers through instructional improvements.
- The IB coordinator is using Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to coach grade level teams on bite size chunks of IB implementation.
- Randolph leadership recently added IB to their walk through form allowing them to have points of pride and points of progress to discuss when coaching teachers.

Challenges:

- Teachers report they do not feel any control or shared decision making within their school, only within their grade level teams.
- The principal shares that the teacher shortage has made it difficult to hire highly qualified teachers. Without many candidates to choose from he is unable to recruit or select to meet the unique needs of the magnet. He looks for skills that translate to IB strengths, because he is not coming across IB trained teachers often.
- The principal shares that retaining teachers is often more important than pushing them to implement with fidelity something they are not trained to do such as IB.
- Both students and parents shared frustration with lack of retention or recruiting for some teaching positions and classes being left with a revolving door of long term substitutes. Students expressed they cannot learn this way and parents were frustrated by the lack of instruction taking place.
- Parents and teachers discussed the need for stipends or compensation for the extra work teachers put in to uphold the IB standards. Without this compensation teachers will leave and go to schools or districts where they do not have to do any extra implementation beyond the traditional district mandates.

Recommendations:

- Utilize teacher leaders by grade level or department to share in school decision making.
- Consider creating an IB implementation team. Work on training them first and give them opportunities to bring their knowledge back to their teacher teams.
- Consider printing and laminating IB visual aids that can be uniformly hung on all classroom walls and serve as quick supports for both teachers and students to reference. Example: Posters of IB criterion, approaches to learning, the design cycle and learner profile traits.
- Consider flexibility about how to best merge together district mandates and IB curriculum in order to alleviate teacher stress and make implementation manageable and aligned to district goals.
- Create opportunities for Randolph staff members to visit other IB schools within the district where training has been provided and implementation is happening at a high level.
- Ensure that the principal has been trained in IB and is committed to implementing IB at the school.
- Collaborate as a leadership team to develop a professional development plan that supports the in house training and supports the IB theme. With so few teachers trained, if you want to remain an IB magnet and uphold your school's standards, significant in-house support must be delivered.
- Consider stipends for teacher leaders willing to step up and work toward the sustainability of IB within the district. Perhaps create a district IB support team, composed of teacher leaders, rather than just one director to support all.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for current IB magnet students into East Mecklenburg High School.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools.
- The IB magnet program within the school has a full-time IB specialist financially supported by the district.

Challenges:

- The district financial plan does not appear to allow for all teachers to be fully trained in IB.
- The district has made efforts to “calibrate” their IB programs in an effort to equalize opportunities across the district, however, more needs to be done to support, maintain and equalize the standard of excellence with IB in the district.
- The district is adding new IB programs and funding for training is being reallocated to this new school, taking away from the maintenance and quality of existing schools.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each IB school in the district. A school cannot be marketed as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for the IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Create, in collaboration with all IB coordinators, supporting documents and templates for the implementation expectations of IB throughout the district and a system for evaluating the success of each program.
- Ensure that district hiring practices consider knowledge of the magnet theme, marketing skills and commitment to the purpose of magnets in the district when matching school leaders to schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Parents report that they feel their voice is heard and respected at the school. They have seen suggestions made and implemented based on their feedback.
- The district maintains a dedicated space on their webpage for all partnership and volunteer opportunities and procedures.
- Randolph has alumni contacts that provide support and partnerships to the school in various ways.

Challenges:

- Most community partners that Randolph has are specifically donation based, not curriculum focused and don’t have a direct connection to the magnet theme implementation.
- Randolph did not show evidence of having businesses or organizations that share in the decision making about theme implementation.
- Both students and parents share frustration with partnerships made with online language learning tools in order to satisfy IB world language requirements when teachers could not be replaced. Students reported without a strong teacher they would struggle or fail their language requirement and lose their honor roll status.

Recommendations:

- Seek out a partnership with a local university or community college that will bring student teachers to

your building. They can support the development of future teachers for your school, as well as allow Randolph teachers to be reflective practitioners in their own practice.

- Leverage more local businesses and community partnerships to work with students and help enhance curriculum connections within the theme.
- Develop ways to support schools across the district when a teacher vacancy is unable to be filled so that students do not fall behind because of something out of their control.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents report that they feel their voice is heard and respected at the school. They are happy with the communications from the school and the ways in which the school is showcasing student learning.
- The school has an active family and parent group that is involved in the school operations.
- Parentsquare is being successfully used for communication and parents feel informed on school happenings.
- The school has found a way to showcase their students and their diversity through an International Festival in which students will be able to showcase their culture.
- Randolph parents appreciate the IB community service requirements. Parents and their students work in collaboration on these service projects and feel this family engagement is positive for their families.

Challenges:

- PTA feels like they need to fundraise to support the funding of sending teachers to IB training because district funding is going to the new IB high school.

Recommendations:

- Develop an IB professional development plan for the district to help support IB teacher training for all IB schools so that PTA's are not having to supplement funding to train teachers.

Overall Recommendations for Randolph Middle School:

- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for the IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Create, in collaboration with all IB coordinators, supporting documents and templates for the implementation expectations of IB throughout the district and a system for evaluating the success of each program.
- Ensure that school leadership is trained in IB and is committed to supporting teachers in the magnet theme.
- Consider creating an IB implementation team at the school. Work on training them first and give them opportunities to bring their knowledge back to their teacher teams.
- Consider printing and laminating IB visual aids that can be uniformly hung on all classroom walls and serve as quick supports for both teachers and students to reference. Example: Posters of IB criterion, approaches to learning, the design cycle and learner profile traits.
- Consider flexibility about how to best merge together district mandates and IB curriculum in order to alleviate teacher stress and make implementation manageable and aligned to district goals.
- Consider giving Randolph staff members the opportunity to visit other IB schools where training has been provided and implementation is happening at a high level.

- Collaborate as a leadership team to develop a professional development plan that supports the in house training and support of the IB theme. With so few teachers trained, to remain an IB magnet and uphold school standards, significant in house support must be delivered.

Ranson Middle School - IB

Ranson Middle School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Ranson engages prospective parents in a number of recruitment and marketing opportunities such as International Baccalaureate (IB) open houses, inviting feeder elementary schools to tour and the district magnet fair.
- Ranson IB is a small school within a school of 30-35 gifted students, however the principal has adopted the model of “what’s good for some is good for all” and has the whole school doing the IB theme.
- CMS uses collected census data of the SES blocks across the district to achieve the greatest diversity possible by matching students’ SES priorities with SES seats available in schools.
- CMS has a tri-zoned transportation policy that is designed to increase access to schools which are out of the student’s home school.

Challenges:

- Ranson’s demographics do not match that of the district. The school demographics are 58.1% Black, 1.8% Caucasian, 31.5% Hispanic and 66% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.
- There are so many competing IB options in the district, no one is driving out from their transportation zone to Ranson’s.

Recommendations:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes and recruitment events at specific elementary schools. Find ways to go to the students rather than only events where the students come to the school.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The district has rolled out an implicit bias program on how to work with Black students. This is a self-paced course online that is required. There is also a poverty simulation course from the district. With Ranson having a high poverty index, these courses have been good for teachers to learn how to reach Ranson students according to staff.
- Ranson's IB core beliefs statement is a policy statement that emphasizes the importance of the power of diversity and the commitment to teaching all students.

Challenges:

- District and school-based policies and activities are not attracting and retaining students to support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration
- Even within their school within a school IB program there is not a balance of demographics and minority group isolation of Black students exists.

Recommendations:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes and recruitment events at specific elementary schools. Find ways to go to them and not only offer events where they come to the school.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development**Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity****Successes:**

- Ranson's principal has utilized Title 1 funding to pay teachers to meet in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) over the summer to collaborate on unit planning. During this time they are able to meld together the CMS adopted curriculum with the IB curriculum.
- Ranson has adopted a school wide sequential instructional cycle that all teachers are using to maximize instructional time. In this cycle, remediation is always at the end of the block.
- Evidence of the IB magnet theme was very obviously integrated in all classrooms visited on the site visit. The reviewer was able to view several IB unit plans in action which highlighted the integration of IB into various content areas and encouraged students to utilize their IB learner profile traits.
- The district funds a full time IB specialist/coordinator for the school.

Challenges:

- The IB pathway looks different for different students at Ranson depending on their schedule. The 30-35 school-within-a-school IB students are receiving higher level courses and access to Math 1 that prepares them for high school IB. Ranson leadership is constantly reviewing data to try to grow students from 6th grade on to get to that standard and be prepared for high school IB.
- The IB theme is not traditionally and fully implemented at Ranson. Students are not exposed to the community service hours or the community project even in the school within a school program.
- The principal identifies staff allotment as the biggest barrier to implementing the theme with fidelity. Ranson does not get allotments that fit the program needs, as program needs are beyond the needs of a traditional middle school ex. world language classes require more teachers.
- The school does not currently have the IB specialist/coordinator position filled at the school.

- There are always new teachers coming in who need to be trained and supported in IB. As new teachers, it is hard for them to get their bearings in teaching while also implementing a magnet theme according to leadership.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each of the IB schools across the district. Schools cannot market an IB program without teachers being trained to implement the theme with fidelity.
- Work to increase the teacher allotment for IB programs understanding that they must have more teachers on staff to fill positions that directly support the magnet theme.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school has a plan for professional development related to their magnet theme. There are structures in place that allow teachers to collaborate and plan for the integration of the theme.
- Teachers meet in PLCs (grade level and content area) two-three times a week, during planning to collaborate and build exemplars, dive into data and tweak unit plans. PLCs in the school are strong and PLC time is highly protected. There are clear expectations about how PLCs are supposed to run and clear expectations for how this time will prepare teachers for instruction.
- The leadership utilizes early release days for professional development as well as Wednesday mornings once a month. This professional development always integrates the IB theme in some way.
- About 40% of the faculty has been trained in IB.
- Before the IB coordinator left, resources were built up, organized into a Google folder that is accessible for all and will support not only teachers but the newly hired coordinator to continue theme implementation.

Challenges:

- The school does not currently have the IB specialist/coordinator position filled at the school.

Recommendations:

- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for the IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Ranson’s three tiered instructional support guide is extensive, with goals, targets and action steps that are research based and relevant to instruction.
- The instructional leadership team works hard to set expectations for school-wide teaching and learning that includes multiple modes of learning to improve student achievement. Academic monitoring and small group instruction are making a difference for students.
- Ranson’s school-within-a-school IB students are exposed to honors level classes and have opportunities in 8th grade to take the Math 1 high school level class.
- The school has partnered with two outside tutoring companies to bring further remediation to their students PIMOSH Tutoring Services and Learn It Tutoring Services.

Challenges:

- Ranson has a chronic absenteeism problem which affects students' learning and academic success.

- Ranson students are not consistently meeting their growth targets. Achievement trends for Black males are especially low. Math achievement is the biggest academic barrier, especially since the pandemic.
- IB requires a certain amount of intervention time and the school can't meet it. There is no transportation after school for after school intervention.

Recommendations:

- Continue building on the attendance incentive program.
- Consider offering district transportation for an extended day program to increase remediation time and hopefully student growth.
- Continue to examine the schedule and ask for input from stakeholders (families, community partners) about how additional intervention time can be built in to support students.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Ranson is focused on growing their honors students from within. They used to not have a 6th grade honors program and they have grown enough to add one. Their focus is on pushing students to the honors standard earlier so they can get to Math 1 before going to high school and be on the IB diploma track.
- Ranson has implemented an attendance incentive program to decrease chronic absenteeism. They are seeing small gains in reduced absence.

Challenges:

- The school has a chronic absenteeism problem which affects students' learning and academic success.
- Ranson's MultiLingual (ML) population is increasing. Some ML students are coming with little to no elementary experience and they have missed a lot of school. There are large learning gaps, trauma and culture shock that affect their learning.
- The school reports that economic mobility for families is a problem. It is really important for low income students to have access to a strong program to increase this mobility but it does not alleviate the struggles that come with economic stress. It is hard for parents to be as involved because they are working multiple jobs.
- The climate of education presently makes it an undesirable profession and teachers themselves are coming in with gaps and they then have to teach students with gaps.

Recommendations:

- Consider offering district transportation for an extended day program to increase remediation time and hopefully student growth.
- Build on new teacher supports at the school to coach pedagogical and content but also retain teachers over time.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Many Ranson teachers were able to get IB training through the district four years ago and are pushing it out to the teams as new teachers come in. There are two to three teachers on each team who are trained.

- Instructional leaders are using the Get Better Faster coaching model to coach teachers to see the connection between the district-mandated curriculum pieces and IB.
- The school maintains a school wide IB curriculum folder to provide theme implementation resources for all teachers. The school has created a self-paced Canvas course for IB resources.
- IB gives the staff a common language that is used in classrooms. Ranson students can name the learner traits as they use them.

Challenges:

- Lack of training is a barrier to IB implementation, the last time the district provided training was four years ago.
- The high turnover rate is due to a transient population of both staff and students that makes training updates necessary.

Recommendations:

- Continue to update the school Canvas course each summer to ensure it is ready for use by any new staff coming in.
- Work to increase teacher allotment for IB programs understanding that they must have more teachers on staff to fill positions that directly support the magnet theme.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The principal is grateful to have Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) funds and Title I funds to help support their financial needs. Some of the things she is able to use this money for include: human capital, supplemental programs, tutoring, extended employment in the summer for teacher planning, etc.
- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for current IB magnet students into East Mecklenburg High School.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools.
- This school has a full-time IB specialist/coordinator financially supported by the district.

Challenges:

- Though the school has a full time IB specialist funded by the district, there is no one currently in that role. The school has hired someone, but since the new hire is a teacher, the teacher cannot leave the classroom until summer.
- The district financial plan does not allow for all teachers to be fully trained in IB.
- While the district's calibration of IB is an effort to equalize opportunities across the district, more could be done to support and maintain a standard of excellence with IB in the district.

Recommendations:

- Create a budget plan to equitably provide training for each of the IB schools across the district. It is hard to market a school as an IB magnet program without teachers being trained to implement with fidelity.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for the IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Create, in collaboration with all IB coordinators, supporting documents and templates for the implementation expectations of IB throughout the district and a system for evaluating the success of each program.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has two very strong community partnerships that support after school care and tutoring (OURbridge and Piedmont Tutoring). Students can attend for free and they pay school staff to support the tutoring.
- Janes Foundations is a local group who provided every staff member with money for Christmas to help with teacher retention and purchased graphing calculators for all of their math students.
- Classroom Central - provided supplies for teachers and students, Teacher of the Year and teacher appreciation gifts to help with teacher retention.
- Shermco is a partnership that came from the district to increase parent engagement. They had a parent night with sessions such as: self-care, zumba and budgeting. This was a fun way to get parents into the school.
- The school has a community partner meeting every summer to share highlights and show appreciation, and solicit feedback.
- The school now has a teacher leader who has taken on the role of partner liaison where all communication goes through them to welcome new partners.

Challenges:

- The community is economically challenged and it is hard to ask for support in this climate.
- While the school partners with the community, their alignment to the magnet theme is not evident.

Recommendations:

- Consider soliciting additional partnerships that would support families and students in poverty - considering non-profits that have a mission and vision that align with the needs of the school.
- Secure community partners to support the IB magnet theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- The school is creative in finding times to connect with parents who work during the school day. The school has partnered with their after school program, which requires parent engagement and they hold quarterly curriculum nights for parents when they are already coming in for the after school program requirement.
- The school has parent events and student showcases on the same nights that sporting events happen, offering the parents an opportunity to come into the school while they are already at the school for sports.
- The school has a process for two way communication through ParentSquare, homeroom contact log (weekly reach out to parents) and quarterly parent student teacher conferences.

Challenges:

- The school does not have an active parent group who meets regularly to be involved in the school's operations.
- The principal shared that there is a challenge with redefining what engagement looks like, engagement is not just coming into the building.

- Scheduling and time for working families is always the biggest barrier to families being engaged in school.

Recommendations:

- Consider forming a group of community members, parents, and school staff who can help take some of the load off of the school operation decisions and meet with them via zoom/Teams at more convenient times for the parents.

Overall Recommendations for Ranson Middle School:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in areas with underrepresented demographics. Consider mailers to homes and recruitment events at specific elementary schools. Find ways to go to them rather than only events where they come to the school.
- Consider a “train the trainer” investment to build sustainability for IB programs in the district and be able to provide accredited IB training within the district.
- Create, in collaboration with all IB coordinators, supporting documents and templates for the implementation expectations of IB throughout the district and a system for evaluating the success of each program.
- Consider offering district transportation for an extended day program to increase remediation time.
- Work to increase teacher allotment for IB programs understanding that they must have more teachers on staff to fill positions that directly support the magnet theme.

Rea Farms STEAM Academy

Rea Farms STEAM Academy				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school conducts open houses and recruitment events.
- Transportation is available to all students.

Challenges:

- There are hundreds of students on the waitlist to enroll in the school according to staff, but there is

no evidence of targeted recruitment to move the applicant pool closer to district demographics.

- Other STEAM schools within the zone are not full.

Recommendations:

- Develop a system where students on the waitlist for one school have the opportunity to attend a similar school in the zone.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The school embraces and celebrates holidays for a large number of different groups. Staff, students and parents collaborate on celebrating various holidays. Students are proud of the decorations throughout the school for the different ethnic or religious holidays (Chinese New Year, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Diwali, etc.).
- The school administration collaborated with families and the community to develop Core Values, which include a diversity statement.

Challenges:

- The school demographics do not resemble that of the district. According to the NC Report Card, the school demographics are 9.9% Black, 42.4% Caucasian, 9.8% Hispanic and 14.3% economically disadvantaged, whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Target recruiting efforts toward moving the school demographics closer to that of the district.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Units are planned thematically across subject areas with a student project at the center.
- STEAM nights occur each quarter to showcase student projects. Students present their projects to families and community members.
- STEAM is showcased throughout the school.
- STEAM related field trips - Each grade level participates in a Grade Level Field Trip: Grade 4 - Winston-Salem; Grade 5-Charleston; Grade 6-Space Camp in Florida; Grade 7 - Washington DC; Grade 8 - Outer Banks. The Grade Level Field Trips for grades 6-8 include a college site visit.
- Students have access to various STEAM pathways each year that have included: roller coaster engineering, cooking, theater, pediatrics, forensics, engineering, dance, fashion design.
- Pathways vary based on student input.

Challenges:

- Some computer coding is included in some student projects, but computer science is not an available pathway for students to explore.

Recommendations:

- Establish a computer science pathway for students.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- A core group of teachers successfully completed the Buck Institute PBL professional development and

have provided PBL professional development to the rest of the staff.

- Four times per year, teachers choose from multiple teacher-led professional development opportunities for half a day. Some of the options include Math PBL, using manipulatives and looking at data.
- Teachers and families participated in a book study (Project Based Learning - Suzie Boss).
- Apple provided professional development for the K-2 teachers on how to use iPads in their classrooms.
- NC State University provided professional development on gardening and how to incorporate it into their lessons.

Challenges:

- Lack of district PBL, STEM or STEAM professional development.
- Lack of structured collaboration time between STEM/STEAM principals or teachers throughout the district.

Recommendations:

- Design and implement district led professional development focused on PBL, STEM and STEAM.
- Facilitate structured collaboration time between principals and teachers of STEM/STEAM schools.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The school has a strong MTSS program. Students in the lowest 25th percentile receive Tier 2 intervention and students in the lowest 10th percentile receive Tier 3 intervention.
- Two full-time high achieving teachers push into classrooms to provide intervention to students.
- Teachers and staff participate in monthly MTSS meetings to discuss the needs and progress of students receiving intervention.
- All subgroups have high achievement and high growth.

Challenges:

- Students requested offerings of high school level classes in ELA and Science to accompany the high school level course offerings in Math.

Recommendations:

- Provide high school credit course offerings in ELA and Science.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- All subgroups have high achievement and high growth.
- The school uses MAP, Dibels, MVPA and formative assessments to measure and track student growth and learning.
- Teachers analyze student data weekly during PLC meetings.
- Teachers conduct a deep data dive during half-day in-service days, which occur soon after each benchmark assessment.

Challenges:

- The correlation between MVPA and the state summative assessment is unclear.

Recommendations:

- Provide correlation data between MVPA and the state summative assessment.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Most stakeholders are consulted during the decision making process.
- Feedback is requested, reviewed and implemented after events, professional development and student projects.
- Teacher and parent committees provide input and solution ideas to challenges at the school.
- Teachers are included in the hiring process of teachers, administrators and staff.
- Each interview for new staff includes multiple questions regarding STEAM integration.
- Instructional coaches are proficient in PBL and STEAM integration and provide suggestions to teachers in those areas.

Challenges:

- A magnet coordinator position does not exist to support thematic instructional coaching for teachers.

Recommendations:

- Add a magnet coordinator position for all magnet schools.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Two teachers are dedicated to supporting highly gifted students and according to staff two teachers are dedicated to supporting curriculum development.

Challenges:

- The school does not include a magnet coordinator to assist teachers and staff with magnet theme implementation or targeted recruitment.
- Magnet schools are not referenced in the district's strategic planning.
- It is not clear if the district has a magnet financial plan.
- The district does not provide teacher or administrator professional development focused on PBL or STEM/STEAM integration.

Recommendations:

- Add a magnet coordinator position to support marketing and theme development.
- Highlight magnet programs in the district strategic plan.
- Establish or publicize the district magnet financial plan.
- Design and implement district professional development for teachers and administrators focused on PBL or STEM/STEAM integration.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Community partners collaborate on student projects and field trips.
- Community partners assist with funding and instruction for STEAM Pathways for students. A separate business partner supports each pathway.
- Feedback is requested, reviewed and implemented after events, professional development and student projects.
- Partnerships have been established with NASCAR, Flour Power, Queens University, State

Employees Credit Union, Atrium Health, Carowinds Theme Park.

Challenges:

- There is not support from the district in establishing community partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Provide support to schools in establishing community partnerships.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

- A parent commented, “Parents can’t say they don’t know what is happening at the school.”
- The monthly Falcon Newsletter is very informative for parents.
- Most teachers use ParentSquare effectively to communicate with parents.
- The school uses social media to keep parents updated and celebrate student accomplishments.

Challenges:

- The school website does not include information about the magnet theme or celebrations of achievements.

Recommendations:

- Update the school website to include magnet information and student and school achievements.

Overall Recommendations for Rea Farms STEAM Academy:

- Target recruiting efforts toward moving the school demographics closer to that of the district.
- Establish a computer science pathway for students at the school.
- Design and implement district led professional development focused on PBL, STEM and STEAM.
- Facilitate structured collaboration time between principals and teachers of STEM/STEAM schools.
- Update the school website to include magnet information and student and school achievements.

Shamrock Gardens Elementary School - Learning Immersion/Talent Development

Shamrock Gardens Elementary School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Enrollment applications exceed the number of magnet seats available. There is a trend of waitlisted students following the district's lottery process.
- The 250 LI/TD magnet slots are filled annually which is 48.17% of the total school enrollment of 519 students.
- School reports that the neighborhood is going through regentrification and is the preferred school for families because there is generational loyalty to the school which originally opened in 1957.
- The original school was demolished during the pandemic and a replacement school was built and opened for the 2022-2023 school year.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of a written diversity plan or recruitment plan. The staff reported past enrollment trends of approximately 30% enrollment of Caucasian, Hispanic and Black students prior to re-gentrification of the neighborhood.
- Percentages of total school enrollment: 2.9% - Asian; 17.1% - Hispanic; 22.2% - African-American; 5.4% Multiracial; 51.6% - Caucasian
- District enrollment: 7.2% - Asian; 30.6% - Hispanic; 28.8% - African-American; 3.6% multiracial; 23.8% - Caucasian.
- Transportation for students living outside of district transportation hubs is a barrier for attracting a diverse population. Parents report that hour-long bus rides before and after school are undesirable and impact family life and after school activities.
- In the 2023-2024 school year, the school did not receive Title 1 designation.

Recommendations:

- Formalize a written diversity plan with targeted enrollment goals, metrics and review in alignment with the district's diversity goals.
- Work with the district transportation department and magnet office to minimize hour-long rides for elementary students.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity**Successes:**

- Classes reflect diversity of enrollment. Screening procedures and assessments are in place to ensure alternative options are available for students to qualify for Talent Development (TD) aside from formal assessments. Students designated as special education (EC), Multilingual Learners (ML), MTSS and others have an opportunity to present portfolios to a district screening committee for review for placement in the LI/TD program. Based on the fall screening, 80% of the students submitting portfolios successfully completed the process.
- The magnet coordinator plus a team of coaches work in classrooms daily to provide support to teachers and students with intervention and acceleration strategies.
- It is the expectation that all students have access to LI/TD instructional practices. It was evident during classroom visits and a review of weekly ninety minute Professional Learning Community (PLC) agendas and minutes that there is reflection on practices and a review of student data and professional development sessions are tailored to individual staff needs when appropriate.
- Classroom walkthroughs plus student achievement are used as indicators of success.
- Teacher retention is consistently about 95%.

Challenges:

- Identification of neighborhood students who qualify for LI/TD programming is a reported challenge.
- Academic growth is minimal in high performing students.
- Student focus group feedback indicated that teachers “sometimes teach to the middle and it leaves the accelerated students frustrated and bored.”
- Leadership reports the need for diversity training with the changing demographics of the school community and staff.

Recommendations:

- Refine and document the process to qualify neighborhood students for LI/TD programming.
- Evaluate, formalize strategies and provide professional development along with metrics to address the needs of high performing students.
- Identify and implement diversity training to address the needs of students and staff.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- It is the expectation that all instructors are required to implement and integrate LI/TD strategies into all classes.
- Student work is displayed throughout the school and is indicative of the expectation of standard based instruction delivered with Thinking Maps, Project Based Learning (PBL), Jacob’s Ladder, inquiry questions, Socratic Seminar and through Connect Classes including arts, music, science and Mindful Media which includes a strong SEL component.
- There was evidence of small group instruction, differentiation with coaches and teachers and ‘push-in’ practices to meet the needs of students at various levels.
- Extracurricular activities and clubs are conducted every two weeks with teacher, parent volunteers and community support.
- Feedback from the leadership team screams a culture of care.

Challenges:

- Although there is common planning time, weekly PLCs and daily instructional coaching related to the theme, the language of the theme is seldom used. There is an impression that ‘gifted or academically talented’ oftentimes has a stigma attached that creates angst in children. This was evident in both student and parent focus groups with the theme being rarely mentioned, however, the culture of a caring supportive staff was in the forefront.
- There was no written evidence presented of the theme articulated and differentiated.

Recommendations:

- Formalize in writing articulated instructional practices, standards, units of instruction including theme integration by grade level.
- Develop a marketing plan to raise awareness of the theme.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Theme based professional development is calendared for the year to support the theme including targeted professional development for students with disabilities and English language learners.

- Professional development is provided by grade level and for individual teachers during weekly PLCs as required and requested based on need.
- Bi-weekly clubs and activities are related to the theme with advanced math and science activities, journalism, robotics, arts and mindful matters including yoga. Community partners, parents and teachers support academic and extracurricular experience with financial resources and volunteer support.
- District supports GiftEd certification by reimbursing teachers who take the Praxis exam for AIG certification.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of a formalized professional development plan. Professional development was scheduled throughout the year based on student data, staff needs, staff survey, the school improvement plan and benchmarks.

Recommendations:

- Standardize a plan with metrics linking professional development to the curriculum and student academic achievement.
- Formally link extracurricular activities to the theme.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- There is a schoolwide commitment to using multiple modes of learning through lesson planning, curriculum delivery supported by coaching, PLCs and professional development as evidenced by documented planning sessions and a professional development calendar.
- Data evidence was provided using a variety of formative assessments.
- Interventions and enhancements were evident through plans, coaching and intervention schedules and expectations daily of small group instruction by teachers and coaches.
- Pre-pandemic data generally showed academic student growth. Post pandemic data shows limited growth.

Challenges:

- Data shows limited to no growth for high achieving groups and lowest performing students.
- Based on student feedback in focus groups, many teachers teach to the middle group often leaving high performers feeling frustrated and bored.
- DIBELS and MTSS MAP scores for beginning of the year (BOY) and middle of the year (MOY) show a decline in achievement for all subgroups for 2023-2024. State assessments also show downward trends in student achievement.

Recommendations:

- Refine and align instructional practices and accountability protocols to school improvement plans to address academic success.
- Develop a plan to address the academic performance of identified subgroups.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Multiple indicators are used to show academic performance and are analyzed weekly during PLCs.

- Chronic absenteeism has lowered from 15% to 14.5% over the prior year. Leadership attributes the slight improvement to strategies implemented by the school social worker.
- No data was presented on behavioral expectations, however, a behavior interventionist collaborates with teachers to address behavioral concerns.

Challenges:

- Data trends show there is limited narrowing of achievement gaps.
- Leadership reports the need for diversity training with the changing demographics of the school community and staff.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps.
- Identify and implement diversity training to address the needs of students and staff.
- Identify data sources to address concerns regarding attendance and behavior.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- In alignment with district policies, school leadership is allowed to recruit and recommend hire for teachers who meet school needs and support the theme.
- The leadership team includes the principal, assistant principal, magnet coordinator, theme coaches, data coordinator and behavior specialists.
- Instructional coaching and support are provided daily with additional support during weekly PLCs.
- The leadership team reports that teachers are supportive, collaborative and vocal about needs in the school and readily take leadership roles in getting needs accomplished.

Challenges:

- Theme branding is limited. In student and parent focus groups, the LI/TD theme was rarely mentioned. One student's assessment of the magnet theme was that it must be "gardens" since the original building and grounds included outside gardens adopted by various classrooms and grade levels.

Recommendations:

- Enhance the theme branding and marketing protocols.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- District funding provides a designated magnet coordinator along with two curriculum specialists.
- The district provides access to the GiftEd certification process with reimbursement funding for teachers desiring to take the Praxis for certification.

Challenges:

- Pathways for LI/TD elementary schools are middle school IB programs controlled by application and lottery. Limited seats are available.
- The evaluator was unable to meet with the teacher focus group because of the short notice of the visit and class coverage challenges.
- It is unclear if magnet schools are part of the district strategic plan.

Recommendations:

- Explore pathway options for LI/TD students transitioning from elementary to middle school.

- Provide opportunities for teacher focus sessions to gather feedback on student achievement, theme fidelity and school operations.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school reports over 20 community based partnerships.
- Active PTA and parent volunteers provide daily support and fundraising profits to support academics and extracurricular activities.
- School newsletters, social media, leadership links and parent conferences provide updates to families regarding school activities, celebrations and student progress.
- Parents' surveys and scheduled meetings with parents and community partners provide avenues for support and engagement.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence of a formalized protocol for soliciting community partnerships and metrics including a link to the theme.
- District supported partnerships were not evident.

Recommendations:

- Establish a protocol with district approval for soliciting partnerships to include metrics and linkage to the theme.
- Document the success of partnerships sustained over time and connect to theme support.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Overwhelmingly, the leadership team, students and parents describe the school's climate as one of caring.
- PTA is actively involved as school volunteers in classrooms, extracurricular activities and fundraising events.
- There is a commitment to engage families in all school activities through phone, email, newsletter and social media.

Challenges:

- Without Title 1 designation, funding for some activities are limited.
- Access to the school improvement plan via the website is challenging.
- Theme branding is limited, however, there is a strong community commitment to support the school.

Recommendations:

- Explore resource opportunities to support school activities.
- Work with the technology team to make student academic progress and the school improvement plan more readily accessible.
- Enhance branding of the themes of the school.

Overall Recommendations for Shamrock Gardens Elementary School:

- Explore pathway options for LI/TD students transitioning from elementary to middle school.
- Identify and implement diversity training to address the needs of students and staff.

- Formalize a written diversity plan with targeted enrollment goals, metrics and review in alignment with the district's diversity goals.
- Develop a plan and strategies to address achievement gaps.

South Academy of International Languages

South Academy of International Languages				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Those who are familiar with the school have a very high opinion of it and word of mouth is almost always positive.
- The school's Spanish Teacher is an excellent recruiter and the faculty themselves see recruiting students for the school as part of their job.
- South Academy of International Languages (SAIL) holds regular events for parents and prospective families. The PTSO is actively involved in the student recruitment process and even leads the tours for the school.
- Magnet Fairs with CMS have been helpful ways to connect to new families.
- SAIL regularly visits area daycares and PreK centers (the school is sometimes called by families who are currently pregnant to ask if they can get on the waitlist) according to school staff.
- The school reports that families have moved to Charlotte in order to have their children attend the school.

Challenges:

- The school's name and location has changed multiple times in recent years and is often called by its former name/location.
- According to school staff, the shift in the CMS application timeline this year put limitations on the school's ability to recruit. Families who were considering school options were forced to make decisions earlier than they were used to.
- Because the overwhelming majority of core instruction for K-5 is in a foreign language, interested students for grades 1-5 are required to pass a language aptitude test in order to enroll (to ensure they'll

be able to comprehend instruction) and there are often multiple steps for this process and it can take more than a month.

- Interested families must enroll at their neighborhood school first before they can apply to SAIL.
- Because of current staffing, the school's PTSO does the majority of the strategic marketing and promotion.
- SAIL isn't able to offer a full slate of athletics and loses middle school students (approximately 10% of 5th grade) because of that according to school staff.
- The school demographics are 19.3% Black, 33.4% Caucasian, 33.1% Hispanic and 35.7% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a full time magnet coordinator to lead marketing, recruiting, program and partnership development, major events and outreach to new families.
- Consider partnering with CMS to explore possibilities around allowing prospective families to apply to SAIL directly - or to enroll in CMS online instead of in-person at their neighborhood school.
- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district team and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Students at SAIL are conversationally fluent in a foreign language by the end of their first year.
- The faculty and staff at SAIL regularly collaborate to design instructional and culturally responsive lessons and units.
- There is a strong commitment to teaching in diverse settings and a significant portion of the staff have come to the United States to teach at SAIL.

Challenges:

- Because of the school's unique theme and need for language fluency, the school is often developing its own cycles of practice and reflection.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the CMS Magnet and CMS World Language departments to collaborate together on a "Language Immersion Playbook " for strategies, coaching cycles and best practices for staff at SAIL and other language immersion magnets.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- SAIL's core instruction K-5 is entirely in a foreign language and has a high dosage of language learning and instructional content in grades 6-8.
- SAIL faculty regularly collaborate and plan together on ways to drive language immersion towards growth in core instruction.

Challenges:

- SAIL is often developing its own internal thematic curriculum supports.

- Having access to high-quality texts and content-standard aligned resources in Chinese, Japanese, French and German at various student grade levels can be a challenge.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with Magnet Schools of America to explore formal and informal networking with other language immersion schools to collaborate on professional development for thematic instruction and theme-content integration.
- Consider leveraging artificial intelligence to translate existing CMS instructional assets into foreign languages to give students access to grade-level texts and resources.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- SAIL teachers are regularly invited to present nationally at various education conferences and seminars on their unique approach to language immersion and acquisition.
- Faculty and staff regularly collaborate to develop many “in-house” professional developments and training.

Challenges:

- It is likely often the case that many SAIL teachers find themselves generating more training and professional development than they do receive. SAIL utilizes all available CMS training and resources and includes various differentiated thematic training and professional development, however, due to SAIL’s unique theme and instructional methodology, there are fewer theme-specific opportunities than the staff feels they need.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the CMS Magnet and CMS World Language department to collaborate together on a “Language Immersion Playbook” for strategies, coaching cycles and best practices for staff at SAIL and other language immersion magnets.
- Work with the district team to advocate for conferences and other ways to bring specific theme-aligned PD to teachers at SAIL.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Student collaboration and a sense of belonging amongst students is evident throughout the building.
- Parents report that their children have shared with them that they find learning Math in German easier than English due to aspects of the language structure and that learning Chinese characters have helped them have a better concept of foundational numeracy.
- The school-wide teaching and learning philosophy uses multiple modes of learning. According to the school, “Every lesson, activity and conversation between teams begins with this vision of our culturally competent students achieving academic excellence through the medium of multilingualism. Our goal is that each of our students leaves our school as 1) Confident communicators in at least two languages, 2) Culturally agile learners who can work within and between the cultures they encounter 3) Reflective problem solvers who can apply a growth mindset and academic competence to any challenge.”

Challenges:

- All state testing and assessments, including writing, are done in English and teachers report that students sometimes answer with English words arranged in non-English conventions.
- Parents report that children who finish at SAIL have some struggle with English composition in high school.

Recommendations:

- Consider potential “practice” state testing sessions to give students the ability to receive support on their English conventions.
- Consider additional English composition activities in grades 7-8 to provide additional opportunities for students to practice their writing.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- SAIL has consistently shown academic achievement well above the CMS average.
- According to school documentation, “For non-Caucasian students, our rate of improvement post-pandemic went from 1.6% to an 8% score increase. From 2020 to 2023, we have seen a 12.9% increase in achievement for our Hispanic students, outperforming Caucasian students who made 6.9% increases. African American students also saw a 14.9% increase in reading scores.”

Challenges:

- During the 2020-21 school year, the school, along with the rest of CMS, saw a decline in achievement and while improvement has been made, many students are still behind pre pandemic levels.

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement the school’s post COVID-19 academic and instructional interventions and leverage data to identify student gaps.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- There is a strong legacy of consistency in leadership: the school’s new Principal follows the long tenures of the previous two principals who left due to retirement (20 years and eight years).
- There is a team-based approach to innovation and change: SAIL’s leadership operates as a team and works hard to address school decisions collaboratively. There are multiple opportunities for faculty leadership contributions, feedback and consultation on school decisions.
- There is a genuine sense of a positive culture and climate as observed on a visit to the school site.

Challenges:

- Many of SAIL’s teachers are foreign nationals who work on visas - which are often complicated and confusing to apply for and receive.
- The school is often forced to limit available seats for incoming students, especially in Japanese, due to the limited availability of multilingual staff.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the PTSO to bring in an Immigration Lawyer to consult two to three times each year on best practices and strategies for teachers needing visa support.
- Consider including teacher recruitment as a strand of future SAIL marketing and recruiting.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The long term success of SAIL has led to the launch of a sister language immersion magnet school in North Charlotte.
- SAIL has a new building and facility.

Challenges:

- How SAIL fits into the larger strategy for CMS Magnets, particularly as an all-lottery school is unclear.
- Due to a mix-up during the last lottery/application season, SAIL was assigned an additional 18 sixth grade students in the Japanese program who would have technically been placed at the North Language Immersion School but could not because only SAIL offers Japanese.

Recommendations:

- Consider a partnership between SAIL and CMS Communications to feature the school consistently with various guests, state and national visitors and media requests. The school's new facility and interesting/unique theme could be an excellent component of a broader CMS public relations strategy.
- Consider providing additional information and disclaimers for the CMS online lottery application around which languages are offered at each language immersion school.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- There are many significant and unique partnerships that support SAIL - not limited to but including the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Foreign Ministry of Germany, the Alliance Francais and many area businesses with international divisions.
- The school and parents have both reported that SAIL has been used by area businesses as a way to recruit new employees to relocate to the area as an excellent school choice for their children.
- SAIL students have met with and performed for Foreign Delegations, Ambassadors and Consular Officers.
- SAIL students regularly travel overseas to engage with others from various French, German, Chinese and Japanese speaking countries.
- Many classes at SAIL have classroom helpers that are foreign university students whose native languages are the languages of instruction.

Challenges:

- The school is without a dedicated magnet program coordinator or specialist to oversee, manage and expand SAIL's community partnerships.
- Due to increased uncertainty in the US/China relationship, there are additional public relations and political dynamics in the SAIL Chinese Language program (ex. planned trip to China had to be canceled - alternate trip to Singapore scheduled).

Recommendations:

- Consider hiring a fulltime magnet coordinator to oversee SAIL partnerships along with marketing, recruiting and program management.
- Consider hosting a SAIL cultural community open-house during the school day where community members from area businesses, non-profits, CMS leaders, local and state officials, neighbors and

churches would be invited to tour the school, meet staff/students and see various SAIL cultural performances like Taiko drumming, Chinese dancing and others.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Parents report a strong sense of connection amongst each other and specifically stated how many friendships that exist between families are a direct result of their attending SAIL.
- SAIL was invited to be a pilot for ParentSquare at CMS and has become one of the strongest success stories for improved communication and engagement in the district.
- Several parents and members of the PTSO serve on the school's School Improvement Team.

Challenges:

- SAIL administration and faculty report that engaging with and having regular communication with non-English speaking families can be a challenge.
- SAIL administration and faculty also report that there are challenges for non-English speaking families to attend school events and celebrations.

Recommendations:

- Consider developing strategies to engage with non-English speaking families and creating additional leadership roles for them with the school's PTSO.
- Consider hosting 1-2 off-campus events or showcases for SAIL performances or celebrations in areas of Charlotte closer to neighborhoods and communities where many non-English speaking families live.
- Consider adding a Grants position to the school's PTSO board that focuses on seeking out and applying for grants throughout the year to supplement and support additional initiatives and programs at SAIL.

Overall Recommendations for South Academy of International Languages:

- Consider hiring a fulltime magnet coordinator to add additional leadership for all programmatic aspects of the school's marketing, recruiting, partnership and community engagement.
- Consider establishing a partnership with CMS Communications to make SAIL one of the district's "must-see" schools for visitors, guests and local/state/national leaders as well as encouraging local media to consider SAIL as a place to regularly feature when reporting on schooling and education.
- Consider adding a "grants" position to the PTSO to seek out additional funding sources and supports for SAIL initiatives.

South Mecklenburg High School - World Languages

South Mecklenburg High School - World Languages				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	

7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships			X
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The CMS Magnet Office provides information to parents starting before Kindergarten for interest in World Language immersion schools that then feed into South Mecklenburg High School.
- Parent volunteers (as well as student ambassadors) give personal tours to prospective parents and students interested in visiting the school before applying to the World Language Magnet.
- Language-proficient students and faculty members (including ASL) act as interpreters when needed, so there are no language barriers to understanding in the recruitment process.
- The school staff strategically coordinate with feeder middle schools (approximately five) where students may not know about the offerings at South Meck.
- Staff also work to accommodate students who may have the opportunity to transfer into South Meck from non-feeder schools.

Challenges:

- The change to district provided transportation may have negatively impacted student recruitment efforts. (See final bullet under “Suggestions” question for the Parent Focus group in the Appendix.) There are express stops, but they are not always optimal or convenient.
- The school demographics are 18.6% Black, 24.3% Caucasian, 50.6% Hispanic and 50.4% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Communicate and collaborate with the CMS district office to explore and identify innovative, workable solutions to transportation-related challenges, including the shortage of bus drivers.
- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- While the exact percentages of students in each racial subgroup at South Meck do not mirror those of CMS, diverse student representation was observed in most magnet and non-magnet classrooms that were visited.
- Multilingual (ML) students are supported in their metacognitive growth, as well as language acquisition, which can be used in classrooms outside of World Language classes.
- The magnet program currently serves 47 exceptional education (Exceptional Children - EC) students. EC teachers and support staff offer learning labs and after-school tutoring along with collaboration with world language magnet teachers to support students’ accessibility to programming.
- In learning lab classes, teachers use research-based curricula to provide intensive interventions for students with IEPs. Frequent progress monitoring provides data for timely identification of the need

for instructional changes.

- Circumlocution techniques and classroom equity strategies are integrated into the curriculum, ensuring that every student receives a high-quality education regardless of their language background.
- Although the World Languages magnet is part of South Meck, all students attending the school may participate in the numerous language clubs that are offered. Likewise, students in the magnet programs are able to access school clubs.

Challenges:

- A new high school is being built, which further impacts the diversity of the school, as some families may opt to have their children attend a school closer to their home.

Recommendations:

- Consider how the school's parent advocacy groups (PTA and World Language Magnet Boosters) can seek out carpool and ride-share connections as a transportation alternative.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The program's magnet theme is visible throughout the magnet program buildings, with an abundance of student work posted inside and outside classrooms.
- In World Language classrooms, students compare and contrast language/dialect differences across different cultures.
- In English and social studies classes, students research and critically analyze texts to look at persuasive techniques and how to review texts for bias.
- Culinary arts students prepare meals from different countries each month to highlight the diverse population in the school.

Challenges:

- While there is rich evidence of theme integration in literacy and social studies courses, the connections are more challenging in math and science courses.

Recommendations:

- Provide opportunities for teachers in magnet and non-magnet courses to engage in timely, relevant, cross-curricular professional development, with a focus on theme integration in math and science courses.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- All teachers at the school have been trained on accessing teaching strategies for multilingual learners through the Ellevation program for multilingual learners.
- Teachers who lead AP (Advanced Placement) classes are trained through the College Board and are offered ongoing support and training in the school, the district and at a national level.
- Teachers at the school have opportunities to develop and provide professional development for each other based on identified needs and areas of interest related to the school theme.
- Ongoing professional development is offered to all World Language teachers through the district, with a focus on developing students' language and intercultural communicative proficiency.

- At least once a year, national proficiency experts are brought in to help teachers create engaging and meaningful learning experiences based on authentic resources. Additional professional development is offered to all department chairpersons six times each year to help them lead their departments in this work. Department chairs then share relevant resources with teachers based on the level and or language they teach.
- Teachers in the World Language department participate in professional development throughout the year both in person and online, in the magnet-theme philosophy/goals and objectives throughout the district.
- Additional opportunities are made available for teachers to receive external training through ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages); FLANC (Foreign Language Association of North Carolina); SCOLT (Southern Conference On Language Teaching); PEARLL (Professionals in Education Advancing Research and Language Learning) among other institutions.
- There is a schoolwide professional development plan with an underlying thread of language acquisition across all content to support the magnet theme.
- Teachers work and learn collaboratively in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) weekly.

Challenges:

- *Intentionally left blank*

Recommendations:

- *Intentionally left blank*

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Teachers utilize group structures, projects and authentic learning tasks to foster communication, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving in the classes observed.
- The school implements targeted support programs, including a Spanish Leadership and Learning class, which supports ML students to enhance their academic and social-emotional development.
- The Newcomer Buddy program within Spanish for Native Speakers classes offers specialized support to new ML students, aiding their integration into the school community.
- ML and EC teachers are assigned to EOC courses (Courses with End of Course exams) to provide direct support for students.
- Specific AP courses are promoted at lower grades to build a strong academic foundation, enabling students to handle more challenging coursework in later grades.
- The World Language magnet program offers study in Chinese, French, German, Japanese and Spanish, requiring students to complete level V, as an AP (Advanced Placement) course. Additionally, students can take American Sign Language classes up to level III and Spanish up to level VII. The school also offers civilization and culture 1 and 2. These courses are unique to the program and offered in every language (except ASL). Magnet students can meet the seven required credits with non-language approved courses such as AP World History, AP Human Geography and Latin American Studies.
- ASL is also offered as a course.

Challenges:

- Per the NC Report Card, math and reading proficiency has trended downward for all demographic groups.

Recommendations:

- Partner with parents, local colleges and business/community partners to support reading and math achievement through tutoring and mentoring.
- Leverage the American Sign Language (ASL) course offering as a marketing strand.

Standard 6: Student Achievement**Successes:**

- Over the past five years, magnet students' graduation rates for students in the magnet program have consistently been higher than that of the school and the district.
- The graduation rate for Black students, economically disadvantaged students and exceptional education students increased from 21-22 to 22-23.
- The school reviews and celebrates successes such as EOC pass rates and AP exam participation in addition to proficiency rates in reading and math.

Challenges:

- Per the NC Report Card, the graduation rate for Hispanic students and English learners has trended downward.

Recommendations:

- Explore how partnership with parents, colleges and business/community agencies can be leveraged to provide mentors and tutors for students not on track for graduation.

Pillar 4 - Leadership**Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development****Successes:**

- The school principal, along with his leadership team, has been strategic and effective in recruiting teachers with a shared vision for high-quality, learner focused instruction and fidelity of theme implementation. Specifically, the interview questions are crafted with the idea of hiring individuals who are committed to growth and sustainability of the program.
- Teachers are supported in collaborative decision-making around data during their weekly PLCs.
- Beginning teachers have monthly mentoring and coaching from veteran teachers, receiving support for thematic instruction.
- The language models standards-based, thematic instruction and differentiation through co-teaching.

Challenges:

- Sustaining the ability to identify, recruit and retain high quality world language teachers who require H1-B visas is a school challenge.

Recommendations:

- Partner with NC universities that have World Language teaching programs to identify prospective interns and teachers.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations**Successes:**

- There is a well-established pathway to the World Languages magnet at South Meck from SAIL and Collinswood K-8 schools.

Challenges:

- The district does not provide a dedicated magnet coordinator for each school.

Recommendations:

- Consider what alternative funding sources might be available (i.e., specialized grants) that might be available to support a full-time magnet coordinator position.
- Explore how the PTA or World Language Magnet Boosters might identify a person or team to apply for grants from state, local and other charitable foundations to support identified school needs.
- Communicate and collaborate with the CMS district office to explore and identify innovative, workable solutions for transportation-related challenges.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school leverages its strong relationships with families to identify and access business and community partners to support and enhance students' learning experiences in the magnet program.
- The school has an active partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS), sponsored by Latin Americans Working for Achievement (LAWA).
- CIS surrounds students with a community of support, building upon students' successes and growth as well as the overall school's success in meeting its school improvement plan and other school-driven goals including being a world-class model with its World Language magnet program.
- CIS facilitates trips to visit colleges around the Charlotte area every weekend, with more than 30 students participating.
- LAWA partners with the school to empower students with strategies to access higher education through support with college applications and completing the FAFSA.
- The school has established a partnership with Huntingtowne Farms Elementary, where students go once a week to mentor 4th-grade students. This provides students with an opportunity to explore and apply mentoring, coaching, artistic and athletic skills.
- German and Austrian companies located in the Charlotte region offer apprenticeships to South Meck students in collaboration with CPCC (Central Piedmont Community College). Pfaff Molds; Groninger and Co. and Shiron are some examples of these companies.

Challenges:

- Although both leadership and parent focus groups identified growing and expanding partnerships to support the school theme and student achievement as a goal, there is currently not a specific plan for how to do this.

Recommendations:

- Consider a collaboration between school leadership, the PTA and a representative group of teachers and students to develop a protocol for identifying curriculum-focused business/community partners.
- Make contact with the German Consulate in Charlotte to share about the school and explore partnership opportunities.
- Consider how the culinary program could support monthly or quarterly luncheons for business partners and prospective families.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- South Meck has an active PTA (Parent, Teacher, Student Association) and the World Language Magnet Boosters, a subset of the PTA that specifically supports the magnet program. There's also a South Meck Alumni group that provides grants for teachers, as long as they are aligned to the curriculum.
- Parent volunteers from the PTA offer school tours that focus on the world language magnet program and facilities. As they have children participating in the program, they are able to offer their experience and information related to the program.
- Training is provided to onboard everyone (parents/staff/students) to understand the requirements and information concerning the magnet program. Every student is provided with a magnet compact signed by parents and students, in which expectations and requirements are clearly outlined.

Challenges:

- Providing support to ensure parent/family engagement is explicitly linked to student learning and achievement, as well as teacher support

Recommendations:

- Explore how the alumni support group can serve as mentors for students identified as "at risk" of not graduating.

Overall Recommendations for South Mecklenburg High School

- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.
- Leverage the existing, strong parent advocacy groups (PTA and World Language Program Boosters), higher education and business/community partners to provide mentors and tutors with a specific focus on increasing graduation rates for Hispanic and ML students and increasing proficiency rates in reading/math for all students.
- Consider how a targeted focus on increasing proficiency rates and graduation cohort rates, as well as narrowing achievement gaps might strengthen marketing and recruitment.
- Communicate and collaborate with the CMS district office to explore and identify innovative, workable solutions to transportation-related challenges, including the shortage of bus drivers.

Statesville Road Elementary School - IB

Statesville Road Elementary School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Successes:

- Research shows open enrollment without consideration for student characteristics can further perpetuate segregation, therefore, it is a success the district lottery takes into account socioeconomic status to achieve socioeconomic diversity among schools.

Challenges:

- Discussion with leadership confirms that during Magnet Fair events there is limited family knowledge of what an International Baccalaureate (IB) elementary school offers in comparison to magnet themes, such as STEM, STEAM and Dual Language Immersion themes.
- Discussion with families confirms the uniqueness of an IB elementary theme is not always easy to understand in relation to the standard neighborhood school.
- Review of the Statesville Road lottery magnet enrollment shows the school has 66 magnet seats (showing comparatively limited interest) and with a total school enrollment of 466, the school is not at enrollment capacity.
- Discussion with the school staff confirms that there is minimal understanding of the purpose of the magnet program.
- Discussion with leadership and school staff reveals there is minimal awareness concerning the specific purpose of a magnet school to reduce and/or prevent racial and socioeconomic isolation and that the IB magnet theme may promote school choice to change family enrollment patterns for the specific purpose to desegregate a school district.

Recommendations:

- Develop and increase district-level marketing and recruitment materials and distribute materials to each IB elementary school.
- Develop marketing materials at the school-level and distribute to local diverse preschool programs and host family nights for the school's preschool programs to increase magnet enrollment.
- Host a district level training for all magnet school principals to train principals on the purpose of magnet schools.
- Provide training to school leadership to increase knowledge concerning the purpose of a magnet school and include in the training the school's specific socioeconomic goals, diversity goals and target enrollment.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Observations gathered during a Howard University (student interview panel) event confirm the school is developing powerful connections between Black college students and Black elementary students.
- Observations gathered during classroom and hallway walkthroughs confirms the change in school culture over the past two years under new leadership has improved student self-respect and improved student behavior.
- Discussion with teachers reveals teacher demographics reflect and embrace student diversity.

Challenges:

- Review of the NC School Report Card shows student demographics does not reflect the district: Asian 2.4%; Black 64.4%; Hispanic 28.7%; Caucasian 1.0%; Two or More Races 2.8%.
- Review of the NC School Report Card shows student demographics for Black +28.5% above district; Hispanic -.09% below district; Caucasian -23% below district.

Recommendations:

- Develop a school marketing and recruitment plan to increase marketing and recruitment targeted to diverse student populations to reduce racial isolation of Black students.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The IB Primary Years Program emphasizes a well-rounded education and as shown in the Statesville Road ES Report Card for Art Education, 92.6% of students participate in music and 92.4% of students participate in visual art, above state percentages of 91.3% music and 90% visual art.
- Discussion with leadership reveals efforts have begun to integrate the IB magnet theme into music, arts, science and other course specials.

Challenges:

- Review of school artifacts show that while the school has made significant improvements in instruction for math, reading and science standards, there is minimal to no integration of the IB magnet theme into all subjects and courses.
- Observations through classroom walkthroughs show minimal consistency and minimal visibility of the IB magnet theme throughout the school.
- The cycle of improvement to improve theme integration is limited by lack of sufficient IB certification training beyond minimal requirements to meet IB compliance.

Recommendations:

- Integrate the IB magnet theme into all subjects and courses to provide a magnet experience for students throughout the school day rather than within isolated courses.
- Expand IB visibility into all classrooms, hallways and the main office area to increase the visibility of IB throughout the school campus.
- Expand district financial resources to fund teacher attendance at both beginner and higher-level IB certification workshops to support the cycle of improvement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Discussion with leadership reveals due to the school's success with academic growth, the school continues to host district level principal walkthroughs to showcase instructional practices aligned to district curriculum.

Challenges:

- Data in the Statesville Road ES NC Report Card shows the school has 72.8% experienced teachers, 27.2% beginning teachers. The district percentage for experienced teachers is 84.2% and for beginning teachers 15.8%, making it a challenge to retain IB trained teachers.
- Discussion with teachers reveal minimal to no embedded theme based professional development reflection occurs.

- Discussion with students reveals minimal magnet theme integration occurs in extracurricular experiences within the school.
- Review of school artifacts and discussions with leadership and teachers show Statesville Road ES teachers attend IB certification training, however, resources are limited to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified workshops which would deepen IB implementation and strengthen IB sustainability.

Recommendations:

- Dedicate some PLC time to IB magnet theme planning and reflection.
- Integrate the IB magnet theme into extracurricular experiences within the school.
- Provide district budget allocations to ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to meet IB required teacher training as well as provide financial resources to send teachers to higher-level and differentiated IB certified training.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Discussion with leadership, teachers and students confirms there is a school wide philosophy of teaching/learning which fosters respect and caring.
- Classroom observations show a variety of interventions exist to support all students; increasing teaching staff in classrooms, providing instruction to small student groups and tutoring throughout the school day to individual students.

Challenges:

- Review of school artifacts and classroom observations show a variety of tiered interventions exist to support math and reading yet are limited to support specific components of the IB magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Expand tiered interventions to support components of the IB magnet theme, such as concepts of thematic units, key concepts and summative assessments related to the IB magnet.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Review of the NC School Report Card shows performance grade score history for overall school performance improved from 2022 33-F to 2023 43-D.
- Review of the NC School Report Card shows English Learners at Statesville Road ES met progress goals towards English language attainment at 38.5%, above the district percentage at 28.8%.
- Review of the NC School Report Card shows over the past five years academic growth was not initially met, yet in the past two years, 2022 and 2023 academic growth was met.

Challenges:

- Review of the School Report Card shows performance gaps between student subgroups in student performance for math, reading and science, however in comparison to other school student demographics, the disparities between Statesville Road ES student subgroups for science are not as large.

Recommendations:

- Expand different modes of learning, differentiated instruction and tiered interventions to support individual student achievement and reduce achievement gaps among student demographic populations.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Discussion with leadership reveals the district IB staff conducts IB theme meetings and facilitates discussions among IB school staff.
- Discussion with leadership, teachers and families confirm there is collaborative decision making.

Challenges:

- Classroom observations and discussions with teachers, students and families confirms the IB theme is not implemented with fidelity across all subjects and courses.
- District level IB collaboration and training between schools has decreased over the past two years.

Recommendations:

- Expand IB collaboration opportunities for IB teachers across IB PYP schools to support thematic instructional coaching.
- Provide IB certified training to ensure all teachers have access to IB professional development so the IB theme can be implemented with fidelity.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Discussion with leadership reveals that while a dedicated IB/Magnet coordinator position does not exist, teachers asked to support IB have been willing to attempt to accomplish IB coordinator tasks.
- There is a K-12 Magnet Pathway for IB.

Challenges:

- Review of artifacts and the district website show the district strategic plan includes an opening statement supporting magnet schools as an opportunity to nurture student talent and interest, however; the district Strategic Plan does not specifically address magnet schools in goals and action steps.
- Discussion with school leadership and teachers reveals the school does not have a sufficiently funded IB coordinator position.

Recommendations:

- Include the operation of magnet schools into the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives and action steps specific to magnet schools.
- Advocate with the district to provide resources for an IB elementary school coordinator position to meet IB requirements.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Discussion with leadership and volunteers confirm volunteers working in the school are valued and appreciated.

Challenges:

- Review of school artifacts and discussions with teachers and community partnerships confirms the school does not have IB focused community partnerships that enhance the magnet theme.
- District supported partnerships aligned to the IB theme are minimal at the school.

Recommendations:

- Develop IB focused community partnerships to enhance the IB magnet theme.
- Increase district supported IB theme community partnerships across all IB schools.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Chronic Absenteeism (often an indicator of student engagement) is shown in the Statesville Road ES Report Card at 24.2%, which is below the district 25.6% and state 26.7% percentages.
- Discussions with students, teachers, leadership and families confirm the school culture fosters caring, kindness and respect.
- Discussions with families confirm a parent group that participates in school decision making.
- Discussions with families confirm annual parent-teacher conferences demonstrate a commitment to engage families in student learning.
- Discussions with families confirm over the past two years new school leadership has improved student behavior and increased student academic growth.
- Review of school artifacts shows the IB student of the month celebration incorporates the IB Learner Profile and engages families in the IB magnet theme.

Challenges:

- Discussion with leadership, teachers and families confirms limited time and limited resources make it a challenge to focus on math, reading and science achievement while also engaging families and community partnerships with the IB magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Expand the integration of the IB magnet theme throughout subjects and courses so the engagement of families is a natural occurrence with the IB magnet theme.

Overall Recommendations for Statesville Road Elementary School:

- Develop a school marketing and recruitment plan to increase marketing and recruitment targeted to diverse student populations to reduce racial isolation of Black students.
- Develop marketing materials at the school-level and distribute to local diverse preschool programs and host family nights for the school's preschool programs to increase magnet enrollment.
- Integrate the IB magnet theme into all subjects and courses to provide a magnet experience for students throughout the school day rather than within isolated courses.
- Expand IB visibility into all classrooms, hallways and the main office area to increase the visibility of IB throughout the school campus.
- Provide IB certified training to ensure all teachers have access to IB professional development so the IB theme can be implemented with fidelity.
- Expand different modes of learning, differentiated instruction and tiered interventions to support individual student achievement and reduce achievement gaps among student demographic populations.
- Develop IB focused community partnerships to enhance the IB magnet theme.

Tuckaseegee Elementary School - Learning Immersion and Talent Development

Tuckaseegee Elementary School - Learning Immersion and Talent Development				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The school has outlined marketing/recruitment, entrance/assignment and transportation policies, including active participation in district events such as the magnet fair, open houses and tours.
- Open houses are conducted both in person and virtually to accommodate all parents' scheduling needs. Additionally, the school utilizes community-wide flier distribution to advertise open house dates.
- The theme has been in existence for over two decades at the school. Leveraging a social media presence, the school promotes its offerings to a wider audience.

Challenges:

- Despite the school's capacity to accept 35 students per grade level, only 36 students are currently enrolled via magnet application, indicating under-enrollment.
- The school is 43% Hispanic, 43.2% Black and 23.8% Caucasian which is significantly different than the district demographics of 30.6% Hispanic, 34.7% Black and 23.8% Caucasian.
- The school faces recruitment obstacles due to the community's perception of the school's location. However, visiting parents express positive impressions of the school's offerings.
- The parent/partner group shared that the application process is not user friendly and discouraging to parents when they apply. Multiple parents shared they required help to decipher what the questions were asking and what they were applying for.
- A parent mentioned that the process for registering their child and applying for a program is confusing and should be clearer.
- Partners reported receiving feedback from parents that they struggled with the application process.

Recommendations:

- Establish and implement a robust, targeted recruitment plan to effectively showcase the school's strengths and attract prospective students.

- Provide dedicated funds to the school specifically designated for recruitment efforts, enabling targeted outreach and engagement activities and a magnet coordinator to lead the school's efforts.
- Invite prospective parents to school events so they can meet and speak with current parents as well as observe the interactions between staff and families.
- Review the current application process and survey parents on ways the process can be more clear and easier to navigate for parents.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Translators are provided at open houses for the school's growing Hispanic population, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity in communication.
- Classroom observations have revealed evidence of inclusive teaching practices, including the use of thinking maps, small group instruction and differentiated teaching methods.
- Teachers demonstrate a commitment to teaching in diverse settings by either possessing or actively pursuing Academically/Intellectually Gifted (AIG) certification, aligning with the school's magnet theme.

Challenges:

- The absence of a school-specific diversity statement is noted, although the district has a general diversity statement.

Recommendations:

- Develop and prominently display a school diversity statement or policy throughout the premises and on the school's website to affirm commitment to diversity and inclusivity.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The Talent Development (TD) curriculum integrates learning immersion and talent development across subjects and courses. The principal noted that the school has a wall to wall theme implementation approach no matter if the student applied to attend or if this is the student's home school. A collaborative teaching approach is embraced throughout subjects, fostering extended thinking, facilitating problem-based learning and encouraging deeper exploration of concepts. Classroom observations provided evidence of students participating in academic conversations provided throughout the whole group instruction.
- College pennants are displayed in a few classrooms to showcase the various colleges and universities that students may aspire to attend.

Challenges:

- The Learning Immersion/Talent Development theme lacks a clear focus on innovation and primarily emphasizes best practices for learning. This lack of a distinct focus may pose challenges in articulating the theme effectively.
- The parent focus group expressed a desire for the implementation of additional strategies at the kindergarten level to enhance student preparedness, ultimately leading to increased success rates in passing the talent development certification assessment by second grade.

Recommendations:

- Innovate the Learning Immersion model by integrating a thematic focus, such as utilizing the established STEM lab to enhance the educational experience. This enhancement will offer an additional point of interest for prospective parents.
- Develop and implement a collaboration between kindergarten teachers, curriculum specialists and assessment coordinators to align instructional strategies with the specific requirements of the talent development certification assessment.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Integration of embedded professional development and scheduled collaborative planning sessions was successfully implemented, as evidenced by shared planning schedules. The school demonstrated commitment to inclusive education by providing job-embedded professional development tailored to its thematic focus, catering to diverse student populations, including English language learners and students with disabilities.
- The active engagement of the magnet coordinator and the talent development (TD) teacher in classroom push-ins include modeling lessons, enriching teaching practices and fostering continuous improvement.
- Newly hired teachers benefit from the Panther Academy, receiving tailored professional development in talent development instructional strategies.
- Talent development strategies, outlined in the school improvement plan, are prioritized and integrated into the walkthrough process. Teachers participate in monthly learning walks, utilizing a standardized form to reflect on observed practices.

Challenges:

- Absence of a written structured theme-based professional development plan poses a notable challenge, potentially hindering cohesive instructional strategies.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive written professional development plan outlining targeted workshops or training sessions centered around thematic instruction to address the identified challenge effectively.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- The principal and leadership team consistently pursue resources and instructional strategies to elevate teaching practices. The principal maintains regular communication with staff through a newsletter, "The Paw Print," wherein she disseminates articles aligning with the school's goals and themes.
- Tiered interventions are consistently deployed across all grade levels and subjects, ensuring students receive personalized support tailored to their unique needs, both for enrichment and remediation. Teachers employ a variety of formative assessment techniques to accurately gauge and address instructional needs, fostering a responsive learning environment (DIBELS, MVPA, MAP, iReady, etc.).
- Despite a previous decline in student achievement attributed to changes in leadership, the current leadership team has demonstrated evidence of an upward trend in academic performance, forecasting a substantial 20% increase in overall scores. The school reported the highest growth in the district

according to the DIBELS K-2 assessment, indicating significant progress and commitment to student advancement.

- Third-grade students exhibit the highest growth among priority schools, showcasing the efficacy of the leadership team's strategies and interventions in fostering academic success.

Challenges:

- While some classroom observations revealed instances of heightened student engagement facilitated by small group instruction, the predominant mode of teaching observed in upper grade levels was whole group instruction.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate a greater balance of instructional approaches, including increased utilization of small group instruction in upper grade classrooms.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- The school has demonstrated evidence of academic improvement across all subgroups, effectively narrowing the achievement gap. Rigorous data collection and analysis are consistently undertaken to monitor progress.
- English learners at the school are surpassing growth targets, indicating effective support and instructional strategies tailored to their needs. The school has two ML teachers.
- Through targeted prevention strategies for behavior management, the school has achieved a decline in suspension rates, decreasing from 66 suspensions last year to only one suspension this year.
- The school reported a 20-point increase in student achievement specifically among Black male students. The school has implemented a volunteer mentorship program specifically aimed at supporting Black boys, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment.
- Classroom observations reveal a strong emphasis on student achievement, with each classroom incorporating data tracking and goal setting for students. Bulletin boards celebrating student success and collaboration rooms showcasing data tracking further exemplify the school's commitment to fostering academic growth.

Challenges:

- The school has had a D score since 2014 except for a C in 2022.
- The school has not met growth targets from 2017-2023 except for exceeding in 2022.
- Despite overall progress, the principal has noted that the growth rate of the English learner population outpaces that of Black students, indicating a need for targeted interventions to address this disparity.

Recommendations:

- Continue the partnership with the Black Child Development Institute and implement evidence-based strategies known to enhance student achievement. This could involve adopting research-backed approaches tailored to the unique needs of the student population, with a focus on equitable outcomes for all subgroups.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The magnet theme is a central priority within the school improvement plan and implemented with dedication.
- Inclusivity is promoted through the engagement of teachers from each grade level in the school's Instructional Leadership Team. This collaborative platform facilitates decision-making across all school facets, including master scheduling.
- The School Improvement Team embodies a partnership between educators and parents, fostering a collaborative environment where decisions are made collectively to enhance educational initiatives.
- Every staff member, including the principal, benefits from personalized coaching sessions tailored to individual needs. These sessions occur regularly, either weekly or bi-weekly, ensuring timely support for both thematic and personal development, including self-care.

Challenges:

- While the talent development theme has been executed faithfully, it primarily facilitates higher-level thinking and problem-solving instructional strategies, limiting the theme.

Recommendations:

- Consider integrating STEM into your higher-level thinking and problem-solving instructional strategies.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The advanced studies office allocates resources by providing the school with a lead talent development teacher for three days a week, supplemented by the school's contribution for one additional day.
- The magnet office provides a magnet coordinator that is a liaison between the school and magnet office and provides curriculum support for the magnet theme.

Challenges:

- Lack of continuity in the learning immersion and talent development magnet theme at the middle school level has resulted in students transitioning to an IB magnet program.
- The parent/partner group stated that the magnet office is understaffed and does not communicate well with the public.

Recommendations:

- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in learning immersion and talent development, ensuring a smooth transition from middle to high school.
- Create and implement a comprehensive review of the communication process to ensure messaging is consistently clear, transparent and aligned with organizational objectives. This policy should outline a structured approach to enhance communication practices, aiming to strengthen the relationship with the community while upholding professional standards.
- Provide more funding for magnet district personnel to support magnet school themes and marketing.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Parental feedback from the parent focus group indicates consistent communication from the school.

- The school demonstrates evidence of strong alignment with curriculum focused and career-related partnerships. These partnerships provide mentoring, tutoring, culturally inclusive books and exposure to new experiences such as the opera.
- The school has a PTA that collaborates with school leaders in decision making.

Challenges:

- During the parent/partnership focus group a partner requested that the district provide the findings of this survey with the school stakeholders before presenting to the board. They shared that this step was missing after the last MSA evaluation was completed.
- The parent/partner focus group stated district personnel dedicated to creating partnerships for the schools is needed.

Recommendations:

- Provide funding for more district personnel dedicated to creating partnerships for schools.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Both students and parents have expressed gratitude for the diverse range of events offered to families, enhancing community participation and involvement.
- The school's culture, as perceived by students, parents and staff, is characterized by an enjoyable learning environment, where teachers demonstrate genuine care for their students.
- The school improvement plan incorporates the magnet program, demonstrating a commitment to its development and success, with transparent dissemination through the school's website.
- The school benefits from an engaged PTA that actively contributes to school operations, fostering collaboration between parents and staff.
- Parents shared that the school is open and willing to collaborate with them to ensure they receive the additional support needed for families.

Challenges:

- Several students within focus groups have voiced frustrations over interruptions to their learning caused by misbehaving peers.

Recommendations:

- Develop a consistent approach to managing disruptive behavior that is fair and equitable for all students. Clearly outline the steps for addressing misconduct, including warnings, redirection and escalating consequences if necessary.

Overall Recommendations for Tuckaseegee Elementary School:

- Review the current application process and survey parents on ways the process can be more clear and easier to navigate for parents.
- Establish a seamless pathway for students interested in Learning Immersion and Talent Development, ensuring a smooth transition from elementary to middle to high school.
- Provide more funding for magnet district personnel to support magnet school themes and marketing.
- Incorporate a greater balance of instructional approaches, including increased utilization of small group instruction in upper grade classrooms.

- Establish and implement a robust recruitment plan to effectively showcase the school's strengths and attract prospective students.
- Innovate the Learning Immersion model by integrating a thematic focus, such as utilizing the established STEM lab to enhance the educational experience. This enhancement will offer an additional point of interest for prospective parents.

University Park Creative Arts School

University Park Creative Arts School				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity			X
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- University Park's applications and enrollments were not negatively affected by CMS changes to busing and transportation options.
- University Park parents listed the school's theme as a major driver in their decision to apply.
- Even though University Park's current demographics show significantly higher rates of Black students than the district, the upcoming changes to its lottery/home-school status are likely to add new variables and opportunities to recruit a more diverse student body while retaining current families.

Challenges:

- University Park will lose its status as a CMS "Home School" in 2 years and become a 100% lottery school.
- The school's demographics are an accurate reflection of the surrounding community but not the larger district.
- Until recently, the school's overall reputation was not positive.

Recommendations:

- Leverage the upcoming University Park - First Ward - North West School of the Arts (NWSA) alignment to market the school as an excellent way for families to be set up for success all the way through 12th grade (ex. be able to attend First Ward and NWSA).
- Consider partnering with First Ward and NWSA to develop a K-12 arts pathway marketing campaign to promote visual and performing arts as an excellent option for all families in CMS.

- Principal Rae is a dynamic, warm and compelling leader - consider partnering with CMS Magnet and Communication offices to present her as one of the major faces and personalities for any upcoming CMS town halls, community meetings and public forums as a way to expose University Park to a wider audience.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Providing high quality instruction to all students is a non-negotiable for all staff at University Park. After a teacher left the staff, the parent of a child in their class reported to Principal Rae, *“I knew that lady wasn’t gonna work out because she wasn’t living up to your expectations.”*

Challenges:

- Administration and faculty report inequitable access for University Park students when it comes to technology, facilities and resources.

Recommendations:

- Consider undergoing an “equity audit” at University Park with staff and families to identify where specific resource gaps and needs exist.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Since becoming Principal in spring 2023, Principal Rae has launched a holistic and rigorous school-wide system focusing on culture, academic and professional development (CAP).
- In addition to thematic integration into core instruction, core instruction is integrated into Encore (Arts) classes.
- University Park’s master schedule includes regular times for Encore teachers to meet with grade-level teachers during Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to collaborate on thematic-core instruction integration. There is a quarterly rotation for which Encore teachers plan with grade level teachers.
- The school has made significant academic progress by leveraging its theme into core instruction as opposed to sidelining it.
- University Park’s thematic integration system of collaboration, planning, presenting, coaching and reflecting are robust.

Challenges:

- While the school’s current systems for theme integration are strong and dynamic, teachers reported the need for additional professional development and thematic supports.

Recommendations:

- Consider partnering with the CMS visual and performing arts department and CMS magnet school office to develop an internal “CMS Arts Integration” playbook for art-integration instruction and unit design.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Professional development is one of the school’s three core initiatives, along with culture and academics

Challenges:

- Most of the school's thematic professional development is "home-cooking" and requires additional efforts on the part of the instructional leadership team.

Recommendations:

- Consider engaging with Education Closet/Susan Riley or other arts integration workshop providers for more structured and systematized arts integration professional development resources.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Faculty and staff report a new culture emerging in the building focused on student outcomes, data and collaboration - while on a walkthrough of the building a long-time veteran teacher looked at me with tears in her eyes saying *"I've been waiting 28 years for this."*
- The school's instructional leadership team has worked very hard to break down pre-existing silos between related arts, classroom and special education teams towards a common vision for holistic arts-integrated rigorous experience for all students. During meetings with the faculty, teachers report greater degrees of cross-curricular collaboration than in the past.
- The instructional coach for science provides coaching for the Encore team.
- The new teacher mentor provides additional levels of instructional and thematic integration support for teachers - often collaborating with fellow coaches to provide a great degree of wrap-around supports for new teachers to better facilitate teacher growth, confidence and orientation to the school's expectations and standards.

Challenges:

- Despite the school's significant strides towards thematic instruction as a driver for academic progress, the school's staff and leadership both report that thematic integration with consistent fidelity is an area of concern.

Recommendations:

- Consider experimenting with monthly or quarterly colleague observations where administrative or coaching staff provide coverage for a teacher needing support for thematic fidelity to observe a colleague modeling the practice with students.
- Consider tracking observational gaps in thematic integration fidelity over time to see if any specific trends emerge that point to a general staff or grade-level concern as opposed to addressing all observed gaps individually

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Teachers have "data meetings" with their students to include them in the process of their academic growth.
- University Park is on track to exit its low-performing status but the faculty and staff insist that exiting low-performing status is not enough - they intend to grow beyond 75% proficient as a school.
- Chronic absenteeism has reduced from 40% to 10%.

Challenges:

- 10% chronic absenteeism is still a significant challenge for continued academic growth and achievement.

- Despite making significant progress with academic achievement and attendance issues, the school acknowledges that major gaps still exist and must be addressed.

Recommendations:

- Continue implementing the school-wide systems focusing on culture, academic and professional development (CAP) with fidelity to ensure thematic integration and academic rigor become deeply ingrained into the school's culture.
- Consider piloting a "School Exchange" store sponsored by community partners to incentivize parents to prioritize attendance by exchanging credits for attendance for basic necessities.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Despite overall CMS challenges with staffing, University Park is currently fully staffed.
- Principal Rae has been able to provide hiring bonuses for new staff and CMS allows information about bonuses in their job postings for University Park.
- School Leadership reports that their ideal candidates are teachers with some experience who are open to coaching and feedback.
- The addition of a new teacher mentor appears to be an invaluable asset to support as well as retain new teachers.

Challenges:

- Despite positive staff culture and shared vision, staff stamina and fatigue are areas of concern.
- Coaches report that being able to find and hire fully-certified quality teachers is an area of concern.

Recommendations:

- Consider identifying one to two specific community partners to exclusively support/encourage/reward/celebrate the school's faculty and staff - as a way to support students and families
- Consider adding a "faculty recruitment" lens to future school marketing and recruiting for the emerging revised K-12 arts pathway.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The emerging revised K-12 arts pathway is providing a potential opportunity for a streamlined and strategic approach for all CMS arts magnet schools.
- CMS is planning on building a brand new facility for the school.

Challenges:

- While there is an overall basic feeling of "support" at University Park by the district, there is a lack of specificity and clarity on the exact nature and structure of supports.
- It is unclear if there is a specific financial plan for University Park and its fellow arts schools beyond capital improvements and it is unclear what specific thematic supports are provided by CMS specific to integration.

Recommendations:

- Consider leveraging the upcoming transitions with University Park, First Ward and NWSA to define and communicate how this unique K-12 arts pathway fits into the overall strategic plan for CMS and CMS magnets.
- Collaborate with the other arts magnet school leaders to work with the district on a sustainable financial plan for the arts magnet schools in CMS.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The established partnership with a local church that provides free after-care for students with an arts enriched program is an incredible asset to the school and a resource for families.

Challenges:

- While there are several instances of specific thematic partnership events for the school, there are not yet consistent and on-going partnerships between the school and arts-aligned community partners.
- While the school currently has a partnership process, it is likely that as the new school leadership continues to further engage with the community and additional partnerships are formed, a more streamlined process will emerge that differentiates the process for partners who directly support the needs of students and families, partners who directly support the needs of the school, partners who support the theme and partners who help advocate and advance the school in the surrounding community.

Recommendations:

- Consider leveraging the school's history and tradition as the first school for Black students in Charlotte and as a point of pride for CMS towards a potential "University Park Legacy Foundation " in conjunction with area churches, businesses, and nonprofits.
- Consider hosting annual "University Park Homecoming" celebrations for alumni and family to celebrate the school's heritage as well as engaging them with the school's current mission and partnership opportunities.
- Consider offering one to two annual "University Park Community Open Houses" during the school day where community members, CMS leaders and various stakeholders are invited to come and tour the school, see student performances, learn about the school's mission/vision and be informed about partnership needs and opportunities.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Principal Rae insisted that current family-school relations be reset with a culture of mutual respect and clear boundaries/expectations. Parents reported that their input and opinions were taken seriously and thoughtfully by the school.
- One parent reported that they had withdrawn their student from the school due to concerns of culture and climate but had re-enrolled after learning about Principal Rae's new vision and standards.
- Two full time family advocate positions appear to have made a significant positive impact on the school's ability to engage with families.
- One parent reported "*At Awards ceremonies it was always the same kids and now I see my son.*"

Challenges:

- Families report some concerns over student behavior.
- Families report a desire for more student voice towards school decisions and arts offerings.
- There is not currently an active PTA but the school hopes that a new group will launch soon.

Recommendations:

- Consider leveraging the emerging University Park Student Council as a regular feature on all school social media platforms with updates on meetings, decisions and projects taken on by the group as a way to communicate greater student voice.
- Continue implementing CAP with fidelity to further redefine the school's culture and climate.

Overall Recommendations for University Park Creative Arts School:

- In addition to launching a school PTA, consider identifying one to two high capacity parents to take on a "Grant Writer" volunteer position to apply for various small and medium size corporate/non-profit grants. Any funds awarded could then be used to create a discretionary fund for University Park initiatives and projects. A more formal PTA, once established, could absorb these volunteer roles as members of their leadership team.
- Consider partnering with CMS magnets, First Ward and NWSA to bring on a 3rd party marketing firm to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the west-side CMS K-12 arts pathway.
- Consider identifying long-time community stakeholders, influencers, and institutions to develop a "University Park Legacy" group to celebrate the school's unique history in the community and to raise awareness and resources for the school's future.

Walter G. Byers School - STEM

Walter G. Byers School - STEM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication		X	

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- The newly hired principal has an extensive recruiting plan, which includes flyers, social media, open houses and community STEM events.

Challenges:

- Reconsider the magnet K-2 and 3-8 Magnet Compacts as listed on the school website, considering the impacts to equity and access. (<https://www.cmsk12.org/Page/8855>)
- Recruiting for the magnet program has not happened in many years.
- The number of magnet application students seated in kindergarten is trending downward over the previous five years with only seven KI students seated in the 2023-24 school year.
- The administration was unclear exactly how many students were magnet or how many seats are currently available.
- Many classrooms are empty due to a lack of students enrolled in the school.
- The school website lists the 2019-2022 Instructional Focus, 2022 Benchmarks and other information. The AVID Program area of the site is empty of content.

Recommendations:

- Develop and implement a strategic recruiting plan to increase enrollment in the school to mirror the district demographics.
- Complete a website audit and update it to reflect the school currently. Leverage the website as a recruitment tool, including directions in multiple languages of how to apply to the school.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The diversity of the student population mirrors that of the surrounding community according to school staff.

Challenges:

- The diversity of the student population does not mirror that of the district. According to the NC Report Card, the percentage of students considered economically disadvantaged by North Carolina is 77.2%, much higher than CMS's at 47.3%.
- Students noted that they would like to see more celebration of their diversity in an effort to lessen the derogatory comments between students.
- There is no evidence of inclusive teaching practices or the implementation of the magnet theme in a diverse setting.

Recommendations:

- Improve recruiting efforts to attract a more diverse group of students and bring the student diversity at the school closer to that of the district.
- Celebrate the students' backgrounds and cultures to promote the school's diversity.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The students and staff grow vegetables used in the cafeteria in a large hydroponics lab on campus.
- Students learn how to care for fish in eight large tubs filled with perch.
- Students can participate in STEM themed after school activities including coding and robotics.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of STEM integration into the classrooms.
- The STEM theme was not visible throughout the school.

- While there was a banner in the main office for Project Lead The Way (PLTW), there was no evidence of PLTW in classrooms.

Recommendations:

- Provide professional development for teachers focused on STEM integration into their classrooms.
- Showcase student STEM work throughout the school.
- If Project Lead the Way is going to be central to the school's E³ STEM model (Epidemiology, Ecology, Engineering), invest in training teacher leaders who can assist their colleagues in writing magnet theme-integrated lessons and units.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The new principal has begun working with community partners to offer STEM professional development opportunities to the staff.
- Students can participate in STEM themed after school activities including coding and robotics.

Challenges:

- The previous administration did not prioritize professional development for teachers related to STEM integration.
- The current administration is not aware of any district sponsored professional development for teachers related to STEM integration.
- Current budgets do not provide for full staff professional development according to school staff.

Recommendations:

- Establish a professional development plan for the school that prioritizes professional development for teachers related to STEM integration.
- Provide district sponsored professional development for teachers related to STEM integration and opportunities for school leaders of STEM/STEAM schools to network and share best practices.
- Provide funding to STEM magnet schools for additional professional development for teachers related to STEM integration.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- High School level courses in math and Spanish are offered to students.

Challenges:

- Students did not feel as though there is a focus on academics in many of the classrooms.
- A culture of high academic expectations is not evident at the school during the site visit.

Recommendations:

- Establish a culture in the school where student learning is prioritized by all stakeholders.
- Establish a culture in the school that reinforces high student expectations along with the belief that students can achieve the high expectations.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- Student academic achievement and growth are measured by Dibels, MAP and district benchmark assessments.

- The principal provided the staff with student benchmark and growth data during a “It’s a New Day” themed staff meeting.

Challenges:

- Student achievement has consistently fallen below the state and district averages.
- MAP is only utilized in K-3.
- There is no evidence of teachers analyzing student assessment data to drive instructional practices.

Recommendations:

- Consider utilizing MAP through Grade 8 to provide a greater growth trajectory for students.
- Provide and monitor a framework teachers can use to analyze student assessment data to drive instructional practices.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The leadership team, composed of administrators and select teachers, collaborates on most decisions in the school.

Challenges:

- Only the leadership team is included in the decision making process.
- Thematic instructional coaching was not evident.

Recommendations:

- Include parents and students in the decision making process.
- Hire a thematic instructional coach who will establish regular coaching sessions with each teacher.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- According to school staff, there is meeting time on the calendar to work with the Director of Magnet Programs on the future of the magnet program.

Challenges:

- Very little direction or support have been provided to the new principal from the district or magnet offices.
- The district and magnet offices’ expectations are not clear to the principal.

Recommendations:

- Provide new principals with support or mentoring from district and magnet offices.
- Provide clear expectations to magnet principals.
- Establish a support system of magnet principals within the district.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Digi-Bridge currently provides the school with BCDI (Black Child Development Institute), a 9-week summer camp for students and STEM kits for teachers.
- Communities in Schools currently provides the school with 1 full-time staff member focused on student intervention and translation services.

- Avidxchange currently works with Digi-Bridge to provide additional support to the school.
- The principal is working with Avidxchange to establish a partnership with LiveNation to develop the only Audio Engineering program in CMS.
- The principal is establishing a partnership with Atrium Health to rebuild the Epidemiology program at the school.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to the principal whether there is district support with establishing new community partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Provide support to schools with establishing new community partnerships.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Families are invited to participate in Monthly STEM Nights that include multiple fun STEM activities.

Challenges:

- The school's website and Facebook page lack updated, relevant information for families.
- Few families participate in events or feedback sessions.

Recommendations:

- Utilize the school's website and Facebook page to highlight positive things happening at the school.
- Incentivize family participation in events.
- Consider reviewing the research of Dr. Karen Mapp of Harvard University for practical ways to partner with families.

Overall Recommendations for Walter G. Byers School:

- Develop and implement a strategic recruiting plan to increase enrollment and diversity in the school.
- Celebrate the students' backgrounds and cultures to promote the school's diversity.
- Provide professional development for teachers focused on STEM integration into their classrooms.
- Establish a culture in the school that reinforces high student expectations along with the belief that students can achieve the high expectations.
- Utilize the school's website and Facebook page to highlight positive things happening at the school.

West Charlotte High School - IB

West Charlotte High School - IB				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership			X

8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Diversity issues drive at the literal founding of the school in 1938 as a school for Black students in a segregated system and have impacted every phase of its history. As an all-Black school under segregation, West Charlotte was a cornerstone of the community. In the 1970s and 1980s, it became a national model for integration. When court decisions led to the end of bussing for integration, the school resegregated. The magnet program has provided an opportunity for further integration, although the school is composed of nearly all minority students today. The newly authorized IB Career-Related Programme and possible expansion of the Middle Years Programme to broader segments of students provide an opportunity to further diversify the school. The navigation of these diversity-related changes and challenges in the midst of complex and fluctuating political discourse is a testament to the strength, flexibility, vision, pride and character of the West Charlotte community, alumni, faculty, administration and students.
- Magnet student demographics are nearly identical to overall school demographics.
- The school has recently developed and implemented an extensive marketing plan that includes a social media campaign, visits to at least eight middle schools (including the various arts, athletic and academic programs), multiple open house events and tours.
- Parents reflected that the magnet lottery process created no significant challenges or barriers for entry to the school and pathway middle school students have guaranteed entry to West Charlotte High School.
- Transportation has been available and has been generally effective for West Charlotte students. Although express bussing has presented challenges at other schools, it has made West Charlotte somewhat more attractive to families because of the school's closer proximity to the city center in contrast to other IB magnet high schools.

Challenges:

- School demographics are significantly different from district demographics. Most notably, the school is composed of 75% Black students vs. 35% in the district and the school is composed of 2% Caucasian students vs. 24% in the district.
- The school is challenged to fill available magnet seats; typically as many seats remain open as are filled with magnet students over the past five years. It is noted that recent improvements to marketing campaigns have started to turn-around this issue, particularly with more students wanting to attend from Piedmont IB Middle School.
- West Charlotte shares the magnet zone with North Mecklenburg, which is also an IB World School and has similar CTE program options. This direct competition for magnet students creates confusion and some competition that can be perceived to be unhealthy for the school and community.

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement newly developed marketing campaigns that engage the larger community with positive and engaging aspects of West Charlotte’s range of academic, artistic, athletic, career-related and service-oriented opportunities through social media, middle school visits, open houses, tours, etc.
- Continue to share the benefits of the newly authorized IB Career-Related Programme and consider expanding the Middle Years Programme so that West Charlotte has more of an “IB for All” approach, which will aid in student learning outcomes and has the potential to assist in marketing and recruitment.
- Consider realigning IB high school attendance zones so that West Charlotte is not in direct competition with another high school that has similar magnet programming options and is located in the same attendance zone.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- IB magnet classes (MYP and DP) reflect the diversity of the overall school population, although the IB currently is not offered schoolwide.
- The school prominently displays the school and IB mission statement in many classrooms and other locations. These mission statements strongly emphasize the importance of diversity in the learning environment.
- IB teachers use culturally relevant, inclusive teaching methods to appeal to the learners in their classrooms, focused on the tenets of the IB magnet theme.
- The IB theme is taught with fidelity, as is evidenced by extensive IB unit planning. Unit planning documents have been made available to the reviewer and IB classrooms post IB essential questions, key concepts, learner profile traits and approaches to teaching and learning that are related to the current unit of study.
- Diversity is highly evident in decorations throughout the school building, which is a “wall to wall” demonstration of best practice for the emphasis of diversity in school decor. However, additional IB-focused signs/banners could be displayed in the school hallways.
- Multiple systems are in place to ensure effective teaching in the diverse setting, including ten walkthroughs per week, administrative support/coaching, two PLC collaborations weekly, etc.

Challenges:

- Although the diversity of the IB magnet program is reflective of school diversity, it is not reflective of overall district diversity, as Caucasian students are underrepresented.
- The IB magnet programs are accessed by a limited number of students in the school and not broadening the MYP to a larger segment of the school population (or potentially all of the 9th and 10th grade population) is a missed opportunity for engaging all learners with its rich emphasis on inquiry, global understanding, student-driven research, social action and service. Additionally, broadening access to the MYP would create more robust pathways to the DP and newly authorized CP, which then are linked to enhanced opportunities for diverse learners to develop college and career readiness.

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement newly developed marketing campaigns that engage the larger community with positive and engaging aspects of West Charlotte’s range of academic, artistic, athletic, career-related and service-oriented opportunities through social media, middle school visits, open houses, tours, etc.

- Continue to share the benefits of the newly authorized IB Career-Related Programme and consider expanding the Middle Years Programme so that West Charlotte has more of an “IB for All” approach, which will aid in student learning outcomes and has the potential to assist in marketing and recruitment.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The magnet theme is defined and integrated into all IB subjects, as evidenced in classroom visits, highly articulated unit plan documents and PLC minutes.
- Differentiation strategies were evident through student choice over Extended Essay topics and other required IB assessments and varied teaching/learning strategies.
- The theme is visible throughout IB classrooms on posters (learner profile, IB mission, unit planner key concepts, etc.). The IB learner profile traits are displayed in prominent locations in the school, such as on a mural in the student services lobby, although additional IB focused banners/signage could be developed for classroom hallways as the school continues to decorate its relatively new facility.
- Lesson and unit plans demonstrate university preparation. University preparation is also evident from alumni who have attended university and current 12th graders’ post-graduation plans.

Challenges:

- The magnet theme could be further articulated for students who are not in the magnet program through expansion of the MYP to broader segments of the school.
- The magnet theme could be further articulated through a schoolwide emphasis on the IB Learner Profile and the IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning.

Recommendations:

- Consider methods for broadening access to the IB MYP, DP and CP to students who do not have magnet status in the school.
- Utilize IB foundational concepts such as the IB Learner Profile and the IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning for school wide focus and improvement.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- All IB teachers and administration have participated in the foundational required IB training.
- PLCs meet twice per week to reflect on data and refine lesson/unit plans. The IB faculty additionally meets monthly for collaborative planning and transdisciplinary lesson alignment.
- IB teachers have a week of paid summer work time to develop and refine unit plans, with support from the magnet/IB specialist.

Challenges:

- Teachers outside the IB program have little exposure to the tenets of the IB and could be further engaged in school-based professional development and/or official IB training.
- Although minimal training requirements from the IB have been met at West Charlotte, teachers and administrators would benefit greatly from more advanced IB training on assessment, approaches to teaching and learning, inclusive teaching practices, etc.

Recommendations:

- Provide additional in-school training for all teachers and administrators on IB mission, philosophy and foundational concepts.
- Enhance official off-site IB training to include advanced (Category 3) workshops for current IB teachers and administrators in addition to introductory (Category 1) training for teacher leaders who do not work within the IB Programme.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- There is a schoolwide philosophy of “expectations of excellence,” which is evident throughout the building.
- Student performance on state mandated examinations exceeded growth expectations overall in 2023 and either met or exceeded growth expectations among all reported demographic subgroups in the same year.
- The school was taken off the NC “low performing school” list in 2023.
- Teachers and administrators have demonstrated exceptional drive and grit to reflect on student learning, analyze formative data continually, learn best practices, revise plans, reteach and implement a comprehensive package of intervention strategies, which has brought about significant improvement on student state examination results.
- The school offers multiple advanced courses in IB, AP, CTE and Arts programs.

Challenges:

- Despite significant growth recently, based on mandated state examinations, the school has been rated as a D-school since 2019, although scores were not reported due to COVID waivers in 2020 and 2021.
- IBDP exam participation is low and passing rates on IB examinations are below district, state, national and global averages.

Recommendations:

- Continue to utilize the turn-around strategies to drive student achievement in all courses.
- Apply the turn-around strategies used in state-tested subjects additionally within IB Diploma Programme courses to ensure student success on IB examinations.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

- After years of low achievement and growth, student performance on state mandated examinations exceeded growth expectations overall in 2023 and either met or exceeded growth expectations among all reported demographic subgroups in the same year. As a result, the school was taken off the “low-performing” list.
- The school and program use multiple indicators for success. Within the IB Program, the school utilizes success on IB internal and external assessments to note progress.
- Suspension rates have declined by 50%, which ensures that students are in class, learning.
- Robust CTE pathways in culinary arts, cosmetology, nursing and other areas provide students with career credentials to go directly into the workforce or to quickly earn an Associate’s Degree.
- Dedicated college counseling and continual presence by the local community college ensure access to post-secondary pathways.

Challenges:

- Participation in the IB Diploma examination process is relatively low and pass rates are below state averages.
- Although graduation rates are significantly below state averages, they have increased by 9% over the past three years.

Recommendations:

- Apply the turn-around strategies used for state-required courses additionally within IB Diploma Programme courses to ensure student success on IB examinations.
- Continue to offer intervention strategies and on-time graduation assistance to students who are in danger of not graduating.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- The magnet theme is implemented with fidelity in IB magnet courses, although it could be broadened to other courses within the school.
- The school has the autonomy to hire teachers.
- Decision making is highly collaborative, with multiple forums for teacher feedback and collaboration. The community of educators has a familial camaraderie that carries forward their professional collaboration.
- The teacher focus group reflected that the IB/magnet coordinator provides exceptional, timely and knowledgeable coaching.

Challenges:

- The percentage of teaching staff at West Charlotte High School that is provisionally licensed is more than double the district average, although many teachers have worked in the school for a significant number of years.

Recommendations:

- Continue to hire strong staff. Additionally, positive school marketing will help to attract top-quality staff to apply to work at the school.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear K-12 pathway that includes IB, guaranteeing acceptance for middle school magnet students in the feeder schools.
- The district magnet office has a full-time IB specialist who works with IB schools and the IB magnet program within the school has a full-time IB specialist/coordinator.

Challenges:

- District practices could clarify why magnet programs are placed at various schools and the underlying purpose for magnet programs.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that the district has a unified, communicated and implemented vision for the placement of magnet schools and determination of their magnet theme.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has an established procedure for inviting and welcoming community partners.
- Partners include local businesses, service organizations and higher education institutions.
- Partners meet monthly to receive updates on the school and provide feedback on operations.

Challenges:

- It is not evident that the district facilitates school-community partnerships.
- Further theme-based partnerships could be developed to drive theme-focused learning experiences.

Recommendations:

- Expand partnerships to enhance teaching and learning in the IB programs, including through universities, travel organizations, world language institutes, international businesses, etc.
- Ensure that the district office encourages and facilitates partnership development.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- The parent representative reflects that the school engages in highly effective, two-way communication with families via social media, phone, email, etc.
- Many teachers make a point of calling all parents on the phone to introduce themselves at the start of the school year.
- The school has multiple open houses and other magnet activities that are well attended, engaging and showcase student achievement.
- Multiple parent organizations are active and engaged (PTA, various arts boosters, etc.).
- The school improvement plan and school data are publicly available on the website and the NC School Report Card.

Challenges:

- The school website could be redeveloped to emphasize the magnet theme more clearly.

Recommendations:

- Update the school website to “scream the theme.”

Overall Recommendations for West Charlotte High School:

- Continue to implement newly developed marketing campaigns that engage the larger community with positive and engaging aspects of West Charlotte’s range of academic, artistic, athletic, career-related and service-oriented opportunities through social media, middle school visits, open houses, tours, etc.
- Continue to share the benefits of the newly authorized IB Career-Related Programme and consider expanding the Middle Years Programme so that West Charlotte has more of an “IB for all” approach, which will aid in student learning outcomes and has the potential to assist in marketing and recruitment.
- Utilize IB foundational concepts such as the IB Learner Profile and the IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning for school wide focus and improvement.
- Apply the turn-around strategies used for state-required courses additionally within IB Diploma Programme courses to ensure student success on IB examinations.
- The school website could be redeveloped to emphasize the magnet theme more clearly.

Whitewater Middle School - Environmental STEM

Whitewater Middle School - Environmental STEM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity	X		
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity	X		
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity	X		
6	Student Achievement	X		
7	Leadership	X		
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships	X		
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- During the site visit it was reported that parents were excited to have their students enroll as a magnet student - Whitewater is the only ESTEM magnet in the county and is considered a very safe school.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent district and school-based efforts for student selection including marketing, recruitment, entrance and assignment and transportation policies, are designed to ensure equal access for all students and reduce minority group isolation. Although Whitewater is able to fill all its magnet seats and there is often a waiting list, the one magnet 6th grader in the focus group was unfamiliar with the term ESTEM (Environmental STEM).
- The school demographics are 49% Black, less than 5% Caucasian, 37% Hispanic and 58.3% economically disadvantaged whereas the district is 34.7% Black, 23.8% Caucasian, 30.6% Hispanic and 44.3% economically disadvantaged.

Recommendations:

- Determine if recruitment efforts accurately depict the extent of ESTEM being delivered at the school.
- Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The district has a statement about their commitment to diversity on its website.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent district and school-based policies and activities to attract and retain students do support racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration.

Recommendations:

- Determine if racial, ethnic and socio-economic integration is a goal for the school.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- Teachers reported they would like to see an ESTEM program return to their school. They liked how it worked in the past and mentioned they were excited to get the program going again.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the school's magnet theme is integrated into all subjects, monitored, differentiated, articulated between grades and is innovative, relevant and ensures student preparation beyond high school. It is unclear to what extent the ESTEM theme is being implemented at the school. At the site visit it was reported that in the past the school held homeroom design challenges, had a hydroponics garden, a composting project and involved partners. Now, they have no real partners and no real magnet curriculum.
- Teachers reported they would like to see more ESTEM happening at the school - gardens, composting, hydroponics, using the land around the school, etc., but they are not sure how to get started, how to get funded and how to make time to do it.
- From artifacts submitted, English Learner (EL) students are pulled from electives for standardized test preparation.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to get the financial and personnel support needed to implement the magnet program.
- Consider ways to offer interventions for EL students that do not prevent them from accessing elective coursework.

Standard 4: Professional Development**Successes:**

- Through artifacts submitted, there is evidence of a PLC expectation and protocol.

Challenges:

- It was communicated at the site visit that the ESTEM theme appears to be in name only and many teachers are teaching in silos. School-wide efforts seem to be focused on getting new hires up to speed, creating a culture of community amongst the new staff and moving the needle on the school's D score. At the site visit it was reported, *"We're working on getting our core taken care of, moving the needle from our long standing score as a D school."* *"We have a nice Innovation Lab. It gets used, but not very often. It is not hard for a teacher to schedule it."*

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to get the support needed to train teachers in ESTEM thematic instruction.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence**Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity****Successes:**

- Problem solving opportunities do occur in the PLTW classes and *"a few teachers do it, but they are mostly elective teachers."*

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent there is a school-wide philosophy to teaching and learning. Teachers report they are primarily teaching the state-mandated curriculum and not teaching the ESTEM theme unless it happens to be included in that curriculum.

- The climate and culture of the school has been one of high turnover. There have been many new teachers and two new administrators this year.

Recommendations:

- Develop a theme-based philosophy to teaching and learning and develop a system that replicates the success of the new teacher mentor program. The school's new teacher program provides a mentor and an instructional coach to meet weekly with each new teacher. Although there has been a lot of turnover, both among the teachers as well as the leadership, it was reported that this year feels different. *"Last year we had a bunch of teachers that left and a few teachers that left in the middle of the year. No one has left this year. There is a sense of pride this year that hasn't been here for a while. The new staff is really buying into this as their school."*

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- According to the NC Report Card, 2022-23 Academic Growth was Met. Artifacts provided (Navigator Portal Unofficial EOY End of Year State Assessment Report/EOY Proficiency Annual Comparison Report) indicate that student achievement is improving with the highest gains being seen in math and sixth grade reading. In addition, there is evidence of narrowing the gaps in student achievement with the largest gains being seen in the EL/LEP population.

Challenges:

- Although artifacts provided (Navigator Portal Unofficial EOY End of Year State Assessment Report/EOY Proficiency Annual Comparison Report) indicate student achievement is improving and there is evidence of narrowing the gaps in student achievement, it is unclear to what extent there is evidence of academic achievement that is measured using multiple indicators.

Recommendations:

- Develop a system to analyze student data using multiple indicators.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- There is a successful new teacher mentor program this year.

Challenges:

- At the site visit it was reported the theme is not implemented with fidelity.
- At the site visit it was reported there are no partnerships to support the theme.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop a system to support a theme-based school. Develop a system that recognizes exceptional instruction, that coaches staff to ensure the ESTEM theme is implemented with fidelity and that encourages collaborative decision making.
- Develop a system where teachers are recruited, selected and retained to meet the unique needs of the magnet.
- Develop a system where strategic partnerships are cultivated to meet the unique needs of the magnet.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- Through artifacts submitted, there is evidence that the school is aware of CMS magnet programs funding request processes.

Challenges:

- It is unclear to what extent the district supports the magnet program in all school improvement efforts or includes them in the strategic plan.
- It is unclear to what extent there is a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve magnets with latitude for decision-making and dedicated resource allocation and curriculum support

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop a plan where the district supports the magnet program in all school improvement efforts, includes them in the strategic plan and has a pathway for themes.
- Work with the district to develop a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve the school with dedicated resource allocation and curriculum support.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- Through artifacts provided, there is some evidence of a partnership between the school and Queen City Robotics.

Challenges:

- The school would like to have partnerships that would support the theme, but other than ideas, the staff are not really sure how to get started or who would lead the effort. At the site visit it was reported that when the school had someone overseeing the program, they had strong partnerships. That position no longer exists.

Recommendations:

- Develop a process to welcome and involve businesses and organizations in decisions about theme implementation.
- Work with the district to cultivate career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships that enhance the magnet theme and benefit students.
- Work with the district to secure a magnet coordinator to oversee the ESTEM program.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- Artifacts provided demonstrate an example of principal posts/written communication to Whitewater Middle School Families.

Challenges:

- Although the school provided an artifact that shows PTA meeting agendas for 2023/24, it is unclear how many parents attend and if to what extent they are involved in school operations.
- It is unclear to what extent student learning is showcased regularly.
- It is unclear to what extent there are policies and practices for communication and there is a demonstrated commitment to engage families.

Recommendations:

- Develop a process to get parents involved in school operations.
- Develop a system to showcase student learning regularly.

- Develop policies and practices to communicate regularly with parents.
- Develop a process to engage families.

Overall Recommendations for Whitewater Middle School:

- Consider enlisting the professional support of a provider of Project Based Learning (PBL). PBL is research-based and focuses on theme-aligned instruction, student collaboration and problem solving. It is a natural fit for the community of teachers and scholars at the school. PBL training could help the school find the natural connections among subjects, build strong relationships with partners and improve academic achievement. Develop diversity priorities and goals with the district and create a targeted marketing strategy to move closer to mirroring district demographics.
- Work with the district to develop a system to support a theme-based school. Develop a system that recognizes exceptional instruction that provides coaching to staff to ensure the ESTEM theme is implemented with fidelity and that encourages collaborative decision making.
- Work with the district to develop a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve the school with a dedicated resource allocation and curriculum support.
- Work with the district to cultivate career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships that enhance the magnet theme and benefit students.

Wilson STEM Academy - Computer Science

Wilson STEM Academy - Computer Science				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection	X		
2	Diversity and Equity		X	
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development		X	
5	Instructional Fidelity		X	
6	Student Achievement		X	
7	Leadership		X	
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication	X		

Pillar 1 - Diversity

Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection

Successes:

- Classes visited reflected the diversity of the local community.

Challenges:

- Transportation is a challenge. Many students are choosing to attend other magnet schools because they are closer to where they live.
- The school regularly has open seats. The school has a total population of 409 students. The schools' partial magnet has 34 students. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students is 71.5%. Of

the school's 409 students, the majority are Black and there is a large population of students classified as McKinney-Vento living in the hotels around the area.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to provide transportation for all who are interested in attending the school's magnet program.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- The schools' teachers are committed to teaching in a diverse setting. All teachers are using the Unbound Ed GLEAM strategies - Grade Level, Engaging, Affirming and Meaningful. "Teachers are committed to making sure kids are seeing themselves in the content".
- To determine staff effectiveness in teaching in a diverse setting, the leadership team conducts weekly "Learning Walks" where the GLEAM strategy implementation is measured with their walk-through tool.
- GLEAM strategies are shared and examined in professional development and in PLCs. Teachers share/model best practices/exemplars and then the others have the opportunity to script out exactly how the strategy will be implemented, rehearse what has been scripted and receive feedback from colleagues.
- "Strong relationships are key." This was echoed by the students in the focus group as well as the teachers. The school begins every day with their Community Connection Circle. "Let's circle up. That's how we start our day". For 20 minutes every day, they meet in their class to celebrate each other and to learn how to live the "Wilson Way." "I am THE WILSON WAY!, I make a CHOICE to leave my footprint. I am a COMMUNITY builder. My VISION drives my journey. I am not afraid to FAIL FORWARD. I take RISKS... because I am COURAGEOUS through my fear. I SOLVE problems. I am CREATIVE. I am a Champion. I am...THE WILSON WAY!"
- The principal's "Rebound and Assist" activity supports school culture and the schools' commitment to seeing each and every student and meeting them where they are right now.

Challenges:

- Although there are systems in place to determine staff effectiveness in teaching in a diverse setting, it is unclear to what extent there are systems in place to determine staff effectiveness in teaching the magnet theme in a diverse setting.

Recommendations:

- Create systems to determine staff effectiveness in teaching the magnet theme in a diverse setting.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school's magnet theme is integrated into all subjects, differentiated, articulated between grades and is innovative, relevant and ensures student preparation beyond high school. In weekly grade-level PLCs teachers meet to plan together. They discuss what works and what doesn't work and agree on strategies. Class coverage is provided to allow for peer observations.
- If a weekly learning walk (observation/walk-through) by leadership reveals the teacher needs support with content or on a specific strategy, a plan will be created to support that teacher. The plan could

include targeted professional development, peer observation and/or other collaboration/professional development opportunities.

Challenges:

- Although the school's magnet theme is integrated into all subjects, differentiated, articulated between grades and is innovative, relevant, and ensures student preparation beyond high school, it is unclear to what extent it is monitored.

Recommendations:

- Develop a system to monitor the school's magnet theme. Consider including it as part of PLC planning and learning walks.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- The school has a formalized professional development plan that aligns to its theme that supports all students including English language learners and those with disabilities and includes job-embedded training. Collaboration is a structured part of regular planning. Professional development at the school includes a system of 1) analyzing an exemplar practice/strategy; 2) small group work to tune into one or two components of the lesson they plan to teach the next day with a focus on the specific 'look for'; 3) scripting, rehearsing and delivering the component; 4) receiving feedback on the delivery; 5) reflection; 6) learning walks to measure success and 7) feedback and reflection.
- Collaboration is a structured part of regular planning. Teachers meet in PLCs twice a week - once for planning, once for reviewing/analyzing data.

Challenges:

The learning walk tool does not include a specific measure of theme implementation/integration.

Recommendations:

- Add theme implementation/integration to the learning walk tool.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Teaching and learning focuses on theme-aligned instruction and researched-based design. It includes student collaboration and problem solving with tiered levels of intervention and formative assessments relevant to instruction that improves student achievement. *"Academic monitoring is done every day so teachers differentiate every day."*
- Teaching and learning is student centered, focuses on student engagement, and incorporates AVID strategies school-wide and leans on restorative practices and a culture of care.
- Students engage in collaboration, problem solving, and academic discourse. There is a culture of failing forward, of providing feedback with gallery walks and peer evaluations using rubrics and question stems.
- Data meetings were held by the leadership for every single student.
- Students learn how to have data chats with their families. They learn to tell them, *"This is what is happening, and this is my plan moving forward"*.
- The school is addressing academic improvement and attendance challenges by tying performance in these areas to participation in school activities like dances and assemblies.

Challenges:

- Although there is theme-aligned instruction occurring at the school, it is unclear to what extent it is a primary focus for the school.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan where all teachers focus on theme-aligned instruction.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- According to the NC Report Card grade-level proficient scores in math have increased for all subgroups in math:
 - Math: Asian students: 47.1% (2023), 38.9% (2022); Black students: 26.8% (2023), 20.3% (2022); Hispanic students: 24.1% (2023), 16.5% (2022); economically disadvantaged students: 24.6% (2023), 16.4% (2022); not economically disadvantaged students: 35.2% (2023), 28.3% (2022)
- According to the NC Report Card grade-level proficient scores in reading have increased for Black and economically disadvantaged students in reading:
 - Reading: Asian students: 47.1% (2023), 61.1% (2022); Black students: 26.8% (2023), 25.0% (2022); Hispanic students: 21.7% (2023), 24.7% (2022); economically disadvantaged students: 27.2% (2023), 24.5% (2022); not economically disadvantaged students: 27.8% (2023), 34.0% (2022).
- This was the first year the school exceeded growth. For each benchmark they exceeded the districts' grade level projections.
- In weekly PLCs teachers analyze data from various sources that identify strengths and areas of growth. Academic success is measured using multiple indicators including state-mandated assessments and teacher made assessments, both summative and formative. Exit tickets are used by all teachers on a regular basis. Learning walks monitor how well teachers are using this data to improve student success.

Challenges:

- Although the school has shown growth, it still remains a D school.

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement researched-based teaching practices that include student collaboration and problem solving with tiered levels of intervention and formative assessments relevant to instruction to improve the schools' D score.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Hiring decisions are made collaboratively with teachers and students providing input. Teachers sit on the interview team and students observe a mini-lesson and provide feedback. Hiring priorities include: *"The candidate has to really love kids and be coachable."*
- All new teachers attend a two day mini-camp, where they learn to be a Wilson teacher (The Wilson Way) and then they receive administrative support and are assigned a mentor who meets with them regularly.

- Leadership recognizes exceptional instruction and excellent instructional coaching occurs at the school - learning walks drive coaching goals and PLCs offer opportunities to practice and receive feedback.

Challenges:

- Although leadership recognizes exceptional instruction and excellent instructional coaching occurs at the school with the learning walks driving coaching goals and PLCs offering opportunities to practice and receive feedback, it is unclear to what extent excellent thematic instruction occurs school-wide.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan to include thematic coaching school-wide in the coaching model.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a pathway for computer science from K-12.
- To motivate 8th graders prior to the EOGs, the school brought them to Harding University High School to get a sense of what 9th grade would look like. *"It made a big impact."*

Challenges:

- There is limited district support to assist in theme integration school-wide.
- There is no district strategic plan or financial plan that includes magnets.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to secure support for theme integration school-wide.
- Include the operation of magnet schools in the district's strategic plan and outline goals, objectives, and action steps specific to magnet schools.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships

Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Successes:

- The school has a very successful partnership with district partner ShermCo. ShermCo not only supports recruiting and school-wide events, it also provides funds for students to attend field trips.
- The school has partnerships that support career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships that enhance the magnet theme and benefit students including:
 - Corning - Provided a day for 8th grade girls to learn about careers at Corning.
 - ShermCo - Supported an event for all 8th graders to learn about financial literacy. Each student got a credit score, a certain amount of money and teachers participated as bill collectors.
 - Truist Bank - Provides a financial literacy course for families.
 - Women's Group - Teaches etiquette and how to prepare and dress for an interview.
 - Digibridge - Supports the schools' STEM club.
 - Planet Improve - Provides a theater class at the school.

Challenges:

- Although the school has partnerships that support career-related and curriculum-focused partnerships, it is unclear to what extent those partnerships enhance the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Develop partnerships that enhance the magnet theme.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication

Successes:

- This year the school had student-led conferences for the first time. There was a large turnout of 6th grade families.

Challenges:

- Afterschool activities are not well attended, but leadership is trying to get families involved by trying different days, times and Saturdays as well as snacks and drinks, to get families involved.
- There is no representative parent group. *“We do have one faithful grandmother, Miss Mary, who shows up.”*

Recommendations:

- Build on the success of the 6th grade student-led conferences to get families involved. Consider creating a student council where parent and community involvement is one of their goals. Consider enlisting the support of ShermCo in these student-led discussions.

Overall Recommendations for Wilson STEM Academy:

- Add theme implementation/integration to the learning walk tool.
- Develop a plan where all teachers focus on theme-aligned instruction.
- Develop partnerships that enhance the magnet theme.
- Build on the success of the 6th grade student-led conferences to get families involved. Consider creating a student council where parent and community involvement is one of their goals. Consider enlisting the support of ShermCo in these student-led discussions

Winget Park Elementary School - STEM

Winget Park Elementary School - STEM				
Standards of Excellence		Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
1	Student Recruitment and Selection		X	
2	Diversity and Equity			X
3	Theme and Curriculum Fidelity		X	
4	Professional Development	X		
5	Instructional Fidelity			X
6	Student Achievement			X
7	Leadership			X
8	Magnet and District Relations	X		
9	Community Engagement/Partnerships		X	
10	Family Engagement/Communication			X

Pillar 1 - Diversity**Standard 1: Student Recruitment and Selection****Successes:**

- The school participates in the two district-wide choice fairs to market and recruit potential students.

- Winget has open house events, virtual and in-person, to market and recruit potential families to their school. They display a tri-fold board to showcase their magnet school and are very intentional to choose diverse images and photos of students to display. The event dates are published on the school and district's website.
- The principal stated their parents are their biggest marketing tool as they speak very highly about the school in the community.
- The dean conducts parent tours by request.
- Although the school does not do any targeted marketing, demographic data shows there is no need as the population is diverse and mirrors the district's demographics. According to NC Report Card data, the school has 43.5% of students considered economically disadvantaged.

Challenges:

- Based on the school's leadership team and the parent focus group, there are mixed opinions on the transportation policy. The school spoke highly about the stops stating they are assigned in a timely manner and may be delayed from time to time, however, parents feel the bus rides are too long and often delayed.

Recommendations:

- Administer a survey to parents to gather feedback on their experiences with the current transportation policy, including the length and punctuality of bus rides. Include questions about specific concerns, such as delays and the impact on students' well-being and academic performance. Work with the district to alleviate transportation issues.

Standard 2: Diversity and Equity

Successes:

- Approximately 23.8% are magnet application students and approximately 76.2% are neighborhood "zoned" students. However, all students have access to the entire magnet program once enrolled in Winget. The website describes the school as a "partial magnet school."
- In order to create diverse classrooms, at the end of each school year, teachers complete profile cards and take into consideration the following student characteristics: ethnicity, behavior, academics, IEP's and multilingual status (ML). The teachers' recommendations are taken into account when creating classrooms for the following year.
- Winget's motto is: "Unite. Create. Innovate." every day. According to school staff, they unite a diverse group of students from various programs - neighborhood enrollment, magnet school enrollment, extensions classrooms and the pre-kindergarten program -- to build a learning environment that is supportive of all learners.
- During the teacher focus group, teachers stated that they love teaching in such a diverse school setting and that Winget has a very positive, warm, welcoming and supportive environment where everyone is very dedicated to the school and students.
- School's student enrollment data reflects the diversity of the district.

Challenges:

- During the focus group, parents expressed the need to target "beginner's day families" (non school-age children 0-5 years old) to keep neighborhood students enrolled at Winget.

Recommendations:

- Increase targeted recruitment efforts in zoned neighborhood areas and preschools/daycares to attract and retain neighborhood zoned students. Consider mailers to homes and recruitment events in the community. Find ways to go to students in the community, not only offer events where students come to you. Since all students have access to the magnet theme, consider removing branding that refers to the school as a “partial magnet school.” Despite some students attending on an application through the choice office, all students attend a STEM magnet school and are therefore magnet students.

Pillar 2 - Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development

Standard 3: Theme and Curriculum Fidelity

Successes:

- The school’s mascot was redesigned with a robotic wolf head to reflect the magnet theme.
- The magnet theme is integrated into a variety of subjects and elective classes through various projects throughout the school year. The school also conducts many school-wide projects such as their kindness PBL. PreK-1st made kindness quilts, 2nd-3rd painted river rocks and 4th-5th created kind posters to hang around the school.
- Student work is displayed throughout the hallways
- “Special Area” classes are called enrichment classes because Winget’s belief is that their classes enrich the curriculum that is going on in the classroom. Enrichment teachers work closely with classroom teachers and incorporate the curriculum into their STEM, Makerspace, art, music and PE classes. Students spend a week in each enrichment class and then cycle through to the next class the following week.
- Class PBL’s are aligned with the engineering design process.

Challenges:

- There is no clear evidence of how the magnet theme is monitored for success and it is not clear that the school’s magnet theme is integrated into all classes.

Recommendations:

- Create a plan to monitor the success of the school’s thematic implementation in all subject and course areas, including enrichment classes.

Standard 4: Professional Development

Successes:

- Within the district, cohorts of teacher PLC’s meet together to collaboratively plan.
- Teacher-led professional development occurs throughout the year based off of last year’s insight survey on what teachers need. Topics have included MTSS, self-care and integrated PBL into existing CMS curriculum to name a few according to staff.
- Enrichment class teachers helped to increase EOG scores by teaching science standards and concepts. They collaborated and came up with interactive games to enrich the learning deficits with low proficiency students according to staff.
- There is collaborative planning with teams during PLC’s to discuss data, PBL integration and MTSS.

Challenges:

- There is no clear evidence of a professional development plan aligned to the magnet theme.

Recommendations:

- Implement a yearly theme-based professional development plan at the school-level to provide targeted and relevant professional learning opportunities that support teacher growth, foster collaboration and advance school improvement goals. Consider beginning by collaborating with school leadership, teachers and stakeholders to identify key focus areas aligned with the school's mission, goals and priorities for the upcoming academic year. Then, create a comprehensive professional development calendar outlining specific workshops, seminars, training and activities aligned with the magnet theme. Integrate magnet theme-based professional development into existing support structures, such as PLCs or grade-level meetings to ensure continuity and sustainability.

Pillar 3 - Academic Excellence

Standard 5: Instructional Fidelity

Successes:

- Teaching and learning encourages student collaboration and problem solving.
 - For the Special Olympics, each class sponsors a child and designs a game or device to make it more accessible to students. School makes signs to cheer on athletes.
 - There is some evidence of rigorous Project Based Learning (PBL) within classrooms.
- The school's overall performance scores for the past 5 years are: 22-23 C/59; 21-22 D/54; 18-19 B/71; 17-18 C/64. Scores were on an upward trend before the onset of Covid-19. Following the pandemic, scores are once again showing an upward trajectory. The school's goal is to have "exceeding" as their growth status
- Winget uses the standard MTSS standard protocol set by the district to look at data and determine who needs more intensive or supplemental interventions. The school has a motto of "all hands on deck", everyone pulls students for small groups, even the Principal has a small group.

Challenges:

- Based on the NC Report Card, Winget's data shows that there are discrepancies between subgroups in academic achievement and success.

Recommendations:

- Continue developing and exploring targeted interventions and support services to address the unique needs of subgroups experiencing academic disparities. Implement and monitor evidence-based practices such as differentiated instruction, culturally responsive teaching, additional/other academic interventions and social-emotional support programs tailored to the needs of specific student populations. Provide additional resources, tutoring and mentoring for students who may be at risk of falling behind.

Standard 6: Student Achievement

Successes:

- According to the NC Report Card, the school has met their 2022-23 reading and math academic growth targets.
- According to school staff, School collects and analyzes formative assessment data and tracks data trends per student.
- The school's chronic absenteeism is lower than the district's and state's average. The principal stated she made phone calls to parents to explain the importance of students in school every day. Incentives such as the AttenDANCE, in which students who were identified as chronically absent, once they are

present every day Monday through Friday with no tardies, receive a dance party on Friday. Students track their progress on scorecards to give them a visual and to incentivize them to come to school every day.

- From school year 2021-22 to school year 2022-23 the school's academic growth by subgroup increased for all demographic subgroups according to the NC Report Card. Additionally, economically disadvantaged students went from a performance grade score in 2022-23 of 47 to an 80.6 in 2022-23.

Challenges:

- According to the NC Report Card, despite academic growth increasing for all subgroups, Winget's data shows that there are discrepancies between subgroups in academic achievement and success in math, reading and science performance.

Recommendations:

- Continue to develop data protocols to inform decision-making and monitor progress towards closing the achievement gap between subgroups over time. Establish benchmarks and goals for improvement, track key performance indicators and regularly assess the effectiveness of interventions and support services in addressing academic disparities.

Pillar 4 - Leadership

Standard 7: Leadership and Educator Development

Successes:

- Winget has a school improvement team composed of the leadership team, instructional staff and parents for collaborative decision making.
- A walk-through schedule was created to ensure the curriculum is being regularly monitored for student success.
- Multi-classroom leader and grade-band facilitators (K-2 and 3-5) model the curriculum as well as provide ongoing coaching.
- During the site review visit, the school's area superintendent called to announce one of their teaching assistants won "TA of the Year."
- Teacher retention is consistently about 85-95%. Typically, changes are due to teachers moving or retiring according to school staff.

Challenges:

- The leadership team made reference that the interview pool is "shallow" due to the state of education today and teacher shortages.

Recommendations:

- Develop targeted recruitment strategies to attract qualified teachers with expertise and passion in the STEM field. This can include partnerships with universities, STEM-focused organizations and professional networks to identify potential candidates. Advertise teaching positions in STEM-specific publications, websites and forums to reach individuals with a STEM background. Highlight the unique opportunities for STEM educators to make a difference in the lives of students and contribute to the school's mission.

Standard 8: District and Magnet Relations

Successes:

- The district has a clear pathway for magnet themes from K-12.

Challenges:

- There is no evidence that the district supports the magnet program in any school improvement efforts.
- It is unclear to what extent there is a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve magnets with latitude for decision-making, dedicated resource allocation and curriculum support.
- The district does not provide funding for a dedicated magnet specialist at Winget. The school's dean of students is also unofficially the STEM coordinator and is not funded or compensated for the magnet work that is completed.
- There is no evidence of a district magnet financial plan to sustain the magnet work.

Recommendations:

- Work with the district to develop a plan where the district supports the magnet program in all school improvement efforts and includes magnet programs in the strategic plan.
- Work with the district to develop a financial plan to sustain and continuously improve the school with dedicated resource allocation, a magnet coordinator and curriculum support.

Pillar 5 - Family and Community Partnerships**Standard 9: Community Engagement and Partnerships****Successes:**

- Winget has a wide range of community theme-based partnerships such as Bosch, Leadership Martial Arts, Joyful Sounds, BASF, International Paper, Western Governors University and the Steel Creek Association. The school advertises and promotes their business in weekly flyers.
- The PTA hosts uniform-free days, allowing students to participate by paying for the privilege. Proceeds from these days are donated to a different charity each time.
- The school improvement team (SIT) is open to parents and community partners.
- Parent surveys are sent out to garner feedback on how well their children are interacting with the theme.

Challenges:

- There was no evidence of an established partnership process or protocol to welcome and involve community partners in decisions about theme implementation besides the school improvement team (SIT).

Recommendations:

- Create a formal protocol outlining the steps to welcome and engage businesses and organizations with the school. This protocol could include procedures for initial outreach, communication channels and methods for building relationships. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for school staff involved in welcoming and coordinating partnerships.

Standard 10: Family Engagement and Communication**Successes:**

- The school utilizes social media, ParentSquare, parent newsletters and their school website to communicate with families and the community.
- During a previous STEM Night, students and teachers shared the project based learning and STEM activities they had completed. The event also included a display of artwork by every student and a chorus performance. Over 600 attendees attended this family event.
- PTA and parents on SIT participate in school operation decisions.

- The school improvement plan and the NC School Report Card are publicly accessible to parents and the community.

Challenges:

- Although there is some evidence of families engaging through the magnet theme, continue to demonstrate a commitment to engage families more regularly through the theme.

Recommendations:

- Continue leveraging the School Improvement Team to seek feedback on the school's magnet related news/events. Conduct surveys and gather input on what is working well, areas for improvement and suggestions for future events or initiatives - especially that leverage your magnet theme. Use this feedback to inform magnet related decision-making and continuously improve family engagement efforts.

Overall Recommendations for Winget Park Elementary School:

- Create an instructional coaching cycle that includes the magnet theme and formulate an action plan for implementation and assessment of the coaching plan.
- Enhance targeted recruitment efforts within zoned neighborhood areas and preschools/daycares to retain and attract geographically zoned students. Explore ideas to organize recruitment events in the community.
- Seek opportunities to reach out to families directly by bringing events to their locations, rather than solely relying on them to attend events at the school.
- Implement targeted interventions and support services to meet the distinctive needs of subgroups facing academic disparities. Utilize evidence-based practices including differentiated instruction, culturally responsive teaching, academic interventions and social-emotional support programs tailored to each student population's requirements. Offer supplementary resources, tutoring and mentoring to students at risk of academic decline.

Conclusion

MSA commends Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools for their commitment to ensuring strong magnet schools by adhering to the Five Pillars and Ten Standards of Magnet Schools of America. The objective of this report and the Site Visits have been to highlight strengths, challenges and recommendations for each school as well as to highlight the overall district findings and recommendations and their commitment to magnet programs and diversity. The implementation of the recommendations in this report will demand diligent work and exercise, but it will serve as a cornerstone and a foundational document for the CMS community.

MSA encourages CMS to consider this report's recommendations as they support schools in school improvement planning and make decisions about adding, removing and supporting magnet programs in the district. CMS is a complex system; factors such as demographics, transportation, displacement and discontinuation of programs will all have an impact on CMS overall and should be considered carefully and holistically.

Appendices

- A. School Student Focus Group Notes
- B. School Parent/Community Focus Groups Notes
- C. District Focus Group Data
- D. Unedited Community Survey Data

Appendix A

School Student Focus Group Notes

Albemarle Road Middle School

Grade 8 - 4 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Umm, the library. It is probably the safest place to chat with friends, and I spend a good amount of time there. This is our first block.*
- *My favorite space would be the library, with comfy chairs and learning about different things.*
- *You are not going to believe this, the library. For the same reason, they said.*
- *Our clubs. We try to do clubs. 6th-7th grade always gets to do clubs.*
- *GenOne is the first generation to go to college: separate program, Charlotte Country Day, scholarship acceptance with financial aid. We will go there next year. Tutoring provided. Thursdays mostly, I get home at 8 or 9 pm. Take a pre-test and post-test, tutoring, and get questions together. Students from other schools. Charlotte Country Day private school and select students from our school. I love classical music, and they were playing it during the test.*
- *The newsroom.*
- *One thing for me is sports. I'm a cheerleader, and I have opportunities to look at other schools.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *The fighting, the vaping, the kids, the pregnancies.*
- *To elaborate, I see it a lot. The kid will be in the bathroom for a long time, and then we come out, and you can smell the fumes. It was bad in 6th grade. It was even on the news because a student got jumped in the mall.*
- *One other thing is skipping. Instead of going to class, kids go to QT and Walmart. It's so bad that the principal had to get on the news to address it. Stealing the Chromebook chargers is about integrity.*
- *The teachers are excellent, but when you see some students academically at the second-grade level, Look at the number of jails being put up; do you realize what is happening?*
- *The lessons that you have, the few class clowns who mess up and think it's funny to mess up the class—that's a big problem. Sometimes, the teachers kick them out of class or play favorites. Sometimes, they call another teacher (bouncing). If they get in trouble in that class, they get sent to the principal or assistant principal.*

3. What makes this school a special place?

- *The different cultures. I will say it is a different mix of cultures. I like the diversity. (debate between*

students about the population of white students at our school, representation small)

- *There are so many sports that you can do, such as GenOne, IB, and clubs.*
 - *Seeing friends. In social life, most of our friends are here.*
 - *Friends, good friends, not fake friends.*
 - *Where do you develop friendships? Everything. This Saturday, I could not go skating, but I will go again this Saturday.*
- 4. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
- *Charlotte Country Day (full scholarship), East Meck IB. Then college.*
- 5. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a School that has a special theme?**
- *The IB Programme, because you have another opportunity to not go to just your home school.*
 - *I went to a PWI, but this school is way different, especially in terms of diversity. My friend still goes to the school.*
 - *This is a better school than my friend's. My friend goes to a more strict school. Our school is different because it shows you different pathways, like CTE. One of them is business etiquette. Computer Science, marketing, cooking/Baking—there are options at this school.*
 - *I don't know anybody at any other school.*
 - *It's hard to get in contact during school hours.*
- 6. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**
- *I went to different camps, and I got accepted into several schools. Harding, POB, Butler, one of those schools to pursue law school.*
 - *I'm in the IB Programme, and I'm going to East Meck. I want to go to college and major in science.*
 - *Architecture and I also want to be paid really well.*
 - *I will probably go into something with math or accounting.*
 - *Currently taking Math online- trigonometry, probability, square roots, inverse operations, Math II. Virtual Public Schools. 15 of us used to be 16, but the other girl moved. I like to have more time to do things. I do not like that you have to watch the videos to learn.*
- 7. If you were Principal for the Day, and it was time to make one big change, what would you do?**
- *Start school late and get out early. Shorten the school day. 10-2:30 pm*
 - *I want better quality food that is not within the budget. It's okay at times. Some good food. Tastes like plastic. They freeze everything. Most/majority of students eat lunch; some do not go through the line.*

Billingsville-Cotswold Elementary School

Grade 5 - 7 Students

Grade 4 - 3 Students

Grade 3 - 2 Students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
- *Teachers are nice, we get to have Spanish and other students in other schools don't always have Spanish class.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *5th grade eats lunch at 10:30 am which is the early lunch and at the end of the day we are hungry, there is no time to see friends who are not in your class.*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Teachers should not assign seats we should sit where we want, more time to see friends.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *We learn things like the IB traits that other students don't learn, we have Friday clubs to learn what we might be interested in doing for careers.*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *All 7 of the 5th graders will continue IB in middle school and have applied and been accepted into the Randolph Middle School IB program, the younger students are uncertain at this time, all students like the theme especially thinking about global issues around the world.*

6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *Students felt it was more challenging than other schools, students liked using the IB traits throughout the day.*
- *Students feel safe in the school.*

Blythe Elementary School

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 3 students

Grade 3 - 2 students

Grade 2 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Clubs and special events – Clubs: STEAM, Math Olympiad, WBES News, Chess, Battle of the Books, Destination Imagination, Talent Development Reading and Math, Honor Society, IB Ambassador.*
- *IB Ambassadors are guides for things at school.*
- *Gives challenges for grade levels – I'm doing 3rd grade level work in 2nd grade.*
- *Connects classes – P.E., science, and music.*
- *International Week – we celebrate different countries and cultures and perform shows.*
- *I like the teachers and friends at school. Teachers are helpful, friends are smart.*
- *Parade of nations – my family represents China.*
- *Parade of nations – my family represents Korea and Native American tribe.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Some teachers are mean and they won't assist me.*
- *Group punishments – silent lunch.*
- *Punished at lunch for no reason.*
- *Some teachers are mean for no reason – they turn off everything and you sit in silence.*
- *Can't finish homework because I'm in clubs in the morning.*
- *Teachers are mean when students are disruptive.*
- *After breaks, teachers assign papers to write or give tests.*

3. What would you change about your school?

- *More nice teachers.*
- *Students taking advantage of nice teachers.*
- *No referrals for behavior. Just tell your parents know you got in trouble but no referrals and parents don't have to sign the paper.*
- *I would change the Spanish lab teacher.*

4. Do you want to continue to study in an IB school?

- *Unanimous – Yes.*
- *Piedmont IB was the choice for 4th and 5th graders.*

5. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *We have volunteers come to the school.*
- *We have clubs and tournaments.*
- *We earn treats for our class for community service.*
- *We have more TD students.*
- *Classes are challenging. I like the challenge!*

Bruns Avenue Elementary School

Grade 5 - 1 student

Grade 2 - 1 student

Grade 1 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *The end of the day because I get to relax.*
- *Math- because I like solving a lot of things.*
- *Lunch- I like to eat, and Recess.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *When we have to sit down because the class isn't being good.*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Calming table.*
- *Some of the teachers.*
- *Some teachers are too mean.*
- *Teachers have a plan; before getting a sub.*

4. On a scale of one to five, how would you rate all teachers?

- *4*

5. What makes this school a special place?

- *A safe place.*
- *There is a garden; Green Team committee supports.*

6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *This building is different, cafeteria has a 'theater' (stage).*
- *There are 3 vans that pick students up for afterschool; the school counselor/social worker support with getting assistance.*
- *Excited to get a new building.*

- *Like the teachers for the most part.*
- *The snacks in the cafeteria are expensive.*
- *Would suggest a theater project.*

Chantilly Montessori School

Grade 6 - 2 students

Grade 5 - 3 students

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 2 - 1 student

Grade 1 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *It's everything, the gardens, the art room, the community, the music room, the teachers care about me, the freedom.*
- *We can use the materials the way we want.*
- *I can move around and look at what I want to look at and I can sit with my friends.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *The amount of work.*
- *It's small.*
- *I wish there were more M schools.*
- *Immaturity of some students.*
- *When the teachers scream.*
- *The gardens get messy during the summer.*
- *Disrespect towards some of the teachers.*
- *Students get put out or get a moment – hallway – sometimes nothing – go to the peace table*

3. What happens if someone is bullying someone else?

- *Referral*
- *We would stand up for them and then tell an adult.*
- *Tell them to stop.*
- *Leave to calm down.*
- *Walk away*
- *See if you can bring them to peace table.*
- *Take a deep breath and talk it out.*

4. What would you want to change about your school?

- *People take the freedom for granted.*
- *I want more space.*
- *Quieter in the lunchroom.*
- *The gardens need to be better taken care of.*
- *Treat Ms. Regina in the cafeteria with respect.*
- *Nothing*
- *The amount of pull-outs for 6th graders.*
- *Safety – make it safer (dog walkers outside).*

- *People try to enter the school without getting permission.*

5. What makes this school a special place?

- *It's different.*
- *Montessori curriculum materials.*
- *We get to use our materials and choose the work we want to do at tables and rugs.*
- *The respect that people give each other.*
- *Practical life (how to pour water, tie your shoes).*
- *We get to work with friends in the community – on Friday after PE we are helping in the garden.*
- *We get to read to younger children.*
- *We do work differently and do it on a rug – we aren't sitting at a desk.*
- *The diversity and appreciation of other cultures.*
- *European cultures of Denmark France.*
- *Culture Night (sushi).*
- *Japanese culture class for 6th grade.*
- *Global cuisines.*
- *World snacks.*

6. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *Fortunate to have the opportunity.*
- *Lucky*
- *Hard to explain.*
- *Fortunate to have this experience.*
- *We can learn about other cultures and gardening and everything.*
- *Having freedom and doing all different works.*
- *At least getting to do something.*
- *I feel very fortunate - most kids don't understand what it is I do here.*
- *2 not staying in the program for Middle School.*
- *3 staying in the program for Middle School.*
- *3 said attending was their parent's decision.*
- *6 said the decision was made by parent + student.*
- *1 said the decision was their choice.*

7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *So many different schools.*
- *The environment, more peaceful.*
- *We don't have to sit at a desk all day and other schools are chaos.*
- *The school is nice and we get to work on rugs.*
- *They do different stuff and have different names.*
- *Most of the kids go to charter schools in my neighborhood.*
- *You can walk around and observe.*
- *The relationships with our teachers.*
- *We have better relationships with our teachers because we have them for multiple years.*
- *6 students said they have best friends at other schools.*

- *7 students said they have best friends at this school (and hang out outside of school).*

8. What else do you want to tell me?

- *Watch out for snakes.*
- *It's a one of a kind school.*
- *You're always welcome here.*
- *It's been here for a long time and it's falling apart.*
- *You can see lots of animals outside.*
- *We're an amazing school, even though we have weaknesses.*
- *I feel safe here – not a lot of suspicious activity going on here.*
- *Peacekeepers are great and have helped me build relationships, I get hugs.*
- *I didn't want to come at first but now I think it's amazing.*
- *The teachers love me even when I'm having a bad day.*
- *I like that we have clubs.*

Charles H. Parker Academic Center

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 3 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *The positivity of the school*
- *The program and all of the kids*
- *All activities in the teachers*
- *How the school is run*
- *I like how they customize curriculum for each student*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *All students in the group said there was nothing they did not like about their school*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Longer recess and longer lunch*
- *Shorter day, only one hour school per day (student being silly)*
- *The rest of the group said there was nothing they wanted to change about their school. They like it just the way it is.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *How they teach us*
- *They break down the instructions for us, it is very differentiated.*
- *Like I said, it has a customized curriculum for every student.*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *All of the students in the group said they would like to continue with the LITD thing, but middle school only offers IB. They all plan on attending the feeder school for IB. (Randolf)*

6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *Not as far from home*
- *I don't really know anyone in my neighborhood.*

- *No one in my neighborhood goes to this school, but I do not know what their school is like.*
- 7. Is there anything else you would like for me to know about your school?**
- *It's the BEST SCHOOL*
 - *Teachers and students are great*
 - *I wish that TD students had their own specials.*

Charlotte East Language Academy

Grade 6 - 3 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

Grade 3 - 1 student

Grade 2 - 2 students

Grade 1 - 1 student

Grade K - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Having friends*
- *Learning new stuff*
- *Talking to teacher*
- *Learning new things, like history*
- *All the different cultures*
- *Free food*
- *My class*

2. What are some ways your teachers help you learn and work together with other students?

- *They model for you*
- *Help you with thinking about staying focused*
- *Let us work on projects together*
- *Let us practice the skills with classmates*
- *Encourage students to explain the details and thinking*
- *Sometimes make us work with kids that we might not know*
- *Teachers put students in groups so we can help classmates see mistakes and how to help each other respectfully*

3. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *We have the multi-cultural festival, we have houses in middle school and we meet other kids not in our class*
- *school provides different programs like sports, Girls on the Run*
- *We learn Spanish and different cultures,*
- *We learn to look at and try different ways of solving things.*
- *Many friends throughout the school.*
- *Classroom is flexible and the seating is like a living room.*
- *We have specials, library, music, art, gym*
- *Our school is clean and beautiful*
- *We have teachers that can teach you and help you with your mistakes.*

4. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Ask the lunch monitor to punish only the grade that is talking*
- *I want to bring Epic (an online e-book platform CMS had) back; they are afraid of lawsuits*
- *I would reward students who are doing the right thing in lunch*
- *Provide backpacks, uniforms, and school supplies for kids who need it, and give out water bottles*
- *Get more books about history*
- *Listen to all students opinions and the needs of the everyone*
- *Change the specials up a little bit*
- *Add a fun math club*
- *Alter the dress code*
- *Have a time to chill and relax (down time), build a break into the schedule*
- *Provide a time in the morning or middle of day, a room to go and study outside the classroom during EOG week*

Charlotte Mecklenburg Virtual School

Grade 12 - 1 student

Grade 11 - 1 student

Grade 10 - 1 student

Grade 9 - 1 student

Grade 8 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *I like the flexibility the most. We can work anytime as long as you get the work done by the deadline.*
- *The teachers are flexible.*
- *The school is accommodating to the different situations people have.*
- *It's easier to communicate with the teachers than in an in person setting. The teachers have a flexible schedule and can be available to you much more than a regular school.*
- *A variety of clubs and programs*
- *Love the learning.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *When you don't understand something it can be hard to get immediate feedback and help*
- *Participation between clubs and school events are minimal*
- *Can't be as social as you would in a regular in person school*
- *Virtual means that people can be far away from the school and so it is hard to come in for tests and it is hard to get to socialize in person*
- *Sometimes it's hard for us to connect on Chromebooks, wifi issues, the Chromebooks don't always work and we can't turn in work*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"

- *Better network to connect with other students*
- *Many kids don't check their newsletters or emails so we don't know about clubs and stuff going on*
- *We lack on college preparation, we need better college counselors*

- *Maybe not have a lot of tests in person, the test dates sometimes change*
 - *Transportation problems for coming in for testing*
 - *Moments to connect with kids in our grade or classes would be good . More opportunities to come together as students and friends.*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
- *We bring our Chromebooks home. We need to set up our own quiet environment in our home.*
 - *It's a completely different environment. It requires strong discipline to succeed.*
 - *We get access to a lot of things and have flexibility, but we need to be disciplined*
 - *We have opportunities to take more courses and dual enrollment*
- 5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
- *We work with our homeschools to have access to sports, clubs, etc.*
 - *Clubs at virtual will give us opportunities to socialize, but you have to come in.*
- 6. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
- *Junior - there is a dual enrollment program and I am a part of that. I want to finish my associates and transfer to a university*
 - *Get a 2 year associate degree. I need a scholarship and then will use my associates cosmetology to work while in college*
 - *Middle school student wants to go to hs in virtual school. But eventually I want to transfer out in person by junior and senior year.*
 - *Dual enrollment program will graduate with associates and then transfer into UNCC*
 - *In the dual enrollment program and will graduate with an associates and transfer to a four year college*
 - *Sophomore - will do dual enrollment. Will finish hs virtually, I love the independence and am unsure about what i will do with college.*
- 7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *Compared to my home school virtual school is smaller, my home school is HUGE and that setting would be harder to have a one on one relationship with the teachers.*
 - *We get more communication with our teachers at the virtual school than they do in my friends ' traditional schools. We get more online tutoring options.*
- 8. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school? [For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?**
- *Masters and going to law school*
 - *Degree in engineering and want to declare a field and go to get my masters*
 - *Master is business admin and jump into the workforce*
 - *Cosmetologist and delivery nurse*
 - *Love art and photography, would like to continue that as a job. I'd also love to travel the world with my church.*
 - *Becoming a missionary in the church spreading the gospel, film maker, actress*

Grade 8 - 1 student
Grade 6 - 2 students
Grade 5 - 2 students
Grade 3 - 2 students
Grade 2 - 1 student
Grade 1 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *All the teachers are individuals*
- *Friends*
- *All the kids speak English and Spanish*
- *Everyone is so bilingual*
- *Learning here is really fun*
- *Kids know how to speak different languages*
- *Teachers*
- *Specials give you extra things to learn*
- *The small classes; one of my biggest classes is 20 kids, so we get individual help*

2. What are some ways your teachers help you learn and work together with other students?

- *They model the strategies.*
- *When we solve problems, we get to just express the things we know, and we get to see different ways*
- *They let us work with a friend, and it helps to work with a friend*
- *Explaining things in different ways so different kids understand it*

3. How is your school helping you prepare for after elementary school or after middle school?

- *It is bilingual, so half of the things we learn they teach us in Spanish and half the things in English*
- *They give us due dates, so we learn about deadlines*
- *When you get jobs in the future you can earn more money if you can speak another language*
- *Someone came to our class to help to prepare for middle school; talked about schedules and how to be organized, so we won't be nervous*
- *Teach us about first and next so we know how to plan*
- *Helping us learn multiple languages and things we might need in life; helping us finish things on time; making sure we have everything we need to know in the future*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Have six brothers and one sister; sister does technology and hoverboards; here we learn two different languages*
- *We have the opportunity to learn language; different kids in our class show us things they do in different ways*
- *A little bit bilingual; teachers have different ways to teach you with toys and examples; experiments*
- *I think this school is special because we learning Spanish for almost the whole day*
- *More things to learn*
- *SAIL has Spanish, but it's one class an elective; we have the advantage of learning more*
- *Here we learn a lot more Spanish than my old school*
- *Other schools start earlier and end earlier; I have a little bit more time to sleep*

5. If you could change or improve something about your school, what would it be?

- *Change the no uniform policy*
- *Go back to one hour classes instead of 90 minutes; don't have science every day;*
- *we would be more ahead if we had it every day*
- *If the Principal gets students to help her do the Pledge of Allegiance*
- *When it's time for English, she can have a group so she can have kids say things in English, so the teacher can help them*
- *For middle school, add clubs and advertise sports more*
- *Add 6th grade sports*
- *Have ice cream*

Coulwood STEM Academy

Grade 8 - 3 students

Grade 7 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Love all of the teachers, they are respectful and kind to all students, unless they give us homework*
- *Friends, programs like after-school Starbase where we get to use a lot of our skills and collaborate with new people*
- *We have an hour to eat lunch which gives us enough time to eat and rest*

2. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”

- *I want the school to let us use our lockers so we have more space to put our things*
- *The dress code policy. Girls can't show their shoulders but the boys can.*
- *I wish the school was a bit cleaner*
- *For students to stop being rude and not guessing what race we are, just ask us*

3. What makes this school a special place?

- *How all the teachers make it safe*
- *When you walk in, you see different languages which makes me feel special; I see people from my race and continent and I like that*
- *Mr. Robins' room is a special place. He gives us attention, food, and if you are sad he is always here for you*
- *In 6th and 7th grade, we have single gender classrooms and I love it. It means I can stay away from boys who are usually not at that level to be respectful and productive, they distract you. Girls know how to figure out things and we can have our privacy. Plus boys do not take care of their hygiene*
- *Mr. Robins, he gives us activities and let's us fly drones. He recommended the Starbase program for me.*
- *The people you come across with and connect to*

4. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?

- *Yes, sometimes*

5. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?

- *Phillip O Berry*
- *After I graduate, I want to continue playing the violin and go to college and become a doctor*

- *Phillip O Berry. I want to go to college and become an engineer.*
 - *I want to play soccer and volleyball professionally*
 - *I want to make art for video games like sprites, animations, and backgrounds. I learned about sprites in Computer Science class*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *We have a longer lunch*
 - *We have better opportunities to do things that other kids don't. We get to be more creative and get to build and see our designs*
 - *We have a stricter schedule*
 - *They choose our electives for us and we get the same group of people to move with in our cohort. It makes it a lot simpler and less stressful.*
 - *Some schools have uniforms and we don't*

Crestdale Middle School

Grade 8 - 3 students

Grade 7 - 5 students

Grade 6 - 6 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *My friends, the collaboration between my art classes and my science classes. My teachers give me my accommodations. The teachers actually help us.*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Many kids use inappropriate language. Teachers sometimes punish everyone for what one student does. We don't have PAW time anymore. SEL class is boring and repetitive. There are cliques in the cafeteria. Some people won't even sit by other students. Sometimes behaviors get in the way of teaching. There is a lack of basic respect.*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"**
 - *Discipline should be fair to everyone. We would bring back PAWS, and let SEL be optional.*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *My friends and most of the teachers. I love my major and my minor. All schools don't have majors and minors.*
- 5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *No because my good friends live too far but we talk on the phone*
- 6. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
 - *Butler, Providence are the zone schools, will continue with their majors. And two will go to Northwest High where they will have to audition. Wants to go there for new opportunities.*
 - *I wants to be a teacher. I wants to be a medical professional, I is not sure what he wants to do but he is interested in engineering. I love theater and want to be a playwright and study economics.*
- 7. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**

- 2 will audition for Northwest and 2 will go to their zone schools

Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy

Grade 5 - 6 students

Grade 4 - 4 students

Grade 3 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *All the teachers are loving and kind, they respect us and treat us equally*
- *The teachers and principals are nice*
- *It's a technology school and we are able to do and learn computer science.*
- *I like the coding-the lego robots*
- *All the teachers push me to my full potential to be ready for the next grade*
- *I like that the school represents something and all the different programs we can do*
- *I appreciate SMART girls-we have different units*
- *I love the fun educated sites we can go on (prodigy, scratch, code.org)*

2. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Ever since a teacher left, we don't do as much coding, I was hoping we can someone similar to him so we can do those fun things again*
- *I think 5th, they have us carry around binders. I would like to carry around our book bags*
- *Sports team, maybe an after school activity, more after school options (basketball, drama)*
- *I agree, if we had a team, it would bring more students,*
- *If we had more varieties of after school program, girls on the run or a coding program would be great*
- *I think we could add other grades to SMART girls.*
- *I agree we should have the lower grade levels involved in SMART girls*
- *I think 5th graders should be able to work with the lower grades*
- *I agree with the sport teams, but by the time they set that up, we will be in middle school*
- *More teachers-it is complicated with substitutes*
- *Classes take advantage of the substitutes*
- *Expand activities for lower grades. For example K-2 didn't participate in the Black History Programs*
- *Boys are smart, maybe add a SMART boys*
- *The boys feel left out*
- *Try to find something to motivate boys*
- *For example when the girl went on their field trip, the boys had to stay at school...*
- *More opportunities for all students*
- *Computer science electives*

3. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *Computer science, I would keep the theme. If we didn't have it, we couldn't learn digital. We need to learn how to do things on computers. I would like to continue learning about computer science*

- *AVID-is the only problem I have. Maybe have folders or notebooks and carry our bags around instead of binders*
- *For Kindergarteners they need to learn technology. If this wasn't a technology school, they wouldn't know how to use the computer or apps because they haven't used computers*
- *I like the computer Science theme and think it is fun. I think going to middle school we should have other themes, not just computer science*
- *The theme is one of the reasons why I came here. My brother told my mom while in middle school that DJV was a good school*
- *I would like to continue the theme, it will help girls if they want to go into that field.*
- *I like the theme, I didn't know how to code until I came here*
- *I like computer science because it helps us with coding and we can use it moving forward*
- *I like the theme and would like to continue through middle school*
- *I like computer science, but I want technology schools to experience more. I would like everyone to have the same opportunity to get this experience.*
- *I like computer science. I would like to keep on doing it, because it will help us and whatever job we choose to have, it will have technology.*

4. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *Other kids in the neighborhood don't have as much technology*
- *We have more coding and technology, almost everything is on the computer*
- *At my other school, we didn't do showcases. Here we are able to use what we learn to show others*
EXTRA:

• *We have lense ticket and we have a party. If you have a certain amount you go to a party. There are art parties or academic parties.*

• *Most of the time the student chooses, sometimes students only pick their friends. I think it's fair when teachers choose.*

Teachers don't give lense tickets out as much.

It is hard for 5th graders, the requirements are going up.

Teachers punish the entire class instead of students who are misbehaving,

I agree, some of the individuals are misbehaving and time was deducted from recess. However, there were students who had not misbehaved, but were punished.

They keep elevating the price of lense ticket, it makes us try harder, and we end up with nothing. It makes us feel like what's the point and we stop trying.

East Mecklenburg High School

Grade 12 - 1 student

Grade 11 - 2 students

Grade 10 - 1 student

Grade 9 - 3 students

1. What is your favorite thing about the school?

- *I feel like certain teachers make it their responsibility to make you feel included. Choir teacher makes you feel like they want to know you on a personal level.*
- *Performing arts programs- choir, theatre, etc. it is a place for me to grow. I enjoy the teachers. And getting to perform.*
- *School community- teachers get involved, transferred from another school. Got to know others better. Teachers are more involved with students and their successes.*
- *Relationships, variety of class options.*
- *Opportunities to be involved- clubs and activities and honor societies.*
- *Chances to meet so many different people. (not clique-ish)*
- *Diversity of people*
- *Behavior*
- *Teachers are supportive*
- *Janitors work so hard*

2. What is your least favorite thing about the school?

- *Not really is one- staff and people work hard to make you feel involved, treat you with respect.*
- *There are teachers who aren't the best and that can diminish confidence.*
- *This year is better because of the teachers*
- *Some cliques*
- *High school drama*
- *Isolated groups*
- *Bathrooms are gross*
- *Janitors try but eww*
- *Vandalism*
- *Student destruction*
- *Vaping*

3. What would you like to change about the school?

- *The school hours*
- *Would love to start at 8:15am*
- *But like being able to be done at 7:15*
- *Shuttle bus stops*
- *Crowded buses*
- *Same distance from home to shuttle or home to school*

4. Do you notice that the kids in your neighborhood go to East or go to another school?

- *(Garinger, Rocky) Most of the neighborhood goes to East over neighborhood. Or private*
- *Not many from Butler, AK*

5. Coming to East, knowing it is an IB school, Why East vs somewhere else?

- *Came because East is not home school (avoiding an unwanted school)*
- *Poor reputation*
- *IB is more challenging and I want to go outside of comfort zone.*
- *Builds skills to reach goals*
- *I enjoy IB and appreciate what it gives*
- *IB since elementary school*
- *More used to the rigor and work*

- *IB program versus an IB school*
 - *More opportunities and options*
6. **Do you plan to continue?**
- *YES*
7. **As an ambassador of IB- what would you tell others about East to convince them to come to IB?**
- *We have a lot of different options, arts, sports, clubs, different academic options, AP, IB, honors, etc. anyone would be able to find their place.*
 - *We have the best support.*
 - *Super enthusiastic principal. Very supportive of all of the programs in the school. Participates in the events and spirit events.*
 - *Parker is the school's energy source. Motivate students to try (OTOT) On Time On Target. Had 9th grade reinvigoration assembly.*
 - *Students at East feel celebrated and not just tolerated. Supportive peers. Feels like family.*
8. **Recommendations to CMS about IB?**
- *Good job being done already (difference between IB and MYP)*
 - *diploma / career teachers are awesome*
 - *Teachers have a plan*
 - *More education on what the IB program is (DP, CP, MYP) for students and families before they start. So that they know what they are signing up for.*
 - *Explain what classes are required*
 - *And what those programs mean*
 - *The bathrooms need to be changed*
 - *Students go to do things that aren't okay.*
9. **How to change the mindset of the peers?**
- *Respect?*
 - *Here more than home?*
 - *Rewards the students*
 - *Set the example and hold the standard*

Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School

Grade 5 - 6 students

Grade 4 - 4 students

1. **What is your favorite thing about ETES?**
- *Field trips to the symphony*
 - *Lighthouse School*
 - *Teachers make it a safe pace and they are helpful*
 - *Morning news helps us remember things*
 - *Kind school overall*
 - *Teachers and habits with our success*

- *Teachers prioritize to help students learn*
- *Safe school*
- *Programs outside of school: camps, after school sports, clubs, and Leadership*

2. What is your least favorite thing about ETES?

- *Broken seats in the auditorium*
- *Lunch food – can we give suggestions for food choices?*
- *Dirty bathrooms*
- *Writing on bathroom stalls*
- *Need more recess time*
- *Opportunities to change seats at lunch.*
- *Side seats in cafeteria when you don't follow directions*

3. What would you change about ETES?

- *Bullying*
- *More Eagle Eyes news*
- *More teaching after school*
- *Would like Lighthouse clubs everyday*
- *Add business class*
- *More breakfast and lunch options*
- *Would like ability to help in other classrooms when work is finished.*
- *Extra equipment for kids who need it and can't afford it.*

4. Will you remain at ETES or will you go for middle school?

- *Don't know – 1*
- *Mint Hill – 1*
- *Piedmont – 4*
- *Randolph – 1*
- *Randolph or Piedmont – 1*
- *Randolph or Private - 1*

5. What makes ETES special?

- *Fun field trips, nice friend and nice teachers*
- *Clean*
- *Clubs and choices*
- *Variety of cultures in the school*
- *Friends from a different culture and can do things outside of school*

First Ward Creative Arts Academy

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4- 3 students

Grade 3- 2 students

Grade 1- 1 students

Grade K- 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about school?

- *Teachers and staff – take care of the school, listen, “they’re there for you,”*
- *Math – 1st grader liked learning about adding and subtracting*
- *Basketball – school has a basketball team for 4th and 5th grade students*
- *Specials classes*
- *Musicals – 4th grade student loves doing the musicals*
- *Literacy – literacy, colors of the books; 4th grader’s favorite book is “Cat in the Hat”*
- *Drama – danced to the Grinch last year; 2nd grader liked making props for Black History Month program and performing for the whole school; 2nd grader liked writing in drama; 1st grader liked making things out of paper*
- *Media – instead of just getting books, they get projects, 3rd grade student was excited about getting a poster*
- *Art – 1st grader said “it is fun to do different types of crafts and drawings”*
- *Dance – 1st grader liked learning new movements, especially moving feet*
- *PE – Kindergarten student likes PE because they use hula hoops*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Food at lunch – 2nd grade student doesn’t like the hamburgers and corn dogs*
- *Substitute teachers – 1st grade student doesn’t like doing different things and “it is not the same when it is not with our regular teacher”; 1st grade student misses their teacher when she is not there*
- *Media*
- *Behavior – when class is too loud and teacher has to yell*
- *Dance – Kindergarten student said “I don’t even dance;” the dance teacher switches every day because the last teacher retired earlier in the year*
- *Indoor recess – when class is too chatty and has to do indoor recess to make up for it*
- *Lunch monitors – she means business*
- *Other kids – some of the kids can be mean; tell the teacher if they are being mean; fights that happen*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Create a nice calming corner for kids that have problems at school*
- *Food – there should be more options; should be able to buy snacks like ice cream and sweets, not just chips*
- *Lunch monitor – they keep on staring at you; one 2nd grade student would change the way that people think about the lunch monitor because she wants people to see that she is just trying to do her best*
- *Recess schedule – “we barely get any time;” 4th grade student wants at least 40 minutes*
- *Teachers should let us sit next to our friends in the classroom*
- *Lessons – taking tests on iPads is hard because “we don’t learn all the stuff that is on the iPads;” 2nd grade student says teacher already knows*
- *Change free time in the morning into drawing time*
- *Time that school starts and ends – 1st grade student thinks it starts too early*
- *1st grade student wants a half day every Wednesday*
- *Kids who are not nice – Kindergarten student would let an adult know*
- *Kindergarten student would like to live at the school*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Kindergarten: “People are kind”*
- *1st: “Everyone’s personality and Ms. Young”*

- 2nd: *(spoke too soft to hear)*
 - 3rd: *"Ms. Young" + would like it to be a school just for K-3*
 - 4th: *"Ms. Young"*
 - 5th: *"Ms. Young"*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school with music, art, dance, band, and drama**
- *Kindergarten: "Bored – I don't really like those classes"*
 - 1st: *"There's a lot of stuff. My favorite one is probably PE, orchestra, and band"*
 - 2nd: *"I like them because you get to learn different types of things. My favorite is art and PE."*
 - 3rd: *"I like technology and band;" she plays trombone and flute*
 - 4th: *"I really like drama and music and orchestra;" she plays the bass*
 - 5th: *"I really like art and PE;" he likes to draw*
- 6. What school do you want to attend when you leave First Ward? (4th and 5th grade responses only)**
- *Stay at First Ward if it becomes a middle school; if not, she'd go to Crestdale*
 - *Going to Piedmont or James Madison middle school*
 - *I don't know*
 - *Northwest School of the Arts or Southwest*

Governor's Village STEM Academy Lower and Upper Campuses

Grade 8 - 1 student

Grade 5 - 2 students

Grade 3 - 4 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
- *Opportunities*
 - *Cheerleading and Sports*
 - *Band and Orchestra*
 - *Teachers bring the two together*
 - *Playing in a symphony*
 - *Feels like peace and joy when you walk in*
 - *Teachers and principals thank us and give us things*
 - *Making friends, learning math*
 - *Specials Teachers*
 - *PE*
 - *Specials*
 - *Learning and having fun at the same time*
 - *Learning how to code using Google Scratch*
 - *Code your own game*
 - *Other scholars can play as well*
 - *Other Scholars*

- *We help each other*
- *Help with homework*
- *Middle School: Writing, art, drawing*
- 2. What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *Add extra recess and better lunch*
 - *Cleaner bathrooms*
 - *Make the school more colorful on the walls*
 - *Add some art, writing, poetry*
 - *Not incorporating STEM, but could*
 - *Cleaner, fresh coat of paint*
 - *Dress code*
 - *More opportunities for PreK or K*
 - *No afterschool programs*
 - *More options and creativity in class*
 - *Instead of teachers dictating*
 - *Students getting more of a voice*
 - *Add voting boxes in the halls*
 - *Help make decisions*
 - *More tutoring on Saturdays?*
 - *More electives*
 - *Fashion, Cooking*
 - *Stop violence and weapons in Upper Campus*
 - *No more scanners*
 - *Middle School: It would be nice to have more connections to STEM in other classes. For example, in art, could we have a chance to draw something related to engineering like a 3-D drawing? Could we make something we want, not just what the teacher wants? Maybe we could have voting boxes, where we could decide on things. The Science Fair is not really for 8th grade. 8th graders would like more options - options where we can be creative. That's what gets me invested in learning.*
- 3. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
 - *Incorporate STEM?*
 - *Saturday STEM*
 - *Science Olympiad*
 - *Learning the Science behind Peter Pan*
 - *Museum*
 - *Science and Math*
 - *Reading and SS give us a break from STEM*
 - *Everything we do in class leads into each other*
 - *Gets me invested into learning*
 - *Binary Bling*
 - *Fashion and Coding*
- 4. How do you get help when struggling?**
 - *Teachers after school*

- *Peers*
- *First we have to try, then we can ask for help*
- *Ask 2 friends before asking the teacher*
- *Can email teachers.*
- *Students have group chats.*
- 5. Do your parents get to see your projects?**
 - *Science Fair*
 - *Vote on projects*
 - *Gr. 8 didn't have as many projects*
 - *Museum coming in April*
 - *More creativity in Lower Campus*
 - *Should be more on Upper Campus*
- 6. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *Middle School: Friends, teachers. You can text a teacher whenever you want, not like after 9 o'clock, but mostly whenever.*
- 7. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *Middle School: No one lives close, but we all go to the mall together. We're going to the mall this weekend.*

Greenway Park Creative Arts

Grade 5 - 2 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Our CATS system, different types of CATS for each grade, all the arts offerings. I like Band and play percussion. Band has a performance later this year. I'm in Art too. PE is my second favorite because I like sports. I play on the basketball team.*
 - *I like the CATS too, my favorite is musical theater. I'm in the play this year. I also play the flute. I don't care for PE but I do play soccer. We have a soccer team and I play.*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Having to go to school.*
 - *Nothing has changed except we've added a bunch of stuff. They added soccer and basketball but not football. I don't like waking up early.*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *Add more sports like baseball or volleyball or football. I wish they would add swings to the playground and improve the field we play on at recess. Make our soccer field better. More time in math. Add another sports team. Add more extracurricular activities after school and time to finish work after school. Teachers can do things that kids can't like, order coffee or have Jimmy Johns.*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *Everything. Our CATS system and magnet and science and learning and teachers. They help us grow until we leave to go to Middle School or college. Teachers take time out of their day to help us learn. It's technically their job but they put effort into it.*
 - *I like soccer and cheer and science. I don't know many other schools that do all that.*

- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
- *I like it. I feel like the science program is good. We have an outdoor science class and there are different sections to it. We learn about force and motion. The CATS system helps us with different stuff until we get to Middle School. You can enter into contests for Art. In PE you can improve on your sports. For the band and orchestra you get better at stuff you never played before. Musical theater helps you improve your stage fright.*
 - *That's why I signed up for musical theater because I have stage fright when I'm acting or singing but not dancing. Because I've always been at an Arts school I don't think I'd like going to a different school.*
 - *Yes, my parents chose this school because they want me to go to Crestdale because they have an Arts program and also my friends are going there. I wanted to go to McClintock.*
 - *I am going to McClintock and they're a STEM school and I want to try something new. A lot of my friends are going to McClintock.*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
- *Mostly everyone in my neighborhood goes to this school.*
 - *All the kids I know go to this school. I think one of my neighbors goes to East Meck but that's a High School.*
 - *This school helps kids to get better at their growth at mostly everything*
 - *This school makes reading math and science really fun. Without the arts program I wouldn't be good at singing and dancing.*
 - *"Come on down" you should bring your kids here. It's a good school. When I was in Kindergarten I went to a PreK birthday party and it was, like crazy fun. PreK gets naptime which I was not aware of.*
 - *I got like 10 friends going to McClintock and a few going to Randolph. A few are going to Crestdale. One kid is going to NWSA. I didn't know NWSA was a school until we went there.*
 - *If you see anybody who is looking for a school tell them to come on in.*

Harding University High School

Grade 12 - 1 student

Grade 11 - 2 students

Grade 10 - 1 student

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
- *Teachers, the math 3 teacher - she was passionate about math and knew the content, computer science class, English class - I like to write.*
- 2. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"**
- *The start and stop time, the 15-minute rule (you cannot leave the classroom to use the bathroom), homeroom - we used to have homeroom which I liked, now we are just prepping for the EOGs.*
- 3. What makes this school a special place?**
- *Teachers, friends, variety of classes*
- 4. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**

- *Yes, but not with anyone from my neighborhood. We mostly get together online.*
- 5. What are your plans after you graduate?**
- *I want to open my own business - something with culinary. I want to go into medicine or law. I want to do something with culinary or be a flight attendant, I'm not sure.*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *Here we have specific coursework that I don't think other schools have. We get to do more field trips than other schools. We got to go on a college tour, I'm not sure if other schools get to do that.*

Hawthorne Academy

Grade 12 - 6 students

Grade 11 - 4 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *I have to say my favorite thing about the school is probably the health science classes that we have here and all the teachers that teach them are very helpful and they are also very knowledgeable about what they're teaching. For example Mr. Jackson, he's my favorite teacher ever. I had him both my freshman year and this year and every single time he teaches a class he gets up there and he knows what he's talking about. He can talk your ear off about anything so he knows what he's doing. He's so helpful to teach the students.*
- *Experience different classes.*
- *I love my classes because they have made me more comfortable. I'm in health sciences and if I was working in a hospital right now, I'd be comfortable walking around the hallways talking to doctors and nurses. And I would be able to understand what they are telling me because I'm hearing those things in class.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Need permanent teachers. Have a substitute for some classes.*
- *We need more food and different types of food like spaghetti. We are adults, we're almost full grown and we need more food. The portion size is too little.*
- *I think some kids don't come here for the exposure to health or the military. Some just come because the parents want a small school. Some of us are pressed to try to have a good GPA. We have the resources. I just really think we are not being pushed to use them like we should.*
- *No spirit week takes away from the fun of the school. Too strict, too boring, and I need more chances to participate in activities. This week is spirit week but the dress code keeps us from being able to really participate. No pajama day, no fun.*
- *We need clubs and a few other extracurricular fun things. We have internships but that is still like school. I think it was two years ago when we had clubs at the end of the day once a month for two hours. But now we have it once a month for 45 minutes. We can't get all the stuff that we need done in 45 minutes once a month so moving forward I think it should be dedicated time. And we need sports.*

- *Student government is important to us. The administration only listens to us sometimes. If we truly have a voice then they should listen to us more.*
 - *Transition time and restroom breaks went from 10 to 7 to 5 to 4 minutes. They cannot get into the bathroom in the amount of time they give you.*
 - *They are told to go to the bathroom during transition (3 minutes) but then when they go they are told to go to class.*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”**
- *Rebrand, fresh new start, new name, new logo,*
 - *How the admin runs the school, students say when they talk to their teachers, the teachers say it starts from the top.*
 - *Staff is given too much work*
 - *More school activities*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
- *Internships and health based learning - opportunities - most of the staff cares about the students*
- 5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
- *Nope, don't see them much.*
- 6. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
- *All answered college or community college*
- 7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *My friends go to zone schools. They have some of the same problems we have. We are not really unique in that all schools have good and bad.*
- 8. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school? [For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?**
- *Associates and Bachelors in Biology, medical school, and be a pathologist - same but want to take a gap year to travel, maybe an ultrasound tech... but will stay medical...*
 - *4 year for BSN then medical school trauma surgeon*
 - *4 year college, nursing, not sure yet but it will be a healthcare career*
 - *4 year - child psychology or pathology*
 - *My up internship in the summer and rise to success to become an ultrasound tech.*

Highland Mill Montessori Elementary School

Grade 6 - 1 student

Grade 5 - 6 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

Grade 3 - 3 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
- *Work at your own pace.*
 - *Special people come in for assemblies.*

- *The teachers at the school.*
 - *Many different subjects. Math is the favorite.*
 - *Recess is the favorite of the majority.*
 - *Work where you want.*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
- *Cafeteria food*
 - *Sometimes people are mean to me. I get emotional and start yelling.*
 - *Recess – amount of time (wants more)*
 - *Weird math - ways the teachers teach it*
 - *When they take MVPA's it's not what they've been taught.*
 - *The way teachers confuse us.*
 - *Feels that some students aren't treated the same. Some students are sent to the office for the same offense and others do not get sent to the office.*
 - *Too many tests.*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school?**
- *Wear a mask when you are sick and come to school.*
 - *Dress code – should be able to wear tank tops*
 - *Teachers be more understanding of the way students feel*
 - *Teachers should be flexible in math about the way you solve problems*
 - *People should be get in trouble when they do wrong, not just certain people*
 - *Fair treatment for all (boys seem to get in trouble more than girls)*
 - *One person shouldn't cause everyone to have time missed from recess*
 - *Take away some of the tests. Some people get bad grades because they are nervous.*
 - *Better consequences. The consequences should match what they do.*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
- *6th grade*
 - *Nice people*
 - *Spring Fest/Winter Concert*
 - *Choose where they sit*
 - *Spirit Week*
 - *Music teacher*
 - *Assemblies/Concerts*
 - *Work at your own pace.*
 - *Differentiated to your pace and level (Middle EL) Accommodate to your level of learning*
 - *Upper EL – students say they aren't able to work at their own pace*
 - *Teachers help when you are struggling*
 - *Math – you are taught several ways to solve*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
- *You can move at your own pace.*
 - *Materials to help you learn.*
 - *People aren't as strict.*
 - *Independence – freedom to make your own choices*

- *Montessori rules are different from traditional*
 - *Some things about Montessori don't make sense about why you need them in a school*
 - *Learn from play using materials*
 - *5th graders – All plan to stay for 6th grade*
 - *6th graders – plan to attend Montessori Secondary school*
- 6. What you should know about my school:**
- *One student was told to stand by whiteboard and couldn't get his work done*
 - *Not everything is perfect*
 - *Office referrals – you speak to Ms. Shauna (counselor) and nothing is done*
 - *Ms. Shauna is like a therapist and has helped me*
 - *Respect others' differences*
 - *If you are struggling, you need to ask for help. People will help you.*
 - *Students are asked to show their math skills in front of the class*
 - *Students asking questions about what the teacher just said will get an "x"*
 - *The parents of all students chose the school for them. One student said she also had a say in her placement.*

Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 3 students

Grade 3 - 2 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Fun activities, community feels safe, we stay on task in the classroom, teachers make learning interesting, relationships with teachers*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Bullying, broccoli at lunch, other student behavior off task, bathrooms can be dirty*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *We want students to follow teacher instructions the first time, give students a second chance, older student can role model for younger students*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *We feel international and around the world, teachers are nice, we learn Spanish, fun, teachers welcome students*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
 - *We learn the IB Learner Profile, teacher are open minded, Spanish, kind, inquiry, teacher challenge us, we get new experiences*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
 - *They do not have IB monthly awards*

Idlewild Elementary School

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 3 students

Grade 3 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Teachers work hard to teach us, do their best to stay healthy so they can be here to teach..*
- *Even the strict teachers are good because they just want us to push ourselves to be better*
- *Diversity because there are a lot of people from different places*
- *Support from teachers with whatever we want to learn*
- *Nice Teachers*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Some kids that are still learning, but they litter and the school isn't always clean*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Nothing I like it how it is*
- *Students looked irritated that I would suggest anything needed to change.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *All the events that the school puts on*
- *The way things are done*
- *Extra activities that we can do*
- *Electives*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *It's good to be unique*
- *I can get smarter or achieve more*
- *Going on to the next theme might be harder*

6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *Things called different, electives*
- *More grade-levels at other schools*
- *The extracurricular are different*
- *Far away and different bell schedules*

7. Anything else you would like me to know about your school?

- *Everyone is polite*
- *Learn no matter what you look like*
- *Don't just care about academics, care about safety*
- *Give us a say*
- *Tutoring groups for both high and low*

iMECK @ Cochrane Academy

Grade 12 - 5 students

Grade 11 - 5 students

Grade 10 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Opportunities. Visit college campuses, student to teacher ratio, can learn better here. Teachers are nurturing. Calm school. Not many discipline issues so we can learn.*
2. **What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Least favorite part of the school is no sports. No clubs, want to be able to do something outside of just going to class every day. The district needs to fund the school so that the principal can buy needed items and fix things.*
 - *Fix the ac issues in the school. Allow them to be able to adjust the temperature during summer and winter.*
 3. **What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”**

No hot water in the bathrooms, no sports, and I need more advanced classes.
 4. **Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *no*
 5. **What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
 - *Community college first, want to be a nurse, community college first then a 4 year, 4 year college to be an architect. Community college then 4 year college to be a psychologist.*
 6. **How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
 - *It's not too different everybody got something special at their school*
 7. **[For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school? [For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?**
 - *College or work, but probably college*

Irwin Academic Center

Grade 5 - 5 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

Grade 3 - 3 students

1. **What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *How nice the teachers are*
 - *No bullying*
 - *Opportunities, like battle of the books and electives*
 - *I get to meet different people*
 - *Clubs and fun stuff to do that are based on our interest*
 - *Extra groups where we have extra challenging work in math and literacy*
 - *We get to speak up for ourselves*
 - *The teachers match our learning styles to what we are learning*
 - *The work environment*
 - *I like to be challenged in this school challenges me in math*
 - *Like the house system and earning points*
2. **What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Not being challenged enough and regular classes*

- *Everyone being punished from recess because some students misbehaved*
- *Sometimes the teachers don't understand us*
- *The lunch teachers punishing everyone when not everyone was talking*
- *Not having enough challenging work*
- *Everyone being punished when not everyone misbehaved*
- *When students are bad, they get consequences when they are good, there's no benefit*
- *Students who work faster and finish first are rewarded, if you're slow and take your time you're not.*
- *People don't follow the soccer schedule.*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *The lunch*
- *I would change the soccer schedule*
- *All A's equals something special*
- *Create a finance class*
- *Not allowing one person to get everyone in trouble*
- *Going outside for gym*
- *Students being more empathetic and caring if they get other people in trouble who were not misbehaving*
- *Longer recess*
- *More challenging work on your level*
- *Teachers cannot take away your recess because it's part of your 30 minute activity requirement a day*
- *Don't take time off of recess*
- *Split up people who are playing different games outside at recess to make it more safe*
- *Instead of taking someone's recess, you can have them sit with a teacher and reflect on what they have done, have a reflection corner.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Lots of opportunities*
- *Do more fun things*
- *We do more physical activities in class and less digital on computers. We have a choice.*
- *Students on the same academic level*
- *I like the structure*
- *Here everything is fun and hands-on*
- *We get higher work if we need it*
- *SSA because we get to do six and seventh grade math*
- *More opportunities*
- *We get to do service projects where we donate to other kids who don't have toys and other things.*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

Yes, I like this theme because we need to be challenged

I want to remain in the LITD program through middle school

I love this program it challenges me

I like this program because I don't want to keep learning the same thing

It pushes my brain to learn something new.

6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *We have different houses and specials*
- *We have the TD program and other schools do not*
- *Extracurricular activities that help us grow*
- *Groups clubs in electives*
- *My old school didn't have any of the things the school has*
- *Other schools don't have the SSA group*
- *I learned more at the school and let her see in math, and then my friends at other schools do, and they're in grades higher than me.*

J.M. Alexander Middle School

Grade 8 - 3 students

Grade 7 - 4 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *PPA on the track*
- *Electives like band and robotics*
- *Gym and band*
- *Given a lot of opportunities to grow -- higher level education, extra help when I need it*
- *Electives, and how we can learn French and Spanish -- now I am trilingual*
- *PPA, gym, some of the electives - design and modeling*
- *Give a lot of opportunities to grow -- always something to do*
- *School is very inclusive -- find ways to include you in everything*

2. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"

- *Equipment: band instruments, sports equipment (get newer stuff)*
- *Change how our schedule is built -- gym in the AM means sweaty for the whole day (but, only for some)*
- *I feel like I should be able to have headphones on (listening to music helps me work) - we should be able to listen to music during independent time*
- *Add another language -- learning a language is interesting, but I feel like we should be able to choose something besides French and Spanish -- add Japanese -- include online courses*

3. What makes this school a special place?

- *Yeah, because in elementary I went to an arts school, not an IB. I do like the IB program.*
- *It's complicated for me. There are things that could be improved. I.e. When a few people do something, that impacts the whole school and that impacts everyone in the building.*
- *I don't like how we all get punished even if it wasn't something we were all related to. For example, fights broke out at PPA and they took away privileges (took away balls). It doesn't really feel like it solved the problem and it made everyone sad.*
- *I think it is special and it also could be more special. There are different things that we could do -- we could plan PPA more to make it.*
- *I feel like the IB and the community service is a special thing. If restrictions go on too long, it creates tension.*
- *They shouldn't take away sports*

- *I think this school has opportunities -- my friends at non-IB schools don't have the same opportunities that we do -- it puts us ahead of kids at other schools.*
- 4. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
- *West Charlotte - want to go into entrepreneurship - I play sports, so I want to keep up with that - I want to do internships - also interested in electrical engineering - also want to do dual enrollment*
 - *North Meck - I want to pursue a career in Sports Marketing - I'd like to run a sports team - NM has sports marketing and business marketing*
 - *Want to be an aeronautical engineer - not sure about HS*
 - *North Meck - interested in weight lifting class - after HS will go to college, get some sort of job - want to get enough money to buy assets and be able to retire early*
 - *Going to IB at North Meck - I want to be an IT professional*
 - *An arts school (North West) or go to IB high school (NM) - go to college and take over dad's business or one of my own*
 - *Big sports person - want to keep up with football -- interested in coding because I enjoy video games - architect - West Meck or something better*
- 5. What would you say is different/unique about being a student in an IB school?**
- *You really stick to an elective*
 - *Access to language*
 - *They prepare you for when you are older and when you are an adult - do things that prepare you for adulthood*
 - *When we do service and the community project, we learn about the problems in the outside world and inspires us to change the world and make a difference*
 - *It allows me to do more advanced courses -- higher level math, hs credit*
 - *Business procedure classes -- business etiquette, international business etiquette*
 - *It gives you a lot of opportunities to learn in multiple different ways*
 - *When I entered IB, I started to read the news a lot more*
 - *I started paying attention to more than just school -- be more observant*
 - *Friends who are older told him that IB prepared them for high school -- staying on top of work, etc.*
- 6. Do you feel proud of your school?**
- *If everyone would try to get along, I would*
 - *Sports wise I'm proud -- football yay!*
 - *Proud of some of the education -- I like learning math with my teacher and I am learning from the work*
 - *I'm proud of my social studies class - our teacher is very talented and knows how to get to the point - has a good balance between giving us freedom, but not walk over him - he's a teacher who makes you want to stand a bit taller*

J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School

Grade 12 – 2 students

Grade 10 – 2 students

Grade 7 – 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Agricultural class; actually, all things*
- *Sense of community*
- *School focus*
- *We know the teachers and the teachers know us*
- *Connection with teachers and students*

2. What is your least favorite thing about your school?

- *Size of the school means fewer opportunities like sports teams and events*
- *School does not always recognize inappropriate behavior*
- *Administration is a lot stricter on behavior. It sometimes makes students fear administration and 'makes students feel sneakier.'*
- *Limited sports opportunities*

3. What would you change at your school?

- *Bell schedule – 8:15 a.m. would be a good start time.*
- *Earlier school start time*
- *Wider selection of electives, i.e. different levels of agriculture, design/modeling, ceramics*
- *Expand electives in middle school including the arts.*

4. What are your plans as you transition to future grade levels?

- *All students responded with their desire to remain in the Montessori pathway.*

5. What makes this school a special place?

- *Closer community*
- *Intercessions*
- *Self pacing*
- *Hands-on materials; adaptations to student needs*
- *Teachers/students are passionate about student needs*
- *Opportunities in intercessions – ability to pursue passions*
- *Relationships with teachers*
- *Opportunities for dual enrollment at Central Piedmont Community College and the ability to earn college credits paid for by the school district.*

6. What recommendations would you like to share with CMS?

- *Provide more resources for Montessori schools so they can provide more opportunities for students.*
- *More resources for our friends with special education needs.*
- *Transportation – some of my friends could not return to this school because of transportation.*

Kennedy Middle School

NO STUDENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Lansdowne Elementary School

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Events, the learning environment is respectful, teachers are kind*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Homework, lunch food, sometimes other students are talking and interrupting the teacher*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *We want different lunch food*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *We do the bucket filler ceremony and use the IB traits to give other students positive comments and encouragement*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school? What is a theme?**
 - *I like the IB because other students do not have the IB traits*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
 - *We learn about other cultures and private schools learn about one culture*

Lincoln Heights Montessori School

Grade 6 - 3 students

Grade 5 - 2 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

Grade 3 - 2 students

Grade 2 - 3 students

Grade K - 2 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Media center*
 - *Work on what we want to*
 - *Walk around*
 - *Lot more independence*
 - *Math*
 - *Spending time with friends and teachers*
 - *Having the best science teacher in the state*
 - *Nice teachers*
 - *People who are different from me*
 - *Actual hands on lessons for the future*
 - *Kindness and welcoming feeling when you walk into school*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *The road that they never re-did*
 - *Tests*
 - *No sports fields*

- *Too big building*
- *I want more before school activities*
- *How many hours we have to stay here*
- *How far our classroom is from the start of the hallway*
- *Envision math*
- *The playground has a moat*
- *We don't get to use enough instruments in music*
- *Very busy schedules*
- *Tests and PE*
- *Too many lessons during the day*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Have less windows*
- *Get more instruments*
- *Go home whenever we want to*
- *Lunch whenever we want*
- *Twisty slide and a pool*
- *Lunch is way too late*
- *How many hours there are in school*
- *Having bigger classrooms - ours are too small and we need more space to work*
- *More shady spots outside*
- *Better computers*
- *More before school and afterschool activities*
- *Bigger classrooms and less empty space*
- *Paint a mural on the walls of the fence around the school*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Montessori*
- *Teaching me how to solve problems*
- *It goes PreK-6*
- *I can sit where I want*
- *The whole class doesn't have to do the same thing*
- *More freedom*
- *Specials and time to express ourselves*
- *3 playgrounds, except now one of them got destroyed*
- *So much space*
- *Wait till it's lunch time*
- *Free lunch*
- *Multi-grade classes*
- *Pick your own work*
- *Get to learn physically and visually*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *I feel great*
- *Good*

- *Surprised*
 - *Unique*
 - *Important*
 - *This school is set apart*
 - *Really cool - we can learn different ways*
 - *Bored*
 - *Both 5th grade students are staying for 6th grade*
 - *One 6th grader is deciding between either Sugarcreek or JT Williams*
 - *The other two 6th graders are planning to attend JT Williams*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
- *My last school didn't have a library*
 - *We learn new things*
 - *They go to private schools*
 - *It was really small*
 - *No uniforms*
 - *They (other schools) have better laptops*
 - *We get materials to work with instead of a pencil*
 - *They are PreK-5*
 - *We work on rugs*
 - *We have freedom because of M*
 - *Some schools have language classes and we don't*
 - *Other schools are grade specific*
 - *We get to choose and my friends don't*
 - *We have safety guards*
 - *On Wednesdays we recycle*
- 7. What else do you want me to know about this school?**
- *I've never met a mean person here*
 - *Everyone tries to do their best and the work plan helps us make choices*
 - *This school has different kinds of people*
 - *We have the stem room*
 - *We have jobs*
 - *We have an empty part of the school*
 - *Its peaceful*
 - *If you need extra time you can ask for it and do it in a peaceful area*
 - *We have a group called OM and we work really hard and we have won the trophy*

Long Creek Elementary School

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 4 students

Grade 3 - 1 student

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**

- *It's very diverse and we have different encore electives for middle school so we have all these different things to try out so we know what we want to do in middle school. Prepares you for the EOG. Many schools don't have Encores. The teachers are great except for a few. But one of them is not here anymore, like they just left.*
2. **What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *When you raise your hand and the teacher didn't get a chance to call on you. They call on the same people all the time.*
 - *I don't like that they teach us about healthy food in this curriculum and they teach us to eat healthy but in the cafeteria they gave us unhealthy foods like pizza and chicken.*
 - *I don't like when kids misbehave in class. It takes up too much of our learning time. They should do something about them like move them to a different part of the school. It is really distracting.*
 3. **What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *More sports, more teachers to help when we need extra help, a bigger school so we don't have to leave for middle school. More clubs.*
 4. **What makes this school a special place?**
 - *All the different cultures and languages and people come from different places. Yes I think how we choose the musical is very unique because we have students choose what they would like to see and what they think is interesting. The musical is something that's special about our school because it's also very diverse and it's different. I have something very special about the school that you really like - this school has been here for more than 100 years, founded in 1923.*
 5. **How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
 - *Most of the schools don't have creative arts but we have a lot. Most students will continue with their major in middle school.*

Mallard Creek Elementary School

Grade 5 - 5 students

Grade 4 - 3 students

Grade 3 - 3 students

1. **What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Lunch food*
 - *Enrichment Electives (fashion design, Harry Potter, science experiments, chefs)*
 - *Elective Showcase*
 - *Math*
 - *Playgrounds at recess*
 - *Competitions- i.e. Mathapalooza, Battle of the Books*
 - *Connect Classes- explore your interests*
 - *5th Grade Math Accelerated lessons-integers, volume, surface area*
 - *Trivia- questions on the news with winners*
 - *DMI- small group math lessons with projects*
2. **What is your least favorite part of your school?**

- *Lunch food*
- *Tests*
- *Some students and staff are mean*
- *5th grade math is easy*
- *Delay in schedules*
- *Literacy- detailed questions*
- *Literacy- essays, quizzes*
- *Literacy- go over the same thing multiple times (a whole quarter)*
- *Science- if one person gets in trouble, the whole class gets punished*
- *Connect- Music*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”

- *During math small group- need teacher help more*
- *Book discussions*
- *More competitions*
- *Topics in math*
- *More Connect activities*
- *Computer Lab Connect*
- *Duck Trophy- class with the most points in the grade level*

4. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to?

- *Less playgrounds*
- *Charter- less opportunities for Connect, no electives, no competitions*
- *Talk to neighborhood friends about electives and they are surprised about how fun it is here*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?

- *More opportunities than other schools*
- *LI/TD theme so you can learn more- wouldn't have electives, math acceleration*
- *Help creatively*
- *Teach subjects well*
- *TD classes are for scholars above level*
- *Honors Society- food drive, toy drive, blood drive- service projects*
- *Electives, Connect*
- *Other schools don't have opportunities based on your interests*
- *STEAM Lab- 3D printing, building*
- *Old school- she stayed in the classroom*

6. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?

[For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?

- *Piedmont- full magnet IB*
- *J.M. Alexander IB*
- *Ridge Road*

McClintock Middle School

Grade 8 - 8 students

Grade 7 - 3 students

Grade 6 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *All of the sports*
- *Ten80 Class because you learn a lot about cars. Mr. Becker is a great teacher and helps you for the future.*
- *Pep Rallies and seeing all of the different sports and afterschool activities*
- *The MALL (McClintock Innovation, Lab, and Library). It has a lot of different things you can do in it like 3D printing machines, books, sewing machines, study areas, and computers.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *More stuff to do and more opportunities. I will go to an IB school because they have a lot of opportunities like STEAM*
- *More higher classes to take*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”

- *It's just a great school*
- *Don't get much homework. Whatever you do not finish you finish at home*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *The teachers*
- *There are different types of people here from every background*
- *Good friend groups*

5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?

- *yes*
- *yes, sometimes*

6. What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?

- *East Meck because they have an automotive program. Mr. Becker changed my life and influenced me to want to pursue a career in mechanics or an engineer*
- *East Meck and I want to be a software development programmer*
- *East Meck. I plan on going to university in the medical or automotives field*
- *Go to college somewhere nearby and going into engineering automotive field*
- *College and I want to be in the military*
- *College and I want do a business or start a game*

7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to?

How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?

- *We have 3D printers, sewing machines, a cricket, poster makers, VR headsets, robots, carpentry, heat presses, vinyl, and so much other things that other schools don't really have*
- *Vinyl, asphalt navy team where we print vinyl to stick on cars*
- *WIN Time (What I Need)*
- *Sewing machines and things you have to be trained on*
- *Heat presses where we printed out Black History Month shirts*
- *Robots although we haven't really used them much. There is a coding club where they use them*

Grade 5 - 8 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

Grade 3 - 1 student

Grade 1 - 2 students

Grade K - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about MPES?

- *House system – students created names of the house, chose words to describe the house.*
- *Type of people that are here. Teachers are ready to teach us even when we don't make good choices.*
- *K-8 Habits – My favorite habit is being proactive.*
- *Specials – my favorite is science – We made a roller coaster out of plastic.*
- *House system – brings us all together, buddies, and we meet new people.*
- *House competition – Put first things first, share fun games, Leader of the Month celebrations of the month and week; Habits – my favorite is synergize.*
- *House and habits - my favorite is find your voice.*

2. What is your least favorite thing about MPES?

- *Math*
- *Specials – Lessons in specials are duplicated in class. I would rather learn something new.*
- *Bathrooms – kids are writing on the walls and leaving the bathrooms dirty.*
- *When someone is left out at recess. I go over to them to play.*
- *Bathrooms and recess when kids don't know the rules or follow them.*
- *Bathrooms writing on the walls. Feels sorry for the custodians because they work hard to keep them clean.*
- *Mastery Connect (District's assessment platform) – The results tells stories about the students' assessments and they have misspellings.*
- *Recess – Wants more time.*

3. What would you change about MPES?

- *Always have a class to attend when there are subs. We don't learn anything.*
- *Bullying*
- *Safety patrol expanded to grade 4. Right now, it's on 5th grade.*
- *Change schedule for math to be at the beginning of the day.*
- *Schedule change – End of day is the same time as when we dismiss on half days.*
- *Disrespect toward the custodians.*
- *Start earlier. Lunch time is late and I'm really hungry.*
- *Ability to bring water bottle outside.*
- *Have Starbucks decaf vanilla lattes every day when we walk into school.*

4. Will you remain at MPES or where will you go for middle school?

- *6 students will remain at MPES*
- *5th graders*
- *Randolph IB*
- *South Charlotte MS or Tellra Institute*

5. What makes MPES special?

- *Teachers that love us*

- *Teachers as friends*
- *One big family, teachers really*
- *Houses*
- *5 Houses, 8 Habits, I Myers Park Traditional School Family*
- *Friends*
- *Diversity*

North Academy of World Languages - Elementary

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 3 - 3 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Global Connects, friends, and the teachers are nice.*
- 2. What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *More opportunities for hands-on science, STEM, playground updates*
- 3. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *Teachers, the principal, opportunities*
- 4. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
 - *They like the theme and plan to continue after elementary school.*

North Academy of World Languages - Middle

Grade 8 - 2 students

Grade 7 - 2 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Diversity, amazing teachers, lots of opportunities, "Culture is not a one day thing", acceptance of all people*
- 2. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"**
 - *More middle school events, especially student-led events like the Social Justice march they just completed.*
- 3. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *It fulfills its magnet purpose, teachers are amazing, lots of opportunities to grow personally*
- 4. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *Yes*
- 5. What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
 - *2 are planning to go to West Meck to continue language studies, 2 are planning to go to Hopewell.*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**

- *There are more opportunities here, more than there might be in another school, especially a bigger school.*

North Mecklenburg High School IB/ World Languages and CTE

Grade 12 - 3 students

Grade 11 - 6 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Likes having a stable group of friends in his program, gets to see the same people in French every year.*
- *Access to cosmetology*
- *Sense of community, close-knit and tight*
- *Because it's a magnet, everyone has chosen to be here*
- *Stable teachers so you build relationships with your teachers, very supportive*
- *Teachers chose to work in the program*
- *Teachers help reach goals (get to 1200 hours for cosmetology license)*
- *Automotive - help to get a job in auto, borrowed tools from shop to help friend whose car broke down - apprenticing in machine shop*
- *Field trips are paid for - get access to lots of opportunities and never have to pay.*
- *IB tests are paid for*
- *Get a free education that other kids around the world have to pay thousands for.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school? What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"

- *More advanced levels of world language needed for students coming from language immersion schools*
- *Vertical articulation for language classes for immersion students*
- *Auto advanced studies are co-sat with Auto 2*
- *Need more world language teachers*
- *No chemistry books at the beginning of the year*
- *Standardization of Chemistry 1 classes made Chem 2 more challenging for some kids*
- *Disconnect between MYP and DP - basic questions taught in MYP Chem doesn't translate to DP Chem questions*
- *Students have some fundamental gaps due to COVID learning*
- *MYP / Honors mixed classes - honors and MYP kids might be graded differently even though they're in the same class*
- *No Japanese teacher*
- *Cosmo doesn't have the supplies needed to do acrylic nails and facials so they focus on hair*
- *A lot of the work in Cosmo is in a workbook*

3. What makes this school a special place?

- *WLA - program classes feel special. In classes with students she's known since elementary. Hasn't lost connections with middle school friends. Guaranteed to have at least one class with a long-term friend*
 - *IB - community service / CAS project - Blythe Buddies club - club members to go neighboring elementary schools and build relationships with those students through regular activities there*
 - *Magnet programs - opportunity to get cosmo license*
 - *Students chose NM because this isn't our home school, we come to North for these programs.*
 - *Surrounded by kids who are motivated and passionate about their programs*
- 4. What are the differences between MYP and honors in a mixed class? (The mixing of the classes was a concern students noted, so this was a question added for clarification.)**
- *Magnet Students who sign up for honors classes get put into MYP/Honors mixed classes*
 - *No discernible difference between two classes, graded on IB scale*
 - *Perception that IB and honors classes get different quality points*
 - *In an IB math class, IB and honors students were getting graded differently*
 - *Bio teacher left mid-year so had fill-in coverage*
 - *Honors kids don't understand the "IB scale" - "the way you answer the question, you put more thought into it so you get more points".*
 - *From an IB student perspective, does not remember a difference between the two*
- 5. Why did you choose NM?**
- *Cosmo - learned from a middle school counselor about the program. North was closest cosmo option*
 - *WLA - closest world language high school option*
 - *WLA - attended feeder middle school*
 - *IB - parents wanted a rigorous academic setting. Chose North for diversity, wanted to be surrounded by people of different ethnicities and cultures*
 - *Auto - great facility*
 - *Culinary - middle school counselor recommended*
 - *IB - middle school was K-8 language academy, wanted to continue in Chinese and take up IB*
 - *IB - went to middle IB feeder school, lives close to North Meck*
 - *WLA - lots of options at North if he didn't want to continue on with French*
 - *WLA - wanted to finish out German and get recognition at graduation. I Want to visit Germany. Home school does not offer German*
- 6. How does the school celebrate the diversity of the student body?**
- *Reading James Baldwin and a lot of works from other cultures. Would not have the opportunity to read these in other schools or states. The diversity of the student body allows the freedom to do this.*
 - *In chemistry - first day teacher recognized lots of scientists who aren't white men.*
 - *Black history door decorating contest, Hispanic history month door decorating contest*
 - *Black Student Union*
 - *Black History Month spirit week*
 - *It doesn't matter what your background is, it shouldn't define what you can do*
 - *Went to a predominantly white middle school, totally different dynamic here*
- 7. What is the dynamic between students in magnet and non-magnet programs?**
- *Students not in magnets don't know what goes on in magnets*
 - *Most students only know about IB*

- *Divide between IB and the rest of the school - IB is the biggest magnet and drives the curriculum of everyone else*
- *A lot of kids don't even know about cosmo and culinary*
- *There's no visible difference between magnet and non-magnet students. There isn't a perception of superiority for any program*
- *Clubs to mix outside programs*
- *Forensic Science*
- *Clubs for all Languages*
- *Blythe Buddies*
- *Gay-Straight Alliance*
- *Creative Writing Club*
- *Fashion Club*
- *Photography Club*
- *Athletics mixed between magnets and non-magnets*

8. What are your plans after graduation

- *CPCC dual enrollment*
- *Already working at a salon, pass state boards, get full license(Cosmo)*
- *WLA - go to college for language, specialize in French*
- *French teacher has introduced idea of going to college abroad*
- *IB - all of his teachers have spoken about value of current classes to prep for college*
- *Schools see DP on applications and know you're prepared for university*
- *Teachers care about where you go, counsel through decisions*
- *Psychology background - become a child life specialist after college*
- *Auto - finish apprenticeship at current shop, get CPCC credits*
- *Hard to get a job at a shop when you're underage. Connections with Mr. Brown got him the opportunity. Would not have gotten this job without the auto program*
- *WLA - pediatrician - will be able to work with Spanish speaking patients without a translator*

Northeast Middle School

Grade 7 - 2 students

Grade 6 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *The people, getting to know a bunch of kids, teachers are not too strict, it's relaxed, staff are kind hearted, staff help you feel wanted, teachers play music in class and that makes it so it's not boring.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

Recess is too short, the food

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"

- *I would make recess longer, nothing - everything is good here.*
- *I would make the policies fairer. Sometimes it seems like the bad kids get treated differently than the good kids.*
- *Testing is very disorganized, sometimes it takes a long time to get started.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *The teachers, friends*

5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?

- *One does and three do not.*

6. What high school are you planning to go to?

- *Independence because it is close and that's where my friends are going.*
- *Butler because that's where my mom went.*

7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to?

How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?

- *The four students in the focus group did not think their school had a special theme. 1 student had taken 2 computer science classes and might take another, 1 had taken a CS class in 6th grade, but did not have plans to take another, and 2 had not taken a CS class.*

8. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?

- *When asked what they knew about magnet schools, all four students did not know what a magnet school was other than, "something my mom signed me up for."*

Northridge Middle School

Grade 8 - 13 students

Grade 7 - 2 students

Grade 6 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Friends, teachers are nice, we get to go outside, sports (volleyball, basketball), teammates, friends, electives, people*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Teachers are overly strict, they write up kids for doing little things, bathrooms, dress code, we can't use our phones*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"

- *Dress code, phones*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Teachers - they make you feel like family, friends*

5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?

- *2 of the students do, the others do but it's online.*

6. What high school are you planning to go to?

- *The majority plan on attending Phillip O Berry - their friends go there.*
- *Two are planning to go to Rocky River - one wants to be a surgeon and the other a psychologist.*

7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to?

- *No one felt like it was different.*
- *When asked what they knew about it being a magnet school, 3 had no idea what a magnet school was, 4 mentioned it meant a "specialized" school, and 10 said a magnet school was where you got to learn computer science and technology.*

Northwest School of the Arts

Grade 12 - 4 students

Grade 11 - 1 student

Grade 9 - 1 student

Grade 8 - 3 students

Grade 7 - 1 student

1. What's your favorite part about NWSA?

- *Art program*
- *Jazz band; if you're wanting to pursue what you're here for, there's no better place to develop my skills. I get to collaborate with my peers.*

2. Going deeper: What is something about the student experience that you collaborate on?

- *Collaboration with musical theater dance, teachers allow students to grow in leadership, give opportunities for students; I really like to see collaboration in the Pro Caring Days to see; I really like opportunities that I get than if I didn't go to NWSA.*

3. What do you dislike about the school?

- *Classes have no AC; heating, climate; I don't like that teachers' help is not as good. Sometimes the teachers will only help you if you ask for it. Another problem is the sound quality in our auditorium, you can't hear anything b/c there is nothing to absorb the sound, we've attempted to get additional funding from TAG funding for curtains to hang to help. A big opportunity is the Blumey awards for the spring musical, which is a huge cool opportunity to partner with Blumenthal and do something like that, but every year, the adjudicators say they can't hear anything we say and it's really upsetting b/c it's months of work and the Band, tech, directors, and we're in rehearsals for so long and they can't hear us. Learning curve with sound/tech issues; teachers that don't know what goes into the production process. Lunch too short (20 mins)*

4. What is something you would change about NWSA?

- *Lunch before SPA (SPA = gym class). We're already starving since we start at 7:15. The*
- *The A-B day schedule feels too condensed.*
- *Art has semester courses to stay focused on certain classes. Students want more time with their art majors. They want additional funding for the school.*
- *They feel like the school is breaking down.*
- *The bathroom rules are too strict; we have to get our agenda signed.*
- *Having to get our agendas signed as a HS student.*
- *Bathroom policy should not reflect students but Admin/teachers.*
- *Bathroom room health issues; stalls that are open; lunch is 25 min and sometimes you're standing in line for the bathroom for 10 min.*

5. What makes NWSA special?

- *Collaborating with the students; I love the fact that everyone has something to bring to the table.*
- *Teachers are loose; they understand your priority with your art; musicians rather starve than miss work; all of our teachers are seasoned professionals eager to help us. They do a good job bringing in driven teachers.*
- *An inviting process for students who are hungry to join.*

6. Raise your hand if your closest friends attend this school?

- *Ten of the attendees raised their hands.*

7. MS students, what HS are you planning to attend?

- *Two of the MS students are planning to leave NWSA to attend another HS. All the others are staying.*

8. What are you planning to do after college?

- *Career; gap year; work on a cruise line; college my major will be the same in college.*

9. What makes this school different from your neighborhood school?

- *More accessible for the arts; potential for more than what is offered at my zoned school.*
- *NWSA prepares you for the industry, so if you're eager to excel in your artform, you should attend NWSA.*
- *I've heard a lot of bad things about my homeschool. I have a friend that says there's so much fighting at other schools.*
- *NWSA is calmer, more uplifting, and has fewer distractions. No other apparel classes were offered. NWSA the ONLY opportunity for an apparel major.*

10. Raise your hand if you'd say that you believe this school knows you as an individual.

- *7 hands raised with comments:*
- *I am able to get my needs met here at NWSA academically.*
- *Arts students being more interested in academics is not a reflection of the school.*
- *I have experienced a lot of teachers that seemed to care, or were never there. And I didn't pass. There are many teachers that help you.*
- *I think my academic needs are personal; I took math over the summer and It was really helpful.*

11. Raise your hand if you believe this school provides what I need personally and emotionally.

- *All hands raised.*

12. Raise your hands if the decision to attend NWSA was your choice.

- *All hands raised.*
- *Comment: Auditions to get into this school should be taken seriously.*

13. What is 1 more thing that you want me to know about NWSA?

- *For Dance, there are so many opportunities to learn , we have a state test, I get so many opportunities. Rollercoaster experience.*
- *Attending this school is like a roller coaster. My teachers should understand that music is my life period. I appreciate Mr. Hinson and Ms. Petrere, they really helped me turn around.*
- *Students are too talented for the admin to care.*
- *I really appreciate my teacher for Tech theater and has helped me meet so many people, helped me apply to school.*
- *I have been very well prepared for my future, you are able to find your tribe.*
- *I love that there is an opportunity to be supported.*

Oakhurst STEAM Academy

Grade 5 - 1 student

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Drama.*
- *PE.*
- *Collaboration with pep rallies, assemblies with the rest of the school.*
- *Learn about things and see about things. Owl pellet dissection.*
- *Field Trips-Discovery place, murder mystery, Rocket bucks, terrific kids, positive office referrals. Rocket News team.*
- *Math as a favorite subject, it exercises your brain. They were talking about their STEAM Fair projects*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Media center because I want to be on Sora or Epic.*
- *Lunchroom consequences for people throwing food. It is happening to everyone when one person.*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Drama! People fighting, arguing, bullying but understandable why they get ISS though. Hate when 2 people are doing something and the whole class gets disciplined for it. It stinks when one or two ruin it for everyone.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Because it is a STEAM school. We are working on our STEAM projects. In house field trips and assemblies.*
- *The enthusiasm that the teachers have.*
- *Creative staff. We celebrate a lot of things, it is fun and makes it not boring. A lot of parties for students, field days, end of year activities.*
- *Curriculum nights are fun, sneaker ball is fun. Teachers like to play with us during recess.*
- *Teachers care about students. They are hard on us but it is because they care about us.*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *4.5 or a 5 out of 5 for the school.*
- *Yes, I like it.*

Oaklawn Language Academy

Grade 8 - 1 student

Grade 7 - 1 student

Grade 6 - 1 student

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 3 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Getting to speak Spanish*
- *Yes, it's school, but it can be fun too—like specials and stuff*
- *Multicultural fair*
- *Kahoot*
- *Teachers answer our questions*

- *Teachers explain everything we're supposed to do; they don't just give us the work*
- *Students help each other; opportunities*
- *Teachers make us comfortable; I can speak, I can ask why*

2. What are some ways your teachers help you learn and work together with other students?

- *We get to work with other students, so we're not stuck just doing a big project*
- *They get to know us so we feel comfortable talking*
- *Relationships with teachers are really important*
- *They help us figure out what we disagree about, and we can talk it out*
- *The teacher is a referee*
- *Sometimes you agree to disagree and find a reasonable solution*
- *Throughout the year, repeat the expectations*
- *Socratic seminar- teacher lets us talk to other students; kinda like figuring out and other students can help us*
- *Sentence starters- time to prepare*
- *Assign partners because some are really shy and others speak up a lot; you can help shy people, like asking, "Do you have something to add?"*

3. How is your school helping you prepare for after elementary school or after middle school?

- *If you're on a job, you usually are going to have to have a meeting. Socratic seminars are basically like the kid version of a meeting.*
- *We still have to learn how to get along with people. Sometimes you can't just decide I don't want to work with them.*
- *Math helps you if you have a job where you have to sell things.*
- *We have a course card, and we can get credits. I'm already going to enter high school with some credits.*
- *It was beneficial when I went to El Salvador because I could talk to people.*
- *You might have to translate for someone.*
- *You can get more jobs in the future.*
- *Interactions with people*

Park Road Montessori School

Grade 6 - 6 students

Grade 5 - 4 students

Grade 4 - 2 students

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *We get to choose our own work - we have freedom*
- *We get to move at our own pace*
- *Teachers are great here, they make us learn in a great way*
- *You get to manage your own time*
- *The teachers are nice and i love the library*
- *The diversity and we get to choose what we wear*
- *We learn things here that we wouldn't learn at other schools*

- *Freedom*
 - *We get extra privileges when we do good work*
 - *You get to do stuff and you get to walk*
 - *Easy to make friends here*
 - *You can ask for extra lessons*
 - *We celebrate different cultures*
 - *Relationships between teachers and students*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
- *We don't have to sit at desks*
 - *Freedom of choice*
 - *Visual materials*
 - *Friends with your teacher*
 - *No uniforms*
 - *We don't get punishments as badly as other schools*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *Get a newer gym with A/C*
 - *We'd like a greenhouse*
 - *We have too many wasps*
 - *Buses - the bus ride comes really early and it takes 2 hours to get here and 1 hour to get home*
 - *New works*
 - *More individual grade-level field trips*
 - *Better classroom selection - I'm the only 6th grade girl*
- 4. How do you feel about attending a school with a special theme?**
- *Amazing*
 - *Great privilege*
 - *It's a regular school that does things differently*
 - *I don't think this is a regular school - we don't have to do things that others do*
 - *It has some limits and failings for how it teaches us but it's also wonderful*
 - *I think this school is better*
 - *CMS gives our school limits (I used to go to private school)*
 - *You can learn what you want to learn*
- 5. Do your best friends attend this school?**
- *Yes*
 - *I have friends here and in my neighborhood*
 - *I have friends here and at JT Williams*
- 6. What else do you want me to know?**
- *We have lots of greenery here*
 - *We get time outside*
 - *We have a large greenspace*
 - *Lots of natural wildlife around here*
 - *We have a good musical program here - and we celebrate Earth Day*
 - *Student involvement - I can work outside, we did lots of cooking last year*
 - *Art class lets us choose what we want to do*

- *We can present to the class and do student-led lessons*
- *We have regular related arts rotations*
- *We want a soccer club and more sports and equipment*
- *We have a dance that my class leads*
- *Lots of classes lead events*
- *Classes do fundraisers and we made money*
- *We fundraise for our trip*
- *Teachers rely on us a lot*
- *We have lots of morning programs and jobs so you don't have to stay in carpool*
- *We build relationships with teachers and other grade*

Paw Creek Elementary School

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 2 students

Grade 2 - 2 students

Grade 1 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *The swings*
- *Art because you can paint and color*
- *building things and Media reading books*
- *Reading- books like Peter Pan*
- *Math- equations*
- *Science- enjoyed learning about different topics*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Math- lots of testing*
- *Too much testing*
- *Whole class punishments*
- *Students being disruptive in class*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Flex Groups- feels bored in group sometimes*
- *Schedule- math first*
- *Have more activities during math*
- *More rules regarding bathroom policies with students*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Learning a lot of things*
- *Activities incorporated into different topics in lessons*
- *Help students feel safe and how to learn*
- *Different games in school*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *Students enjoy learning in a STEM school*

- *More robot work in 3rd grade*
- *More outside STEM activities*
- *Gardens and trails have been used by most students- Panther path*

Phillip O. Berry High School

Grade 12 - 3 students

Grade 11 - 2 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *The supportive environment, the pathways.*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Transportation*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”**
 - *Transportation, lack of equipment in lab classes, and more opportunities to have outside professionals (in a particular pathway) to come to the school to tell the story of “how they got where they were”.*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *The teachers and guidance counselors really care about us and set us up for success. The pathways really prepare you for life after high school.*
- 5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *Not if you live far from the school - it’s just too hard.*

Piedmont Middle School

Grade 6 - 3 students

Grade 7 - 5 students

Grade 8 - 1 student

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *The whole vibe of the school. There is a mix. We don’t focus on one thing. There is an IB letter focus per month so we don’t do them all at once. Teachers at the school strive for better learning environments. Help prep us for high school and college.*
 - *The teachers involve the profile traits in our learning. We have a lot of different (design), profile traits every month. Teachers. Teachers. The teachers are awesome.*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *When you are new it is a big school. You can get lost. People help you, but it is still big.*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points”?**
 - *I would add to the variety of classes we have. More classes to choose from. We need more things that help us in the real world. Business stuff. In depth real world stuff.*
 - *Culinary class would be great. We have variety, but could add more.*
 - *More counselors would be helpful.*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**

- *I like that piedmont opens your eyes and puts yourself in others' shoes. Learning profiles.*
 - *Makes you open minded about community.*
 - *Service aspect - 6th community service, 7th - public service announcement, 8th community project.*
 - *Diversity, we can see the world through other people's eyes*
 - *Murals with meanings on our walls.*
 - *We get to hear different opinions from all the students, because of our diversity, experiencing things differently.*
 - **TEACHERS**
 - *We have a great balance - academic, fun, clubs, athletics, we can be students and athletes.*
- 5. Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
- *Yes - meet up at urban air and mall, play on the same football team - go to a tournament together. Basketball league - played against each other. Connections from school bring us together. We get together on early release days.*
- 6. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?**
- *NFL player and entrepreneur.*
 - *Professional baseball player, doctor*
 - *Software engineer, video gamer developer*
 - *Therapist - I'm interesting hearing about people's thoughts and helping people*
 - *Zoologist - love animals*
 - *Engineer - love building things creating things*
 - *Marine biologist- love the ocean. We know more about space than the ocean*
 - *Cardiologist- a lot of people in my family have had heart problems.*
 - *NFL player*
 - *I have options. North meck - good IB program. Piedmont prepared me to go to an IB program.*
 - *Wants to continue IB- improved as a student and a person through IB at Piedmont*
 - *UNCC early college - ready for college!*
 - *CADA - or parkwood - parkwood has IB*
 - *Myers Park- sports,*
- 7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *IB learner profile traits are in this school and other schools don't have that. It is a way to connect with people*
 - *Students aren't as involved in their school as we are in our school. We have clubs and so many opportunities. We are more focused on being involved in your society.*
 - *Friend groups are mixed.... we don't have so many cliques here ...I fit in everywhere*
 - *Made a lot more friends here than at my last school.*
 - *Most schools don't have the IB thing. If you go to an IB high school you can get an IB diploma.*
 - *Piedmont gives you everything you need. If you are not doing so great you can go tutoring, they support you.*
 - *President of IB ambassadors says she wants to make a bigger impact on the community.*
 - *Community involvement with service hours makes it special and different, we get excited about making change. Everyone has an idea, if there is a problem we can solve it.*

- *Staff want to help you. So many opportunities.*
 - *Other schools have A day/B day and we don't*
 - *At Piedmont we don't have just work, we have talks and discussions hear others thoughts everyone feel heard*
 - *Teachers here are hands-on. They are helpful. We get second chances*
 - *Opportunities - clubs program etc. - Improving panthers stadium, composting*
 - *I like everything about Piedmont*
 - *We go deeper than the surface. Teachers help us think deeper than just reading a book and it feels relevant. Helps us build social skills, academic skills, to work in more rigorous environments*
 - *Piedmont prepares us for the next level. Leadership class took me out of my comfort zone and became a better communicator*
 - *Athletics here are fun. Encore. Orchestra- being able to play at school*
 - *Teachers are caring. They will always help you with your problem and will not shut you down they guided you always have someone to talk to*
 - *Accountability creativity.*
8. **[For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**
[For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?
- *East Meck - teachers are great. You feel welcome there. IB program is good there*
 - *My brother and sister went to IB schools and I want to too*
 - *Want to continue IB (most all do want to continue IB)*

Randolph Middle School

Grade 8 - 10 students

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *We're held to a higher standard. It's good and bad. Other schools don't do IB. We have more opportunities such as Math 1 and 2 and we are going to be ahead for high school.*
 - *Athletics. You can take high school level math and English and language credits. So you are ahead when you go into high school*
 - *IB program- held to a higher standard.*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *The trailers in 6th grade, the halls are really compact.*
 - *Overarching issue at a school like this, you get lost in the mix sometimes. You can get swept under the rug.*
 - *When one person is doing something, everyone is doing something. We can get blamed for one person's mistake.*
 - *Lack of teachers. SS class- no teacher for a month, gone through 4 subs. Same last year. Lack of language teachers. Had to learn online and it was terrible. We need better language teachers if it's going to be a requirement. I have to use Duolingo.*
 - *Teacher interaction piece is missing. They don't always interact in a helpful way. It feels authoritarian.*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”

- *Peer interaction.. For some teachers it's ok to collaborate and talk...but in other classes it's not ok to ask your peers questions or ask for help. Inconsistency in teacher expectations.*
- *In elementary it's ask three before you ask me. Here it's ask the teacher, but they won't answer. Talking is not ok, even when it's specific to the assignment.*
- *IB school - standard is higher. Honors classes. Teachers will say “ this is a high school class, you should be acting like high schoolers. But I'm 12. I'm not in high school. Don't hold it against us, raise us up. “*
- *IB can minimize someone who is struggling because they feel like they have to raise to a high level and that they are not allowed to struggle. Sometimes you feel like you are always struggling to keep up when the expectations are so high.*
- *Everyone is struggling in math. The teacher should know this...but I shouldn't know this. One student says she went from 5th grade math to 9th grade math...there is a learning gap. You're so focused on learning the higher stuff that you miss some basics. Sometimes I have to google to learn.*
- *When we get a bad grade, we don't stop to review and relearn it to bring the grade up. And no retests. We need more help.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *The IB program.*
- *Diversity. You don't wish you were something you aren't because there is no one who looks like you. There is always someone who looks like you and it's fun to be around others who don't look like you.*

5. Do you spend time with friends from the school outside of class?

- *You make it work.*
- *Lots of clubs and athletics*
- *Can be close friends in school and not see them outside school.*

6. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?

- *Ballentine Ridge- close to me and IB, debate team, model un, diploma program*
- *East Meck - close and IB, sports, new school, fresh new beginning, new teachers, liked the principal when he visited the school,*
- *Myers Park- Multi generation tradition, IB program partial, feel comfortable there.*
- *Independence high school -Cambridge- college readiness types of preps. I don't' want to go to East Meck. I don't want to do IB anymore.*
- *Private schools - I need teachers to be here to talk to and help me. I can't advocate for myself if I don't have a teacher. Not having a teacher and still having to take a test is not fair. I don't want to go home and teach myself.*
- *Providence - her home school, less people, teacher/student ratio, not an IB school, can compete with IB school because it is advanced. Has good ratings.*

7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?

- *It's much harder. Higher expectations. We can take math 1 and 2. We will go to high school with credits.*

8. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school? [For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?

- *IB can carry me further. One student has done IB from kindergarten and will continue all the way.*

Ranson Middle School

Grade 8 - 11 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Teachers*
- *Math*
- *Friends*
- *People*
- *Teamwork, good projects, principal, counselor, social workers, everyone is helpful. Math is the best subject. No, science is.*
- *Activities they plan for us.*
- *Curriculum night, food trucks, incentives, slushies.*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *The influence from some of the kids, distracts me and distracts my teachers.*
- *Class clowns act up and it's hard to learn.*
- *When some teachers don't take the time to teach and give you a packet.*
- *When the teachers don't listen or don't listen to kids, they just say "this is the way it is. " Not the majority, the majority are really good, they try to help us.*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your "pain points?"

- *Kids' attitudes.*
- *The image - they look at us the same and they think we all are one way but we are all the different.*
- *Everyone thinks our school is bad and they stereotype us. The perception is bad. They say Ranson is bad. We are an IB school and have high expectations, we're not bad. They just see our score.*
- *Longer time to eat.*
- *Bigger portions, better food in general.*
- *More mac and cheese.*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *The teachers, the students, the community.*
- *When you find someone who went here too there are bonds you can make.*
- *It's old and a lot of people know what it's like. Many people went here and have pride in it.*
- *Generational school. They like passing it down.*

5. Do you spend time with friends from the school outside of class?

- *Yes, we all live nearby each other and nearby the school.*

6. What middle school are you planning on going to? What high school are you planning to go to? What are your plans after you graduate?

- *West Charlotte - I want to be a part of the SGA and the IB program. I want to continue. Just did a tour.*
- *Not sure. I'm going where my grandma tells me to go. She probably will make me follow IB.*
- *West Charlotte, IB path. Everyone is cool over there . I want to play basketball.*

- *School of the Arts for the visual arts. If my audition doesn't work out I'll go to West Charlotte. I have friends and like IB.*
 - *Going to Hopewell. I don't know why. I wish I could go to West Charlotte.*
 - *West Charlotte. Lots of clubs.*
 - *West charlotte. One year, my sister is senior and then to Hopewell.*
 - *Going to Hopewell all of my siblings went there. Lots of events.*
 - *Hopewell...I'm routed there.*
 - *No idea. Moving.*
 - *Independence...would prefer to go to West Charlotte for the nursing program.*
 - *West charlotte. My siblings went to Hopwell and we didn't like it. West Charlotte is Ranson High school. I will know everyone. I want to stay in IB.*
- 7. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to?
How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *Everyone in my neighborhood goes here.*
 - *We are a neighborhoods school*
 - *I like IB.*
- 8. [For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?
[For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?**
- *See answers above.*
 - *What they want to be when they grow up...*
 - *Neuro surgeon or cardiologist*
 - *Nicu nurse*
 - *Orthopedic surgeon*
 - *Lawyer or interior designer or ultrasound tech*
 - *Paramedic or science teacher*
 - *Mechanic*
 - *Family dr*
 - *Marine Biologist*
 - *Lawyer...Dr...professional soccer player or painter...Navy*
 - *Pro basketball I do my work on the court and off the courts*
 - *Pro basketball player*
 - *SWWA player, Sports medicine*

Rea Farms STEAM Academy

Grade 8 - 4 students

Grade 7 - 1 student

Grade 6 - 2 students

Grade 5 - 1 student

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 1 student

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**

- *ES - Specials, a good break (Art)*
 - *MS - Clubs - First Logo Robotics, great experience, great way to learn coding and building*
 - *MS - STEAM pathways, course about future careers*
 - *MS - Sports, fun, go a lot of places*
 - *MS - Last week of school, we don't do anything*
 - *MS - Math program, we can challenge ourselves and sit with our friends, build a community of friends.*
 - *MS - Lunch, snacks are good*
 - *MS - Teachers are engaging and they care about you as an individual.*
 - *ES - Teachers care about improving the students' learning, explaining, reviewing, tutoring, groups, challenge, Math Olympiad*
 - *ES - Science and SS, you get to do fun stuff, Gimkit (like Kahoot, more engaging)*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
- *ES - Lunch and recess, boring, too loud,*
 - *ES - Stairs - MS 3 flights of stairs*
 - *MS - Can't use headphones without a chord*
 - *MS - Can't wear my hoodie or hat or beanie*
 - *MS - Hallway transitions, crowded*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school?**
- *Let students use elevators*
 - *Allow hoods or hats*
 - *Include HS ELA and Science choices to be challenged more*
 - *Put a wall and ES PE room and lunch room*
 - *More food, better food, let us DoorDash, more healthy choices*
 - *Add Veterinary Science as an elective*
 - *Look at what elective options other MS have, more career based*
 - *Should be able to use microwaves*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
- *Electives and pathways, more fun*
 - *Drama, Art, Clubs*
 - *K-8 school, more of a community, help with younger grades, MS is role models*
 - *Curriculum and teachers - ELA imbedded in SS,*
 - *More than what you are learning, impact outside of school*
 - *Fundraisers, playing a role in helping your community*
 - *School is clean*
 - *Teachers and Admin actually listen to students*
 - *Smaller MS, teachers and admin know students and are concerned about what happens in their lives.*
 - *Drama program is great, acting, singing, backstage, set design*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
- *Decorations throughout the school.*
 - *Diverse and accepting community, different holidays, shoutouts on the news*
 - *Students are a part of something special*

- *Very diverse student body, all are as good as each other*
 - *PBL*
 - *Modules, hands on activities, more enjoyable*
 - *Gr. 3 - Frogs, watched tadpoles*
 - *Centers*
 - *Well walk, clean water to Africa, raise money*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
- *Different curriculum and classes*
 - *Safer*
 - *Less violent*
 - *K-8, empowering*
 - *Opportunities to explore with STEAM pathways*
 - *Cohesive learning*
 - *STEAM Showcases, display projects, fun to present*
 - *Cross-Aid Buddies, older students help younger students.*
 - *Peer Buddies, MS students help ES students*
 - *Musicals, parents help with concessions and raffles, community ads in playbill*
 - *Extra field trips, pumpkin picking, laser tag,*
 - *Grade level field trips*
 - *Gr 4 - Winston Salem*
 - *Gr 5 - Charleston*
 - *Gr 6 - Space Camp*
 - *Gr 7 - DC*
 - *Gr 8 - Outer Banks*
 - *MS include College visit*

Shamrock Gardens Elementary School

Grade 4 – 2 students

Grade 5 – 8 students

1. What is your favorite thing about Shamrock?

- *House meetings*
- *Extracurricular activities*
- *Clubs every other week - musical theater club*
- *I like our connect classes and teachers because they are engaging and fun to learn with.*
- *My favorite connect is PE*
- *I really like the curriculum; it has a very diverse curriculum that prepares for things in real life. My favorite is science because we do a bunch of activities.*
- *I like the add-on activities, like chess club, Digi Bridge, basketball and cheerleading. We also have fundraisers like Booster Fun Run happening on Friday. I am on the basketball team and that's my favorite part*

- *I really like the way the people - we have 4 houses here (Engage, Enrich, Empower and Explore) so their teachers try to put that into the curriculum. In 5th grade, we are talking about AI - is it ethical to use AI?*
 - *I like our houses because our teachers make fun challenges like Shamrock Way tickets and Penny Wars. For Penny Wars, each house has a container and you put money in it and you try to raise the most money.*
 - *I love our amazing teachers and staff and how everyone is so supportive towards you no matter what.*
- 2. If you were to tell me one experience that you've had that makes you feel good - what was that?**
- *Mathapalooza in 3rd grade. It is where 20 scholars from a bunch of different schools compete with other schools in math events.*
 - *One of my favorite things is in the library before we check out books - Ms. O'brien, our media teacher, helps us do stretching and yoga exercises and helps us and then we go to the MakerSpace. One time we had a book and we had to make something that represented the book.*
 - *My favorite things are extracurricular things like SSA, 4 E's, and Battle of the Books. Sometimes the school can be not at all people's levels, and it is fun to compete with other schools. I have been on those teams and my favorite team is the 4 E's. There are 4 categories: HOE, trivia, Socratic Smackdown and STEM challenge.*
 - *My favorite thing is also the extracurricular activities, and you can extend your learning, read new books with Battle of the Books.*
 - *My favorite thing about our schools is the people inside of it. Everyone is so kind and caring. Right before tests, especially, they tell us it's fine if we don't get the best grade, that it does not change how they think of us and that helps.*
 - *My favorite is the House Meetings when everyone gets in the gym and we talk about stuff, like who is winning competitions like Penny Wars.*
- 3. What is your least favorite thing?**
- *My least favorite thing about our schools is that we do not get to play with other classes at recess.*
 - *My least favorite thing is the music in the cafeteria. Lunch is one of the times we have free time to talk to other classes. They turn on the music to tell us to stop talking.*
 - *One of my least favorite things is the uniform. Sometimes it is annoying to just be able to wear khaki pants and some people might not have access to those clothes and it would be easier if we could wear everyday clothes.*
 - *My least favorite thing is not just PE, but when things aren't supposed to be as harsh against each other - some scholars make things too competitive.*
 - *My least favorite thing is even though we have a lot of things to work on at your level, sometimes, the teachers have your work on things in the middle. So, if you finish early or work faster - some people might get done and then can be distracting.*
- 4. What would you want to change about this school?**
- *One thing I would like to change is that some people can bully others. And there is a hierarchy and people can think you are beneath them, as if you're on the basketball team.*
 - *Probably the school dress code because some people might not have access to the dress code clothes.*
 - *What I would change is probably the food - I feel like it could be a little better and the options are a little weird like the green hamburger. Ugh!*

- *If I could change one thing is that I would change my obsession with soccer. Every day we go outside and there are people playing soccer.*
 - *I would change the way clubs are run every other Friday. I want them to be every Friday. If it was every Friday and we could change our club every quarter instead of halfway through the year.*
- 5. What makes your schools a special place?**
- *The reason our school is special is because - one, we have a very nice building and probably the best teachers and I also say the extra curriculum but there are some very smart people. These teachers teach so we can understand things quickly and then we can learn at a higher level, like SSA.*
 - *What I think makes our school special is the Shamrock Way. It's a reminder of how we should act: Hard workers, be respectful, be self-disciplined, and be cooperative.*
 - *We have a lot of cool field trips. 5th grade got to go on an overnight trip to Camp Thunderbird. We did a few different activities: one was pioneer life, reading compass, nature hike, teamwork puzzles - it was fun. We are also going to the symphony in a few weeks.*
 - *One thing that makes our school different is that our teachers don't stop if someone has a disability or can't do something - they keep teaching so they can do all the same things the other kids can do.*
 - *We do fun activities we can do fun activities with the TD teachers - things like Wordly Wise, creative writing, STEM challenges. In math, we had a challenge where we had to crack the codes.*
- 6. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?**
- *The way I like going to school with a special theme - I think it would make the learning experience better.*
 - *I think having a theme - I love our school and having a theme would be cool. We are Shamrock Gardens, and we have a theme of having the gardens. We are working on our gardens and are raising money to create an outdoor classroom.*
 - *It would be good to have a theme, there is Northwest School of the Arts Middle School. They have art, singing - and drama. That would be good, and themes help you embrace your interest. You can think about that for a job or college.*
 - *Going to a school that has a theme is awesome because it makes your own school stand out against other schools. Different themes mean different things than other schools. I would like Northwest School of the Arts for painting.*
- 7. Do you want to continue the same theme when you leave Shamrock Gardens?**
- *When I go to middle school - I want to make sure my plan works out and I need to plan more and our school helps you think about your goals and how to accomplish them.*
 - *I enjoy sports and I also enjoy debating and things like that. So, I'm interested in business or being a lawyer.*
- 8. Do all the kids in your neighborhood go to this school?**
- *No - it's a magnet school.*
 - *People here don't all live in the same neighborhood. If you're a magnet kid - you can come from anywhere.*

South Academy of International Languages

Grade 7 - 3 students

Grade 6 - 1 student

Grade 5 - 3 students

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 1 student

Grade 2 - 1 student

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *They teach 6 languages*
- *It's cool that you're not always working*
- *Lots of different types of people here and experiences*
- *People support you when you need help*
- *I like the diversity of my friends here*
- *Many people from different backgrounds*
- *You get to know other cultures and languages*
- *Experience other cultures in your classroom*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Filter status on the water fountains*
- *We need a technology teacher*
- *Social Studies gives us a bunch of work and the school is too dependent on technology*
- *Sometimes I can't keep up with the work*
- *I dislike all the extra language based texts*
- *The month of testing in January*
- *I really don't like EOGs*
- *I don't like MAP tests either*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *I would change how a lot of the MS get to do sports but Elementary can't do as much I want to do baseball*
- *I want recycling bins in the cafeteria*
- *To include after school arts or dance*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Diversity of everything here*
- *All the language events*
- *Japanese here*
- *Not all schools have an elevator*
- *I like the field trips – Universal Studios, Discovery Place, Plays and musicals, Belk theater, Foreign country trips (Spain/Portugal), Orchestra*

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do any of you have plans to attend a different Middle School?

- *I really like uniforms*
- *I feel privileged*
- *This place has lots of experiences*
- *I feel really good coming here because I used to be at a Charter school and they didn't teach language well*
- *Here it's people from all over and it prepares you for the future*

- *Learning a language at a younger age is easier*
- *My parents are thinking about having me attend a different MS*
- *Some MS are going to the HS, but one is not because Audrey Kell is close to their house*
- *It depends on the type of people who will go there*
- 6. **How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
 - *They all go to the same school with people they see all the time*
 - *We're different*
 - *They don't have uniforms or other languages*
 - *This school expands my mind*
 - *My neighborhood doesn't have homework*
 - *They only speak English*
 - *This school helps me prank my friends*
 - *This school opens earlier than the others*
- 7. **[For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**
 - *Most students said yes, two were unsure*
- 8. **Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *Half of the group indicated that they spent time with school friends outside of class*
- 9. **What else do you want me to know?**
 - *Teachers are awesome*
 - *The language teachers really help you a lot*
 - *All of the teachers are really kind when you have difficulties*
 - *Teachers provide you with many tools*
 - *Japanese immersion only has 1 class per grade (get more)*
 - *It's really easy to learn here and to get to know other people*
 - *The stairs are awesome*
 - *I love going up the stairs*
 - *If you forget something the teachers are understanding*
 - *Yes it's harder because your teachers are speaking another language all day – when you miss a day you miss more*
 - *In Kindergarten it was hard but now it's easy*
 - *We do learn some things in English*
 - *In Kindergarten they teach you the words so that you can learn (mix of parent and student decisions)*
 - *My parents thought it was a good opportunity*
 - *I didn't choose this school but now I see why my Mom picked this school because I can speak fluent German*

South Mecklenburg High School

Grade 12 - 7 students

Grade 10 - 4 students

1. **What is your favorite thing about your school?**

- *“I feel like I’ve really been able to benefit from the magnet program. It’s something I’m passionate about. I’m not a magnet student. I feel like, since I was mixed in with the magnet students, compared to my friends at other high schools, I’ve had a lot more immersion...a lot more of a diverse experience. I’m in the AP Spanish Literature class, and I don’t really know any other schools where kids can take that. It’s a very specific class.”*
 - *“Coming from [BLANK of school], there was some kids who went to different schools and we all took Spanish, so we were pretty advanced, I would say, at the end of 8th grade. And those people who went to other schools had to talk to their principal to try and enter Spanish 3 or a higher level. Here, it was very easy to just get put in that class. They, like, respected what we had learned. They just made it easy for us to transition into that level.”*
 - *“I’m a native speaker, and I’m also not in the magnet program. But when I heard they had this literature program, I was like, I gotta get on it. We learn about all these things in English, but I was like, “I want to know what it’s like in Spanish.”*
 - *“Just the option to take Chinese or Japanese. I grew up in the Chinese program at [BLANK of school], and a lot of other high schools do offer Spanish, French, or maybe German—which are all great languages to learn— but I feel like I have a really unique opportunity learning a language like this.”*
 - *“The amount of students. I mean, I know it can be overwhelming, but it’s just such a good opportunity to meet people. It’s really diverse, so you get a little bit of everything.”*
 - *“Yeah, the diversity. Along with that, the language classes, like ASL.”*
- 2. What are some of the ways being at this school helps support you develop skills like collaborating with people from different backgrounds and different perspectives, and problem-solving?**
- *“I would say it kinda pushes you out of your comfort zone. I remember one*
 - *Time when she (points to other student) and I were walking together. And there’s a lot of students who don’t speak English in this school. So she kinda got put on the spot because they (some staff members) told her, ‘You speak Spanish, right?’ And she said, ‘Yeah.’ So they said, ‘Do you want to give a tour of the school in Spanish?’ I just feel like the diversity in this school helps push you out of your comfort zone, which is pretty good because that’s how I learn. It made me push myself to learn a little bit faster, a little bit better every time.”*
 - *“And I feel like it’s very reciprocal, too, because [student BLANK] definitely helps me a lot with seeing how much I want to become fluent in Spanish. Like, we went to a restaurant where I got to order in Spanish, and that sort of thing. That was a really cool experience for me.”*
 - *You just gave me two very specific examples about how your peers support you with working and learning with people from different backgrounds. What about in the classroom? What are some of the ways or structures or processes that help you with this?*
 - *“I mean, just partner work and group work in general. Sometimes we’ll do interviews with each other. Sometimes we work on things together, and it just gives you an opportunity to get to know people better.*
 - *So a big thing they do is have, like a National Honor Society Club for the languages. For me, the Spanish one, you get pretty involved in the community as well. We go to an elementary school, and we help out with these kids who only know Spanish. And, learning about their background, like some*

of the students from South Meck come from that same background. So it gives you a better idea of how to get to know your peers here, too.

3. If you had to make a one-minute video or TikTok about what makes your school unique, what would be featured in it?"

- *"For me, it would be all our staff members, like teachers, because it's just...I like to talk to teachers and staff members. So, when you go to school, sometimes it's like staff members just walking around doing their job, but this school, when you come here, and if you say, 'Good morning,' they'll be like, 'Hey! Good morning! How are you?' And it just brightens your day, 'cause sometimes I might be having a rough day and just seeing them just kinda warms my day."*
- *"Another thing with the teachers, especially the magnet school ones, like the Spanish teachers come from Spanish-speaking countries and, I think, the German, French, and Chinese come from their respective speaking countries, and they bring, like the culture and passion for the language through, like food, dancing—some of them have taught us how to dance and stuff. And they show us different songs. It just makes learning the language a lot more fun for everyone."*
- *"I completely agree with what [student BLANK] just said. Like every Spanish class I've been enrolled in here, even if you don't know anybody in that class, at the end of the semester, you're gonna know everyone. It's just like literally just the warmest community. Everyone speaks to each other and what we do is always in a group-based setting. Even if it's supposed to be individual, we just end up engaging with everyone in the classroom."*
- *"I was gonna say the same thing, especially about food. I actually got to make dumplings in my classroom this year."*
- *I like fun and delicious food, but it's also really important to like Chinese culture, and I get to experience that. Chinese New Year is like Christmas for most Americans. That's when the family gets together. That's when a lot of festivities happen. And my teacher wasn't able to go back home to China, so it really meant a lot. Like you really do feel like a family, a community. Like, we're all together making dumplings, talking about our lives, in Chinese too. Just togetherness in the class and in the program."*
- *"You can do a lot of activities. I can't even count how many times I've been across Charlotte, and other parts of North Carolina as well, just doing events, doing performances, and just sharing Japanese culture. It's really cool to just share with a lot of people who don't know what it's all about."*

4. What do you plan to do after high school, and in what ways is this South Meck preparing you for life after high school?

- *"I'm planning to continue my Japanese education. Actually, this morning I got accepted into a school in Japan. I'm planning to keep doing Japanese and I want to practice international law. My sensei has been very helpful in writing recommendation letters and giving me advice, helping me figure out visa stuff, and all that stuff."*
- *"I'll be attending Dartmouth in the fall, which is where I've wanted to go since 7th grade. I feel like South Meck prepared me really well for that because it's a very diverse school. 18% of the school is international, which is actually one of my favorite parts about it. I feel like, coming from a diverse school, I would be able to come into Dartmouth with more diverse experiences, and I plan to double major in quantitative social science and government, and I also want to minor in Spanish with hopes of also going into international law someday. But I would really like to do an immersion study*

abroad in college. Even though I'm not in the magnet, I feel like having the magnet at the school has helped me be prepared."

- *"I was planning on continuing my language and continuing learning other languages past high school. I want to become a translator and, hopefully, a governmental one. But the thing with translation is that it's all about nuances with language. And the magnet program, it offers like Civilization and Culture, which really helps with translation as well. Because one thing can mean something in one culture, and it might mean something completely different if it's translated incorrectly."*
- 5. If there were one thing you might change about South Meck, what would it be?**
- *"A greater stress on after-school activities, 'cause there's a lot of people I know that don't do anything after school. They're not involved in any clubs or sports or anything like that."*
 - *"I think a lot of our clubs are underdeveloped. Like at [BLANK of school] and [BLANK of school], they all have like so many clubs with like hundreds of students in each of them. I just feel like they're really underdeveloped."*
 - *"I think a good solution to that would be, in general, at South Meck, it's more difficult for students to find transportation to and from school, just given that some of the schools [BLANK of student] mentioned are in more developed areas. Another thing that would be beneficial is if we were able to work some of that during the school year, but I know there are requirements about the amount of instructional time. So, I don't know if that's actually useful."*
 - *"Can we get a longer lunch? Just coming downstairs, and it's already five minutes into my lunch."*

Statesville Road Elementary School

Grade 5 - 1 student

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 1 student

Grade 2 - 1 student

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *I like turbo teams, we sing the IB song every Monday, students feel connected, teachers are respectful, I like specials classes*
- 2. What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *I wish the school was late start, the school starts early*
- 3. What would you want to change about your school?**
 - *A later start time, different lunches, more time with friends*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *We get to interact with everyone, teachers make us feel safe, teachers and students relationships are fun*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
 - *Happy, proud, I am not sure about the IB theme and if I will go to another IB school*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
 - *The IB song, we have specials that have Spanish*

Tuckaseegee Elementary School

Grade 5 - 3 students

Grade 4 - 3 students

Grade 3 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *“Access to more education than I deserve”*
- *They give me the knowledge I need to be successful*
- *My favorite thing is the students*
- *Teachers are always willing to teach*
- *Staff and teachers are always willing to help especially when you need extra support*
- *I like that we have a no bullying policy*
- *I like the friends that I have at the school*
- *My favorite thing or the classes in the learning*
- *We have activities and enrichment that other schools don't have*
- *It's a great place for you to learn*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *My least favorite part is when I'm trying to learn and others are misbehaving in the classroom taking up instructional time.*
- *Math*
- *Misbehaving students*
- *Substitutes especially the really strict ones*
- *Disruptive behaviors from others that keep teachers from teaching*
- *Class clown and bullies*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *I would change the bullying*
- *I would change the uniform policy*
- *Racist students*
- *Lunch, we need more options*
- *I agree we need to expand the lunch choices*

4. What makes this school a special place?

Competing against other schools and socializing with students from other schools.

The teachers and principal provide fun learning activities

The competitions because it gives us advantages

Competitions

The science bowl it helped us learn a lot

Summer camps

Programs after school

Teachers make everything special

Work and fun

The principal, the teachers and the assistant principal I'll make it fun

Competitive

The acceptance of teachers

The principal makes it a colorful of magical place

Programs the school offers

Teachers help us in the subjects that we are bad in.

5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *I like it because it expands my education*
- *I like it, because it provides more knowledge for students who are above average*
- *I think the special theme will help people grow*

6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *I did not ask this question because there are only 36 students in the magnet program and the majority of students come from the neighborhood.*

University Park Creative Arts School

Grade 5 - 3 students

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 2 students

Grade 2 - 1 student

Grade 1 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Different activities*
- *Lots of art*
- *Musicals*
- *Teachers and principals because they love me*
- *There are parties*
- *I love that we have arts – morning announcements*
- *Teachers respect students and order*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *We have to sit*
- *Mozzarella sticks on Friday are getting old (they want variety)*
- *This is an old school (building age)*
- *People are mean to each other*
- *Unseasoned food*
- *You can't do what you wanna do*
- *More time with arts*
- *I think attendance should be better and people should participate (talking about fellow students)*

3. What would you want to change about your school?

- *I'd like to be the principal*
- *Sleep in class*
- *Better school food*

- *Bigger playground with swings*
- *Better lunches*
- *Change the amount of bullying*
- *I wish we could bring our computers home*
- 4. What makes this school a special place?**
 - *Other schools don't throw parties*
 - *We have drama (the class...)*
 - *Teachers really care about us*
 - *I know a lot of teachers*
- 5. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?**
 - *One of the 5th grade students had auditioned and been accepted to NWSA, the other 5th graders are planning to attend Piedmont MS*
- 6. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?**
 - *More arts and students can pick what they do*
 - *We have more opportunities*
 - *We can learn new things*
 - *We make new contacts with other people*
 - *We can do arts and crafts*
 - *We do not have lockers*
 - *We have a whole bunch of spirit weeks*
 - *We have field trips: Charlotte Speedway, Duke Energy*
 - *We get a lot of homework*
 - *We use art for math or music with posters*
 - *We have amazing staff*
 - *I'm the President of Student Council (student going to NWSA)*
 - *We have the best counselors and principals and Ms. McMurry*
 - *You can do things in dance and have a dance break at the end*
 - *Ms. Perez helps with Spanish speaking kids*

Walter G. Byers School

Grade 8 - 1 student

Grade 7 - 1 student

Grade 5 - 2 students

Grade 4 - 1 student

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Opportunities*
 - *HS courses*
 - *Afterschool programs*
 - *STEM, Coding and Robotics, Soccer, Bball, Track, Tutoring*
 - *PE - It's fun*

- *Different Houses - Color, pop a balloon at a ceremony*
- *"We are five houses but one family."*
- *Each house has a theme*
- *House Day*
- *Sports and challenges*
- *Math*
- *Study for EOGs*
- *HS credits, Math courses*
- *Math 1, 2; Spanish 1, 2*
- *Math 2, Spanish 1, 2 online*
- *Lack of teacher*

2. What would you want to change about your school?

- *School lunch*
- *Food not good*
- *Some Teachers are just bodies here to collect a paycheck*
- *Lack of training*
- *Lack of control of the class - afraid of the students*
- *Need more training*
- *Don't want to deal with parents*
- *Industrial Era of Values*
- *Students learn differently*
- *Lack of freedom for students*
- *Ability to learn at your own pace*
- *Classrooms should be split into levels*
- *Behavior issues - Students should be placed in an alternative setting*
- *Teachers quit causing multiple classes placed together*
- *Bullying*
- *Grade 6 should not be mixed with Grade 8 in electives*
- *Racism is very bad*
- *Need more discipline*
- *Negative energy in the building*
- *A lot of fights*
- *Lack of resources*
- *Need more pencils*
- *Teacher had to buy their own pencil sharpener and folders*
- *More creativity, opportunities for artistic expression*
- *More student inclusion*
- *More projects*
- *Lack of trust from teachers to students*
- *Homework anxiety*
- *Last year school was more organized*
- *Not a lot of communication*
- *School and bathrooms could be more clean*

- *Students should have more say in what happens*
- *Student Council hasn't met in over 2 months.*
- *Add student incentives*
- *Dances*
- *Things are different when the principal is here or not here.*
- *Silent lunch, bus dismissal*
- *MS students should not have to be escorted*
- *Punish the whole group based on a few students' actions*
- *Bus hasn't come for a week.*

West Charlotte High School

Grade 12 - 4 students

Grade 11 - 2 students

Grade 9 - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *Having the same classes as my friends*
- *School Spirit*
- *Sense of Community*
- *Relationships*
- *Sports*
- *Extracurricular Activities*

2. What is your least favorite part of your school?

- *Work is overwhelming*
- *Limited IB Elective Options*
- *Preconceived notions; Debunking the stereotypes of WC*
- *Lunch timing—not enough time*

3. What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”

- *Hallways classrooms organized by Subject area*
- *Bathroom maintenance and privacy*
- *Adding more electives*
- *Understanding other courses*
- *More course selections*

4. What makes this school a special place?

- *Rich history, historical Black high school, sticking to roots*
- *Teachers willing to help, stay after school all the time*
- *WC Alumni Association's Support*
- *The students, teachers and faculty relationships*
- *School community*

5. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to?

How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme?

- *People are proud to attend and have graduated from WC*

- *Community Presence*
- *Long lasting relationships with peers and staff after graduation*
- *Being one of the only schools to offer IB sets WC a part*
- *Being a part of a program with students you share cultural identity with*
- 6. **[For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**
[For high school students]: What do you plan to do after high school?
- *University-bound–UNC, Morehouse, Howard, etc*

Whitewater Middle School

Grade 6 - 4 students

1. **What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Teachers are sweet and nice, teachers are kind, the students are like family to me, I like the principal, they treat you like family.*
 - *CS is favorite class, social studies and , art, honors ELA*
2. **What is your least favorite part of your school?**
 - *Some kids smoke in the bathrooms, bullying.*
3. **What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”**
 - *No smoking in the bathrooms, bullying*
4. **What makes this school a special place?**

My mom works here, my sister works here, the principal keeps me out of fights
5. **Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**
 - *Yes, for the ones that live in the neighborhood. The one magnet student lives 20 minutes away, but she is in band, so she sees them in band.*
6. **How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood or town go to? How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme (ESTEM)?**
 - *I don't know what ESTEM is, I never heard of ESTEM.*
7. **[For middle school students]: Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**
 - *I'm not sure. I'm not sure what a magnet school is.*

Wilson STEM Academy

Grade 6 - 3 students

Grade 7 - 3 students

Grade 8 - 4 students

1. **What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *Teachers: teachers make learning fun, field trips, teachers are friendly, kind teachers, teachers give you a break when you need one -like if things aren't going so well, sports, things that happen at the school like the talent show, Fun Fridays and all the dancing!*
2. **What would you want to change about your school? What are your “pain points?”**
 - *dress code, lunch, the amount of work - sometimes it seems like too much*
3. **Do you spend time with friends from school outside of class?**

- *Yes for 1, the rest No.*
 - *One student had a student from the school in his neighborhood, but they didn't hang out.*
- 4. What high school are you planning to go to?**
- *Harding, but doesn't really want to because they don't like what is offered there*
 - *One is looking for foreign language options*
 - *One plans on going to boarding school in Virginia or to early college.*
- 5. Do you plan on continuing at a magnet school for high school?**
- *Only 2 of the students knew what a magnet school was, one was an 8th grader, the other a 7th grader.*

Winget Park Elementary School

Grade 5 - 2 students

Grade 4 - 1 student

Grade 3 - 2 students

Grade 2 - 2 students

Grade 1 - 2 students

Grade K - 2 students

1. What is your favorite thing about your school?

- *We get to learn but it's also fun and even though we are challenged, it's fun and the challenges are fun*
- *I like the teachers, they are always willing to teach*
- *Fun activities to do while we learn*
- *Enrichment because we can make fun art stuff and make stuff*
- *With this school we usually get to learn first and then get to do fun stuff*
- *I like math because I like to get to learn times and multiplication and learn new stuff about math*
- *I like math because teachers teach decimals and fractions*
- *I like all the kind and fun teachers here*
- *I like the different students from different backgrounds. It is a very diverse community. I like how the teachers explain core concepts that you do not understand. I also like the TD (talent development- talented and gifted) program*

2. What would you want to change about your school?

- *Nothing much to improve except the technology. With teaching us STEM, we do not really learn much. In Middle School, if we have Computer Science, we have to start from scratch there*
- *The uniforms*
- *Nothing*
- *Uniforms and the apps because maybe there are some apps in the future that we might not need*
- *The whole school change it into a big bouncy house and then a music park if people get bored*
- *I wouldn't change anything, it's good the way it is*
- *Have at least one class in every grade that teaches people from different countries how to speak English, or people that speak English to talk to some of their friends*

3. What makes this school a special place?

- *Tons of different kids and teachers with different backgrounds which I think is cool because you can learn about the differences that people have*
- *If you want to be a musician, there's music, if you want to be a scientist there's STEM, if a coach, there's PE. In Makerspace, you can build things like a blueprint*
- *Because you get to spend time with your friends and learn more about them*
- *you can learn new things and it also helps you with stuff that you want to learn*
- *All the teachers and your classmates because you get to learn new languages from classmates.*
- *Learning about all the different people and where they came from*
- *We have a lot of different fields like makerspace, art, math, and STEM which helps us for college and our careers*

4. How do you feel about going to a school that has a special theme? Do you like the theme? Do you want to continue to study this same theme after elementary school?

- *I like our theme. I think it's cool that we have different areas of the day that we learn very different things and that all helps us with the next day*
- *I like going to school with a special theme because then you get to learn new stuff than if you went to another school that did not have the theme*
- *every day you never know what you're gonna learn*
- *I like my theme because you can make really cool stuff like a car*
- *every letter in STEM has a meaning and I like the meanings because it belongs to each of our classes or an enrichment class*
- *It has math in it*
- *We learn new things to show off on STEM nights to our families*
- *I like the STEM program and I love what we learn through it*
- *I like the STEM program because I've been to a non-stem program and we never learn as much stuff as we learn. We didn't have a gifted program and we didn't have as many special area subjects.*

5. How is this school different from schools that other kids in your neighborhood go to?

- *More stuff than other schools, we learn ahead of other schools*
- *Our school is different because we don't switch classes, and we don't have as much homework. {The school has a no homework policy, students only have to read at night.}*
- *They didn't have a STEM activity or a lot of other stuff that we do here*
- *On your birthday you have fun and they give you stuff on your birthday. and you get to bring stuff on your birthday that everyone can have and you can share*
- *More space and it's bigger than small schools and sometimes you can have other people in your family or your siblings here with you*
- *At my old school we didn't do as much stuff and we do more challenging work so it's not as easy for you to do.*
- *At my old school sometimes they would teach you things but they didn't explain in ways that lower level kids could understand, when we didn't do as well on the test then they would go back and teach you stuff. But I like this school because they can pull you into groups if you are lower level and teach you in a way that you can understand.*

School Parent/Community Focus Group Notes

Albemarle Road Middle School

Parents - 3

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Opportunities provided for the students. IB for all, every student gets an IB experience.*
- *Global focus and service learning opportunities. Middle schoolers typically self-centered, this Programme opens them up.*
- *IB for all- the Learner Profiles embedded and opportunities to hear the language.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *Diversity that exists. Love that my daughter has this experience with various cultures, I did not have that type of experience growing up.*
- *Agreed. Lots of opportunities- She Built This City, field trips, extensions that scholars have, Title I programs and commitments to enrich the student experience.*
- *Parent involvement opportunities. When parents do come in, surveys are given to see what they want to see. Live feedback.*
- *Table always at events for parents to provide feedback.*
- *We are teacher parents and on the Parent Involvement Committee, ask parents what they want to see. I enjoy the events and get to see the events too.*
- *Staff and parents do get to advocate for the parents to get involved- accessibility, different languages, socio-economic status. A lot of work to see parents involved. Our school improvement team has done a lot to advocate for parent involvement- time of scheduling events, planning to accommodate parent needs. When we do not have involvement it might not have been good timing, but the school does a lot to bridge that. We are responsive- moving to later in the evening and moving back to earlier in the day. They see "School Improvement Team," that's the teachers or that's the school.. Truthfully, parents may need a break during MYP/middle school. You are involved as you want to be- had parents involved at various levels on the spectrum.*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *A lot of kids that are good fits for the IB Programme...missed opportunities. To encourage them to go on to the high school DP/CP. More recruitment should be done at the schoolhouse level.*
- *Supports the continuation of the Programme. Those who are here, yet they do not have the status. Explain to kids what the IB Programme is.*
- *We tend to at our school miss the opportunity to push our students, those not in the IB Programme. We give them the Programme through our schools. The District needs to be aware of the courses that students take, certain courses.*
- *Teacher shortage- disservice to students who must take Spanish, no other option in another language of learning. For example I teach Spanish, Exploratory Spanish, but we need French back, Heritage Course option.*

- *For diversity purposes. We used to have French here. Covid has taught us so many things. We could do virtual at some level, especially for IB. We used to have Chinese. We have immersion schools within the District, a basic level of instruction at various schools within the District.*
- *As parents we need to advocate more for the District to supply these classes for our students. Parent Cadre for whom a heritage class might be useful, parents may not know how to advocate for/process for getting those classes. Staffing resources.*
- *As a parent, our District is very focused on testing and foreign language is not a priority. We need a more rounded approach, it's a detriment when kids do not have these programs.*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *Transportation changes—It's been so long, but it didn't seem so complicated. Sometimes with the Zones. Transportation issues for high schoolers, it was a hot mess at the beginning of the year with magnet schools. Stops/pick up locations are an issue, with where the buses stopped. A friend of my daughter could not make the express stop work. It's sad, students had to drop the programme. Two miles or more, get a ride to your home school, and get a ride to a particular school.*
- *A lot of the satellite stops are picking up/dropping off at the same time. Some thought that because I was a teacher, people thought that I had a way in.*
- *Socio-economic status impacts- it impacts these students. Not equitable or fair with certain students. I was emailing the school board, called transportation.*
- *Every district is having issues. They made quick decisions. A lot of parents are unaware of transportation changes.*

5. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *E-letter sent every month by the IB Coordinator. IB Board updated by the IB Coordinator, located in the Mall, main area. Marquee has information. There are lots of ways parents are given information.*
- *CMS uses ParentSquare, contacting teachers. District wide. Like texting, it's easy. Parents are responsive. 24 hour response does not seem applicable to all teachers, District expectation, Dr. Hill.*
- *Do not know if it's possible right now, but to have translations. It would be good if parents can get a message directly from ParentsSquare. Rather than using Google translate- teacher found out that the messages do translate, she has been doing extra work*
- *One recommendation is to keep ParentSquare, within the District we often change platforms. Especially during the middle school years, it takes time for middle school scholars to get used to the system. There are benefits to parents connecting, but avoiding gossip/negative things.*
- *We did offer the PTA. Open Mic should be offered for the parents. Parents might actually come to an event to provide their concerns, guidelines should be established to allow them to voice their concerns.*
- *Our principal is very responsive and I think she would be open to hear the parents' complaints. There has to be a way to do it. By grade level, certain needs, giving them a sounding board.*

Billingsville-Cotswold Elementary School

Parents - 8

1. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *The magnet theme IB educates the whole child it is a holistic approach to education*
- 2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *The central district office should market and recruit the IB program for all district IB schools to remove the work from the schools so the school can strengthen educating students, the school needs financial resources to provide IB certified teacher training at this time the PTA funds a large majority of IB teacher trainings, not all IB schools in the district can afford the cost so creates inequities among schools*
- 3. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *The more the teachers work to educate our children the more we work to match the school with parent resources events and fundraising*
- 4. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Really nothing at this time, the leadership has been tremendous during the school merge and families were informed about the process, just more district support for the school, perhaps the school should market to the preschools in the area*

Blythe Elementary School

Parents - 6

- 1. What is your favorite thing about your school?**
 - *What it stands for. Bring children here to be well rounded and good citizens*
 - *Diversity, programs that showcase diversity, programs that get kids involved and include the community.*
 - *Diversity. They teach children about and celebrate all cultures we have here at the school.*
 - *The program and the kids learn*
 - *The feeling of community. The atmosphere of the students.*
 - *Opportunities for second language. Daughter enjoys the Spanish lab and enjoys being exposed to other cultures and other races as opposed to home school, not just one type of person.*
- 2. What is unique about this school?**
 - *Each week/month we focus on the theme or celebration whether it's Women's History Month or Black History Month.*
 - *The focus is on the child from an academic and social/emotional standpoint.*
 - *They give different strategies to solve problems and flexibility in ways to learn.*
 - *The student art and work are displayed around the school throughout the year and bulletin boards are showcased throughout the building.*
 - *IB learning beyond the regular school curriculum*
 - *IB more rigorous.*
- 3. How does the school get families actively involved in the IB program?**
 - *Family came to in IB presentation and took the tour and liked the program. Thought it would fit my children's needs.*
 - *The learner profile can be useful even at home when parenting and referencing it to the kids in discussions about their behavior – thinking, caring.*

- *IB more rigorous*
 - *Would like for children to transition to Piedmont IB.*
- 4. How do you view community partnerships with the school?**
- *They tie events into what they are learning here such as the Duke Energy Science Night.*
 - *The school over communicates at times. They send fliers with the kids, Parent Square, phone calls on Sunday nights, emails*
 - *The school actively engages the parents.*
- 5. How are involved is the PTA?**
- *There are PTA activities every month or so with communication to parents for volunteer opportunities.*
 - *There is difficulty getting parent involvement. Looking for people to head up committees. Some parents are reluctant to head up committees because of the perceived time commitment.*
- 6. Are the any concerns with the IB program?**
- *Consistent communication between grade levels. There can be a difference between how often grade levels communicate with parents.*
 - *Transportation – The magnet bus pick up times are too early and there are long rides sometimes two hours for some students. I transport my child.*
- 7. What would you want to change about the school?**
- *Teacher turnover in grades 3-5 is concerning. Hoping children are challenged academically at these grade levels.*

Bruns Avenue Elementary School

Parents - 2

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
- *Feels like a family, feels like home, teachers take the time to connect with the kids, “quarantine kids are different.” Husband became a teacher at this school because of the way the families feel about the school Afterschool GET program- Parent Advisory Board- Mental Health Awareness for families*
 - *They want to get the parents to buy in*
 - *Likes interaction with administration; the atmosphere and environment; likes the small environment;*
 - *Visibility of admin*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
- *The family centered environment*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *Want to continue the family feel; maintain the small feel*
 - *Everyone should be given the opportunity for assignment; particularly those students/families not exposed to the magnet program*
 - *Provide Transportation*
 - *Communicate in a timely manner*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *District sends email about applying- CMS Choice lottery*
 - *Lottery is confusing, and wasn't our first choice.*

- *Once we applied, we did not get back any official results. The only way she knew she got in was because her husband is a teacher at the school. When we went to back-to-school, the student's name was not on the roster.*
- *School Assignment*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Class Dojo*
 - *Thursday folders (class dojo is the main folder)*
- 6. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at the school?**
 - *Class Dojo- used as a means to communicate to set up a conference*

Chantilly Montessori School

Parents - 13

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Community*
 - *Peaceful relationships with peers (able to navigate conflicts)*
 - *My kids love learning and they love coming to school*
 - *Leadership opportunities*
 - *My kids love that we can come and visit*
 - *The independent growth*
 - *Confidence – each child's potential is tapped into*
 - *They get the time they need to grow*
 - *We're trying to imitate school behavior at home*
 - *My kids have peace talks with their siblings*
 - *My kids are quirky and I made suggestions – the school listened*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *Individualized instruction that builds authentic character*
 - *Educates the whole child*
 - *Practical skills are a part of the curriculum (they've been knitting)*
 - *Cutting vegetables*
 - *Flower arrangements*
 - *Cursive writing*
 - *Teachers asking parents with skills to come in and teach*
 - *Longer projects – make big impacts on kids*
 - *Talk a lot about research (my child had a research playdate with a classmate)*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *More science and STEM projects earlier and in upper elementary*
 - *Foreign language offerings*
 - *Other CMS schools have privately funded foreign language programs*
 - *Sports*
 - *Pros and cons to having the same teacher multiple years*

- *Give parents the ability to communicate to admin when a child needs something that another staffer can provide*
- *I'd like CMS to have less influence over what this school does*
- *mandated testing in 5th grade that doesn't align with Montessori scope and sequence – hurt children's confidence*
- *Montessori programs used to be able to opt out*
- *This school doesn't reflect the diversity of this district*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *There is a problem about getting lottery info to families of color (they give up because they think it's too hard)*
 - *It's super confusing*
 - *Not enough seats*
 - *Why wasn't another new Montessori school built instead of just relocating a current one?*
 - *Parents don't understand Montessori so they aren't sure if they should apply*
 - *It shouldn't be this hard*
 - *Number of schools and choices is overwhelming*
 - *I had to get coaching from friends on how to navigate the process*
 - *You have to know to apply way in advance*
 - *You must enroll in your home school and know what your home-school is*
 - *You've got to get on the CMS magnet email list*
 - *I found it hard. Period.*
 - *The process is daunting for families who don't have lots of time or background information*
- 5. Who is this school for? If families are gaming the system to just get in here, then what is the point for this school if families of color can't get in**
 - *Only one magnet fair (when this was brought up a parent said they didn't know there was a magnet fair)*
 - *Can we have a virtual magnet fair?*
 - *CMS could partner with libraries to promote schools*
- 6. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *We're invited to the classroom every week*
 - *I've never had an idea and been told no*
 - *Transparent Classroom module is great for parents, especially those who can't get here easily (was helpful during COVID)*
 - *Montessori Mornings for parents (class for parents + childcare)*
 - *They provide childcare for events*
 - *Teachers have been blessings to our kids*
 - *Never felt like staff are checked out*
 - *Staff are invested in Montessori theme – I feel like they are supported by the admin team*
- 7. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Transparent Classroom*
- 8. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Career Day*

- *It's built into the work that they do (they learn that careers exist because of what they learn)*
 - *Skills building (goals and reflection)*
- 9. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
- *The school uses parents and community as stakeholders*
 - *Many parents are small business owners and they are involved*
- 10. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
- *Things only happen on Thursdays*
 - *Harder for working parents to be engaged and they feel left out*
 - *CMS has a policy that only 1 phone number can be on the call-out list (also please text me – don't call me)*
 - *More timely information from teachers*
 - *Montessori language and state standard language aren't the same*
- 11. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *Sibling guarantee*
 - *Multi-age classes*
 - *We have three active kids and the desks wouldn't work (independence)*
 - *We applied for PreK because we knew we'd be more likely to get in*
 - *More hands on and real life applications*
 - *We thought about Spanish Immersion, First Ward, Park Ward, Highland Mill, Homeschool, Waldorf*
- 12. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *Don't change the name*
 - *Montessori needs to be more broadly shared and more conversation in general*
 - *90% of Charlotte doesn't know what Montessori is*
 - *Does the CMS board know what Montessori is?*
 - *Lots of history behind the school's name –*
 - *CMS knows how to communicate magnet to communities of color, why don't they do it with Montessori? Language barriers for Spanish speaking communities*
 - *The STEAM and STEM schools get major pushes – why not Montessori?*
 - *This is one of the few Montessori programs in the country that is public*
- 13. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *When I ask questions or have concerns, I'm taken seriously*
 - *Parents should be involved in name change*
 - *Parents on the SIP team*
 - *State protocols for meetings are really tricky*
 - *I got to sit down with my child's teacher and decide how they were going to teach math*
 - *We've been able to provide supports for teachers*

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *I like that the academics are catered to the differentiated needs of students*
- *Extracurricular activities, such as chess science, Olympiad*
- *The feeling of community and family from the teachers, parents and principal.*
- *The students are well prepared for middle school and high school, my son will be going to college for engineering in the fall and I feel like Parker Academy is the reason he is as far as he is today.*
- *The staff is nurturing and caring and a sense of family*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *Differentiated instruction for high-performing students*
- *Extracurricular activities*
- *Feeling a family and belonging*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *More hands on science opportunities*
- *More application opportunities that are consistent across grade levels*
- *Buses need to be available to all students no matter where you live. The school is one of the only schools that offers this magnet theme near me and I have to drive my children every day from far away.*
- *Additional LITD programs, especially at the middle school level because the IB program is not as rigorous at the middle school level.*
- *Robotics club*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *Hidden*
- *Lack of transparency from the magnet office*
- *If it were not for word-of-mouth, I would not know about Parker Academy*
- *If you're new to the area and you don't have a friend who knows about the magnet programs, you wouldn't find out.*
- *Lottery system*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *Extracurriculars parents are invited to participate and host, extracurricular activities*
- *Community events such as fall fest events*
- *Electives, parents are invited to participate and host, extracurricular*

6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?

- *Classroom projects*
- *Competitions*
- *Student work is shared with parents*

7. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?.

- *We love ParentSquare*
- *There are some teachers that do not use ParentSquare and send emails instead. This is confusing. It would be better if everyone used the same method of communication*

- *The principal does an excellent job of communicating with parents. We all look forward to her Sunday night. We all expect it.*
 - *Communication from Parker is wonderful when you get to the middle school you do not have the same level of communication*
 - *I wish the district communicated with parents as well as the school does*
- 8. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *Lack of challenge for my child in the neighborhood schools*
 - *My child finally found a place he belongs*
 - *I found out about PAC and a chess competition and decided to check out the school. I'm not sure if you know but we have a Greek chess team who have gone to several competitions.*
 - *I came to the open house and spoke to some of the students and once I saw a kindergarten classroom, I knew my child had to go there.*
- 9. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *The district does not do a great job of promoting the magnet programs.*
 - *The program name, LITD, is confusing to parents and they feel it is something they would not like. Just call it gifted or stop using TD and say talent development.*
 - *Better promotion of the schools in the programs that are offered in CMS.*
 - *The only way you know about magnet programs is if you have a friend or meet someone who tells you about the programs.*
- 10. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *We have a well-established PTA that is very active in the school*
 - *Parents are part of the school improvement team and are part of decision-making.*

Charlotte East Language Academy

Parents - 6

- 1. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *The teachers speak Spanish, they make the families welcome*
 - *Builds Spanish language as well as English, preserves the native language*
 - *Understand and encourage the importance of early language acquisition*
 - *Lived in Latin America, believe speaking two languages is a way to build bridges*
 - *Good location and invaluable opportunity to learn 2 languages*
 - *Wanted the diversity this school provides, wanted students to learn 2 languages early*
 - *Children can learn a lot of Spanish language so they can keep relationships with family members*
- 2. That's what brought you here. What keeps you here?**
- *The teachers, we are familiar, like family*
 - *Teachers give good advice and support the families*
 - *Teachers are invested in the kids they teach*
 - *Friendly environment with all staff members*
 - *Kindergarten to 8th grade opportunity, consistency*

- *Every teacher and family working together*
 - *Immersion works and kids are thriving*
 - *Environment welcoming and student wide acceptance*
 - *Encouraging to student; have faith that student will succeed*
- 3. How does the school engage you in ways that support student learning and the theme of the school?**
- *Communication between teachers and parents*
 - *Activities to come to and be involved in preparing materials*
 - *PTA reaches out to families*
 - *I feel a change when moving to 6th grade, encouraging student independence*
 - *Initially timid about supporting and have since found that I can help more because I speak Spanish*
 - *Last year, I was brave and helped out more which has positively impacted my children*
 - *Encourage communication and openness with my kids and the happenings in school*
 - *Make parents comfortable reaching out to support academics, like reading books to the class*
- 4. How does the school communicate between teachers and families?**
- *Teachers send videos and pictures of what children are learning through Parent Square*
 - *ParentSquare*
 - *Send messages about topics learned/working on*
- 5. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *School gives opportunities to voice opinions*
 - *Parent survey*
 - *By joining the PTA*
 - *School Improvement Team*
- 6. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *Wish it was open to everyone*
 - *Build another school close to here to provide opportunity to more.*
 - *It is a good system as it is open to everyone.*
 - *Process isn't easy for parents to access if they don't have the resources or know how, other parents have helped others to apply*
 - *Very confusing, and I'm an educated person*
- 7. What would you change/improve about the school?**
- *Parents would like to learn Spanish to help support their children; a teacher here previously taught a class; bringing it back would be welcome.*
 - *Offer tutoring in Spanish as well as English.*
 - *Spanish enrichment*
 - *Enrichment or social for families; intercambio (exchange)*
 - *Summer camp English/Spanish*
 - *Create Spanish summer camp*
 - *District should provide summer camps in both English and Spanish; parents could be willing to support or volunteer.*
 - *District level needs support in staffing with international teachers...multiple teachers leaving after 5 years was a blow to school.*

Charlotte Mecklenburg Virtual School

Parents - 11

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *I like the flexibility and the individualized learning that is different from traditional.*
- *Class size and the opportunity for the teachers to have breakout rooms, small grouping. In CMS school class sizes are huge. Middle schools are overcrowded and have 30-40 kids in a class. The teachers get to know the students in the small classes.*
- *Teachers keep the students engaged. My son is in EC and his teachers are amazing, dynamic. They bring their A game. Each student is given a chance to speak. I used to have to sit by his side, but now his teachers have him engaged.*
- *Online is what's best for my student.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *The students seem to have a better relationship with their students. Teachers have office hours at all different times. The teachers are like friends to their students. They seem to have a better relationship with their students.*
- *We are grateful for the virtual high school. My student never wanted to go to school. The transition after the pandemic was difficult and the virtual school has made this possible.*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Would like to see more communication between the parent and the school. I'm not sure of her graduation requirements. We get a lot of mail, but it doesn't always make sense to me. Much of the mail is irrelevant and not getting the relevant stuff specific to my student.*
- *Would be great to have an option for the kids to get together, maybe at the school or in the community. The social aspect with friends is missing outside of the classroom time, on the weekend would be good, when parents could drive them. Would be nice for parents to meet and engage too.*
- *We need the chat to be open on Teams!! Why can't they chat while in class?*
- *They need to have times when the kids can talk to each other about their work and times when they can make friends with those in their classes. Maybe some mix it up when they come for testing for students to make friends.*
- *Would like to see them be able to chat with each other during class. They need to be able to build relationships in class. The chat is off in Teams and they need to be able to converse with each other.*
- *We have both a middle school and high schooler, it would be great if the communication was for the whole virtual instead of having one for middle and one for high. I'd like to see it all in one place.*
- *Maybe we could get tickets to a game (Hornets game, etc.) where we all go together. We could have specific group emails for specific areas for meet ups. Provide ways for them to volunteer together.*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *It's easy to apply and get in.*
- *We were transferring within CMS from another middle school. The transfer paperwork was easy. Response was quick.*
- *We switched from Union county to the virtual school. When we went to our home school to ask questions they were intimidating and discouraging the virtual school.*

5. **How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *In-person events come up for parents to come in and find out about benchmark scores.*
 - *In-person orientation at the beginning of the year. Each year the events get more as we come away from the pandemic. I like not feeling pressured to come to the school, it's optional and I like that. I am an hour away from the school so it would be difficult to come in.*
 - *I feel like the school is always trying to get better and better every day with changes.*
6. **How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Look at Canvas to see work. Parents can follow their course on canvas as an observer.*
 - *A sharepoint would be great where we could have our username and password to look at that stuff.*
 - *Look at Powerschool for grades.*
7. **What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Not aware of career related opportunities.*
 - *I think the students are being made to work on their own and be more responsible for their work in this magnet and that prepares them for college and careers.*
 - *The autonomy and self-accountability aligns to the preparation for college and careers.*
8. **How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *They made a call at the beginning of the year for any parents who want to be on the SIT.*
 - *The student advocate is on the call and offers suggestions to be sent to her, shares her email.*
9. **How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Yes, they are approachable.*
 - *The teachers are sometimes delayed in grading which causes the students to look like they are failing because grades weren't in. We get a reminder that she is in danger of failing and it causes unnecessary chaos.*
 - *I've experienced a lot more communication with the NCVPS teachers than with the CMS virtual teachers.*
 - *I feel like there was too much communication. So many messages.*
 - *I appreciate the teacher's communication with me. They seem to care about my kids and their success.*
 - *I have reached out to the teacher Wednesday and still haven't gotten a response now on Friday about looking at their benchmarks.*
 - *The test dates keep changing and it is confusing. I like to plan ahead.*
10. **Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Covid was the driving factor for us. The first couple of months was bumpy, but the patience paid off and now it is going well. Both of my kids were showing growth, teachers were showing great efforts with the kids, and we decided to stay. We like that there are not as many interruptions to learning (assemblies, behavior disruptions, special programs) , they get more one-on-one learning and get all of their questions answered.*
 - *There are more opportunities at this school than at our home school. The smaller classes and better relationship with the teacher. Our friends in traditional school don't have the opportunity for the classes that we have access to.*

- *This fits their work style. They are autonomous. They get a lot more done this way.*
- *My son is so happy and he looks forward to logging in each day. I see the joy in his face. He's more positive in this environment. His teachers are amazing. This has made a huge difference.*
- *In virtual my daughter could graduate a year early.*

11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?

- *We need to change our mindset within education that everything is possible until proven otherwise. Departing from "this is how things have always been done" is necessary. We shouldn't approach things this way. I'm happy with our experience here because we have the sense of the possible here, this needs to happen within the district as a whole. We need to embrace the impossible and have a mindset and we can do it.*

12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?

- *I am on the school improvement team. We have monthly meetings. Anyone can be on this committee, they do an all call for parents at the beginning of the year.*
- *There are opportunities for parents to give their voice. When we have requests or problems we feel heard and they are addressed.*

Collinswood Language Academy

Parents - 7

1. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *Personal reasons - dad is Colombian and mom is American, wanted daughter to speak Spanish to communicate with family.*
- *Both parents speak Spanish - want to maintain it and preserve it.*
- *From New York, thinking ways to manufacture experiences for their children*
- *Wanted to provide children an opportunity to be in a diverse environment.*

2. What makes you stay?

- *The teachers and the sense of community.*
- *Communication from teachers and staff.*
- *Support from all staff.*
- *People know us, they know my child and my family.*
- *Hearing my son speak Spanish without an accent, getting a private school experience and an appreciation for differences (accents, nationalities).*
- *Class sizes.*
- *Seventh grader- diverse friends, more positive than negatives.*
- *Buy-In from administration to parents, people choose Collinswood; the community of a neighborhood school, and the level of education she is getting.*
- *We have doctors and college professors teaching our kids*

3. How does the school engage you in ways that support student learning and the theme of the school?

- *Teachers send positive messages to communicate students' success.*

- *When something comes up (or something is wrong), communication is usually immediate and proactive.*
- *Administrators recognize and praise*
- *There is no excuse not to know what students are learning (school sends weekly parent newsletters, and active communication).*
- *International Teachers - lack of consistency among certain teachers, different levels of rigor, evaluation, and discipline.*
- *Training on Cultural Competence for International teachers.*
- *Technology use is an expectation for all teachers.*
- 4. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *At the school level, parents feel there are different people they can reach out to.*
- 5. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *District Level - bureaucracy, not feeling heard. A lot of red tape.*
- *Very little marketing about Magnet Programs, information about Magnet programs is on the CMS website but you have to know where to look.*
- *How do you help people that are not as proactive?*
- *Need more promoting of magnet programs*
- 6. What might you change/improve about the school?**
- *More opportunities to volunteer (strong rubric to volunteer)*
- *More projects and poster boards.*
- *More communication/explicit explanation on how to measure your child's progress. Understanding of their progress report. More information on child's progress.*
- *More than one conference a year.*
- *Conferences with both teachers (50/50).*
- *Curriculum Night - move to an earlier time in the year.*
- *More resources to know how to help your child.*
- *PTA - not hybrid anymore, only in person*
- *District Level - needs to provide resources in the Target Language; change office times for district transportation office—they close before buses are done dropping off students*
- *Lack of diversity within my son's classroom (ensure that students have a friend that looks like them in their class).*

Coulwood STEM Academy

Parents - 1

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Offerings with the curriculum*
 - *After-school program with girls, STEM programs and the field trips.*
 - *This school looks at the whole child, we meet the student wherever they are*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**

- *The people make the process more easy. They care about the child, not just the curriculum.*
- *The support, if I need something I get the support and guidance I need*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *Continuous exposure. Students get a lot of classes, so making sure they get involved and let them know what's in high school*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *It was pretty straightforward. We saw the school before we applied and the process was explained to us*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
- *Parents can participate in the school leadership team. There is an open door policy to come anytime. The school doesn't have any secrets*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
- *With the orchestra plays and performances*
- 7. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
- *Parent Square will send out emails to notify or talk about specific needs. It sends us announcements. We can get it on the phone or computer*
- 8. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *The school tour sold us*
- 9. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *They ask for parent feedback and suggestions. They are willing to talk to you and listen. We have accessibility*

Crestdale Middle School

Parents - 3

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Diversity, and students can choose what they are interested in. The staff is fantastic, with the exception of one or two teachers. One parent stated "My son loves orchestra, it is what gets him through middle school. The teachers have been able to help navigate the teen years." I appreciate how the arts and the sciences connect. They encourage the fine arts. They push the Major/minor for the arts. Students are learning something new and exciting. Students really like Crestdale but they don't like the lunchroom.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *Arts curriculum. The teachers go the extra mile for the students.*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *Need teachers, transportation is an issue, teachers need mental health days. Improve the pay of teachers at the magnet school because we need to retain the great teachers. They get pulled in a number of different directions and now they are stretching them thin and so the expectation is that they won't stay for a long time. Encourage teachers to take a Mental health day. Give them a bonus*

to show how much they are appreciated. About 6 years ago there was a mass exodus from the school. Teacher retention is not great.

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *Lottery system. Went online to apply, this was the first choice school. Not a hard process. I came to tour the school first. I went to a few schools to tour and this was the one I chose.*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *Science Olympiad, Booster, Ms. Keeifer the art teacher is awesome. Art on display at the business. Invitations to everything.*

6. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?

- *Brakeman's coffee shop has items on display. Have the band and orchestra play at the park where there are summer concerts. Used to perform at the Christmas tree lighting.*

7. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?

- *Different restaurants will partner with the school and give a percentage of funds to the school.*

8. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *Communication has been good. They have powerschool, ParentSquare, Crestdale chatter on Sundays, broken down by grade and electives. Lets us know when there are tests, sports and plays. Communication is great. Weekly recap.*

9. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *Tour of school, school report card, word of mouth. One parent was new to town and she asked around.*

10. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?

- *Not sure if many people know it is a magnet school. They think it's a hidden secret. Word of mouth, advertising, flyers for drama. Business owner has had conversations about where the art comes from. The business owner says she is telling people about it.*

11. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?

- *Boosters only for band and orchestra. They do not get to be involved in the decision making processes. The PTO is not really active.*

12. Extra from the parent group...

- *Kudos to Ms. Keeifer. The art teacher. She is the only one that responded to the call to display student artwork. The community member reached out to 3 public schools and now it is a Crestdale exclusive. One student has been offered money for a painting.*

Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy

Parents - 6

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *The staff-I moved in the middle of the summer, I called, spoke with the principal. My son has thrived, it has been an amazing experience. Everyone is loving and kind and they genuinely care about student success.*
- *The sense of community has been grounding, Ms. BLANK advised her family went through some family changes, and staff has been very supportive. Phenomenal and instrumental.*
- *My son has been here since K, the relationship he has with faculty and staff is amazing. Tristan really feels that his teachers genuinely care about him. I feel better knowing that there are individuals here that truly care about my son,*
- *For us, we were really scared as 1st time parents, but the love and reassurance we received from the staff really helped us.*
- *I am at 5 different schools and DJV is my favorite. What they do with students and families is amazing.*
- *The pathway MS is Northridge and it is a computer science school and there are other schools that are options.*

2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Parent 6 (1st and 3rd grade) More support, we had a meeting where they wanted to merge the school with another school. Support the school, not blend it with another school. Blending DJV with another school will dilute the program. The building doesn't matter, what's inside the building needs to stay. It will dilute the program. We fought hard not to move school.*
- *Parent 3 More preparation for communication can improve, planning out the year and communicating what the needs are. You have parents that are willing to be here and support. We need time to come and support.*
- *Magnet Theme-computer science showcase*
- *Parent 1-We need notification 2 to 3 weeks ahead of time to plan. Reminders are big, the last showcase we got the information early, but we forgot, we need reminders. Reminders are very helpful.*
- *Parent 6-I would love to see a calendar by grade with all events.*
- *Parent 5 (3rd grade) There is a master calendar on the website.*

3. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *The biggest challenge was making sure we had our child's ID# (a CMS thing). When I called, I was able to get that information. The process was not that bad. The magnet school program was a little weird, I had to call and find out about the pool and possibly lose my child's seat. That information was not clear in the beginning.*
- *Parent 3- The lottery process is stressful. If you don't want to go to the feeder school, you don't know where you are going. That causes anxiety and stress for months. We all want what's best for our child.*
- *Parent 4- CMS mixed up my child's ID. The process is stressful for the lottery. Ms. BLANK did state she will show me some options,*
- *We have a Magnet Fair.*
- *Parent 1- This was my first time doing the lottery process for middle school. You can do your own research, but it is stressful. I struggled with the gradebook, I don't do data, I don't understand, The Magnet fair was not any help for me. It was overwhelming. There was a lot of information, but it was schools talking about why I should choose,,it was more of a sale, instead of information to help*

us decide where to go. I did not get my 1st choice, my son is #49 on the waiting list. I called his 1st choice, they were not helpful at all.

4. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *The DOT-Build a bear. Every student created a bear and it was a social emotional theme. The magnet program sponsored it and it was free for every student. Every student received a bear.*
- *5th grade girls have community partnership with Smart Girls. Stem based learning with the girls during CONNECT time.*
- *PTSA (PTA) Parent 5-PTA is small and mighty. We do sponsor events, hence the breakfast today. We applied for PTA grants, however the school was not awarded this year. When we receive requests, we do try to support all requests. We did a Mad Science night this year.*

5. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *Technology piece, my son has always shown an interest in technology. My husband and I also know technology is the future. What drew us here was in K, students were coding, DJV was my top choice. To this day, it has served that purpose.*
- *I work in the early childhood field, the program focused on STEM, to continue that was important for us. Getting referrals and hearing the feedback about the school, drew us to DJV.*
- *Technology piece. I feel DJV does not get enough credit. We need to give them more credit,*
- *Technology. When I came to visit, the school was what sold me. Meeting Ms. BLANK. I had a K student during COVID. Ms. BLANK did a great job in ensuring K parents that we will be okay. It made me feel like we found our place.*
- *I did not pick DJV. I needed a school and DJV was close, combined with the conversation I had with Ms. BLANK. It was the interaction with Ms. BLANK, the care, and compassion, confirmed this is where we should be.*
- *The kids work a lot at this school and it is amazing compared to the work at other schools.*
- *Extra*
- *All- We love our school.*
- *We hope we get a new building in the future.*
- *Extend the program*
- *If they merge, I will consider moving out. My daughter had K in COVID, it was so hard when she first came, but now she is now thriving. I need to know what they are learning, about to learn, and the expectation for the end of the year. I hope they don't merge. If they do, I will be back at the lottery.*
- *STEM, a lot of the focus is coding, but there is so much more, My son is now more into ART, and trying to integrate STEM with that. I would love to see more of that so the kids have a bigger picture of what they want to be and how it is related to technology.*
- *Because they use so much technology, my son has lost the desire to put pencil to paper. There needs to be a balance.*
- *I feel like they don't need as much Roblox. I know they will have technology, I want them to be outside...not just video games. Roblox's age is 7 and I feel like my child should not be able to get on Roblox.*
- *It's all in balance, they need the exposure. The way our society is evolving, to be honest, they learn a lot from these devices. We have to monitor and balance.*

East Mecklenburg High School

Parents - 9

1. What do you like best about East?

- *Diversity!!!!*
- *Curriculum*
- *Student body*
- *Socio economic*
- *Mix of kids*
- *Administration*
- *Willingness to listen to concerns*
- *Take to suggestions*
- *Warmth of environment and staff*
- *A place for every child*
- *Kids learning from each other*
- *Hidden gem*
- *Inclusive*
- *Kids thrived*
- *Possibilities*
- *A number of offerings at EM*
- *Space to add in to what is here*
- *Space for additions*
- *Space for reform*
- *Started as a community volunteer—*
- *Space for kids to thrive*
- *Kids were being prepared for what comes next*
- *Pathway that fits kids and choices*

2. What is your favorite memory?

- *Ms. Frilot (English Teacher)-- child hates writing, the teacher connected with son and encouraged him in a way that left her as his “East Meck Mom”. Son now carries the importance of writing.*
- *Daughter- Ms. Shields (CTE teacher)- encouraging daughter to embrace options without limitations*
- *Seconded Ms. Frilot.*
- *French Language teachers*
- *Extracurricular activities- any kid can walk into a club or sport and get a chance to play and be involved. (highly accessible)*
- *Writing is big at East Meck*
- *Gotten support to take writing to a higher level*
- *IB English (Majak and Halbeisen)*
- *Connection and advancement*
- *Senior night from basketball*

- *Academic focused student*
- *Got to play varsity for four years*
- *Two year captain*
- *Used this to build leadership skills*
- *Arts-*
- *Daughter has embraced art*
- *Walked into EMHS and got to enter in advanced art and then can take AP art as well.*
- *Elder son-*
- *A bit of a nerd*
- *Found his people*
- *Joined a sport*
- *Was coached and grew as an athlete*
- *Birthday- had an IB test*
- *Wholesome boys had a breakfast cookout in the parking lot, principal joined in*
- *Principal has created a structure where kids can start things*
- *Daughter started golf team*
- *Son fit right into sports, has started to explore clubs*
- *IB had a space for him to choose what he wanted to take*
- *Son entered as a 10th grader-*
- *Based on where we live, we had to fight to get our son into the schools*
- *Accepted into the magnet program after being away from the social groups has been a challenge*
- *Some of the activities have been hard to access*
- *Cliquishness*
- *Band has been a home (tuba)*
- *3 years of marching and 7 years with his instrument*
- *Director is someone he has connected with and built a relationship with.*
- *Robotics team*
- *Messages got missed*
- *But anecdotal connection led to a strong experience that has been a strong outlet.*
- *School allows the kids to mix*
- *Not in isolation*

3. What do you like about how the school showcases the children? How are they celebrated?

- *Can be improved*
- *Celebration of ALL children in ALL aspects of the campus can be improved*
- *Every aspect needs to be celebrated*
- *Robotics team*
- *Won competition awards (Rookie team awards)*
- *Was NOT recognized by the school*
- *Funded via CMS CTE grant*
- *PRIME opportunity to connect IB, CTE and celebrate*
- *Hays connected to request for options for the students*
- *Was highlighted as a blurb*
- *Could be a bigger blast*

- *Communication is a problem*
 - *No one at the school is identified as the communication liaison*
 - *Also an issue at the district level*
 - *CMS communication liaison is uninformed*
 - *Opportunity for schools to set an example and a standard*
 - *Why can't there be a rogue advocacy effort?*
 - *How do we create this so that it creates a new standard for the district?*
 - *Social media presence*
 - *A chance to model what athletes are being recruited are told*
 - *Shining messages are in a newsletter*
 - *Emails are not being read*
 - *Disconnect in messaging*
- 4. Recommendations to the district?**
- *For communication*
 - *Retake the district TV channel to share out information so that communication is less device dependent*
 - *Explore and implement podcast option*
 - *Visit the whole district*
 - *Highlight lots*
 - *Quit visit the same places over and over again- diversify*
 - *"What's cool at school"*
 - *Expand social media*
 - *District spearhead on communication*
 - *Staffing at the school level beyond teachers*
 - *English curriculum*
 - *Writing in the past has been exceptional*
 - *Reading requirements have been gutted*
 - *Teachers should be given more leeway to do more reading and more flexibility in text options.*
 - *More reading*
 - *More literature*
 - *60% of freshmen are failing a class*
 - *Do student feedback on teachers*
 - *A survey for students on their teachers and their curriculum*
 - *Not about like or dislike*
 - *More variety in course offerings*
 - *Linking of the courses that would lead to employment, apprenticeship, shadowing, etc*
 - *IB/CTE to explore what is available*
 - *More options earlier in HS*
 - *Career path in IB-*
 - *Career courses should receive 5.0 credit weight*
 - *CTE courses do not get the credit weight that reflects the challenges of IB (GPA holds students back)*
 - *A chance for students to do an extra project or internship to elevate the course*
 - *Busing*

- *Grading policy*
- *Retakes*
- *Consequences are needed*

EMAILS:

- *I wonder if MSA and the IB org have considered creating a “curriculum” or support services for students who are experiencing mental health struggles. It seems like every IB parent I talk with (CP or DP) is concerned about their child’s stress, anxiety, etc. It would be nice if there were a set of measurable goals established that could be addressed at any/every Magnet/IB school to help students, and proper PD for staff at the school and district level to ensure the support is putting students on a pathway to medical care should they need it. I know we are severely lacking in available counselors, but this problem isn’t going away.*
- *Not all the magnet schools (or schools in general) are equitable in terms of resources, and I'd love to see that a focus. PTSOs should not be responsible for filling the gaps, because again, that just creates more inequity.*
- *Language barriers are another issue when it comes to communication. We should have resources from the district to help address this.*

5. Does the school "scream" IB?

- *No, EMHS does not "scream" IB, but it could. Think about how a visual representation captures what is meant to be conveyed - artwork, projects, exhibits, photos, sound, etc. How can this be implemented at EMHS? Hallways that display murals, photographs of students working on projects or in leadership roles; Marching and Concert Band performances and concerts; Avian Robotics at work on their robot or in competition; visual examples of the Civil Engineering Club's projects and at competition; guest speakers at the school or field trips, etc.*
- *We have exceptionally talented students who are poised to share their creativity and innovation, why don't we bring them into this endeavor? What about the staff members who are creative and can also contribute to this project?*
- *CMS could and should do a better job of engaging the community to invest in our students. The vast majority of our students are educated in the public schools, the pipeline for the workforce in our county, state and nation. We shouldn't have to beg our local companies, corporations, non-profits, community leaders and organizations to partner with us. They should be begging to work with CMS (and EMHS) in order to capitalize on their investment!*
- *CMS should charter the course for our community partners instead of the community partners selectively determining which school(s) that they will support with time and money. Our neediest students (and schools) need the most attention, focused strategic and targeted attention. Do they receive what they deserve? How do we leverage the need to drive the plan forward?*
- *Aside from the podcast idea that I mentioned during our meeting, what about this - Roving reporters that travel throughout the district reporting on a variety of events and accomplishments. These can be students at their own schools, parents and community members who can visit multiple schools in their geographic areas within the county, CMS personnel who are in and out of various schools throughout the week, etc. Where are the voices of the custodial staff, the cafeteria staff, the school resource officers and the CTE Pathways instructors? They can capture audio segments to accompany photos that "tell the story."*

- *Collaboration with news outlets in the county - print, radio, online platforms, etc. One example to consider is the demise of Black newspapers in NC and the nation, it's appalling! We are fortunate to have a student newspaper at EMHS, but not many students, parents or community members even know that it exists. There are some phenomenal student journalists at EMHS, how many people even know about them? Consider how the next Pulitzer Prize winning journalist could be in our midst but is invisible to the greater school community. Is the next transformational Black newspaper publisher currently enrolled at EMHS? What kind of support is that student receiving? Are the proper creative outlets being afforded to that student?*
- *Our children must be able to express themselves in writing, this is a necessity. We cannot fail them by not setting the expectation that they will accomplish this. Much was said this morning about reading and literature, I would like to see a more culturally diverse "library" of books provided in the curriculum. Let's include Black authors and other authors of color who have a unique and sorely overlooked perspective and voice. Our children deserve to read authors that may not be as well known to us in the United States but are revered and highly regarded in other countries. We cannot afford to limit their exposure to the same old authors who don't look like them and who do not speak to them. Literature is vast and varied, our children should be aware of this rich multicultural world library.*

Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School

Parents - 9

1. What do you like best about ETES?

- *Sense of community*
- *Traditional classes – media, art, music*
- *Passionate teachers, care about the whole child*
- *Leadership Program – leaders of self*
- *Low turnover in staff*
- *Family oriented community; how families are treated.*

2. How would you describe the magnet application process?

- *Easy; three months before application confirmed.*
- *Transportations zones were an issue. Our neighborhood lobbied for a CMS stop in our neighborhood and it was granted.*

3. What does the school showcase learning?

- *Spring and fall concerts.*
- *Grade level Eagle Ed Award and showcases.*
- *Eagle Award – parents notified to be present when children are given awards.*
- *Black History events*
- *Clubs*
- *Golden Eagle Feather for positive behavior*
- *Parent Square, Friday newsletters, teacher newsletter, tutoring*
- *IHOP and Star Party incentives*

- *Brain Busters reading groups.*
- *Looking for more opportunities to bring families into the building.*
- 4. Why did you choose the leadership theme for your student?**
 - *Wanted to help my child become more confident.*
 - *Peer pressure in a positive way; good social foundational skills*
 - *Likes Lighthouse teams.*
 - *Inclusive climate*
 - *Leading to encourage; leading with a servant's heart.*
- 5. How are community or business partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *PTA partnerships with Orthodontic Office – students involved in a sneaker design project.*
 - *Book Bus with Charlotte Hornets – players read to 2nd and 3rd graders and make book donations.*
 - *Arts and Science Council; Captain Planet, Lowe's Garden Project; Knight's Baseball Stadium student incentive; Wells Fargo Readers*
 - *Everyone is approachable.*
 - *PTA goal is to get more parents and businesses involved.*
- 6. What would you change at ETES?**
 - *Staff does not reflect the population. Staff don't always understand the cultural differences and how to approach students or the impact of influences, i.e. domestic violence, food and housing insecurity, mental health issues, transportation.*
 - *Get more parent involvement.*
 - *Identify a more desirable feeder pathway.*
- 7. Recommendations from parents:**
 - *Celebrate diversity more.*
 - *Make hiring of a more diverse teaching staff that is reflective of the students a priority.*
 - *Actively find places for students to be acknowledged and celebrated.*
 - *CMS should seek input from parents before making decisions about students. Parents' perception is that decisions are already made before there is parent inquiry.*

First Ward Creative Arts Academy

Parents - 4

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Diversity and collaboration*
 - *Specials – theater, drama*
 - *Fifth grade choose major*
 - *Child part of musical each year*
 - *Program offerings each year*
 - *Location – close proximity to arts district*
 - *Teachers are exceptional*
 - *Students honor veterans each October; veterans come with a police escort and you can hear the children cheering. The performances bring tears to the eyes of those being honored.*

- Kindergarten holiday program
 - Programs for each grade level
 - Students are involved in the Broadway Jr. Program
- 2. How did you hear about and choose to apply to First Ward?**
- Kindergarten program
 - Attended first grade performance.
 - Talent show for PTA
 - Magnet fairs; saw student performance at the government center.
- 3. Parent/partner observations**
- Specials are first, academics struggle.
 - PTA has a strong partnership with the administration. We work together.
 - Difficult to get parent involvement.
 - Life for Hopeless Foundation works with the surrounding community to provide mental health support and services for underserved communities. Provides support to families experiencing shelter and food insecurity issues.
- 4. Parent concerns/recommendations**
- Improved communication from school to home.
 - Inability for PTA to connect with parents through personal emails.
 - Lack of communication from CMS to families regarding timelines for and of magnet school realignment and First Ward relocation to another facility.
 - Schedule school community meetings to update families and allow for Q/A.
 - Clarify guidelines and enrollment process for those families currently enrolled in First Ward
 - Transportation is a barrier for attracting students with more diverse backgrounds to the school.

Governor's Village STEM Academy Lower and Upper Campuses)

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Greenway Park Creative Arts Elementary School

Parents - 2

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
- *I like the fact that the teachers are really engaging and care about their welfare. They are receptive to working together with parents. I like the 2-way communication. They help me know what I need to do to support my child.*
 - *Principal BLANK is someone I trust my child with. The school is run the way she would do it for her own daughter. I like the diversity and that my child is in a class with people who don't speak English. My child feels cared for and is now testing higher, but they keep her growing.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**

- *I enrolled my child in a different school originally, but it was too militant/strict and I didn't like it. I toured Greenway Park and it felt like a school that I wanted my child to be at. It's the way that it's supposed to be. My child is involved in dance and that is the direction the school is going in.*
- *Being an Arts Magnet is helping them. My child loves to draw and play instruments and the school is giving them the chance to develop that individually and help them for the future.*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *There are a lot of students who struggle with behavior and my child is very sensitive. My daughter sometimes acts out. I wouldn't say it's bullying but they do pick on her.*
 - *I'd like additional homework. That's because I want her to jump-start for the days ahead.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *I found it to be fairly simple. I came from NY and wasn't familiar and someone suggested Greenway Park. They were my #1 choice and we got in.*
 - *My oldest daughter attended when we lived in the zone and then with my younger daughter we applied with no issues.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *I'm not sure about the magnet program but we use ParentSquare and get updates all the time. Teachers send weekly itineraries all the time. I feel like it's very engaging. The Super Bowl event was great, and we're excited for the March Madness event. My only thing is that when Awards Ceremonies happen, we get 1-2 days notice.*
 - *They are doing a good job. Last year there was an event focused on the theme and this year there have been two. Open House had some art elements in it too. Both of my kids love math and I'm striving to keep them engaged. It's great to have events for families that bring them together.*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *I know that there is a big peace element in the school. There was a 2nd grade performance for all the arts elements and my daughter got to show off her drum learnings.*
 - *I would agree. Students are able to show during concerts about their increased proficiency – especially the drama video. The math game we played at a family night was great. My child could tell me all about numeracy.*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *My daughter wants to be a dancer so the dance program is great! She loves math and they work with her to excel in math.*
 - *My 2nd grader wants to be a musician so the arts programs here are great. She loves the violin and math. She wants a lucrative career so she says math helps her count money. She's interested in paleontology and so learning about dinosaurs is great.*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Right off the bat the fact that a church has helped students with so many needs. That's huge – we're a very low income district and I struggled with finances and the help they provided was huge.*
 - *Same. Having kids is a lot and having the benefit of knowing that partners will help my kids have a holistic experience means I don't have to worry that they're getting what they need. They provide shirts – I volunteer when I can. I want to say thank you.*

- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
- 10/10 – no issues with communication. I like that Parent Square has a search option. Everyone is responsive.
 - ParentSquare is great and I like it better than Class Dojo. It helps us know about events and free activities along with family assistance. We also get a weekly review.
- 10. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- Specifically the performing arts aspect
 - For me, the arts was secondary – because it was a magnet school I knew that they would have things that would challenge my child. She is advanced and I knew they would help her excel and not get stagnant.
- 11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- Teacher quality is huge -there isn't turnover here. Parents want to know that good teachers work at the school and aren't leaving. Happy teachers = happy students. Market the culture! This place feels like home. The community aspect is a huge plus.
 - I'd agree! I work in HR and I understand the drive that people have and know that people want to work in a good place to work. Teachers have what they need and that helps them want to stay. There is good energy here.
- 12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- I don't feel like I've been here long enough to know. I do know that parents were involved in helping get a new science outdoor playground space. Parents got to vote.
 - I had a meeting where they asked for parent feedback and it was connected to Title 1. After there was an event where they wanted parent input on a student engagement program that would meet 2x a week.
 - When you look at google reviews of the school it has a bad reputation and low scores and attendance issues. I know from an admin level that matters but it doesn't show what the school does well. My experience is that kids are happy and doing well. My daughter is being challenged and the activities are engaging and my child comes home and tells me what she did. She talked about being a pollinator (used cheeto dust)! Little creative things keep them involved. The cheer and sports teams. It's nice that they have programs like this. If you just look at the numbers it doesn't look good but when you visit you get an entirely different picture. We drive 25 minutes each way to get here – we're dedicated to this school!
 - All the artistry there is amazing. My children love the art that you walk by and you see what people are able to do. What my kids are able to do there is amazing.

Harding University High School

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Parents - 1

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Number of students at the school. Son is introverted. Would have been lost at a larger school. Smaller class sizes and community teaching.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *History of Hawthorne. It has been in CMS for years and has had different functions for a long time. Class sizes, programs that they offer. ROTC program has given him the structure he needs. Teachers make a huge difference*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *Continue with the personalization and discipline part that comes as a natural part of the school.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Fairly easy process.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *The school is responsive to your questions, concerns.*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *The students take their learning with Novant, and atrium health and the students apply that learning in the programs. They also participate in HOSA and students volunteer into the community. Also, projects that come home allow the parent to see the learning. The parent says she sees how the homework is preparing him for the future and in the magnet theme. White coat ceremony is such a beautiful time and parents are excited.*
- 7. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Workforce development programs for students, Patch program. Propelling adolescents for career in healthcare. All about exposing students to healthcare. 10th and 11th grade. Get to rotate through different departments. Happens on Saturdays. Summer internship programs. City of Charlotte partnership, Rise to success program interested in healthcare careers. Novant - explore careers, paid opportunity for career exploration and pd and certifications in financial literacy and career and college readiness.*
- 8. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Daily Progress report that shows up on the phone.*
- 9. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Needed a smaller school since he is an introvert.*
- 10. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Community: Invite the community and parents into the building. Opportunities for them to promote the schools? They come out for career events, parent nights, because they want to promote their programs as well.*
- 11. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**

- *Yes they have an active role in making decisions that are being made. There were different sign up sheets for parents to participate in school and decision making items.*

Myths and misconceptions about Hawthorne:

- *Because it is a school with a more underserved and underrepresented community, they are not prepared or ready for the future. They graduate with additional training that others do not get. They excel and that is the greatest misconception. There is this narrative that a title I School is not successive. Your child can go to any school and do well depending on your parental support. People forget that.*

Highland Mill Montessori School

Parents - 4

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Taking ownership and responsibility – it's impacted my daughter and it's been added to our home-life*
- *Independence and autonomy – choices she makes every day, she owns her education and learning*
- *A sense of community from this school – I'm invited to participate*
- *We picked this school because we wanted our son to have an individualized education – smaller class sizes – teachers are available – I get lots of updates – love of reading has been developed*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *Small community*
- *Diversity*
- *Great family involvement – winter concert with families*
- *Community of the school has lots of participation – great music teacher with excellent relationships with students (Billie Jean on the recorder)*
- *Teachers seem to be close-knit and get along well*
- *Montessori is unique within CMS*
- *The Principal is part of the magic sauce (3 years so far – lots of diversity) and is open to feedback*
- *Christmas music playing outside during the Holiday season*
- *Energy around walking into the building (start the day with joy)*
- *My kids are known here*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *We want our teachers to be cared for, we want the best for them*
- *Can we help new families get oriented quicker?*
- *Maybe bring 3rd and 4th into the safety patrol?*
- *Can older students read to younger students?*
- *Some discussion around moving from 2-year bands to 3-year bands?*
- *Families need application work-shops*
- *Better communication around AIG, what are the kids doing?*
- *More hands-on science in younger grade science*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *Longer than I anticipated*

- *Incredibly confusing*
 - *You've gotta know to put your child in the lottery when they turn 4*
 - *Super confusing*
 - *None of my kids got into this school the first time – even though I was working here. Staff preference isn't honored and neither is sibling*
 - *Everyone I talk to about this says it's confusing, Too many steps*
 - *The earlier application window had a negative impact on Hispanic families (why aren't we telling families that school starts at 4). August was a terrible time for parents – they weren't thinking about school yet*
 - *We had to find out about this school through word of mouth with the PreK*
 - *The portal worked and wasn't buggy – it just made no sense*
 - *We had to have lots of phone calls with CMS about address issues*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
- *Teacher communication to families isn't consistent*
 - *Email is the most common way families are communicated with*
 - *Class newsletters and school newsletters*
 - *ParentSquare isn't used consistently*
 - *The workbook with the work plan goes home with students for parents to see*
 - *The messages are mixed*
- 6. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
- *Families come in and can teach a class or educate students about their careers or interests*
 - *Some classes have career days*
 - *My kids know more about the world*
- 7. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
- *PEP, after school program with clubs and experiences, ASEP, ballet, yoga, basketball*
 - *Girls on the Run*
 - *Bettie Stovall Arts and Sciences program – drums, performances, exhibitions, etc...*
 - *Light Rail – the school is able to use it to travel*
 - *Caroling in the neighborhood*
- 8. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *It had great academics, was diverse*
 - *M model*
 - *I had family who had done M and they spoke highly of it – the differentiation*
 - *Diversity was huge for us – CMS feels segregated*
 - *I wanted lots of small group experiences*
- 9. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *Parents unsure about whether or not the school can market*
 - *Extra signage?*
 - *Maximize social media*

10. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?

- *PTA*
- *Parents are on the JEDI community*
- *Lots of parent empowerment*
- *SIT team meets monthly*
- *Parents were contacted after SB-49*

Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School

Parents - 4

1. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *The school offers Dual Language enrollment for Spanish, the teachers are welcoming, the IB program offer education to the whole child development*

2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Market to more families in the neighborhood, develop a magnet IB dual language program and families will apply to this school to continue to the middle school*

3. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *difficult*

4. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *IB core tenants, newsletters, PTA events, parent square communication*

5. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?

- *Annual 5th grade projects and community events*

Idlewild Elementary School

Parents - 7

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Structure*
- *Growth and work-load, maintain and doesn't struggle- Teachers are great with assisting*
- *For two different students, personality, strengths and program caters to where they are at and structured in a way that meets each individual student.*
- *Additional interventions placed to see him excel*
- *Open Lines of communication and a willingness to partner*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *Looked into the school based on a swim instructor's (teacher at the school) recommendation. I figured if the teacher was this excited about her school I should check it out.*
- *The diversity of school*
- *The people in the building*
- *One of only magnets in our area*

- *Meets my daughter at a level of real-world melting pot- parents diversity, religion ethnicities- Learning as they are learning*
- *Diversity is a big driving factor*
- *The structure to cater to all kids and not just one*
- *Important for both parents and students to have the difference opportunities*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *A little more on weekly and monthly bases on school activities and classroom specific- special focus*
- *Focus to help them excel more- how are things being taught so that it can be reinforced at home*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *When you know what to look for is it easy*
- *Wondering, Do I have to move to be in the zone of the school I want? (transportation)*
- *Stressful, waiting*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
- *Family notes, monthly*
- *Activities from the local churches, with volunteer*
- *ParentSquare, communication*
- *Can be approached by the school as the Church partners, how can we partner and help*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
- *Sending work home, looking over work and seeing how they are learning*
- *Teachers provide weekly updates of what is happening in the classroom, weekly review charts in binders.*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
- *Electives allow them to try different things and focus on the interests, and then build on outside of school*
- *Referral program to Spectrum of the Arts, to look at different arts skills*
- *Magnet School Fair allowed for interest*
- *Magnet Middle School Meetings*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
- *Yearly planning with Leadership with the church*
- *PTA involvement*
- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
- *ParentSquare is amazing.*
- *Constant and open communication*
- *Car pool line is where I ask questions and get information. The staff is great.*
- *Lines of communication are always open. We feel very comfortable contacting the school no matter the reason.*
- *Communication with parents as well that evolves through to middle school and later grades*
- 10. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *My child has learned more in the two years than he has in all years combined at his other school.*
- *Diversity*

- *Word of mouth. I have heard so many great things about the school.*
- 11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *Reach out more to kindergarten parents of Hispanic Families*
 - *Marketed more*
 - *More parent involvement to lead to parent buy in, allows for discussion and word of mouth*
 - *Opportunities to learn about the cultures within the school to bridge gaps to enhance social avenues*
- 12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision-making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *Survey once a year to give feedback from parents(not sure what they do with the information)*
 - *Church Partners, just open lines of communication*
 - *PTA, monthly meetings- needs, help, best uses and good communication*

iMECK @ Cochrane Academy

Parents - 5

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Staff member and parent, small group of kids, tutoring on Tuesday and Thursday. Small class sizes. Small school feel and small class sizes and they are doing academically better. Communication is open. Motivated by the size. Kids went to a K-8. The small school gets individualized instruction and sometimes the same teachers in subsequent years. Schools are what you make it. Great education. Great environment. Their growth is fostered in a great way. As long as they maintain that small feel we will stay.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *Small school is the biggest issue.*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *After school programs are needed like clubs or sports. Some that some larger schools have. Vacancies of teachers. The process of filling positions is long.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Easy application process.*
 - *No problems with the application*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *ParentSquare with weekly updates on the students. Emails, phone calls, texts, Well at meeting standard 10. Allows for translation- Work is in direct collaboration with the teachers. They direct emails - UNC Charlotte. Woven fashion incubator - direct contact. - Mr. Howard and Ms, Kennedy, and Mrs. Jennifer*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Teaching students about investing. One student created a podcast. It was a great way to change it from a powerpoint to something media related. Showcase what they learn everyday. Lunch and Learn, create a design concept for the queens march. And they had to do a mood board and work*

with Adobe program to do so. Had to present to Mrs Jennifer to get approved. In math, her son received an award from the district from the superintendent. With Ms. Dunn.

- *Culture queens- two students were able to shadow the makeup artist and one student was highlighted in the art exhibit. They have been welcomed back. Impressed everyone there.*
- 7. **What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Woven, Radio stations,*
- 8. **How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Business partners state they feel valued and wanted at the school. They believe the students are some of the brightest and they WANT to continue to be partners with the school.*
- 9. **How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *ParentSquare, email, newsletters. The school is good with communication. Just need a few more bilingual activities.*
- 10. **Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Small school environment*
- 11. **What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Both kids were in magnet and the magnet fair is a good way to promote. Have students create a podcast or YouTube channel. Having someone who speaks the language representing the hispanic community. Discouraging when there is no one to speak the language.*
- 12. **How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
 - *Parents need to represent iMeck at all district meetings.*

Irwin Academic Center

Parents - 11

1. **What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *All of the classes and the levels and each level all of the children are exposed to the development program so the fact that and the questions that they ask are high-level and critical, and I love that they get exposed to lots of problem solving and critical thinking.*
 - *Diversity of the program not only the students but the staff as well*
 - *At each level, they are exposed to critical thinking, which prepares them for the IB program.*
 - *I loved how involved everyone is and the kids know each other. It feels like a family.*
 - *Many events for families*
 - *Smart kids get to be smart kids and set the bar higher. They celebrate each other's giftedness; they're not made fun of because they're smart.*
 - *Students are well prepared for sixth grade*
 - *The overall academic setting*

- *Irwin has a sense of community and a special vibe. I volunteer at least three times a week and I see happy kids and happy teachers as I walk around the school.*
- *Extracurricular activities more socialization for students*
- 2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *We would like to see more challenging work for our students. The school was marketed to us as a talent development with much more advanced programming. The pilot SSA program in fifth grade by Miss Luster is exactly what we're looking for, and would like to see more of.*
 - *My son was getting bored in math and he's excited about math again because of the SSA program. He's learning six and seventh grade math and he is being challenged.*
 - *SSA groups elevate literacy as well.*
 - *In the past, we had a magnet contract that we signed. I have asked about this, and no one has seen them in the last five years. I think having a magnet contract provides parents with a true understanding of the commitment.*
 - *When the requirements for third through fifth grade were taken away, behavior issues began to show.*
 - *More support to get certified teachers*
 - *Instrumental classes like piano*
 - *I would like to see the language as a graded subject. Since foreign languages, a part of the IB program in middle school, it would be essential to getting students prepared.*
- 3. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Stressful*
 - *Confusing*
 - *Cannot get clear answers from the magnet office. I have called several times and got conflicting answers to the same question.*
 - *No clear line of communication from the district*
 - *Lots of confusion when it comes to transportation and which transportation area you live in.*
- 4. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Fifth grade wax museum as a black history project*
 - *There are many events which allows parents to see their children's learning*
 - *Multicultural night*
 - *Parents were invited to come in and experience a lesson*
- 5. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *We used to do a career day and I would like to bring it back*
 - *Kindergarten had a meteorologist come in and speak to them*
 - *Second grade learned about paleontologist, and then researched other scientist in invented tools to help scientist*
 - *Extracurricular activities are interest based which helps students figure out what they like and what they don't like*
- 6. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *We get plenty of communication from the school*
 - *There are newsletters from teachers and from the school*
 - *Not all teachers are consistent with sending out their newsletters*

- *The district uses ParentSquare and although it is a good communication tool, it can be overwhelming. We get messages all throughout the day, making it hard to find the pertinent information we need for our students.*
- *I have three students and three different schools all using ParentSquare and going from one school to the other with all of the things coming through is very cumbersome.*
- *There is a lot of testing, but parents do not get to see the reports or do not have a clear understanding of the reports. We wish there was a parent dashboard that we could open up and see our child's progress and charts from various data. We would like to track our students' growth.*

7. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *We actually wanted language immersion programs for our children, because I speak Spanish, and I wanted my children to speak Spanish. After doing research and speaking to other parents, it was told to me that it was not as challenging of work as I was looking for so I chose Irwin after doing my research.*
- *I chose this school because they meet my child where they are academically.*
- *I knew early on that my child was advanced, and I was looking for something that would meet their needs*
- *I heard of the school through word-of-mouth. My homeschool is a great school, but it is mostly white and I wanted my child to go to a more diverse school.*
- *Teachers care for the students*
- *I was looking for that magnet for directory from elementary to middle to high*
- *I wish that the program had a feeder pattern into the middle school in high school*
- *Last year the district tried to make our school IB, because there was not a trajectory instead of adding TD to a middle school*
- *Magnet kept us in a public school system when we were looking at other options*

Extra:

- *We need Miss Lester full-time. Many of the parents are very upset that she was moved to part-time.*
- *The district could not articulate well why the position was made part time instead of full-time.*
- *The students are not making as much progression without Miss Luster full-time*

J.M. Alexander Middle School

Parents - 3

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *When my daughter was here it was the old school building. This school is very nice and clean. I like how they've introduced the clubs. Really great teachers who really care about the students. I like the admin. I'm very happy my son goes here.*
- *The location - it is very close to where we live - the magnet part is the icing on the cake - I like the selection of the course - not just ELA and Math - the STEM focus - being an engineering manager, the STEM focus is important to me - this school is getting it right*
- *The IB program gives more of a challenge to the kids -- the added IB elements gives students a challenge -- my oldest is now in an Early College and the IB program prepared her for that because*

it gave her experience with more challenging classes -- my students have gotten private-school level preparation

- *The school recognized where my student needed to be - they called a week after he arrived, school made sure he was getting the challenges he needed -- he's not bored, he gets a challenge to make sure he's learning*
- *The courses are rigorous enough to keep my son busy but not overwhelmed -- elementary school did not have that balance -- this school has a good balance*
- *Students aren't coming home with tons of homework or in tears*

2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Some of the classrooms can be a little challenging because of disruptive students - not sure how you strengthen that*
- *The shift to new Math I teacher -- the school got it right*
- *There has been some teacher turnover -- there has not been nearly as much teacher turnover or vacancies*
- *Teacher retention and teacher consistency has been a tough one to manage*
- *The school has done the best they can with teacher retention -- but that is something that they can still work on*
- *Smaller class sizes*
- *I would like to see more community involvement with the school, more volunteers*

3. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?

- *There have been some connections between STEM and community -- Ms. Djoii did reach out for parent to come speak to class*
- *I would like to see more of that -- where community members come in and pour into the students now -- show students examples of adults who are really doing that*
- *A club that does a little of that -- Future City -- students get to take a real world situation and get involved -- that has influenced daughter to pursue engineering*
- *All parents would love to see more real-world connections/involvement*
- *The negative is always louder than the positive*
- *Is there a community partnership to pay for a digital sign?*
- *More programs to support students who are struggling and choosing the wrong path*

4. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *Parents like the weekly True Blue ParentSquare message*
- *PTSA - Shirts for Black History Month, sell wristbands for Black History month, getting families involved is a real challenge*
- *Finding ways to get information to teachers in ways they'll pay attention to is hard*
- *More parent/community involvement period*
- *Digital sign would be helpful*
- *Parents do show up for performances and sporting events*

5. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *A balance of socio-economic levels is present here*

6. **How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
 - *Communication between School/Home*
 - *Website isn't utilized as well as it could be to keep people up-to-date about events at the school - website is not completely up-to-date*
 - *Social media is also not as active/informative as it can be*
 - *Phone calls are sometimes helpful, but only very rarely*
 - *Weekly ParentSquare update is great - you get it all, and you can go back to it later*
 - *You can use ParentSquare to message*
 - *More frequent phone calls*
 - *Keep ParentSquare -- but also add some QUICK phone calls for key things*
 - *What is the continuous improvement that we could do to improve the home/school communication? How can we actually DO something -- make sure it gets deployed? I don't think CMS has anyone that specializes in continuous improvement.*
 - *That is something that is needed in the district as a whole*
 - *How might we start here at JMA with this continuous improvement cycle? How can we more consistently do design thinking?*
7. **Impressions of the Magnet Application process:**
 - *It's not hard to apply once you've looked into it and figured out what you want -- I found it easy enough to do*
 - *One parent had a unique experience coming to this school - he wasn't in magnet - there is an area of opportunity to clarify the difference between magnet and neighborhood*
 - *The process of understanding your spot on a waitlist is somewhat opaque -- having more knowledge, clarity*

J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School

Parents - 5

1. **Why did you choose to apply to Williams?**
 - *Montessori theme – 5 of the 6 families have had children in Montessori since kindergarten and one homeschooled until grade 3.*
 - *Student's role in learning; 1-1 approach*
 - *Dissatisfaction with neighborhood school. It wasn't a good fit for a child who was bullied and had additional needs. Williams provided a sense of community, caring, and safe haven for students. Children have a supportive village, and teachers get to know students and their needs.*
 - *Described as neuro-divergent, exceptionally bright, Montessori provides a smaller, nurturing school environment.*
 - *Leadership shines, smaller class size, student discussion*
 - *Describes school as a 'life-thing and with purpose.'*
 - *Students are here to learn life lessons.*
 - *Learned about school at church and loved the concept.*
2. **How does the school actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**

- *Active PTSO and functions as a support to teachers by raising funds to support programs and provide incentives/opportunities for teachers and students.*
 - *Family nights, student driven conferences, open doors, intercessions, real world community things. Families and students feel like 'an active part of the community.'*
 - *Montessori Walk – Research presentations, involved as partners and was given an opportunity to see a child's work.*
 - *Student clubs*
 - *Community service*
 - *Lots of opportunities to be involved – student update on themes*
 - *Events intended for family involvement like community clean-up days.*
- 3. How does the school showcase student learning? Share one favorite memory.**
- *Intercessions – Got to see what my child was passionate about after the two week intercession.*
 - *Rites of Passage gallery discussion*
 - *Rites of Passage – Camping, cooking, prep, meals, sharing living quarters with others*
 - *Band performances*
 - *Camping – learning to be a good sport.*
 - *Arts – band; I was in awe of the level of work and the performances – some better than others.*
 - *Intercessions – fresh baked bread*
 - *Health fairs/plant sales – Learning life skills and rites of passage.*
- 4. What is special or unique about this school?**
- *Staff dedication – requires expert training.*
 - *Every student should have teachers who love kids like these teachers.*
 - *Fosters community especially for my child who has an IEP.*
 - *Any faculty member knows and can assist my child.*
 - *Staff cares and comradery among staff.*
 - *Staff goes above and beyond.*
 - *Kids feel staff cares.*
- 5. How does the school help benefit students as they prepare for career and college readiness?**
- *Intercessions*
- 6. How does school help benefit students as they prepare for career and college readiness?**
- *Intercessions – For my students, the college essay prompt aligned with experiences during intercession. Allows for self-reflection, self-sufficiency, and taught my child self-advocacy.*
 - *Adaptability, better prepared adult and how to take care of oneself, i.e. - life skills taught in the school – cooking, laundry, time management, prioritization, use of planners.*
 - *SEL learning helps especially how to work in groups.*
- 7. What recommendations would you like to share with CMS?**
- *Provide more resources for Montessori schools so they can provide more opportunities for students.*
 - *Students with special needs 504 or IEP need additional support.*
 - *Transportation – some families could not return to this school because of transportation. Interferes with family time and work schedules.*
 - *Express buses – limits diversity opportunities*

Kennedy Middle School

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Lansdowne Elementary School

Parents - 4

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Families are very welcomed into the school by the school and by other families, the scope of learning with the IB from K-12 begins at this school*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *The new school building provides a nice environment for learning, the school has a preschool program and not all schools have the program, it is an IB school that includes Spanish*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Notify volunteers when they arrive to the school if the students are absent or have other schedule conflicts*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *It is confusing that neighborhood kids enroll into their neighborhood school as magnet students when the school is a magnet school*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *The school does weekly IB Learner Profile celebrations and invites families into the school to recognize students, each year the school does portfolio reviews with families*

6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?

- *Student work is on the walls in classrooms, the International Night*

7. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *The school uses the ParentSquare platform and we get communications all the time. We receive a weekly newsletter*

8. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *I went to an IB school*

9. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?

- *People don't really know what IB is so just explaining what IB is in elementary school and how it is different from other themes, tell families students get Spanish in the IB program*

Lincoln Heights Montessori School

Parents - 14

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Allowed us to continue learning at home - we homeschooled before we came here - cultural practices and independence*
 - *Reinforcing ideas around peacefulness and courtesy*
 - *The ability for my child to focus*
 - *Self-directed learning is really valuable*
 - *Community within the school - social interactions, building community outside the school*
 - *Enhance creativity, she thinks differently and inspires us*
 - *I have a sense of security - they know my kids and are looking out for them*
 - *Community with other adults (we came from private Montessori) and people are from all over the place - I had concerns about Montessori practice but it's been a great experience*
 - *My kids have community with other children around him - my son got a birthday party invite from an older child*
 - *I was concerned about a test heavy culture and the public school - but its not hindered the Montessori approach - being developed into deep and critical thinkers*
 - *Uniquely mature because their needs are being met, expectations about how they share and behave*
 - *The concrete materials and the specific training = incredible results and academic/intellectual growth, sets them up for 21st Century life*
 - *Mentorship happens here too, you can learn from and help other students learn*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
- *There is strong staff commitment here - to my kids and to Montessori traditions, it's becoming more popular here (we're a 1st gen Montessori family)*
 - *Mutually held respect between staff and administration - we see the way they communicate with each other and wanted our child to be in a place like this*
 - *The approach to working through challenges and when my child had needs they provided support*
 - *The kids here are respectful - people wave at me even if they don't know me*
 - *Conflict resolution is practiced here (kids talk it out conversationally)*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *The staff here are stretched very thin, extra supports in practical life class*
 - *Things here don't feel sustainable and we don't want this staff to burn out (parents are supporting)*
 - *Can our teachers have one job instead of 6?*
 - *The past 2 years my child's teacher left mid-year - can we have more resources for them instead of extra after school?*
 - *Is there a way to compensate teachers for training*
 - *CMS requirements + Montessori needs are too much - impacts staff retention for teachers and assistants*
 - *We are committed but want to see more support for the school*
 - *We would love to have a summer enrichment program*
 - *More capacity in after-school (feels like a secret list)*
 - *Issues between Montessori licensure and NC License (issues with out-of-state reciprocity)*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *Stressful*
 - *Changing - the process always changes*
 - *Hard to find out about the school and CMS communication families isn't the best*

- *The lottery kept changing and shrinking*
- *I had to put alarms on my phone 1 year in advance to make sure I didn't miss the deadline - too many steps*
- *People made decisions based on old processes and timelines*
- *I had to use FB messenger to get info*
- *Parents came to open houses that had missed the deadline - people don't think 12 months ahead*
- *Just stop changing the process all the time*
- *Stop sending me US mail*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Lots of events*
 - *Come and garden with your children*
 - *Color-run*
 - *Open classrooms*
 - *They tell children*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Open Classroom*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Last year we had career day, parents came to share*
 - *Parents could participate virtually to share*
 - *College professor came to encourage college enrollment*
 - *College programs are advertised here*
 - *6th grade seminars help students become acclimated with educational next steps and students brainstorm action steps*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *We're new but we know they are engaged and there are meetings - especially around safety*
 - *The school is in talks with the LH neighborhood association*
 - *Community invited to walk the campus and see the building*
 - *Parks and Rec helping develop the exterior*
 - *Safety meetings for community - invited BOE members and CMS security*
- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Communication is awesome here (they differentiate)*
 - *Facebook, Thursday, phone-calls*
 - *ParentSquare is primary way for teachers, call-outs for Principal*
 - *DMS on PSQ from teachers*
 - *PTA and Principal collaborate on S'More*
- 10. What do you know about the CMS Magnet Montessori Pathway and JT Williams?**
 - *Teachers are trained (PreK-12) and the school is diverse*
 - *We like the approach of JT Williams*
 - *We are planning to stick with the theme but want our child to be a part of the decision*
 - *JT Williams is the plan (I know it's growing)*

- *Location is a huge factor for our schooling choices*
 - *Some are interested in Piedmont or NWSA or a school with sports*
- 11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *Get photos and videos on the school out in the community*
 - *People don't drive past the school*
 - *We need a marketing budget for the school - parents don't know this program exists*
 - *We live in a high achievement-focused culture and people think Montessori won't help them*
 - *Tell the story of Montessori or of Lincoln Heights*
 - *The school needs a Magnet Coordinator*
 - *Get into more community events where parents can share with parents face-to face*
 - *Retain the teachers, they are more important than buildings*
 - *Montessori will save CMS - we've got to reach more minority communities, and also wealthy communities*
- 12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *I got to come and develop a calming corner and leverage my professional skills to support the school*

Long Creek Elementary School

Parents - 6

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *I like that it offers a lot of different arts classes. Arts encore classes. That's not something that we looked for when we were looking at a magnet program but it's something that we came to love in our kids and actually got into dance outside of the school.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *The Cambridge Curriculum. My older child who came here didn't get that. The arts program. Love the major and minor. Reminds me of college and I want my kid to think like that as well. The number of options and opportunities my child has for middle school.*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *Bring in the community to let kids see what they can be (like professionals). Maybe make a video to share with everybody to see what is happening at the school. Take the kids out to perform in the community. Take the kids to Bradley to let them see what middle school looks like. Try to attract more students. Work on some of the behavior issues the kids are coming home telling us about.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Streamline the application process.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Flyers to inform the parents about different activities that the kids can become involved in and different programs that'll be coming to the school like girls on the run. There have been opportunities for kids to learn taekwondo so I like those opportunity flyers that come. We have an amazing PTO.*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *There is a big performance every year. Everyone helps with it. All the arts classes work together.*

7. **What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *I know about Charlotte Ballet, Chick-fil-A has sponsored a night for a fundraiser, the Arts and Science Council.*
8. **How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *The Mustang message is very good. The only downside to it is that you have to click on a link to open it. Some teachers don't respond timely but most do. The principal is approachable.*
9. **Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Older children came here. I know my child will be safe and get a good education.*
10. **What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *We think it is the parents turn to try to promote the school. Word of mouth and letting people know our experiences. That we should do a video on the school for social media and do a brief tour with some sort of other creative videos to showcase the school. Maybe some clips from some different encore classes. This promotional video could circulate on our social media.*

Mallard Creek Elementary School

Parents - 9

1. **What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Options for scholars with projects*
 - *Choice Boards*
 - *Student Centered Activities*
 - *Enrichment Electives*
 - *Parent/Teacher Engagement*
 - *Speak to multiple people about your child*
 - *Communication*
 - *Transparency*
 - *Kids enjoy coming here*
2. **What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *More parent engagement with school*
 - *Retention of teachers- happening everywhere, higher level issue*
 - *Public school issue- extra curricular at no cost*
 - *Foreign language offered*
 - *Honoring cultural backgrounds*
3. **How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Easy process*
 - *Don't always get their first or second choice*
 - *Lack of magnet schools (high school)*
 - *Don't like the magnets available*
 - *Slow to get responses*

- *Hard to know where they could apply, transportation*
- *Only apply to your zone, transfer to other if have transportation*
- *Getting information from other parents, not from CMS*
- 4. **What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Electives- open up students eyes to other interests*
 - *Field trips- ran their own business, counting money*
 - *Battle of the Books- competitions*
 - *Digi-Bridge STEAM Lab after school*
- 5. **How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Literacy Night*
 - *Social Emotional Night*
 - *Hand outs, resources*
 - *Partner with Stonebridge for Fall Festival*
 - *Community member felt welcomed*
- 6. **How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Parent Square- electronic communication*
 - *Emails from teachers*
 - *Phone call from teachers*
 - *Would like a follow up phone call with emergencies or Sunday night call*
 - *Weekly emails from principal every Sunday*
 - *Staff is responsive within the school day*
 - *Monthly principal chat*
 - *Better communication than past school*
- 7. **Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Where I was working*
 - *Option to feed into Piedmont*
 - *Looking for magnet or charter*
 - *Applied through lottery*
 - *Constant turnover of leadership at home based school*
- 8. **What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Focus on curriculum and what separates you from traditional school*
 - *Diversity*
 - *Acceptance by others*
 - *Have sports available as a choice*
- 9. **What is the purpose of magnet schools in CMS?**
 - *Diversity*
 - *Different curriculum*
 - *Opportunities to be exposed to different activities and be challenged*
 - *Mallard Creek has been a great place for her child. Teachers have instilled character. Top tier*

- *Providing Electives as bringing out interests that the family may not have seen otherwise*
- *Reluctant to bring a child to this school, always went to a charter school. But is impressed with Mallard Creek, loves the culture, rigorous curriculum, and leadership.*
- *After school tutoring*

McClintock Middle School

Parents - 5

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *I specifically hand-picked this school because of the recommendation from another parent*
- *I know my child needs more hands-on and the school provides learning the way ne needs to learn*
- *I really like the electives. We wanted to go to a STEAM school. I love the NASA Ten80 class. Students were able to compete regionally and build a PIT stop. The staff is amazing and my 6th grader said teachers have passion here.*
- *This is my son's homeschool. We are very into the STEAM part and love the NASA Ten80 team. Lots of opportunities are given. My child is quiet but has opened up and wanted to do new things because he feels safe to do so. There are so many opportunities on many levels of how students can get involved. And the teachers are next level, you can tell they care.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *A lot of electives offered. My child is really enjoying it, being able to choose an elective they feel passionate about and interested in.*
- *He's really enjoyed the diversity in this school*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *They do a great job with the technology aspect of the school and dance is interesting and the program has grown. However, I want to see the fine arts like drama grow to be stronger as well.*
- *Parent involvement in PTO for more voices*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *The meeting was great, and they gave a tour. It was all excellent and an easy process.*
- *Application had demographic information and income, surprised there wasn't an academic process*
- *Frustrated with CMS not advertising their magnet schools. The schools tell us about their schools but the district does not help. The second lottery is frustrating because we do not know when it is. I did not know about the high school track. I thought they would go back to their home school.*
- *With transportation, the buses were removed and they assigned express stops for high school magnet students. They told us 2 weeks before school starting*
- *It's hard to navigate when you are new to the process. The schools do offer plenty of options with their Open Houses to come learn about the school*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *Black History Month celebration*
- *Hispanic Heritage Month celebration*
- *Afterschool Parent classes during McPIE Family Nights*
- *PTO does the Thanksgiving Brunch and Mardi Gras Potluck*

6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?

- *Through the dance performances, they record them and put them out for parents to see.*
 - *They hang things on the walls of what students have done*
 - *They highlight exciting things going on in the school.*
 - *The church prints our McPIE eNews and the school advertises that in their newsletters*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
- *They always find ways to have fun learning and not in such a structured setting, and they try to align Family Night with that. We write a grant for 3 years for 100 6th graders, and 100 7th and 8th graders to attend summer camp. It's STEAM related. This began over 12 summers ago*
 - *Even during COVID we (local church) came to help*
 - *Field trips to college campuses and businesses.*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
- *It's amazing. We are very welcomed in the school. We were even asked to sit in on the hiring. We also work well with PTO and help each other. There is an opportunity to serve right on your doorstep which has been life changing for our church*
 - *At the very beginning of the McPIE partnership, we asked the principal at the time what was their deep need, and he said getting more parents involved. So we worked to build a better community and get parents in the building. We provide things to break the barriers that parents have. So for McPIE Family Nights, we provide daycare, transportation, afternoon clubs, dinners, and every parent that attends gets a stipend (gas card, gift certificate, cleaning supplies, etc.). We have parent classes as well like ESOL class. We have about 80-90 middle schoolers attend, we provide about 200 meals on average, and we have about 20 younger siblings attend with 30-40 parents. They are held every Tuesday evening.*

Myers Park Traditional Elementary School

Parents - 10

- 1. What do you like best about MPES?**
- *Community Partner Hendrix Corporation*
 - *Focus on leadership is integral to Hendrix culture.*
 - *Very few schools can talk about leadership and that makes a difference anywhere.*
 - *Executives do monthly Ted Talk type presentations to Leaders of the Month*
 - *Community Partner More Than a Pretty Face*
 - *More holistic approach to life skills, critical thinking skills*
 - *Parents*
 - *Never doubted the direction of the school – they have my child's best interest at heart*
 - *Teachers co-parent*
 - *Diversity, everyone cares.*
 - *My shy daughter has gained confidence – she is finding her voice.*
 - *Leadership supports teachers, everyone has opportunities to get engaged*
 - *Passion*

- *Belk partnership provided support to students and our partner school, University ES*
- *Parent shared; MP was the third school toured preCOVID. Once the tour was finished, parents inquired where do we sign up. Like the diversity, friendships, teachers care, makes the 30 minutes to 1 hour drive each day to attend the school. Teachers feel supported and there are opportunities for parents to get involved.*
- *PTA supports staff and students; diversity; differences are respected, valued and celebrated; no one is from the same neighborhood, so we strive to make the school climate.*
- *Leadership values the teachers; difficult transition to first grade, however child was embraced; parents here want to contribute, no vacancies at the school.*
- *Principal did an excellent job with staffing; applauds the school teams and houses*
- *Staff feel the administration has their backs; administration stands behind the staff; staff feels valued.*
- *Lottery is stressful.*
- *Not a clear pathway to middle school.*
- *Transportation is not always an option because of the length of time children have to ride the bus.*

2. What does the school do to showcase learning?

- *Student artwork showcased in an uptown exhibit.*
- *Talent show partnership with Queens University*
- *Eagle Award – parents notified to be present children are given awards.*
- *Investment in kids with an academic push*
- *Small groups and tutoring*
- *Curriculum nights where parents get to see their child's leadership book and their progress.*
- *Newsletters, social media, Parent Square – fast communication*
- *House points*
- *Leader in Me habits encourage students to advocate for themselves.*
- *My six-year-old shares her SMART goals.*
- *PTA is involved in a deep dive to inform the community of amazing things that are being done at the school.*
- *Our children enjoy opportunities to have house buddies in different grade levels and the opportunity to have leadership roles with the older children.*

3. How are community or business partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?

- *PTA in partnership with the school's administration prepared a folder to invite parents and community partners into the school. In the folder is the MPTS PTA SPOTLIGHT newsletter highlighting the school's mission, theme explanations, school activities, celebrations, before and after school activities, innovative teaching models and methods, and lottery process explanation.*
- *Parents are encouraged to become involved.*
- *PTA president noted there were 120 jobs – 62 parents perform those jobs. PTA raised approximately \$150,000 to support school programs, teachers, students, and award teacher grants.*
- *PTA struggles to get more parents involved.*
- *WINGMEN – MPTS Dads who mentor.*

4. Recommendations from parents:

- *Sibling alumni guarantee if an acceptable pathway is identified.*

- *Would like a Leader In Me pathway for middle and high school students; or IB or School of the Arts is an acceptable pathway, waive lottery.*
- *Magnet enrollment is stressful and needs further communication to parents, i.e. future enrollment, application deadlines, and not guaranteed spot in other magnets, clear delineation of what happens in fifth grade.*
- *Consider changes to transportation options.*
- *Standardize the lottery IB options – parents perceive the options change from year to year without communication.*

North Academy of World Languages

Parents - 3

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Diversity (including socio-economic), world view, cultural opportunities*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *It fulfills its magnet purpose, it helps students become global thinkers, best teaching staff*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *More staff allotments for world languages - some classes have as many as 30 students, a magnet coordinator/coach - to help tie up loose ends, more administrators, more parent involvement*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *One got in through an emergency request - they missed the application deadline because they didn't hear about it. They both like the sibling preference.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *ParentSquare - the school sends out lots of information. If anything, it seems like "overcommunication". Family Fun Night (fundraiser)*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Global Studies Showcase, band/orchestra, student council, social justice march, winter dance. It's tough though for working parents, especially those who live far from the school.*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Hornets summer camp*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *They go through the school or district to see if goals are aligned.*
- 9. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *It was a better fit than our previous school, the opportunity to study French.*

North Mecklenburg High School – IB/World Languages and CTE

Parents - 3

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Son started in middle school IB magnet. Piedmont had a great reputation. Son needs a challenging, rigorous curriculum. Wanted him to have community connections, be developed as a whole child, not just academically.*
- *Location and athletics, someone answers the phone when you call.*
- *Daughter started Spanish in Kindergarten (Oaklawn). Feeder school from Oaklawn. Got to stay in the WL program and continue Spanish. Has enjoyed getting to know different teachers and get involved with the school.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *School has met expectations. Son has learned how to manage time, found interests (wants to study psychology). More independent, loves his teachers, is challenged.*
- *Life skills. Son can do practical things related to car maintenance now (oil change, change a tire).*
- *Daughter has made a lot of progress in high school. Shy, big change coming to a big school where she didn't know many people. Became more outgoing. Choose to be involved in a lot of activities, take leadership roles. Teachers have helped her come out of her shell. Chose to stay at North Meck. for 4 years because she's comfortable and happy with the school. Athletic training, prom committee.*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *New campus! School is so big and spaced out will be better for students and parents.*
- *More opportunities to visit colleges provided by NMHS. More college exposure. Should give the same attention to all sports through the Booster Club. Would help smaller sports get noticed.*
- *North needs a PR campaign to highlight the greatness of the school. Engage the community in knowing the great things about NMHS. The magnet opportunities we have are more expensive than the community knows. Talk about everything North has to offer as a communal message, rather than departmentalizing as we do now. Lots of great things happen in a lot of different areas that don't get noticed.*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *Applied in Kindergarten. Options were more limited at that time. Continued into direct feeder. Did apply to an arts magnet at one point. Process was pretty seamless.*
- *Applied first in 5th grade (to Blythe and D.J. Vaughn). Did not get into Blythe, got second choice (DJV). Applied again into Piedmont. Got in first try for 6th grade. Had to state they wanted to come to North through the lottery for high school but seats were guaranteed.*
- *Did not go to magnet school in middle school. Easy process into North magnet.*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *Mr. Brown (auto teacher), met face-to-face, opportunities to visit shops. He has a great passion for what he does. The school itself: school over communicates. Email, ParentSquare, Remind. Member of Booster Club*
- *Second everything (previous parent) said. Ms. Pasko responds to emails. Open house / info sessions twice a year. ParentSquare has been a huge plus. Noticeably improved from Freshman year. Member of PTSA. Loves that PTSA serves the whole school, not just the IB program.*
- *Triple down on previous statements. Communication is geared through kids more than parents in high school. Also a member of the School Improvement Team and PTSA. Parents have the opportunity to be as involved as they want to be. Can email teachers, Dr. Hood, Mr. Smith and know*

she will get a response. Major Graham in the carpool line. Gets a weekly Connect message first of every week.

6. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?

Entrance Requirements:

- *IB: Initial requirements into Piedmont, can't remember exact specifications.*
- *WLA: Pure lottery going into Kinder. First choice was Chinese.*
- *Magnet Fairs make it clear what options are available and how transportation zones work.*

Northeast Middle School

Parent - 1

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Teachers are very caring and hands-on.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *Teachers here are hands-on. Also, how much the teachers care about the students. For example, they give 3 attempts at a test and let you keep the highest score.*
- *They also do fun things like Halloween and the NC Star Raffle where students got prizes for doing well on testing. My daughter also likes the "Professional" class where she's learning how to get into a career*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *I would like to see more (text) books for my daughter. Sometimes she forgets her password at home and then I have to email the teacher.*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *It was very easy.*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *We get emails from the school everyday with information.*
- *We get fast responses from teachers.*

6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?

- *My daughter hasn't taken a Computer Science course yet. She'll take one next year (8th grade).*

7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?

- *I don't know of any.*

8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?

- *I don't know of any.*

9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *We get information emails every day.*

10. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *I was a student here and I liked my experience. There was bullying at my daughter's previous school, so I thought it would be better to send her here. She likes it here. It is like a family.*

11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?

- *Even though we are a D school, the teachers are very nice and are working hard to change things.*

12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?

- *We get invited to events, but I haven't participated in other things.*

Northridge Middle School

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Northwest School of the Arts

Parents - 2

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *My child loves it! Not only does she do great in her Dance major, but she's excelled in her academics also. She has her own drive. I don't have to push her as much. She has no problem getting her work done. It has increased her creativity, and I see the growth in her. Inclusion and diversity. I like to focus on my daughter's interests. I attended NWSA when I was in MS and I believe they are really excited. This was not my choice, my daughter actually picked this school herself, i love all the majors and the energy of the students. You want to stay. It's very warm.*

2. What is special/unique about NWSA?

- *It's very supportive. The kids from Visual Arts celebrate the Theatre students and attend each other's performances, which is exciting to see!*
- *There is mutual support/friendships and respect among the students and teachers, which is not the norm for High schools.*

3. Where can there be strengthened/improved?

- *More Money. We want the school to have so much more money.*
- *Feelings and excitement around the school, NWSA has the potential to be one of the top schools in the nation. But, I would love to be able to see more access to equipment and be supported in that way.*
- *I believe the Teachers and Counselors are doing the jobs of 5-6 different people. As an observant parent, It's been shocking to me how stretched and understaffed they are as they attempt to serve these kids. The people here don't have to be and they don't leave. It's just amazing. It's impossible to do all these things and do it well all the time and the students don't get what they need.*

4. How does NWSA engage families? In your perception?

- *We have a very active Visual Arts Booster here at NWSA.*
- *The PTO is very active. I get messages from them a lot. It feels not walled off, but there is a lot of activity and I don't know where to go to help the most. I think it's great in our major, it's great.*

- *There is so much community involvement. The parents want to help. There is a lot of opportunity to bring them on board. They have done so much. There are so many messaging apps available. Each major has their own Booster.*
 - *Ms. Coffelt is very good at giving a good end of week wrap up, and monthly coffee with Coffelt. With the previous principal, I was lost. After 2020 we were very understaffed.*
- 5. How does NWSA show student learning?**
- *They really didn't answer this question.*
- 6. What are some ways NWSA prepares students for College?**
- *Parents took initiative and started Portfolio Review Day for Visual Arts students to look at Colleges.*
 - *I think the counselors here do a great job, but they were overwhelmed. We just had a Ready for HS meeting with counselors, I think it a lot of good info, but there was only 2 MS counselors. My daughter has an idea of what she wants but parents have to do the work.*
- 7. Do you have parents as PTO?**
- *We are in regular communication with teachers in terms of Booster activity.*
- 8. What's the primary way you receive communication from NWSA?**
- *ParentSquare. I would appreciate a dispensary of information instead. Ms. Davis helps so much with sharing information on the ParentSquare platform. So much more investment. I regret only knowing some of the academic teachers here. There is some "platform fatigue" with lots of passwords, accounts, and multiple things to sign up for/on.*
- 9. Do you do any parent/teacher conferencing?**
- *We have Curriculum Nights/Open Nights. It would be nice to have one. Last year I had to request one. My child's teacher will send out a message on ParentSquare to have a meet up with parents.*
- 10. In your family, who made the decision to apply to NWSA?**
- *My daughter put this together and had a friend who wanted to try out but did not end up attending but enjoyed learning about the process.*
 - *My daughter attended the CMS virtual school and she did 6th grade there, socially she needed to be in person. I learned that we were two different learners. I think the staff here do everything they can. People think it's a cool place. I think there's a focus that this school is really impressive. Maybe staff community - it's a bandwidth issue, who makes that connection?*
- 11. Do you perceive that you are a part of the school's decision making process?**
- *Ms. Gover loops you in about upcoming events. Connection with Ms. Davis. I've been made the parent liaison. I always try to seek out the answer because of parent involvement.*
- 12. What are some parent complaints?**
- *Transportation; carpool; transportation is challenging.*
 - *I feel like the arts supplies are not in the classroom. They operate on a wing and prayer. The rooms are not equipped with the quality.*
 - *During my child's exams, there was no heat. I did reach out. We have to understand that we need the same grace. The standard should be that the rooms are warm during certain times of the year. I get that it's an old building.*
 - *I noticed that 8th graders did not have a field trip this year.*
 - *It's a staffing issue and discrepancy between funding between majors. It's an ongoing challenge. A lot of moving parts.*
- 13. Anything else to be sure to include?**

- *I've heard that the powers that be know about NWSA. But they need to know that NWSA is a gem in this community. They launch into some amazing places.*
- *This is a really well loved school. I think advocacy pieces need to be there.*

14. Tell me about how your family felt about the start-time change?

- *The data guy in me hated it. Our kids already don't get enough sleep - but I can't argue that my daughter has not flourished. It was a point of contention at first but she's thrived.*
- *My daughter has been on the tardy list frequently. Don't the studies show that students can't retain that early? I think the maturation part is true.*
- *I was concerned, but my daughter has also flourished. It's also helped my husband be able to get up earlier.*

Oakhurst STEAM Academy

Parents - 3

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Cleanliness*
- *Diversity*
- *Activities going on- Art Show, spring fling*
- *Staff is welcoming, more family-type atmosphere, very positive atmosphere*
- *Different grade levels present to others and collaborate with each other*
- *Volunteers are asked to be a part of the school community, not just give money*

2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *On a great trajectory with the teachers especially with so many new teachers and working to implement STEAM in all parts of their lessons. Need more opportunities for staff to see STEAM in the community and bring it back to the building--business immersion, for example*
- *I didn't understand what it meant to be a STEAM school. Reinforcing what STEAM is to parents and students.*
- *Need more information about the magnet stuff. We need to be sure that people know about the magnet process. **LOTS** of confusion about the magnet process.*
- *Time and pressure with testing have to keep moving through things.*
- *Kids are feeling very overwhelmed with testing*
- *community partner meets*

3. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *See above...*

4. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?

- *We have felt very welcomed from day 1. Lots of good friends*
- *STEAM Author visits*
- *We work to bring in more to support*
- *Heart math rep- our volunteers feel very welcome here. It is important for us to choose schools*
- *Principal came to speak at church and build a relationship with the church members.*

5. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *Parent said she jumps in and gets in with the teachers at the beginning of the year and makes myself completely available to them. Communication is great.*
- *ParentSquare, newsletters*
- *Teachers respond regularly*
- *PTA communicates regularly, weekly with a newsletter*

6. What else?

- *Just a ton of pressure on students and teachers with testing. Would love to have a little bit more flexibility.*

Oaklawn Language Academy

Parents - 6

1. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *Live very close by*
- *Hopeful for a language academy; lived overseas and speak a second language; value the impact a second language can have*
- *Feel like Spanish would be more useful to our boys than another language*
- *Were at a private school, but value what children get at Oaklawn that they don't get at a private school*
- *Bilingual, but husband is not; not speaking Spanish in the home and children were losing their Spanish language; needed help*
- *Want my children to grow up bilingual so they stay close to their Mexican roots*
- *Had another child who went through Oaklawn*
- *My husband and I are both bilingual; for our family, it was the only option*
- *Location*
- *Was a bilingual educator; was looking for a school that has the same expectations I have*
- *They let my daughter come shadow when she was, like, 5*
- *The school has socioeconomic diversity as well as language; want our son to be part of a melting pot*
- *Born in Colombia; was made to feel like I was less than when I moved to this country; didn't want that for my children*
- *Brown excellence—my children are really proud to be Colombian*
- *The teachers are brown and white and black; there is true diversity; in a lot of language programs, the teachers are still all white*
- *Appreciation for what my culture has to offer*

2. That's what brought you here. What keeps you here?

- *I feel like my child is safe here.*
- *I know they have my child's best interest at heart.*
- *The slogan, Somos familia; I know it sounds cheesy, but that's what it is*
- *It feels like one big family; you want other adults in your kid's life who are looking out for them*
- *The diversity*

3. **How does the school engage families in supporting student learning and the school theme?**
 - *Events that are a combination of family engagement and academics, like biliteracy night and the multicultural fair*
 - *PTA supports classrooms, like we get materials they need*
 - *Providing information for families in both English and Spanish*
 - *If parents want to do something in the class, they are very open and teachers will ask; the school communicates they want parents to be here*
4. **How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
 - *The principal asks us for input; she doesn't have to ask me anything, but she has over the years*
 - *School Improvement Team (formerly School Leadership Team)- we know goals that have been set, grading policy, data that is coming out*
 - *We sat there and went through the uniform policy and made changes*
 - *SIT is a monthly Zoom meeting that is made accessible to anybody at a time that's convenient; we vote on when to have meetings*
5. **How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *It's hard to get in touch with someone and get the same answer twice*
 - *Confusing; I literally had someone offer to pay me to help her with the process*
 - *It's not a problem for me personally, but being part of these mom groups, there's a lot of complaining*
 - *At no given point was I informed of the rule change; I was never informed*
 - *Box that says, "Do you want to bypass your zone" is so small, you wouldn't see it. It should be in the drop-down menu.*
6. **What, if anything, would you change or improve about the school?**
 - *More arts, theater; enrichments*
 - *Immigration process for the foreign teachers; why are we recruiting these incredible professionals and making them part of our family and then lose them?*

Park Road Montessori School

Parents - 12

1. **What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *This school literally saved my family - my oldest has special needs and would have gotten lost without this school. They are seen and loved - not challenged and squashed.*
 - *We have special needs kids and they get to be themselves and celebrated for who they are. My kids know where they need support*
 - *They are taught how to advocate for themselves and can speak in ways that build awareness. My child feels like the adults here are working with them.*
 - *They've taught my kids how to learn. They're organized. They can work independently - plus the multi-age groups build community*
 - *All of my kids have benefitted from the multi-age approach. It makes differences normal. Lots of new friends*

- *Creativity and diversity + hands on learning*
- *Community, it's beautiful here - I've never felt like I had to struggle to be heard*
- *Student care for each other*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *You cannot duplicate the teachers at this school - they're ability to delve into student needs and community/class needs are incredible*
 - *This is a school that includes all kids in all celebrations - my kids are exposed to new things and they teach me what they learn*
 - *I feel like my kids are known by teachers and even by other parents*
 - *This school inspired my Mother-in-Law*
 - *My kids are pushed to reach milestones*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *We'd like a new building*
 - *We want to see teachers supported more*
 - *More autonomy for teachers*
 - *We don't like the mandatory testing - could we at least have assessments that line up with Montessori*
 - *We are counting the days lost to instruction because of testing*
 - *We're ok with benchmarks - we don't like crazy weird evaluative tests*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Very jumbled and I'm an employee - I don't know how to explain it to my neighbors*
 - *It's hard to advocate for this school/Magnets because the process isn't transparent*
 - *It feels like the game is rigged*
 - *Montessori starts in PreK - this whole deal starts when your kids are 3 because you've got to apply for when they are 4*
 - *The Montessori programs have to carry the weight for ensuring diversity - when will CMS work to make these schools more diverse?*
 - *The GPZ hasn't been determined yet even though they know where the school is moving*
 - *The process is counter-intuitive*
 - *Parents feel like they have to pester the school for updates*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Parent Education Programs*
 - *Parent nights to learn about Montessori/Positive Parenting*
 - *There is a volunteer process*
 - *Kids bring things home and explain to parents what it is*
 - *If you want to be here as a parent, they will let you*
- 6. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Primarily ParentSquare, some email, some text (PSQ is general, teacher specifics come from email/text)*
 - *Weekly newsletter*
 - *ParentSquare from Admin along with Newsletter*
 - *PSQ doesn't allow group communication between teacher and two parents*

- *It was hard to get parents to opt-in for ParentSquare and we've got families all over the city and that was challenging*
 - *We've tried every type of communication and some parents will just never respond or communicate (no class lists)*
- 7. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
- *Most families are planning to send their students to JT Williams*
 - *Also NWSA*
 - *Sedgefield Middle or an IB school*
 - *Parents seemed to prefer a smaller MS*
- 8. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *They don't need to market the school*
 - *Park Road has the longest wait-list*
 - *The district needs to provide more Montessori schools where kids are and have more trained teachers with supports*
 - *Challenges with getting state licensures*
 - *The SES changes in lottery priority seem to be working - we do see more SES diversity*
 - *We need more outreach to diverse families - not just a Magnet Fair*
 - *Helping people know what Montessori is*
- 9. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *SIP, PTO, Montessori Parent Advocacy Group*

Paw Creek Elementary School

Parents - 2

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
- *Relationships with students and staff*
 - *Variety of events robotic, Family Fun Night, STEM Night*
 - *My kids love the school*
 - *Kids share how much they love the school*
 - *Parents can feel the love in the school*
 - *It's evident that kids are learning*
 - *Student struggles with ADHD but staff has been supportive*
 - *Communication is top notch*
 - *Drama(from kids, not students)*
 - *Not just a magnet school on paper*
 - *Magnet is integrate into everything*
 - *Leadership and Administration knows all kids personally*
 - *School is very engaged -*
 - *Principal call about grades*
 - *Teachers meet kids where they are -Differentiated instruction*

- *High expectation across the board*
- *It's a family*
- 2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *Pop-up visits*
 - *Teacher engagement is consistent across the board*
 - *ParentSquare App-more easier*
- 3. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Stressful (address placement)*
 - *Too early to register*
 - *More equitable across magnet school*
 - *Clear understanding of what the process is*
 - *Time of bus stop*
- 4. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *STEM NIGHT*
 - *Families Night*
 - *Early release Days (STEM based)*
 - *1st grade Balloon Event*
 - *Pictures of students via ParentSquare*
 - *Collaboration with STEM class and general ed class*
- 5. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Every grade level sends home a weekly newsletter (they all must have a STEM Focus)*
- 6. One word to describe the culture or experience your child has at this school?**
 - *Unbelievable*
 - *Empower (teacher, staff, admin) gave her the tools to grow and learn*
 - *Student loves her teacher*
 - *Parent may look for private and charter for middle school*
 - *Community, Village, Family- students feel love*
 - *Opportunity-to discover their skill*
 - *Purpose-Driven-there is always a WHY*
- 7. Anything that needs to be captured:**
 - *Need more money*
 - *"Doesn't the Word magnet STEP you up, to get more money" Why doesn't magnet get more money?*
 - *Why aren't we on the bond for a new school?*
 - *Is the magnet theme aligned across elementary and middle school?*

Phillip O. Berry High School

Parents - 6

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Teachers work together, the teachers, the counselors, quick responses from teachers/counselors*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**

- *The pathways, the teachers*
- 3. **What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *Improve transportation - bring it back the way it was.*
- 4. **How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *ParentSquare*
- 5. **How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *The school offers information nights, sometimes art and photography is displayed.*
- 6. **What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *ROC and Road to Hire - but not all parents know about these opportunities.*
- 7. **How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Proximity - both are close to the school.*
- 8. **How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *ParentSquare seems to work well.*
- 9. **Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Reputation*
- 10. **How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
 - *They can attend the monthly SIT meetings*

Piedmont Middle School

Parents - 5

Community Partners - 3

1. **What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Data and reputation. She is a big data nerd. When her students were in Kindergarten she started looking at the achievement of school options around her. Piedmont had the smallest gap of all of the schools. Equitable achievement in all subgroups.*
 - *The teachers are so well involved and so engulfed in knowing the kids inside and outside of the classroom. They knew their kids personally and it made all the difference in their learning.*
 - *The data drew him here. Spiritually he prayed when in elementary and God led us to this middle school. This is a place where they value every student. Piedmont pours into every student. Brilliant black students thrive here.*
 - *I look at Great school.org. I Dig and dig...and I found the data on Piedmont. When you look at the school's performance it is equitable across demographics. Reputation for preparing kids for high school and for thriving in the world, I wanted that for my child.*
 - *Four students in his family. Piedmont challenged his gifted student and he was prepared. Ten years apart the youngest wanted to do what he did and came here too. Two of his kids didn't come here because they were not of the same mindset...this may have been too rigorous for them. But when you thrive on challenges, this program prepares them to thrive.*

- *Looking at numbers. The school has a long rich heritage and tradition in teaching the whole child. They teach character and pull out of them who they are. The assets that kids bring to the table are valued. This school pulls out those assets. The atmosphere is not perfect, it is not the newest school, but the quality is good across the board. School is special. Beats all the odds.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
- *Parents agree on the great legacy of the school.*
 - *Expectation is the word to describe it. Expectation of the Piedmont way. For kids and for teachers. Even after they leave Piedmont.*
 - *Leadership helps it all happen. Piedmont has leaders that cultivate leadership in their teachers. They allow teachers to do what was right for kids. People always say whole child, but we really do it every day for every child. Excellence is a standard.*
 - *UNCC partner says he places more teachers here because of the leadership. There is a stability here that he wants for his college students. The culture is a great example to them. No student teacher has had a bad experience here. It's overall a good example for the student teachers. Retaining teachers has helped them see a great school in action.*
 - *Parent credits Leadership - Dr. Baron does a great job with leadership. They respond quickly to parents. They have high expectations of themselves. Their kids want to volunteer now. Environment is a big deal for why we choose the school.*
 - *Culture is remarkable. World citizenship, intellectual curiosity, self-awareness.*
 - *The teachers believe they are capable of excellence.*
 - *Continuity, caring, excitement here. The spirit of the school is wonderful*
 - *Open house- intro to "why piedmont" convinced me that I wanted that for my child. They did a great job explaining it. I see my children within this population. So many dynamic kids here.*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *Buses...long trips. Middle school is a late start school so they get here late. Not enough funding for transportation.*
 - *Take the model to other places.*
 - *Don't pick at the things that work.*
 - *Quality should not tie to your zip code.*
 - *Life skill training classes. How to change a tire. How to write a check. How to read a clock. Basic skills.*
 - *Train the next leader. They need someone who understands the culture and keeps it going. They have had a history of great leadership.*
 - *20-25 hours of community service in 6th and 7th, used to be in 8th too, but they took it away. Continue to keep the standard high. Wish they kept the volunteer hours. Helps with networking and understanding society. Students express themselves through their volunteering.*
 - *Don't lower the bar because the district has told you to. District calibration should go forward not back.*
 - *Funding for teachers to be paid to stay after school programs. They give so much and don't get enough back.*
 - *IB is a strain as a teacher (from the teacher) they need to be paid according to the work they put in beyond what any other teacher would do. They are willing, but should be compensated anyway.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**

- *The former superintendent with all the data from around the district brought his kids to this school. He wanted a place that would take care of their whole child. Physical, social, emotional and mental safety.*
- *All parents agree that the process was easy and seamless.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *The culture of service. This school is building Servant leaders both in the students and in our families. We are all doing these volunteer hours with our kids.*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *The students are so talented and we get to share in their talents. We are a witness to it.*
 - *The 8th grade project is something to look forward to and be proud of. They love watching their students get to this point and showcase themselves with pride.*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *High school readiness. Compared to others coming into high school her daughter's transition has been easy and this is because of piedmont. The child has a Strong foundation.*
 - *His daughter went to high school and said she already had been taught what was in the high school SS class.*
- 8. How are businesses or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Several leaders in local business and community are here today as a testament to our commitment and support of the school. Community partners feel like a welcomed part of the school.*
 - *The partnerships are long standing traditions. The leadership and teachers make them feel valued for what they bring to the school.*
- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *The communication here is steller! I have never felt like I was lacking in knowing what was going on.*
 - *We need to communicate more outside of the community that is already created here at Piedmont. People need to know about the awesome things that are going on here at Piedmont.*
- 10. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *The legacy....the IB program- cross curricular curriculum...*
 - *One parent came from a STEM charter and this is much more organized and theme based. The learning profile is important to this parent.*
 - *Critical thinking is a norm here.*
 - *Became IB 15 years ago. Long standing traditions that work.*
 - *They want high standards for their kids. Want that mindset to look outside yourself. Let's make things equitable without lowering our standards.*
 - *Diversity on the outside looks one way, but there is diversity in the things you can't see. Privilege gets to be shared with non-privilege.*
- 11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Though we cannot say enough wonderful things about the school and recommend it enough to others, there is no promotion necessary as its reputation precedes it.*

- *All the who's who of Charlotte know about and want their students to be a part of Piedmont. It's a place where you know your kids will be safe and nurtured. Excellence is an expectation and the students will rise to it.*
- 12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *We are all a part in our own ways. The succession plan is as important as the work. Whatever our niche is we are making sure it stays foundation to the school*
 - *Family is only here as long as the student is here. Doing everything we can do to build sustainability.*
 - *Administration is open to suggestions. Example - they wanted to highlight honor roll students more. People asked can we do this...the answer is always yes or yes and. ...There is a lot of openness and communication about why we do things the way we do.*
 - *Communication is given very clearly and thoroughly. This school helps us think outside of ourselves. Leadership Receives and responds to messages quickly.*
 - *PTSA president came to see the principal and suggested the need for a mentoring program for another demographic. Even though this parent had an 8th grader and his student didn't need this service, he saw the need. The principal said yes. And he is making sure it sustains even though his child is no longer at the school. "Our kids are going to be ok, but we're in this together and we step up for the needs for the whole school. "*
 - *Parents are leaders of the needs of the students. The culture/family is that we care about all the kids and the teachers.*

Randolph Middle School

Parents - 5

Community partners - 4

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school? Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Natural feeder from our IB elementary school*
 - *Chose an IB school because a teacher recommended it for him specifically and it has been a good fit.*
 - *Choose for diversity of students and staff. Acceptance, this is a softer place to land for difficult middle school years.*
 - *Montessori in elementary and came to here for strong math*
 - *Classrooms are integrated and diverse and that is appreciated. Something Randolph is doing is nurturing the collaboration between these diverse students*
 - *Randolph does a good job of building this school community and making us feel together.*
 - *Lots of afterschool events help us connect. Also in school clubs for those who can't make it.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *IB school - ability to take a language -other options than just Spanish*
 - *Math options that allow the kids flexibility*

- *My student has an IEP and the EC program here has been very supportive. He's an A/B student and I believe the school has made it possible for him to get to that success point.*
 - *Lesson plans are extensive*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *Desperately need to train more teachers in IB. Lots of turnover. CMS is adding a new high school and resources are going there for teachers to be certified but we still need existing programs to be trained. Very disappointing. Teachers want the training.*
 - *Pay scale should be different when workload is different.*
 - *Educating our community about what IB is and why it is different from other middle school programs. Families come in not understanding what IB is and what they are getting into. Utilize the students for this...student ambassadors.*
 - *Staff turnover is a problem, but we cannot offer virtual problems.*
 - *Elementary school IB it is an overall training. Middle school has to go to the content specific training and it costs a lot. The PTO is trying to raise money to support and train students. Shouldn't be their responsibility.*
 - *Middle school buses are last and parents can't leave their kids home to catch the bus on their own. Buses are late.*
 - *So many new teachers. Every year need a base level of training.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *Easy process. CMS switched dates and it was confusing in the transition, but otherwise is very easy.*
 - *Sibling priority makes it easy.*
 - *Wish you could find out through technology instead of waiting for the mailman to come whether you got in or not.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
- *International festival will be great for students to be able to bring their diversity out to the community.*
 - *Help with volunteering and figuring out where to volunteer. Reminders to not wait until the last minute.*
 - *Parents engage through the community service hours.*
 - *8th grade community service project -parents get to walk through and see the exhibition of the kids' projects. 7th graders will walk the projects too.*
 - *8th grade project is a drive for the students, the kids are excited.*
 - *Expectations are clear this year for the first time since having Mrs. Pendergrass here.*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
- *8th grade project is a showcase of student learning as well as the international festival*
 - *Night of the arts. Showcases the students work - plays, visual arts on display.*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
- *More CTE here with the IB*
 - *A timeline of classes/courses would be nice to have.*
 - *Prepares them for the next step which is high school. Structure is naturally preparatory.*
 - *College and career fair - March 22 during lunches.*

- *IB - their counselor moves up with them every year and that is helpful -academic rigor helps them be prepared for beyond. Still not an insane amount of homework.*
 - *Homework is only given when it needs to be review, not for busy work*
 - *Offering support/tutoring before and after school, all times.*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
- *PTO tries very hard to get the community involved, financially or otherwise. Stuff is donated for the school.*
 - *Asking for volunteers to come for the whole day is unreasonable.*
- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
- *8th grade parent feels they missed a lot of communication*
 - *Missing teacher and we never learned of it until they reached out because the child wasn't learning. Missing SS teacher. Parents needed to know ahead of the time or early on.*
 - *Put it on the kids to communicate with their teachers. She asks her to email the teacher first. She's never had to step in as a parent. Teachers are responsive.*
 - *CMS communication is getting more discombobulated because there are so many sources...Parent Square...PTO...district...social media...etc. ParentSquare- too many responsessome are emails some are texts... parent square is not always reliable or consistent.*
 - *Communications on social media platforms will not get to everyone, especially students. Sports stuff.*

Ranson Middle School

Parents - 5

Community Partners - 3

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school? Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *What Ranson does for children is it gives them an opportunity to learn in a non traditional way...pushing the cognitive lift on them...they become independent responsible adults.*
 - *Exposure. They are exposed to more here than they would in their home life.*
 - *As a staff we meet kids where they are within the IB framework.*
 - *Various needs and we meet them there. IB framework enhances the curriculum.*
 - *Continuity. They leave excited to go to west charlotte, an IB school. They want to prepare for that. We are intentional about building their strategies for the transition.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *Principal sends every morning a Connected message to parents. She connects with them. They feel she's approachable. To connect with the leader is special.*
 - *Staff members who are Charlotte natives and have been there a long time.*
 - *Legacy, heavily involved in the community. Supportive environment.*
 - *Teachers communicate- they are accessible.*
 - *SEL goes on here everywhere.*

- *Opportunity to showcase the learner traits. Teachers showcase different students for each trait each week in homerooms.*
 - *As a new to Charlotte person, the culture in the community is strong. Everyone knows Ranson and has a pride in the school over the years. Lots of multi generation families.*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
- *Diversify the attendance zones. There are so many options for IB so it's hard to streamline the IB program. Stateville Rd is Elementary IB that feeds into our school. Other IB programs can tap into our attendance zone, this decreases our access to students for IB.*
 - *ML students - we've been intention with placement. The families need help understanding what it is all about. We do the heavy lifting to get them to understand, need this for both the parents and the students. Some are ready, but don't understand what they are getting themselves into.*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
- *The timeline is an issue.*
 - *Recent move- couldn't apply because it was over by December. No option for parents transferring in. Difficult as a parent. Wanted to do immersion, but couldn't get in when they moved over the summer.*
 - *Timeline and accessibility - everyone does not have technology available to them. Having to go to the public library to fill out the application presents challenges.*
 - *Knowing what options are available.*
 - *Pin numbers system and the parents have trouble with that. Especially ML learner parents. Lots of parents are asking questions and we have to have them come in and walk them through. We support the 8th grade parents, but who is supporting the 5th graders?*
 - *Once the timeline is over it is over and no option for transient families. Ends in December and there is a second choice time after school starts - school choice fair and you can get or lose kids after the 20 day mark. Students new to CMS can transfer if the school has space.*
 - *Need to simplify the process. This is the same process that hinders them with buses. They don't know their zone.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
- *Curriculum nights*
 - *IB nights in conjunction with basketball games so families will come to learn about IB at a time when they are already here for the game.*
 - *Partnering with the after school ABS program, parents are required to go to nights with them, so we partner and get access to the parents.*
 - *Information is shared in the carpool line.*
 - *Communication platforms- parent square for mass communications*
 - *Social media - facebook and instagram..twitter*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
- *Small groups in science*
 - *Partnering with West Charlotte*
 - *Curriculum nights- students present student work*
 - *Gallery walks throughout the building*
 - *Each classroom and hallways has data walls*
 - *Teachers highlight students learning with each other glows and grows, exemplars*
 - *Students have an agenda and data notebook*

7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?

- *5th third bank worked with 6th students to create young bankers...build financial literacy*
- *Digi Bridge - stem career exposure*
- *Janes foundation -supplied graphing calculators for all students and supplies*
- *Classroom central - helped with teacher retention with supplies*
- *AVID - opportunities*
- *We showcase these partnerships to parents through communication and social media- but do the parents understand the partnerships?*
- *Multilingual night in January - explaining the program and explaining the Access test scores and how it affects their schedule. And how they can exit ML and get access to programs that prepare them for high school.*

8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?

- *Partners invited to community partner meetings and invited on the SIT team. We have a liaison for partners, he is on SIT and communicates meetings with them.*

9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?

- *Parents email, call, stop by. Connected goes directly to parents everyday...it's the principal talking to the families. For staff and parents.*
- *Principal says "Even if I haven't met a parent, when I finally do, they say I hear your voice every morning."*

Rea Farms STEAM Academy

Parents - 9

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *Openness of administration, receptive to ideas*
- *Started before the doors open designing school*
- *Inclusivity, admin is very receptive to celebrating all groups of people*
- *Parents feel heard.*
- *Bright happy place, students are smiling, very welcoming*
- *Feels like home for students*
- *Many different resources for parents*
- *Every student benefits from the resources and clubs*
- *Academic competitiveness encourages and supports students to be their best.*
- *Each student is treated as an individual*
- *Amazing staff*
- *EC services are inclusive*
- *Great to watch MS interact with ES.*
- *Sports are very inclusive.*
- *Musical Gr 4-8, acting and tech*

- *School is doing the best with what they have.*
- 2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *More technology, computer lab, more coding, websites*
 - *No Computer class*
 - *Funding not enough for all of the STEAM aspects*
 - *Massive fundraising for a functioning program*
 - *Space, school too small*
 - *Need learning labs for MS, science, technology*
 - *Need more recreational space*
 - *Lack of shade or playground space*
 - *HOA doesn't allow shades on the windows, wants trailers moved, Lincoln Harris conflict with CMS, no adding outdoor shading.*
 - *Get more parents involved*
 - *Students not prepared for HS (100 Gr 8 to 600 Gr 9)*
 - *Athletics can only play other K-8 schools*
 - *Stage is too short, not meant for K-8 STEAM school*
- 3. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *2 groups of ppl: 1 - don't want too much communication, 2 - Want to know everything*
 - *Falcon Newsletter*
 - *ParentSquare has been a great addition by CMS*
Get teachers to use it more
Most are willing to
 - *Last year over communicated with ListServ*
 - *Parent can't say they don't know what is happening at the school*
 - *Individual grade levels could be better.*

Shamrock Gardens Elementary School

Parents - 8

- 1. What do you like best about this school?**
 - *My daughter goes here - but I fell in love with the students and the opportunities.*
 - *What I love most is the personal experience. I started homeschooling my kids - but when I came here - I got exactly what I wanted to -so if I ever wanted to get in touch with a parent - it is a quick and easy response. I feel like a parent - I am part of their education and part of the school.*
 - *My favorite thing about Shamrock is that it is diverse in all the ways. Some of it brings challenges, but the way they use their staff members to meet kids where they are and they do a great job at that.*
 - *One of my favorite things are the extracurricular activities. I have been beyond excited about Mathapalooza, chess club, Didgi Bridge....*
 - *I think for us, Shamrock feels like a family. I think the East side of Charlotte is a very diverse and close-knit area of Charlotte and Shamrock mirrors that very well. We are just a big reflection of*

East Charlotte. For me and my family and kids - it feels like an extension of our neighborhood and family. Our kids feel like this is their second family.

2. What is special or unique about this magnet?

- *I think the level of the engagement is really wonderful. There are several different methods to communicate with families and communities.*
- *I think what I've always really liked about and what attracted me to the magnet is that when kids come into education in general - they do not know what they are going to excel at and Shamrock is exposing them to all different kinds of things - whether it's extracurricular, Dragon Discussions, clubs - they have the ability to try things and see if they are interested and it escalates in middle or high school. It is priming them for thinking and evaluating what they are interested in as they go.*
- *When some of the parents started here, the magnet was a separate entity and we stopped that several years ago because of parent/staff feedback and what I've come to appreciate is the evolution of the program and staff is looking at what best practices serve all students. They are not always stuck in their ways to serve the best needs of the entire school.*

3. What suggestions do you have to strengthen this magnet school?

- *I think building continuity into the community at Shamrock. I love the way this school emphasizes being good citizens and I love how this continues.*
- *A lot of our families are all so close and we have so much involvement, but one thing we do not have is a continuation for us to all stay together. So, after our kids leave here, TD just dies here and when they move on to middle school - it is a completely different thing.*

4. You're talking to a neighbor/best friend/cousin- what do you tell them?

- *I just told a friend to send her kids here because we love it and couldn't ask for a better school. She is attracted to the East side of Charlotte and what it is all about and this school reflects it*
- *I think you feel like you're part of the neighborhood and family*
- *My daughter is a magnet student, but because we are not a neighborhood family. Her first school experience is Shamrock and she is shy and Shamrock is a small community because she is happy to get up in the morning and see her friends. Also - she has had great teachers - she is quiet but she loves learning and her teachers have embraced her.*

5. How do you feel about how the school showcases student learning that is related to the magnet?

- *When you walk into the main hallway - you see all of the students' art and see all of the different units they are learning.*
- *Being a staff member and a parent, I see it a lot. I think the teachers do a really good job integrating the theme - especially- with thinking maps.*

6. How often are you involved in extracurricular activities?

- *They have clubs every two weeks on Fridays that are run by parent volunteers. I do Lego club and try to come up with a challenge each week. There is a cooking club and different ways to express their strengths through something fun.*

7. How do you perceive business or community partners welcomed into the school becoming key stakeholders to support the theme?

- *The PTA welcomes their money!*
- *Through career day*
- *JA Biztown. They students study the role of community members and then went to Biztown to perform the role*

- *If you look at the Shamrock Shuffle and the sponsors with the run and how the fundraisers are supporting things like the outdoor classrooms*
- 8. When you think about sponsors providing resources, do you ever see them expanding their support by sending employees into the school for training/projects?**
 - *One of our key sponsors does a Realtors Read program where they distribute books.*
 - *There is a journalism club where the students interview and write articles and they learn from an actual journalist.*
 - *Digi Bridge is a free after school program and it teaches about careers in art that use STEAM and I do think there are other partnerships with organizations.*
- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families and admin and families?**
 - *There are a lot. CMS bought ParentSquare, which has been a game changer. What is amazing about that is that it will follow the students from school to school. In elementary school, they do a great job of sending home Thursday folders. Principal Potter has her weekly call that also gets translated into an email and teachers then will communicate, and after school will communicate.*
- 10. How would you recommend a magnet coordinator to promote this school and this program?**
 - *The first thing that comes to mind for me is to promote my kids. My daughter is an ambassador here and she is so excited to bring new families in, my son helped design the House shirts - there is a lot my kids are excited about.*
 - *A lot of our kids who are now in middle school would say they are very prepared in middle school in a variety of ways, workload, love of learning.*
 - *Using community engagement and corporate sponsorship and getting that word out and asking people to spread the word. The infrastructure is there to push out information - it's just getting the*
 - *I am speaking as a minority - but there was a different feeling when we lost our Title 1 money - but to just see what a community and we teach good citizenship – I'm getting emotional talking about it.*

South Academy of International Languages

Parents - 10

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *It draws a variety of diverse families and students. They are in a program that offers multiple languages and backgrounds. I've met new families I wouldn't have known otherwise*
 - *It's made them self-sufficient, they've developed good habits, students here are mature and can converse with new people*
 - *It's given them an appreciation for their cultural identity. They appreciate diversity. They see challenges differently*
 - *Our family is international and when my daughter came here she picked up German instantly and is reading. I see the school active in community events.*
 - *It's given them a worldview*
 - *They have performance opportunities and like being in front of people*
 - *No other school in Charlotte compares to this. Some of us have Private options but we still choose this school. The travel opportunities. Kids can be sheltered and this school won't let them stay sheltered. Intangible growth. There is incredible cognitive growth.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *The multiple languages, the culture, all the exposure – they get extra cultural exposure*
- *It's giving them a "we" perspective instead of "me" – more global*
- *Early exposure and ability to ask questions*
- *Different than an IB program*
- *Parent involvement is really strong and willing to help teachers*
- *Great communication through ParentSquare*
- *It's given my kids flexibility and adaptability*
- *SAIL needs to be spread out*
- *The 5th grade math in German is easier to learn than in English and Chinese numeracy*
- *International faculty*
- *Parents know more about the instructional model than in other schools*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Better parking*
- *The district doesn't understand or visit enough*
- *People don't know what they're going to – they don't listen to parents and call them entitled and stuck-up.*
- *They don't advertise the school*
- *CMS doesn't help with the Visa situation and faculty – how will you open a second language school?*
- *They lost a teacher last year and my daughter had to have ½ a teacher*
- *You can't do this virtually*
- *Would like additional focus on writing/grammar*
- *Tough to know if there is an issue where it's coming from (language, curriculum, etc...)*
- *ELA is lacking*
- *The express stops are a bad idea for transportation, it's an equity issue if families can't get to the express stop*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *Anxiety triggering*
- *Confusing*
- *The process keeps changing, almost annually*
- *It's a mystery*
- *It's hard for parents to navigate it unless they have time*
- *The PTSO alone will spend \$20,000 and they do it because CMS isn't doing it*
- *The magnet office never visits – Walter came once*
- *It's hard to protect the program*
- *We came to SAIL because we wanted structure to their proficiency*
- *We feel like CMS is setting kids up for failure if they don't have competency*
- *My child's PIN is not their ID number*
- *All notices come out via paper mail and no email*
- *Annoying to sign up for home school first to get the PIN*
- *You need to visit the home school to get a PIN*
- *Younger sibling preference should work too*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *We weren't able to get to this question specifically but they address it in the answers included with other questions.*
- 6. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Career Day*
 - *MS Counselors visit students to discuss college/career pathways*
 - *EOG has this*
 - *Promotion of being well-rounded*
- 7. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *We weren't able to get to this one - there are some indirect answers in how they responded to other questions.*
- 8. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *ParentSquare (led to more volunteers)*
 - *Customer service with PS is not good*
 - *I feel bombarded by messages*
 - *Not every message needs to go out to the whole school*
 - *It's easier than email.*
- 9. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Answered in other sections*
- 10. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Answered in other sections*
- 11. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
 - *Answered in other sections - several attendees were on the school's SIP team*
- 12. Additional thoughts?**
 - *All parents are planning to enroll in the HS and the MS*
 - *The program helps me recruit people to come work in my company. The international community here sends their kids here. The marketing here is not enough – this school can be a bigger economic driver and could impact business and economy here in NC.*
 - *So much untapped potential here – stop changing our identity. We're a school.*
 - *CMS needs to do more to promote the school*
 - *We're not special, we're different/unique*
 - *My child has confidence*
 - *Standardized testing is taking too much time – teacher burnout is real here*
 - *The language tests*
 - *We want to have a better relationship with immigrant teachers and workers*
 - *I knew from the moment I walked into a classroom that this was the school for my child*

South Mecklenburg High School

Parents - 5

- 1. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Child attended the feeder school, SAIL (2)*
 - *South Meck is the neighborhood school (1)*
 - *Daughter wanted to learn Japanese (1)*
 - *Grandparents, parents, and self-attended the school before it was South Meck (1)*
- 2. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *How students tutor and are tutored by other students*
 - *Child's acquisition of proficiency in another language*
 - *School feels like a family*
 - *Daughter is happy to come to school*
 - *Non-magnet students have access to language courses and clubs*
 - *Teachers provide a lot of different support for students*
 - *Opportunities for students to participate in exchange programs and travel abroad*
- 3. How does this magnet school showcase student learning related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Community events/performances*
 - *Multicultural fairs*
 - *Service learning projects (tutoring younger students at other schools)*
 - *The halls (student work posted)*
- 4. In what ways does the school make you feel welcome as a partner in supporting the magnet theme and student learning?**
 - *World Language Magnet Boosters support teachers by providing instructional supplies and other items to show appreciation*
 - *Private social media group where parents and teachers share ideas and support each other*
 - *Helping to encourage and recruit other parents/families to be engaged, even in "small" ways*
 - *Good communication (Parent Square)*
- 5. What are some opportunities you've had to be involved in decision making regarding school improvement and sustainability of the magnet program?**
 - *Note: The first response to this was lengthy, and it took the conversation in a direction that was unrelated to the question. It was not negative, just not relevant. It was about experiences of students who had previously attended South Meck.*
- 6. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen the magnet school program?**
 - *Better articulation between the two language feeder schools (one is immersion and one is dual language)*
 - *Provide more differentiation to meet the needs of the students at the highest levels of proficiency in world languages*
 - *District pay for H-1B visas so the school can recruit the most high-quality world language teachers from other countries*
 - *Build more community partnerships*
 - *Provide an Honors level course for Spanish IV, not just AP level*

- *Try to recruit/retain more students who participated in language programs at the two world language feeder schools; need buses*

Statesville Road Elementary School

Parents – 4

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *The school celebrates the IB attributes, everyone feels welcome, I am welcome in the school as a volunteer and can be in the office area*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *The students study Who We Are IB theme at the beginning of the year, The students study sharing the planet and Day of Service*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *Parents don't always know what IB is so explaining IB in elementary schools*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Parents who have the time can complete the application process easily but those that don't have computers or time can struggle, some neighborhood families don't know they need to complete an application to get a magnet 6th grade seat*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Not really sure, but the open house at the beginning of the year could include information about IB*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *Sometimes student work is placed in classrooms to show math and reading*
- 7. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Parents need to know what IB is in elementary school it is different from STEM or Dual Language schools*

Tuckaseegee Elementary School

Parents - 4

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *I like the challenge the school gives and the quickness of the teachers in determining my child's learning style.*
 - *I like the academics and electives, such as typing in chess*
 - *I like all the events and activities provided by the school*
 - *The electives provided by the school have made an impact on my child's growth*
 - *This is an experienced magnet school in the theme is different, and that is more challenging.*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *The staff and the diversity that they bring*
 - *I like that they embrace other cultures*
 - *Exposure to different activities, such as inventors week, and the opera*
 - *The team is open and willing to partner to get additional support needed for the families*

- *The school is welcoming and warm, and really nurture relationships*
- *The leader ship*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *I would like to see more ways for pair students starting in kindergarten to pass the gifted certification test.*
 - *More TD certified students*
 - *I would like to see them bring back the multi age cluster*
 - *As a partner, I feel the teachers should be paid more for what they do*
 - *We need more intentional direct support from the district*
 - *A dedicated district person is needed to assist schools and bringing in partnerships*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *The process is not clear and not user-friendly. It was very discouraging. I didn't even finish the first time.*
 - *Not easy to navigate. I need support from friends to finish the application.*
 - *The language of the application is not clear. I'm not sure what I'm applying for. It looks like you are registering for school and not applying for the magnet. The two processes should be separate.*
 - *As a partner, we receive feedback often from parents that say they struggle with the application process.*
 - *The magnet office is understaffed and does not communicate well.*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *The school does a great job communicating through great level newsletters, parent squared, and social media.*
 - *Magnet Nights*
- 6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *The school does a great job of sharing photos and social media, and ParentSquare*
 - *The school showcases work for parents to see through events*
- 7. What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *The partner shared they have a goal for literacy for the CCR and provide cultural, relevant, reading material.*
 - *Reading at UNC summer program*
 - *The school has participated for the last 5 to 6 years in the Moore study from Harvard. This focuses on informational text, and the program trains teachers.*
- 8. How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Partners are invited in, and given an opportunity to figure out where they fit into the puzzle.*
 - *One of the partners mentioned that all partners should be held accountable to see what they are doing, and what they said, they would do follow up and make adjustments as needed.*
- 9. How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *Newsletters, social media, ParentSquare*
- 10. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *Atmosphere*

- *Teachers and staff*
 - *Teachers and staff promote student growth and higher level thinking*
 - *Kids advocate for themselves*
 - *Diversity of staff*
 - *Higher level of teaching*
 - *The principles engage with teachers and students*
 - *One parent shared that she had plans on moving her child to another school when the teachers approached her and asked her to leave him at their school because of the growth he was making. The parent made the decision to keep the child at the school and is very happy with the results and growth her child has made.*
- 11. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
- *The partners shared that partnerships should be good ambassadors of the school, and communicate with the community about the things going on in the school.*
 - *Partners should promote the school when out in the community*
 - *I feel like they do a great job of promoting the school in a positive manner.*
- 12. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?**
- *Families feel comfortable with the staff and asking questions*
 - *Everyone is invited to be on the school partnership team*
 - *Everyone has a voice and included through various avenues*

University Park Creative Arts School

Parents - 8

- 1. What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *I've seen great things happen here since January and connect with the person responsible for attendance*
- 2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?**
 - *My kids turn into a different kid when they are on the stage*
 - *Arts Majors and Minors – my daughter conquered her stage fright*
- 3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?**
 - *I wish consequences would be more individualized for student behavior*
 - *Still working to repair staff=family relationships, keep working and continue*
 - *Kids deserve to be heard and asked questions about what they'd like (student gov)*
- 4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?**
 - *Process was easy*
 - *I applied right out of PreK*
- 5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?**
 - *Not all Parents use ParentSquare*
 - *Remind families that we're on your side*
 - *Families don't always know they have advocates*

- *I feel like they are going with me*
- *Social Workers were mentioned*
- *Teachers pay attention – they proactively reach out to parents. By the time we talked, they had already developed a plan for my daughter. (they made time for her)*
- *At Awards ceremonies it was always the same kids and now I see my son*
- *The school hosted a Parent Mental Health night!*
- 6. **How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?**
 - *The school is planning on incorporating learning showcases as a part of upcoming Arts Performances*
- 7. **What career-related and curriculum focused partnerships are there in this school that benefit students and help with college and career readiness?**
 - *Johnson C Smith and UNCC*
 - *Building relationships*
- 8. **How are business or community partners welcomed into the school to become key stakeholders in implementing the magnet theme?**
 - *Parents discussed the Food Harvest program*
 - *Event with Zumba dancing*
- 9. **How does the school communicate between teachers and families? How about between administration and families? What could be improved?**
 - *ParentSquare messages and communication folders*
 - *Videos on ParentSquare + relationships and personal phone calls*
- 10. **Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?**
 - *This place used to be rough and I removed them. I brought them back because of Principal Rae*
 - *Two of the three parents (besides Parent advocates) are planning to apply for the Arts Middle School - First Ward*
- 11. **What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?**
 - *Invite potential families to the showcases*
 - *Public Library promotion*
 - *“It goes down” – our plays*

Walter G. Byers School

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

West Charlotte High School

Parents - 1

1. **What do you like best about this magnet school?**
 - *Feels like a community; students have grown; students appreciate IB coordinator, feedback from teachers. Feels like family. Close-knit community.*

2. What is special or unique about this magnet school?

- *Relationships with graduates; eager to come back to assist and help; alumni network actually in the building—not just write a check*

3. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *On the right track—but continue to develop community partnerships*
- *Partnerships—Mayor’s Youth Employment Program, Chase Bank, Olive Garden, food trucks, come in once monthly to support*

4. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *We rolled right into the school; no problem. No additional paperwork/processing*

5. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *IB nights, family get-togethers at the school, parents and new parents come to share experiences—constant opportunity to get together—at least quarterly*
- *Good communication from the school—social media, emails, phone calls, text messages*

6. How does the school showcase student learning that is related to the magnet theme?

- *Social media, flyers, come in and see—often*

7. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?

- *Appreciate the current efforts to visit/connect to the middle schools, especially for students who can’t come in the evening*

8. Final comment from the parent:

- *“West Charlotte is a gem that needs to be continually supported. Other schools need to take lessons from how we show up in the community and support the community.”*

Whitewater Middle School

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Wilson STEM Academy

NO PARENT FOCUS GROUP WAS ARRANGED.

Winget Park Elementary School

Parents - 5

1. What do you like best about this magnet school?

- *First year at CMS, impressed with communication, it’s a lot so you know what’s going on and it’s sent in multiple formats: apps, emails. It’s very frequent; they do a good job communicating.*
- *I like the activities, like the living wax museum that’s coming up, STEM night, things that students get to do outside of pen and paperwork*

- *STEM night watching them show me and how it works, activities in Makerspace and STEM lab and the way my child can explain and put it together and what it does, I learn from them*
- *The makerspace, the STEM lab, gives neat ideas to learn to get and play with at home. It's fun to see them get exposure that I didn't get until high school. I love to see them get opportunities that I could not provide on my own*
- *Kids have made a makerspace at home-we now cannot throw anything away. My daughter wants to make leprechaun traps and pulled things at home to create one. Specials are a week long so kids can really focus on what they are making, when they're in it they're in it. That was a change they made, specials used to be one week*

2. What suggestions do you have for ways to strengthen this magnet school?

- *Only thing to enhance at Winget is that I wish they could have electives to do even more things outside of the curriculum. They have a chorus off and on, theater, drama, band, and orchestra. I also wish they could have STEAM instead of STEM*
- *It could be a CMS district thing, but offering more at some schools creates barriers because some kids have those opportunities and some kids don't. All parents cannot afford different classes outside of school so it's nice that schools offer these activities*
- *More clubs could be orchestra, and coding. More clubs for kids to participate in.*
- *An earlier start time*
- *Would love to do girls on the run as a parent with students. They can have more opportunities for parents to get involved with student activities*

3. How would you describe the magnet or choice application process?

- *We applied 5 years ago. I didn't love it. It was a lot of questions, not as intuitive from the beginning of the process, had to search for the information to find and then apply.*
- *It has improved over the years, more information about schools on the website. They have open houses, virtually and in-person, now it's easy to walk through and just read the information that's available.*
- *We looked at two areas of the city. The principal at the time did the tour himself. We loved what Winget had to offer, he also said there is no separation between magnet students and neighborhood students. That is what helped us to make our decision to come here*
- *Had to dig to find all of the information; how do I scan so it goes into the app...trying to figure out transportation zones...had to decline magnet spots because schools were further than they felt comfortable with being that far away from child. Really impressed by leadership within school and directing me through the process. I did not know this school was a magnet until someone at the school told me.*

4. How does this school try to actively engage families in the school and magnet theme?

- *With STEM night, the different events happening, parents are always invited. Communication piece helps, we know what's happening*
- *Get notices from teachers if students are working on projects, they ask if we have any supplies. We get pics from Makerspace. Teachers share with parents what they're doing and engage them in asking for help to offer and to see what they are doing, especially for those that cannot be in the school*
- *Some projects are work at home and send back in. A few weeks ago we had to make a car that can go. My daughter used a hanger and gummies for wheels. She is in the PreK 4 year olds.*

5. Why did you choose to apply to this school and send your child here?

- *Came to school for a tour and had such a great experience and now we also applied for second child to attend PreK*

6. What would you recommend to a magnet school principal or magnet coordinator to promote the school and program more?

- *More awareness for home families to retain them*
- *A way to get beginner's day information: daycares and preschools*
- *Involve companies in the area to help market and have hands-on experiences. exposure to STEM careers. along with parents coming in for career days, have companies come in, and then share it on social media so families know. Involve PTO to share information about school on a consistent basis*
- *Offer a parent's information night-for PreK parents*

7. How are families, business partners and community members part of the decision making process in regards to school improvement and sustainability at this school?

- *Principal seems very supportive of teachers-during a state of address deflected and said everything is due to teachers.*
- *Really good with criticism-will respond and answer questions through Facebook school site.*

Appendix C

District Focus Group Notes

Academics District Focus Group

8 participants

1. What do you see as the purpose of magnets in CMS? Do you see that being accomplished in Charlotte-Mecklenburg magnet schools?

- *Ensure that we have a more diverse set of opportunities for students.*
- *Allows for specialized programs to exist, not to be duplicated.*
- *Barriers outside of magnet programs hurt magnets. An academic piece that could be causing a magnet program not to be successful.*
- *More diverse student bodies under the same roof-diversity helps students learn better and more.*
- *Makes CMS more competitive and attractive with charters and private schools.*
- *Different things we offer is to interest students and parents - sometimes more than kids.*
- *Families interested in school building versus theme or to escape from an undesirable neighborhood school.*
- *Running to something or running away from something.*

2. Do magnet schools fall under Curriculum? Who do magnet schools report to?

- *Magnet office responsible for supporting themes.*
- *The Learning Community Superintendent oversees the schools and the principal reports to the Learning Superintendent.*
- *Learning and Teaching try to ensure that everyone has access to aligned instruction.*

- *Themes-consistent across themes ex. IB.*
- *Student placement team to help place kids in the school.*
- 3. Do school improvement and Title 1 include magnet schools in their goals?**
 - *Every school has a school improvement plan-worked hard in strategy office to align SIP to district goals but that also includes work within their themes to accomplish their goals.*
 - *Ex. actions may include in an IB school how actions lead to achievement.*
 - *Some Title 1 magnet schools using Title 1 resources for training and resources for magnets.*
- 4. How do you keep magnet school themes/curriculum unique?**
 - *IB has its own set of standards and practices and are different than other magnet themes-Cambridge does not have the same package compared to IB.*
 - *Adding Cambridge as a magnet program so may dilute uniqueness.*
 - *Dual language immersion is trying to be unique by having 5 languages and their literacy development looks different than non-immersion school literacy\uniqueness but it can be a blessing and a challenge at times.*
 - *Identified curriculum commitments-thematic units-Montessori uniqueness.*
 - *Being able to attend to the needs of the school in regards to professional development beyond what we have in the district.*
- 5. What kind of training do schools get on their magnet theme? Do you think principals and teachers in magnet schools need more training and professional development than in non-magnet schools? If yes, why? If not, why?**
 - *More professional development than other schools so schools need support in holding things together at their schools.*
 - *This is where we have a mess-I am the only former principal in the group-not sure it needs to be more but how can we take this training and make this integrated-standards aligned magnet theme. Sometimes we add more and don't make those connections.*
 - *The other side of that is - it is required by our organizations - we can do better at merging but it is a balancing act.*
 - *A lot of transitions and leadership comes in and knows nothing about the magnet theme/program or what it looks like in our context.*
- 6. What suggestions/ideas do you have to strengthen magnet schools in the district?**
 - *Magnet office is tiny but mighty-we are tiny and need more people in the magnet office-70 magnet schools-each supporting more than 20 schools.*
 - *More funding for training requirements.*
 - *More collaboration with Learning and Teaching to not make the magnet theme more but just different-faithful to the theme but meshing with district expectations-time and space.*
 - *Resources to support actual programs so the theme can be implemented with fidelity and be offered equitably across the district.*
 - *IB schools have lots of requirements so it's hard to find teachers to teach specific courses and can't find people to teach it-students not ideal taking online courses.*
 - *More funding for teacher recruitment.*
- 7. Is there anything I have not asked that you want to share?**
 - *Magnet coordinator in each school to implement the magnet theme in each school and be given the time to do that.*

Early and Middle College District Focus Group

5 participants

1. What do you see as strengths of Early and Middle Colleges programs in Charlotte-Mecklenburg magnet schools? Why do you consider them strengths?

- *Incredible option for students (middle college) to pursue their transfer credits and associates degrees.*
- *Hope there are additional options like this for families- perhaps home school families.*
- *Smaller class size for students, first generation college students.*
- *Free associates degree or college transfer credits for students.*
- *Some kids who do not fit in other places fit at early and middle colleges.*
- *Increased graduation rates, advanced preparation for college, mental focus on being college bound, significant financial savings, development of time management and study skills, professional relationships and networking opportunities. I consider all of these factors to be strengths because they support the exploration, development and execution of students' post-secondary planning.*
- *Allows them to be around other students focused on academics.*
- *To get into Middle Colleges students need a 2.8 GPA unweighted or a 2.5 with a qualified test score (preSAT or ACT score).*
- *9th and 10th graders at early colleges there are no requirements.*
- *In Early Colleges, there is a lottery process to get in but students need a 2.0 to stay and have to have a 2.5 to get into 11th and 12th grade and maintain a 2.5 while in early college.*
- *Central Piedmont Early College at Central Piedmont there are no requirements in 9th and 10th grade.*

2. Are Early and Middle College programs in Charlotte Mecklenburg schools well enrolled? What marketing efforts have been employed or need to be employed to ensure families are aware and engaged in these programs?

- *Originally there was a flier but now a postcard that goes out to students who qualify.*
- *Best kept secret to get a free college degree.*
- *Would like more support from the district to get the word out to students who qualify.*
- *Colleagues in other schools think middle and early colleges take the cream of the crop away.*
- *Used to be part of lottery 1, 2 and 3 and now are only part of lottery 1.*
- *Lottery closes after 1st lottery and parents did not know about the opportunity.*
- *Yes, the Early and Middle College programs in Charlotte Mecklenburg are well enrolled. Most, if not all, have students on their waitlist hoping to gain access to the programs. Marketing efforts have included attendance at recruitment fairs and magnet information sessions at feeder magnet schools. Hosting campus tours and open houses. Leveraging recruitment tools on the CMS website, individual school websites and various social media platforms.*

3. Improving diversity is a district goal. Do you see that being accomplished through Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools' Early and Middle Colleges programs? Why or why not?

- *Middle college campuses are very diverse ethnically and with poverty levels-a great job.*
- *Middle college campus has been diverse for the past 6 years.*

- *We have some high fliers and some who struggle.*
 - *Strongly believe in our middle college programs attracting diverse student bodies.*
 - *In Middle College we monitor students all year and remediate in high school and college classes/tracking them, meeting with them so they won't have to be sent back to their neighborhood school. In the past at the end of the year we would put them on contracts but if at the end of year a student is still struggling then they are sent back to their neighborhood school so they are not hurting their college GPA. We keep them as long as we can.*
 - *Early colleges try to keep students as long as possible- academic contracts, tutoring, check-ins - academic check-in weekly. Teachers do not have access to college courses so sit with students to look at college grades with them to make sure they are doing ok. Sometimes SEL support is more what they need than academic.*
 - *Early colleges some students choose to go back to their own school.*
 - *All of us have a great relationship with colleges so that we can work together for students.*
 - *Memorandum of Understanding that they must have a 2.0 for college*
 - *Yes, I do see diversity improving through the development of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' Early and Middle College programs. Our program at CPEC is currently 47.5% African American, 29.9% Hispanic, 14.7% White, 4% Asian and 4% Two or more. The demographics of our campus are more diverse than many of the traditional high schools in our district and are more reflective of the diversity goals our school district is working towards.*
- 4. Beyond students attending classes to obtain college credit, in what ways do Early and Middle Colleges support/integrate the theme?**
- *There is no magnet theme like IB. Our theme would be college prep and taking college courses. So everything we do is strongly connected to taking college classes and completing high school.*
 - *All do a great job of partnering with college campuses.*
 - *College career partnerships.*
 - *Can participate in SGA at colleges and other college events.*
 - *Supportive transition to college.*
 - *Our own National Honor Society.*
 - *Not a traditional magnet so hard to fall under that category.*
 - *Follow all magnet processes and apply through lottery.*
 - *Unique process for getting in.*
 - *Part of Cooperative Innovative High School in NC that partners with community colleges.*
 - *Early and Middle Colleges integrate instructional practices that ensure that students' collective and individual academic needs are supported through the seminar experiences. Students assume ownership of the planning and execution of their four/five year plan. Students have access to a collaborative network of peers across schools that engage in a cycle of development, practice and review for continuous improvement. Early and Middle Colleges consistently use protocols by staff and students that demonstrate an intention of student/staff collaboration and student voice/choice. Lastly, the Early and Middle College framework allows students and staff to identify, collect, monitor and analyze data on an ongoing basis through PLCs, individual student supports and schoolwide discourse.*
- 5. How does Early and Middle college school leadership coach and include staff in collaborative decision-making that elevates diverse perspectives?**

- *Early and Middle college programs allow for a clear decision-making model that is designed to promote school community voice and collective will to ensure collaboration in making decisions. School leadership allows staff to assume ownership for securing individual professional development growth and to contribute to our schoolwide professional development.*
- 6. In what ways does the district provide resources and curriculum support for Early and Middle College programs?**
- *Very supportive in devices that students need.*
 - *Give us support for high school courses we are teaching and following the developed curriculum.*
 - *Other than CATO, there was a lot of flexibility with funding and now not sure if they will get that money from the Cooperative Innovative Grant. They are now being told with the new superintendent that we will not have this pot of money.*
 - *Hard because we all run our campuses different because demographics are different so would like to continue to run our programs in our unique ways.*
 - *Worried about less money and made to be the same.*
 - *Enrollment is lower than other schools so given extra money to do PD and teachers compared to other schools. Worried that is going away and that will hurt their programs and the loss of money will make them less creative.*
 - *Allotments for the positions we have from district.*
 - *Everyone does not get the same.*
 - *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools supports Early and Middle College programs by establishing partnership agreements with area community colleges and universities. The district also supports student recruitment and parent outreach through our Magnet and Student Placement Offices. CMS supports Early and Middle College programs via teacher recruitment and staffing initiatives and data-informed professional development for both our faculty and staff.*
 - *Flexibility to trade for cash to be creative.*
 - *Depends on when school became a school and state funds have petered out for PD*
 - *Four middle colleges get same allotted positions.*
 - *Counselors are liaison between college advisors.*
 - *We get what other high schools do.*
 - *We get money for positions.*
 - *We are able to run our schools with our allotted positions we have.*
 - *CATO does not get the same state money - 055 money different.*
 - *Early College provides counselors/liaison - 500 students at Charlotte Engineering Early College.*
 - *Allotments look promising but the timelines lock in (20 day)-options have changed for principals and what you can exchange for ES, MS, HS principal at all schools (conversions).*
 - *Hard to get clear answers on things this year such as ADM*
 - *Not getting all the information in a timely manner.*
 - *No conversions this year for middle and early college and maybe all schools.*
 - *055 money may not get it all.*
 - *All have different needs.*
- 7. In what ways do Early and Middle Colleges programs welcome and involve businesses and organizations in career related and curriculum focused partnerships that enhance the theme and benefit students?**

- *All students participate in authentic learning opportunities through partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), business/industry and community groups. All Early and Middle College stakeholders engage in ongoing work to identify and develop student internship opportunities aligned to student interest and community needs. Lastly, staff and students at Early and Middle Colleges engage in community service opportunities on a quarterly or semester basis with local business partners and agencies.*
- 8. To what extent do Early and Middle College programs involve families and community partners in the decisions about the programs?**
- *Early and Middle College programs involve families in the decision making process by ensuring that parents and families have access to resources and activities that support the school improvement planning process. Parents are also supported by school staff in understanding and engaging in academic support strategies that can be implemented at home by parents and guardians.*
 - *Largest partner is the college and then PTA, School Improvement Team.*
 - *Meet with colleges to make sure that we are meeting their needs and they are meeting our needs ex. schedules so students can get courses.*
 - *Students are involved in picking their schedules and what colleges to transfer to.*
 - *SIP process parents are involved.*
- 9. Other thoughts?**
- *Been talk about expanding Middle College to be Early College/hope they will talk to early colleges and middle colleges*
 - *Having no requirements for 9th and 10th is a concern.*
 - *Middle college is a place for them to go if it is not working out in their large high schools.*
 - *Hope district takes feedback and looks at the impact of expanding and taking away requirements.*
 - *Not having middle schoolers on college campuses.*
 - *Thinking about moving forward if we are all Early Colleges that we all get to be a part of the planning for that-not building the plane while we fly it. Want to set 8th graders up for success.*
 - *We don't know officially that middle colleges will be early colleges. We have heard nothing official and would like to be talked to about it.*
 - *055 money has been wonderful and allotments have been great so we hope that continues.*
 - *District can do more to promote our program-all sophomores get an opportunity to get a college degree.*
 - *Change is difficult and takes time so hope that we are at the table if there is going to be a move to move middle colleges to early colleges.*
 - *If open to everyone that is a big piece - our voices heard and be included. We are the ones leading the building and want that to be remembered and respected and communicated with.*
 - *We all love our programs and want more folks to know about us.*
 - *We should all have waiting lists to get in.*
 - *Principals love what they do and just want to be heard.*
 - *Magnet office has been a level of support, get quick responses from Marquita.*

Operational District Focus Group

7 Participants

1. **What do you see as the purpose of magnets in CMS? Do you see that being accomplished in Charlotte-Mecklenburg magnet schools?**
 - *Having been a parent of an IB student - magnet programs give our students and families an opportunity to get an educational experience beyond the general ed curriculum. There is an additional focus that would possibly help them in the future - in college, careers and work experience. We have all sorts of magnet programs- gives students an opportunity for growth.*
 - *Historically as a district we have used magnet programs to reduce high concentration of poverty and promote diversity through theme based education. Magnet programs still teach students how to read, write, count and be good citizens but through the theme lens. Magnet programs attract families through a student's interest.*
2. **What financial support does the district give magnet schools? – Marketing? Professional Development? Positions? Technology? Is there a financial plan for improvement and sustainability?**
 - *We do get funding in a number of buckets and ways. There is position funding through ADM like arts schools where we go above and beyond what would normally be at a comprehensive middle or high school like provide a dance, theater, visual arts, technical theater, music teacher plus PE, general art and general music. Other dollars and funds are allocated for some other programs. We always could have more - there are areas of opportunity for additional positions for support - for example - magnet coordinators are needed - to facilitate the programming and help with recruitment. It's inconsistent there. There are other monies pooled like state gifted funds help with LI/TD programs. There is always a need. An opportunity as we figure out which programs are moving forward -to continue to ask for allocation and resources to reach the programs in ways that we don't have at the moment.*
3. **What kind of transportation does each magnet school/student have?**
 - *We have varying levels.*
 - *We have neighborhood stops (about 2/10 of a mile for ES, 4/10 for MS and HS) - but if you get down to it most are walking less than a tenth of a mile. Trying to define neighborhood stops is part of this process.*
 - *We have Express stops -that just happened this year. We did have it around 2011-2016/17 (I might be off a year or so).*
 - *Those are the two big levels. We also have IEP or 504 with extension students.*
 - *As we looked at this we asked - how do you determine who gets what? We worked in association with many departments.....historically we came out of a recession in 2016/17 - we would have K-5 or 6-8 or high schools with express stops but it came down to cost. For example SAIL - one of our language immersion schools was expensive because it was county wide then.*
4. **What was the goal of the high school magnet transportation change?**
 - *The factors drove the decision to go to express magnet bus stops for secondary schools in 2023-24:*
 - *Lack of funding by 3-4 million dollars eliminated by the district for transportation. We worked with Nakesha and Walter - There are a lot of ways to solve this problem.....we could look at the most expensive students to transport or varying layers. At the time, our most negative feedback was lower*

kids since high school students are more likely to drive or use public transit. We decided as a district to focus on high school students. So Express stops ONLY serve HS.

- *It was not a result for loss in funds from state efficiency but from county funding.*

5. You have different zones. Can you talk about the zones and the rationale for how they are divided?

- *We used to have four zones but now we have three - violet, blue and green - but there used to be a gray zone - it loosely followed across Route 85 - diagonally east and west across the county.*
- *The change is one of the things that came out of the last review - a lot of poverty was concentrated in our gray zone. We wanted to create more opportunities for students so we eliminated the gray zone. Once we did that - we had these 3 areas to make sure each theme was offered as best we could - to offer to families. Violet - is North, Blue is Southwest Charlotte and Green is Southeast unless there is one of a kind and then that is county-wide.*
- *We did try to divide it for equitable access but in the past 8 years Charlotte-Mecklenburg has changed. Planning for schools is a hard job to keep up with - now we are seeing what adjustments have to be made to the zones.*

6. Is there anything I have not asked that you want to share?

- *Magnet has an impact on the larger operation of transportation. Depending on the list, we range from 10th to 2nd largest system due to the miles. We can't find people, we don't have people. We had a great presentation given by the executive director to the board that tells you a whole story. We end up raising pay, bus drivers make just under \$20/hour. Even though it's more competitive - we don't have enough school bus drivers.*
- *Yes - we are all here because we want a better education for kids. We could have a great magnet program, but if it costs too much and we can't get them there that is a problem.*
- *We have our first drop off at 7:15 AM until 4:15 in the afternoon.*
- *Efficiency factors are maximized but there has been an uptick of students to serve too.*
- *On time performance is important too. We have to double back too.*
- *We basically have 3 tiers of times - it really is about 7 bell tiers but it's not that complicated. We have some offset from those times.*
- *Board Presentation was great because it showed the whole story. It also showed how we went from about 40 magnet schools to nearly 70.*
- *Kids ride longer - we have to extend the run. Some kids get off the bus at 6:30pm. Kids have a maximum of 4 hours in a day on a bus by policy.*

7. Is diversity, magnet and/or choice part of your strategic plan?

- *The strategic plan falls under the Strategy Department - and it has several parts and follows our pillars of excellence. We are currently working on strategies and will give a report to the board soon (there was a preliminary report this past Tuesday). I am part of one of the committees working on the plan - the Engagement Excellence part which includes- reaching out to families and the community to gain insight to find out what families and the community care about and align that with the goals and guardrails of the district. There is a meeting coming up soon and then more information then.*

8. Communication works with marketing and advertising at the district level - how about the individual school level?

- *We work from a district-wide perspective. So for the survey that is going out about magnet schools, we put the survey on the website, text, email, etc. We blast the entire district. We also share on social media about the programs. At the school level - we encourage them to share what we have shared. It depends on the bandwidth at the schools and if they have someone that does communications of the school. We ask them to re-email and share - and many schools do.*

9. Can you explain the student enrollment processes?

- *Transfers and reassignment requests. We work closely with the CMS magnet department. If we get a request, we see if they meet any entry requirements and send a letter showing families the next step.*
- *As for processing transfer requests - we work with the magnet department and monitor the numbers to make sure they are kept at or below capacity.*
- *Registration period (we use the language of "register," but families can opt out by using the lottery) was moved up because of the lottery dates. It was for families to have a chance to do online enrollment which includes receiving their student ID and PIN and allows the registrar a chance to ensure all documentation is in and it also gives families a chance to join the lottery.*
- *We do work closely with Student Placement - they allow the students to come into the district and they help us do that. Some feed through gifted, exceptional students, magnet programs are one of many ways they place students.*

Superintendent's Cabinet District Focus Group

8 participants

1. What do you see as the purpose of magnets in CMS?

- *No one responded to this question.*

2. Is improving diversity a district goal?

- *I am struggling with the wording of the questions. How about if I make a statement and then you can ask me follow up questions?. I believe we would want our magnet/school choice programs to be diverse.*
- *It's my understanding - and I would have to review the data. SES diversity - because that is an input - the hope is that it is also the output.*

3. Do you see SES diversity being accomplished in your magnet schools?

- *I would need to do some additional studyingbased on what I currently know...it does not seem we have equitable participation in school choice lottery and equitably diverse enrollment in magnet schools in all programs. I need to understand the waitlist....Who is seeking the program and who is getting into the program?*

4. What do you see as strengths of CMS magnet schools? Why do you consider them strengths?

- *Diversity of program choices.*
- *I feel like some of our programs are nationally renowned programs....we have pockets that are not just good - some are nationally recognized- so we have some amazing magnet programs.*
- *STEM programs - We go really deep and offer a wide variety of STEM programs. STEM is a national trend and we were able to be responsive to that.*
- *We offer some programs that are not offered in other districts in North Carolina and even in southern states that don't necessarily offer what we have.*

- *Wide parent interest, we often have waitlists in many of the programs - magnet programs seem to be popular in our community.*
 - *Our community is supportive - there are areas to strengthen but they would not want to get rid of magnet programs.*
 - *We are strategic about the placement of magnet programs - as programs have grown - programs have been placed for equity of access. We have tried to attend to that.*
- 5. What suggestions/ideas do you have to strengthen magnet schools in the district? Or see as additional needs of your magnet schools?**
- *I can't speak with assuredness that we have consistent quality across programs in all locations that have that magnet program theme. We are not sure that on the front end we resource the magnet program, or have a standard for resourcing the magnet programs.....so resources look different among schools.*
 - *We have an interest for a particular magnet program, then get Board approval, then figure out how we are going to pay for it. We do a big announcement - get it all the way through but then there is no plan on financing it - the professional development, materials, resources ... all of those things. It may be strong in one area because funds were available- but it's not equitable now.*
 - *We have some programs that are not highly sought after so enrollment is low. I don't know the process to say when that is true - we do "this." **Do you mean specific schools or programs?** Definitely schools (might be true for programs too).*
 - *Need more education for the parent base to understand the various tracks and opportunities for families. We did an amazing magnet fair this year. This is the first step to do other things to let families know.*
 - *To add on....it would be helpful for us to be able to understand the end game for said program....for example, if a student participates in Cambridge....what is the end game? Our end game is to graduate students enrolled, enlisted or employed.*
 - *The so what?*
 - *Yes - you're in a Montessori program - so what - what does that mean?*
- 6. Which magnet schools/themes do you consider the very best and why?**
- *Montessori programs in general - there are usually waitlists, parents tend to stay for all of K12 in Montessori and school data is generally positive.*
 - *Language programs on the whole are more popular and students have demonstrated success in the magnet component of the school and in the district. This is not aligned to the question - when we track expenditures on - from a curriculum standpoint- it's an expensive program. We have to buy books in 5 languages - it is expensive.*
 - *Visual and performing arts programs.*
- 7. Are principals specifically chosen to head magnet schools? Are magnet school and magnet theme questions part of the interview process in hiring for leadership?**
- *No and No which is a big problem.*
- 8. Do you think principals and teachers in magnet schools need more training and professional development than in non-magnet schools? If yes, why? If not, why?**
- *I don't know if it's more or more specific, program specific training. I don't know if a traditional teacher needs less professional development, it would just be different training.*

- *We do invest in some of that specialized professional development to build up a staff but often it's not sustainable funding so when turn over happens over the years, those staff are not trained.*
- *Some programs require training - like IB - so that would be a "more" in that particular case.*

9. What do you see as additional needs for CMS magnet schools and why are these needed? How could they be acquired?

- *In some programs we need more equitable access...for example arts. We have one.*
- *Traditional programs - we have two - close to the center of the city. A part of this is the review process - wherever you live in the city, you would have access to diverse programs.*
- *Also being sure we have equitable articulation in K12 programs.*
- *Differentiate and/or combine magnet programs and Career and Technical Education pathways. For parents - especially when students approach HS, this is muddy. Is it a career tech program or a magnet school? It needs to be clear to parents what their options are and how they access them. I think that is going to be ultra-important. We have a goal around enrolled, enlisted or employed, a 5 year goal starting 24-25. This is important to that.*

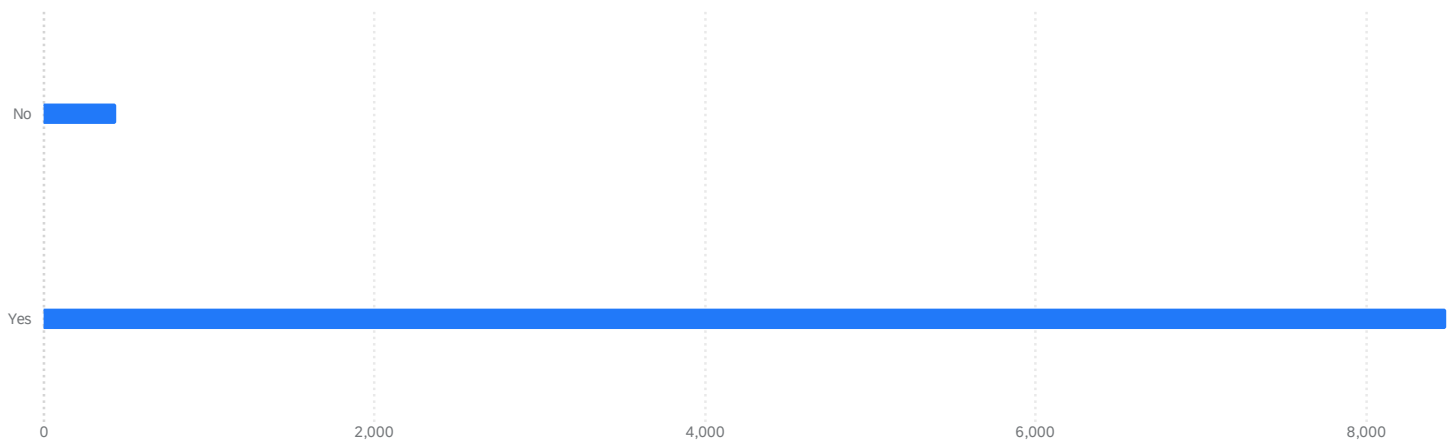
10. Is there anything I have not asked that you want to share?

- *One thing I worry about is our mindset about magnet programs - definitely in the community - maybe the district as well.... 'I am going to a magnet school rather than my home school' - sometimes they are going because they are avoiding the home school. I want it to be in the future - because I want the program and not using school choice or magnet to get away from their home school. I want magnets to be amazing but not forsake all schools.*
- *I hope some best practices regarding access via transportation & other methods are articulated. It's a really hot button topic in the district. I know across the country door-to-door is not the norm - I want to know the why with data behind it. I would like strategies for providing equity & access regarding having diverse magnet programs.*
- *I hope through this process that we will be able to take a look and determine what our themes are. I believe there are programs we offer through magnet that should be part of all schools, i.e. we should all be developing leaders....not just for students attending a Leadership Magnet program. For us to take inventory - & determine what is part of the core experience. We know the values of the CMS family & community - how can we offer those programs in the county to minimize the need to zig zag across the county for transportation.*
- *My greatest hope - is that anyone that comes to Charlotte has access to information. If I am in the airport & I meet someone that just moved here from Chicago, I want to be able to say, in 90 seconds or less, explain & point to a resource that helps them determine what their home school would be, other options & how to access those options - home neighborhood or magnet.*
- *I hope that whatever comes out of the process, it can help us not lose students - to charter or other options. That we align available programs & demand to either increase enrollment (as businesses call it - market share, not that students are market share). I want the community to know that we are the first & best option. That the best option is to stay in CMS even if I don't get into the magnet program I applied to.*
- *I wonder if we spread ourselves too thin - we have lots of programs - are we doing them as well as we could? I have wonderings about that.*

Unedited Community Survey Data

Are you a current resident of Charlotte and/or Mecklenburg County? 8,922 ⓘ

Responses: 10,021



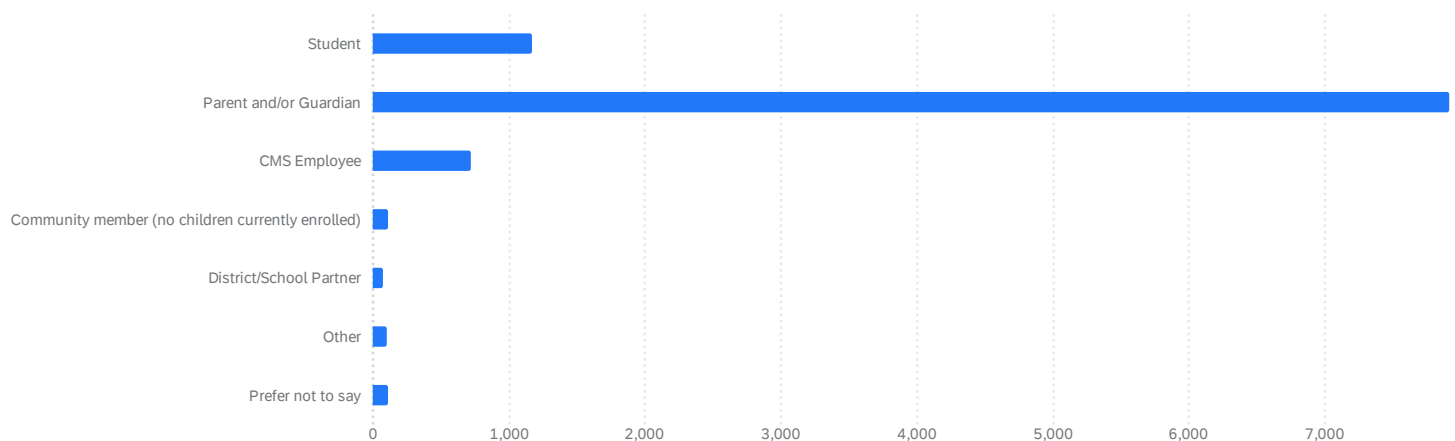
Are you a current resident of Charlotte and/or Mecklenburg County? 8,922 ⓘ

Q2 - Are you a current resident of Charlotte and/or Mecklenburg County?	Percentage	Count
No	5%	436
Yes	95%	8,486

Are you a current resident of Charlotte and/or Mecklenburg County? 8,922 ⓘ

Are you a current resident of Charlotte and/or Mecklenburg County?	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
No	1.00	1.00	1.00	436
Yes	2.00	2.00	2.00	8,486

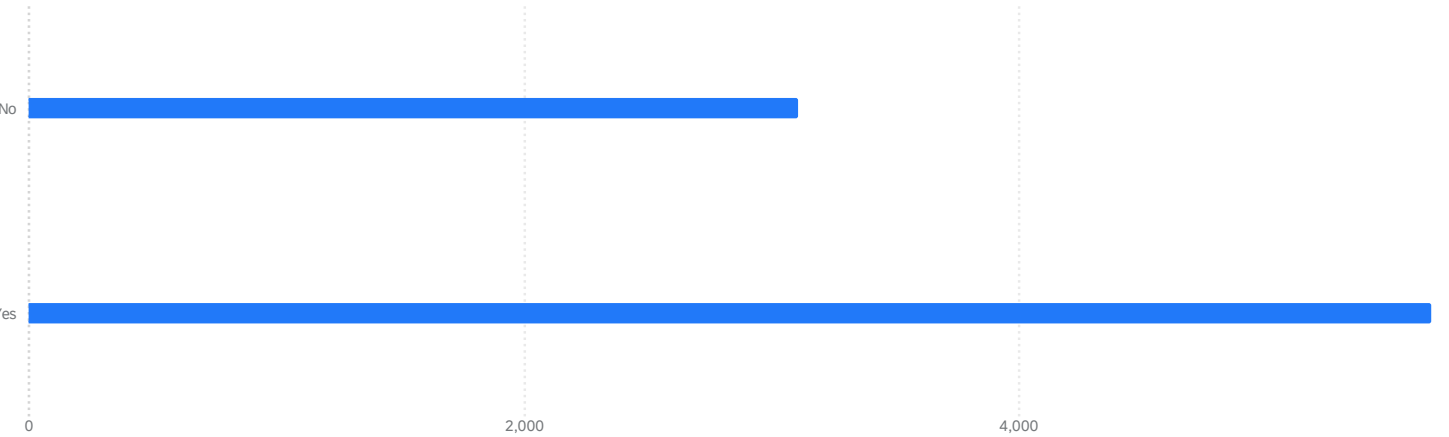
Which of the following best describes your relationship with the district? Select all that apply. 8,986 ⓘ



Which of the following best describes your relationship with the district? Select all that apply. 8,986 ⓘ

Q3 - Which of the following best describes your relationship with the district? Select all that apply.	Percentage	Count
Student	13%	1,171
Parent and/or Guardian	88%	7,918
CMS Employee	8%	717
Community member (no children currently enrolled)	1%	112
District/School Partner	1%	79
Other	1%	99
Prefer not to say	1%	113

Have you ever applied to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 8,776 ⓘ



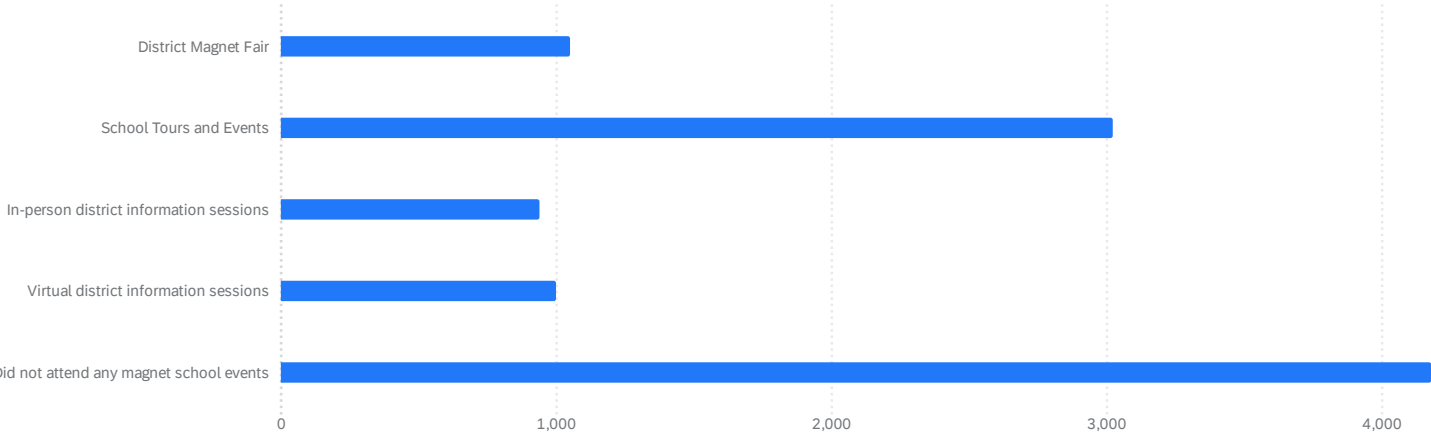
Have you ever applied to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 8,776 ⓘ

Q4 - Have you ever applied to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools?	Percentage	Count
No	35%	3,109
Yes	65%	5,667

Have you ever applied to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 8,776 ⓘ

Have you ever applied to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenbur...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
No	1.00	1.00	1.00	3,109
Yes	2.00	2.00	2.00	5,667

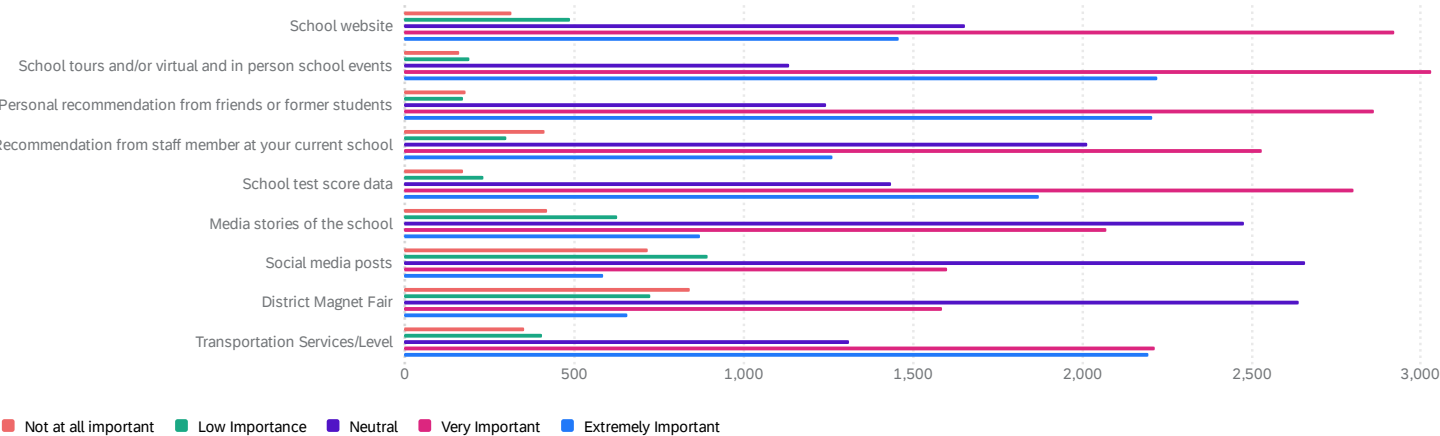
If you have attended a magnet school event, which of the following did you attend? 8,302 ⓘ



If you have attended a magnet school event, which of the following did you attend? 8,302 ⓘ

Q5 - If you have attended a magnet school event, which of the following did you attend?	Percentage	Count
District Magnet Fair	13%	1,049
School Tours and Events	36%	3,024
In-person district information sessions	11%	941
Virtual district information sessions	12%	999
Did not attend any magnet school events	50%	4,181

How important were the following sources of information in your initial selection of particular schools of choice to visit? 6,973 ⓘ



How important were the following sources of information in your initial selection of particular schools of choice to visit? 6,973 ⓘ

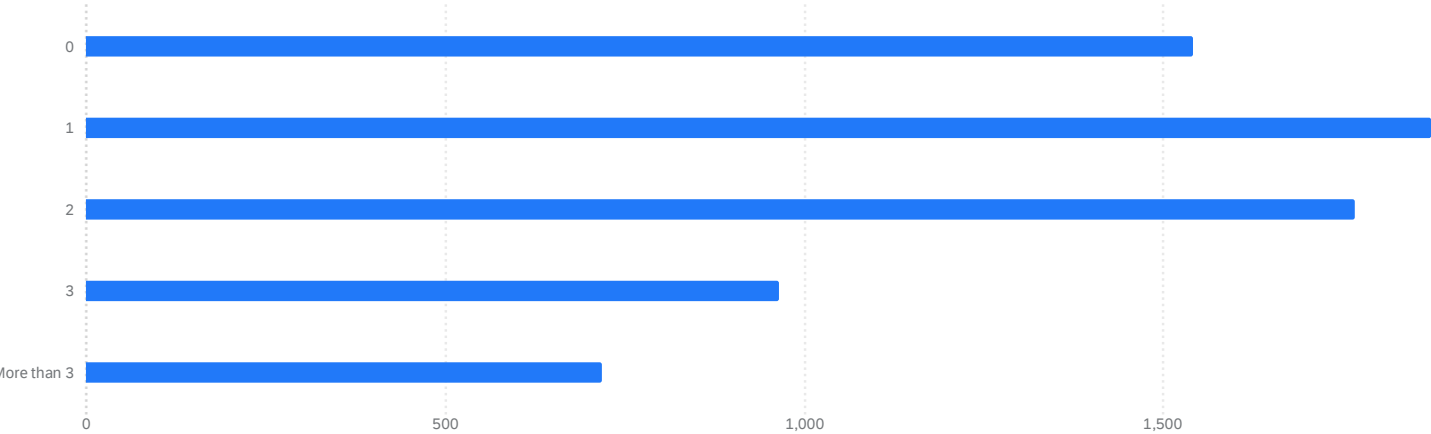
How important were the following sources of information in your initial selection of particular schools of choice to visit?	Not at all important	Low Importance	Neutral	Very Important	Extremely Important
School website	315	490	1,656	2,922	1,461

How important were the following sources of information in your initial sel...	Not at all important	Low Importance	Neutral	Very Important	Extremely Important
School tours and/or virtual and in person school events	163	192	1,136	3,032	2,224
Personal recommendation from friends or former students	181	172	1,244	2,861	2,210
Recommendation from staff member at your current school	412	300	2,015	2,531	1,265
School test score data	172	233	1,436	2,804	1,875
Media stories of the school	422	627	2,478	2,074	873
Social media posts	717	896	2,661	1,602	588
District Magnet Fair	841	725	2,642	1,587	658
Transportation Services/Level	353	408	1,312	2,214	2,196

How important were the following sources of information in your initial selection of particular schools of choice to visit? 6,973 ⓘ

How important were the following sources of information in your initial sel...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
School website	3.69	1.00	5.00	6,844
School tours and/or virtual and in person school events	4.03	1.00	5.00	6,747
Personal recommendation from friends or former students	4.01	1.00	5.00	6,668
Recommendation from staff member at your current school	3.60	1.00	5.00	6,523
School test score data	3.92	1.00	5.00	6,520
Media stories of the school	3.36	1.00	5.00	6,474
Social media posts	3.07	1.00	5.00	6,464
District Magnet Fair	3.08	1.00	5.00	6,453
Transportation Services/Level	3.85	1.00	5.00	6,483

How many magnet schools did you explore? 6,866 ⓘ



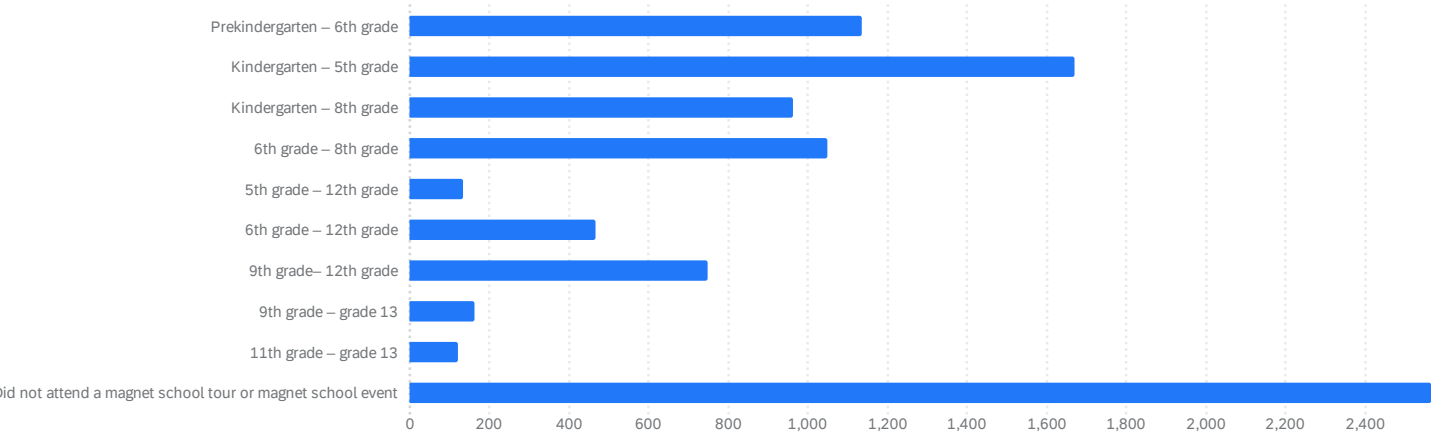
How many magnet schools did you explore? 6,866 ⓘ

Q7 - How many magnet schools did you explore?	Percentage	Count
0	22%	1,542
1	27%	1,874
2	26%	1,767
3	14%	965
More than 3	10%	718

How many magnet schools did you explore? 6,866 ⓘ

How many magnet schools did you explore?	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
0	1.00	1.00	1.00	1,542
1	2.00	2.00	2.00	1,874
2	3.00	3.00	3.00	1,767
3	4.00	4.00	4.00	965
More than 3	5.00	5.00	5.00	718

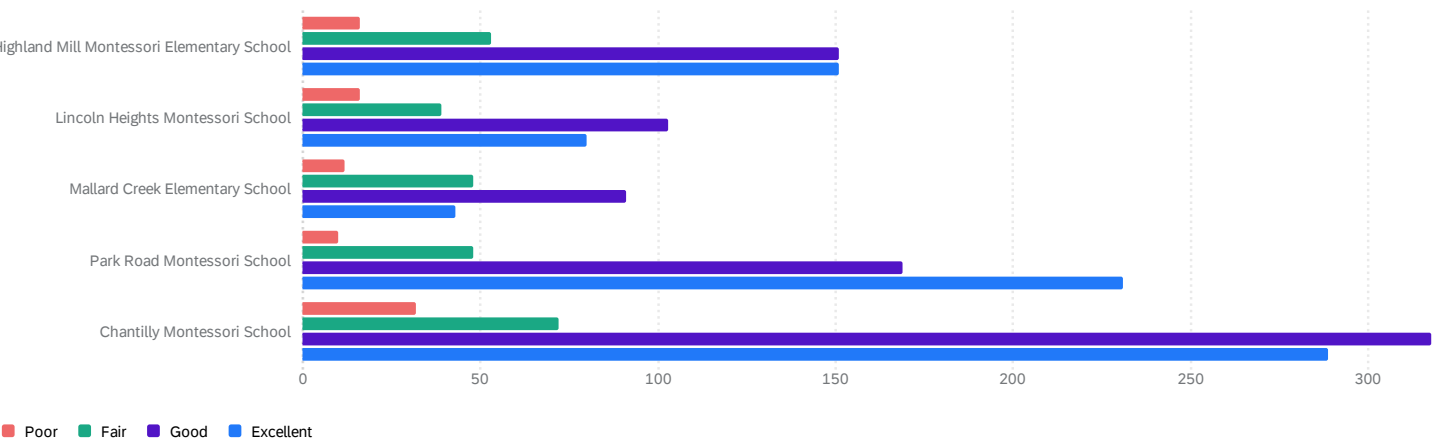
Did you attend a magnet school tour and/or magnet school event at a school with this grade span? (check all that apply) 6,819 ⓘ



Did you attend a magnet school tour and/or magnet school event at a school with this grade span? (check all that apply) 6,819 ⓘ

Q28 - Did you attend a magnet school tour and/or magnet school event at a school with this grade span? (check all that apply)	Percentage	Count
Prekindergarten – 6th grade	17%	1,138
Kindergarten – 5th grade	25%	1,672
Kindergarten – 8th grade	14%	963
6th grade – 8th grade	15%	1,051
5th grade – 12th grade	2%	136
6th grade – 12th grade	7%	469
9th grade– 12th grade	11%	748
9th grade – grade 13	2%	162
11th grade – grade 13	2%	123
Did not attend a magnet school tour or magnet school event	38%	2,568

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the Prekindergarten – 6th grade magnet schools. 927 ⓘ



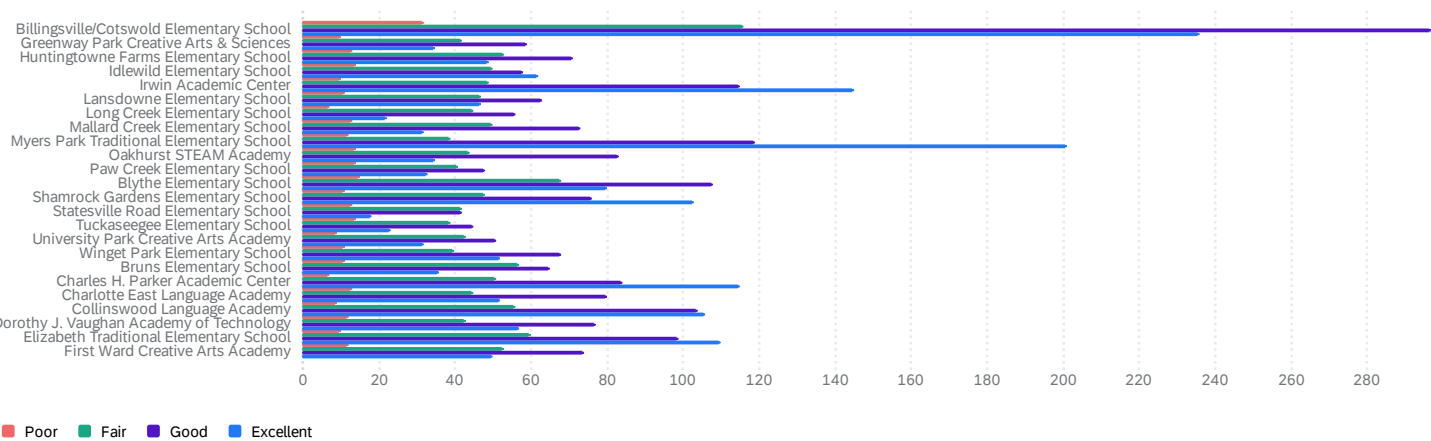
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the Prekindergarten – 6th grade magnet schools. 927 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Highland Mill Montessori Elementary School	16	53	151	151
Lincoln Heights Montessori School	16	39	103	80
Mallard Creek Elementary School	12	48	91	43
Park Road Montessori School	10	48	169	231
Chantilly Montessori School	32	72	318	289

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the Prekindergarten – 6th grade magnet schools. 927 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Highland Mill Montessori Elementary School	3.18	1.00	4.00	371
Lincoln Heights Montessori School	3.04	1.00	4.00	238
Mallard Creek Elementary School	2.85	1.00	4.00	194
Park Road Montessori School	3.36	1.00	4.00	458
Chantilly Montessori School	3.22	1.00	4.00	711

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the Kindergarten – 5th grade magnet schools. 1,411 ⓘ



Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the Kindergarten – 5th grade magnet schools. 1,411 ⓘ

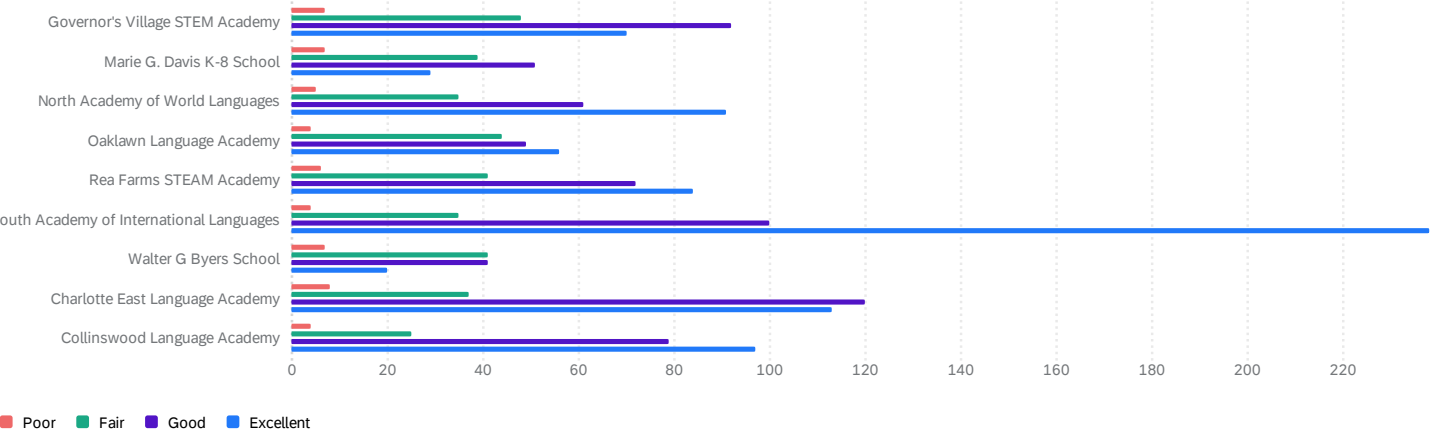
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Billingsville/Cotswold Elementary School	32	116	297	236
Greenway Park Creative Arts & Sciences	10	42	59	35
Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School	13	53	71	49
Idlewild Elementary School	14	50	58	62
Irwin Academic Center	10	49	115	145
Lansdowne Elementary School	11	47	63	47
Long Creek Elementary School	7	45	56	22
Mallard Creek Elementary School	13	50	73	32
Myers Park Traditional Elementary School	12	39	119	201
Oakhurst STEAM Academy	14	44	83	35
Paw Creek Elementary School	14	41	48	33

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Blythe Elementary School	15	68	108	80
Shamrock Gardens Elementary School	11	48	76	103
Statesville Road Elementary School	13	42	42	18
Tuckaseegee Elementary School	14	39	45	23
University Park Creative Arts Academy	9	43	51	32
Winget Park Elementary School	11	40	68	52
Bruns Elementary School	11	57	65	36
Charles H. Parker Academic Center	7	51	84	115
Charlotte East Language Academy	13	45	80	52
Collinswood Language Academy	9	56	104	106
Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy of Technology	12	43	77	57
Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School	10	60	99	110
First Ward Creative Arts Academy	12	53	74	50

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the Kindergarten – 5th grade magnet schools. 1,411 ⓘ				
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Billingsville/Cotswold Elementary School	3.08	1.00	4.00	681
Greenway Park Creative Arts & Sciences	2.82	1.00	4.00	146
Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School	2.84	1.00	4.00	186
Idlewild Elementary School	2.91	1.00	4.00	184
Irwin Academic Center	3.24	1.00	4.00	319
Lansdowne Elementary School	2.87	1.00	4.00	168
Long Creek Elementary School	2.72	1.00	4.00	130
Mallard Creek Elementary School	2.74	1.00	4.00	168
Myers Park Traditional Elementary School	3.37	1.00	4.00	371
Oakhurst STEAM Academy	2.79	1.00	4.00	176
Paw Creek Elementary School	2.74	1.00	4.00	136
Blythe Elementary School	2.93	1.00	4.00	271
Shamrock Gardens Elementary School	3.14	1.00	4.00	238

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Statesville Road Elementary School	2.57	1.00	4.00	115
Tuckaseegee Elementary School	2.64	1.00	4.00	121
University Park Creative Arts Academy	2.79	1.00	4.00	135
Winget Park Elementary School	2.94	1.00	4.00	171
Bruns Elementary School	2.75	1.00	4.00	169
Charles H. Parker Academic Center	3.19	1.00	4.00	257
Charlotte East Language Academy	2.90	1.00	4.00	190
Collinswood Language Academy	3.12	1.00	4.00	275
Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy of Technology	2.95	1.00	4.00	189
Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School	3.11	1.00	4.00	279
First Ward Creative Arts Academy	2.86	1.00	4.00	189

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the K-8 magnet schools. 787 ⓘ



Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the K-8 magnet schools. 787 ⓘ

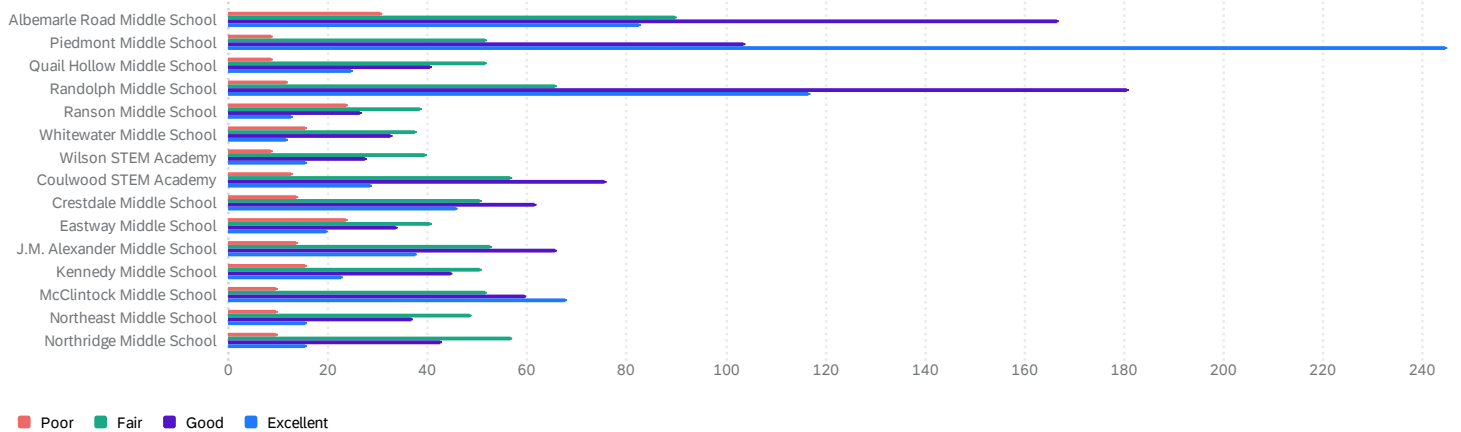
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Governor's Village STEM Academy	7	48	92	70
Marie G. Davis K-8 School	7	39	51	29
North Academy of World Languages	5	35	61	91
Oaklawn Language Academy	4	44	49	56
Rea Farms STEAM Academy	6	41	72	84
South Academy of International Languages	4	35	100	238

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Walter G Byers School	7	41	41	20
Charlotte East Language Academy	8	37	120	113
Collinswood Language Academy	4	25	79	97

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the K-8 magnet schools. 787 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Governor's Village STEM Academy	3.04	1.00	4.00	217
Marie G. Davis K-8 School	2.81	1.00	4.00	126
North Academy of World Languages	3.24	1.00	4.00	192
Oaklawn Language Academy	3.03	1.00	4.00	153
Rea Farms STEAM Academy	3.15	1.00	4.00	203
South Academy of International Languages	3.52	1.00	4.00	377
Walter G Byers School	2.68	1.00	4.00	109
Charlotte East Language Academy	3.22	1.00	4.00	278
Collinswood Language Academy	3.31	1.00	4.00	205

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 6-8 magnet schools. 893 ⓘ



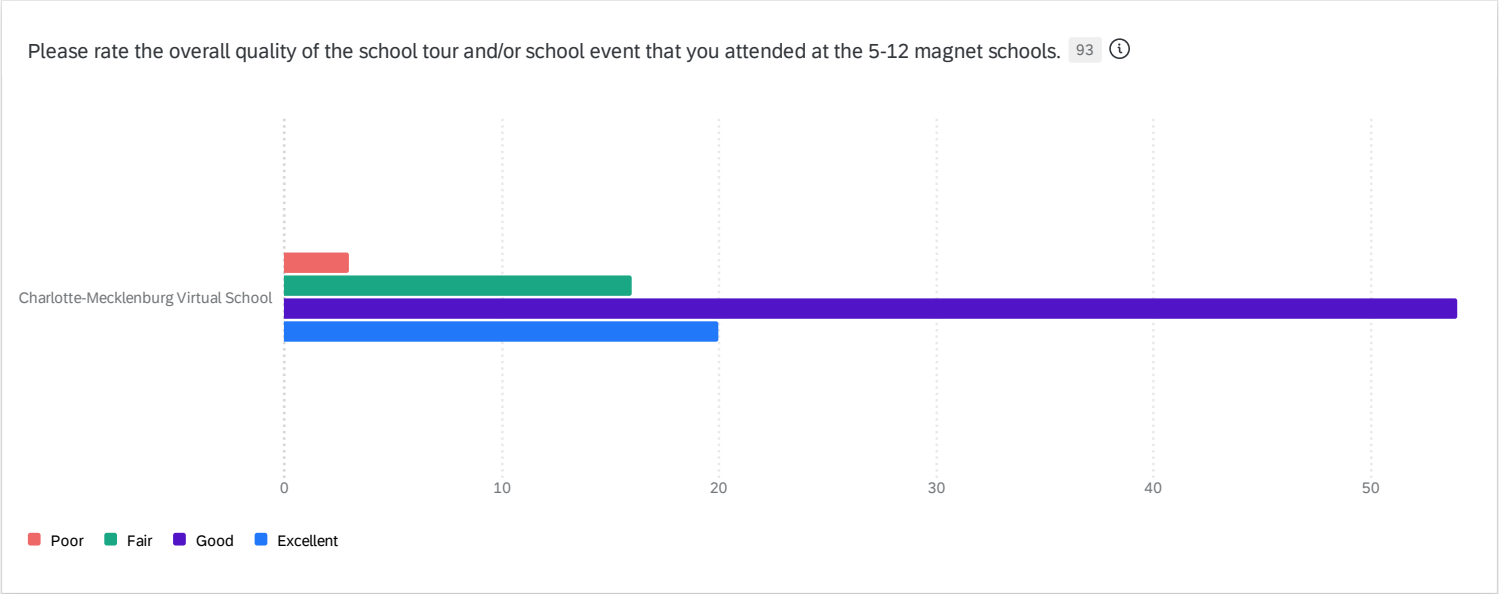
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 6-8 magnet schools. 893 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Albemarle Road Middle School	31	90	167	83
Piedmont Middle School	9	52	104	245
Quail Hollow Middle School	9	52	41	25
Randolph Middle School	12	66	181	117
Ranson Middle School	24	39	27	13
Whitewater Middle School	16	38	33	12
Wilson STEM Academy	9	40	28	16
Coulwood STEM Academy	13	57	76	29
Crestdale Middle School	14	51	62	46
Eastway Middle School	24	41	34	20
J.M. Alexander Middle School	14	53	66	38
Kennedy Middle School	16	51	45	23
McClintock Middle School	10	52	60	68
Northeast Middle School	10	49	37	16
Northridge Middle School	10	57	43	16

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 6-8 magnet schools. 893 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Albemarle Road Middle School	2.81	1.00	4.00	371
Piedmont Middle School	3.43	1.00	4.00	410
Quail Hollow Middle School	2.65	1.00	4.00	127
Randolph Middle School	3.07	1.00	4.00	376
Ranson Middle School	2.28	1.00	4.00	103
Whitewater Middle School	2.41	1.00	4.00	99
Wilson STEM Academy	2.55	1.00	4.00	93
Coulwood STEM Academy	2.69	1.00	4.00	175
Crestdale Middle School	2.81	1.00	4.00	173
Eastway Middle School	2.42	1.00	4.00	119
J.M. Alexander Middle School	2.75	1.00	4.00	171

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Kennedy Middle School	2.56	1.00	4.00	135
McClintock Middle School	2.98	1.00	4.00	190
Northeast Middle School	2.53	1.00	4.00	112
Northridge Middle School	2.52	1.00	4.00	126



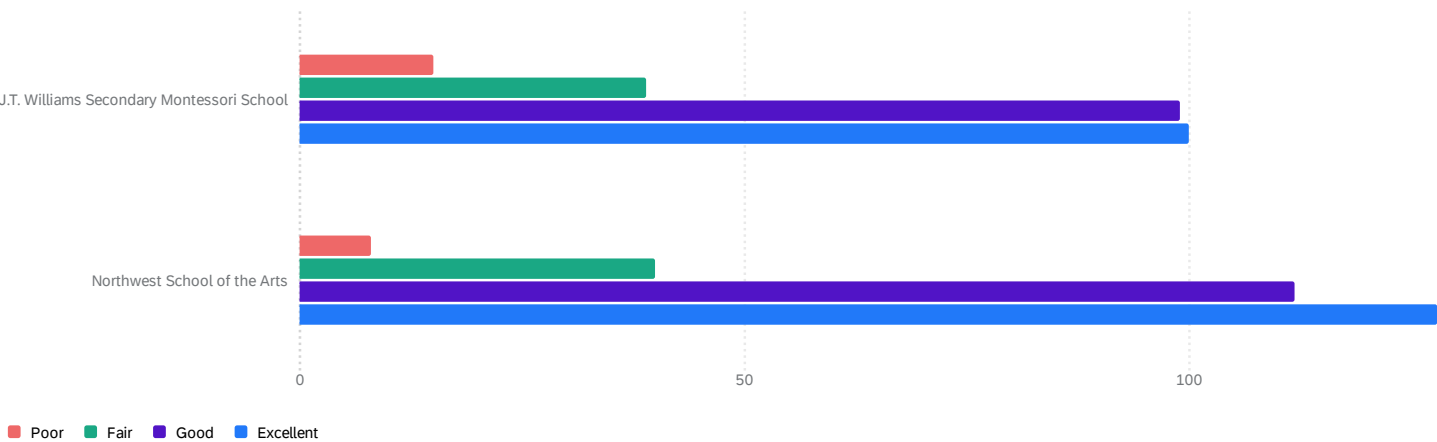
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 5-12 magnet schools. 93 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Virtual School	3	16	54	20

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 5-12 magnet schools. 93 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Virtual School	2.98	1.00	4.00	93

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 6-12 magnet schools. 376 ⓘ



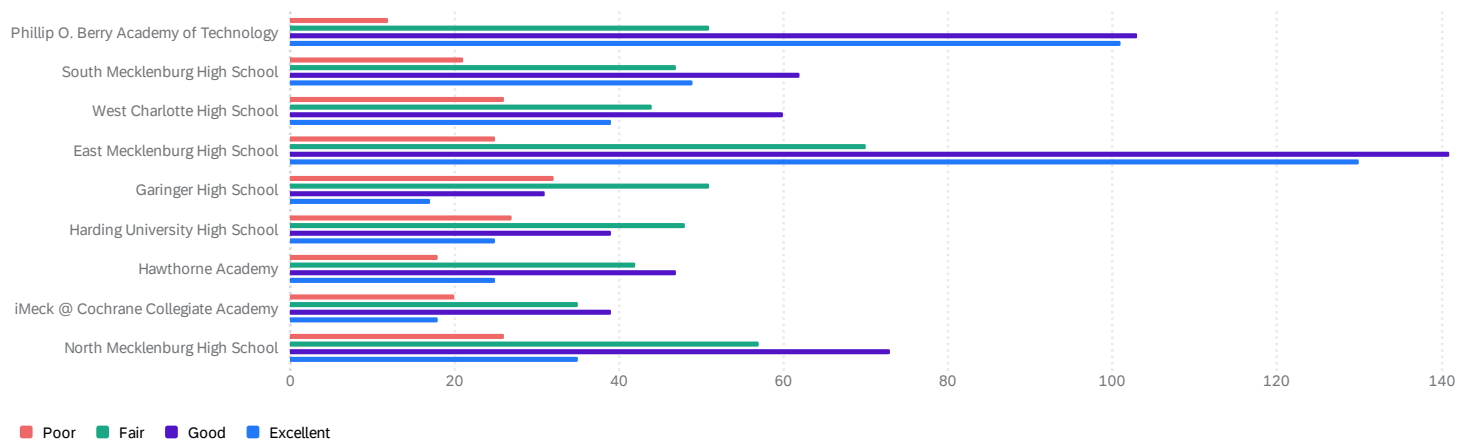
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 6-12 magnet schools. 376 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School	15	39	99	100
Northwest School of the Arts	8	40	112	128

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 6-12 magnet schools. 376 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School	3.12	1.00	4.00	253
Northwest School of the Arts	3.25	1.00	4.00	288

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 9-12 magnet schools. 603 ⓘ



Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 9-12 magnet schools. 603 ⓘ

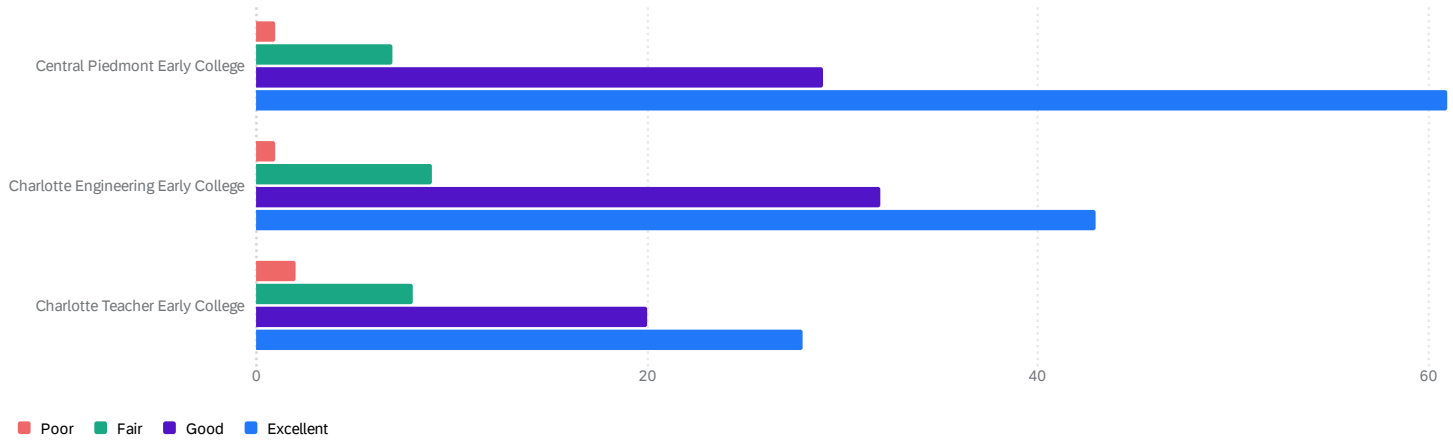
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology	12	51	103	101
South Mecklenburg High School	21	47	62	49
West Charlotte High School	26	44	60	39
East Mecklenburg High School	25	70	141	130
Garinger High School	32	51	31	17
Harding University High School	27	48	39	25
Hawthorne Academy	18	42	47	25
iMeck @ Cochrane Collegiate Academy	20	35	39	18
North Mecklenburg High School	26	57	73	35

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 9-12 magnet schools. 603 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology	3.10	1.00	4.00	267
South Mecklenburg High School	2.78	1.00	4.00	179
West Charlotte High School	2.66	1.00	4.00	169
East Mecklenburg High School	3.03	1.00	4.00	366
Garinger High School	2.25	1.00	4.00	131
Harding University High School	2.45	1.00	4.00	139
Hawthorne Academy	2.60	1.00	4.00	132

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
iMeck @ Cochrane Collegiate Academy	2.49	1.00	4.00	112
North Mecklenburg High School	2.61	1.00	4.00	191

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 9-13 magnet schools. 136 ⓘ



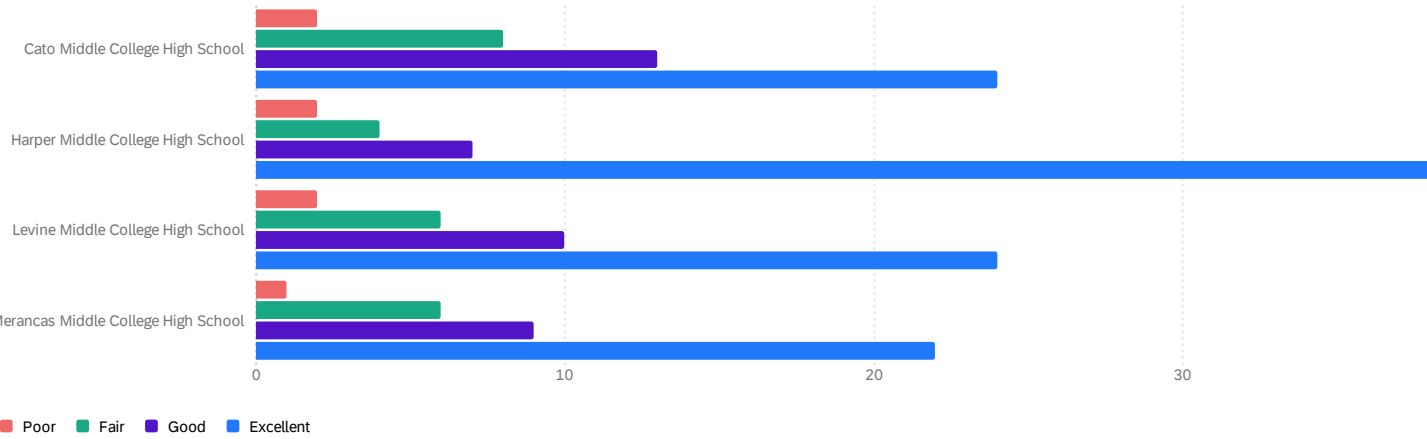
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 9-13 magnet schools. 136 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Central Piedmont Early College	1	7	29	61
Charlotte Engineering Early College	1	9	32	43
Charlotte Teacher Early College	2	8	20	28

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 9-13 magnet schools. 136 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Central Piedmont Early College	3.53	1.00	4.00	98
Charlotte Engineering Early College	3.38	1.00	4.00	85
Charlotte Teacher Early College	3.28	1.00	4.00	58

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 11-13 magnet schools. 95 ⓘ



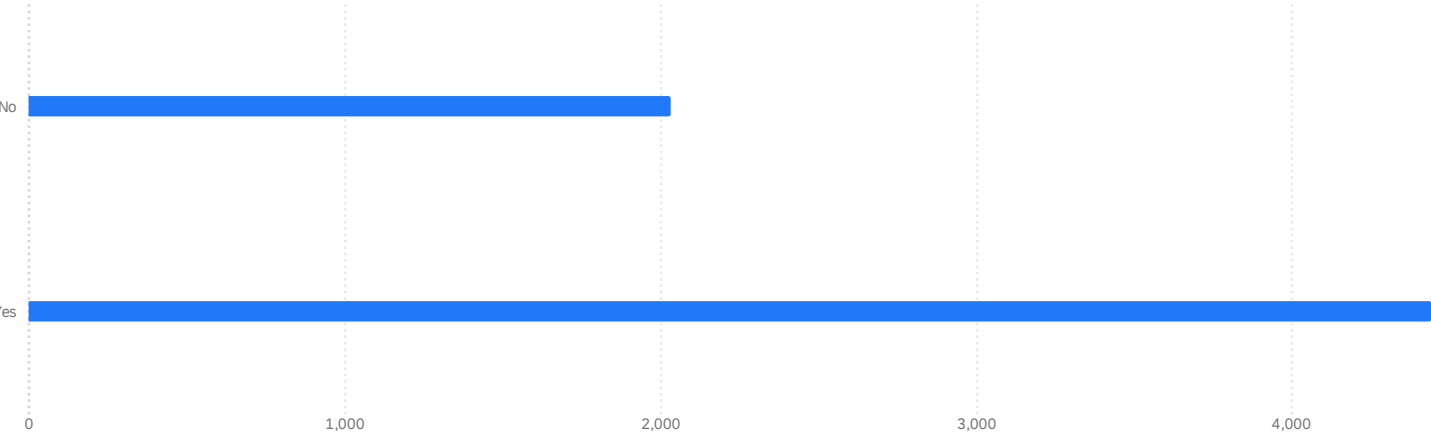
Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 11-13 magnet schools. 95 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Cato Middle College High School	2	8	13	24
Harper Middle College High School	2	4	7	38
Levine Middle College High School	2	6	10	24
Merancas Middle College High School	1	6	9	22

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that you attended at the 11-13 magnet schools. 95 ⓘ

Please rate the overall quality of the school tour and/or school event that...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Cato Middle College High School	4.04	1.00	5.00	47
Harper Middle College High School	4.47	1.00	5.00	51
Levine Middle College High School	4.14	1.00	5.00	42
Merancas Middle College High School	4.18	1.00	5.00	38

Was your student admitted to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 6,476 ⓘ



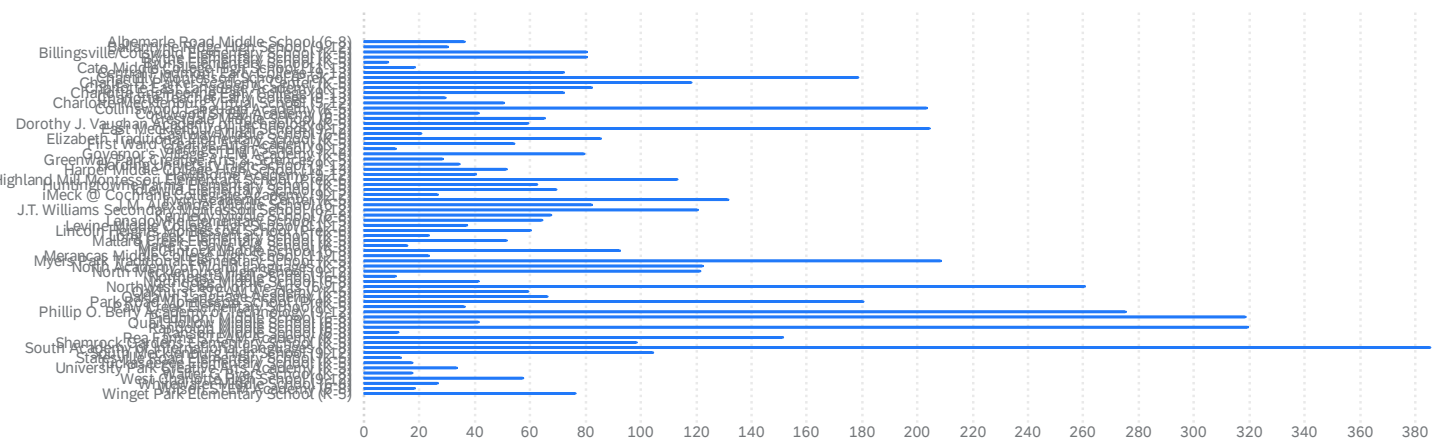
Was your student admitted to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 6,476 ⓘ

Q9 - Was your student admitted to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools?	Percentage	Count
No	31%	2,034
Yes	69%	4,442

Was your student admitted to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 6,476 ⓘ

Was your student admitted to a magnet school or program in Charlotte-Meckle...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
No	1.00	1.00	1.00	2,034
Yes	2.00	2.00	2.00	4,442

Which school(s) was your student admitted to? 4,149 ⓘ



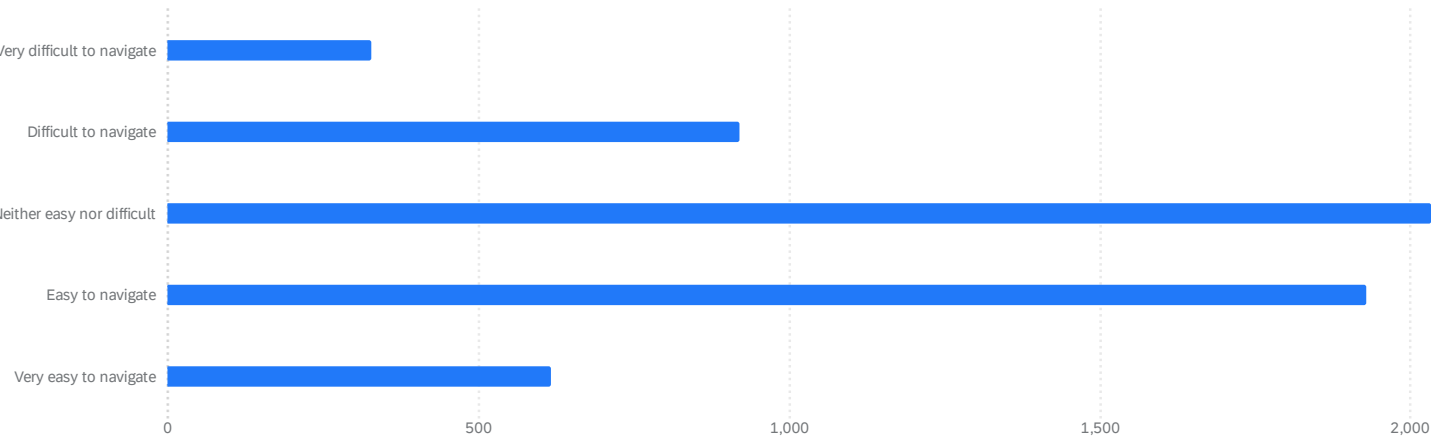
Which school(s) was your student admitted to? 4,149 ⓘ

Q10 - Which school(s) was your student admitted to?	Percentage	Count
Albemarle Road Middle School (6-8)	1%	37
Ballantyne Ridge High School (9-12)	1%	31
Billingsville/Cotswold Elementary School (K-5)	2%	81
Blythe Elementary School (K-5)	2%	81
Bruns Elementary School (K-5)	0%	9
Cato Middle College High School (11-13)	0%	19
Central Piedmont Early College (9-13)	2%	73
Chantilly Montessori School (PreK- 6)	4%	179
Charles H. Parker Academic Center (K-5)	3%	119
Charlotte East Language Academy (K-5)	2%	83
Charlotte Engineering Early College (9-13)	2%	73
Charlotte Teacher Early College (9-13)	1%	30
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Virtual School (5-12)	1%	51
Collinswood Language Academy (K-5)	5%	204

Q10 - Which school(s) was your student admitted to?	Percentage	Count
Coulwood STEM Academy (6-8)	1%	42
Crestdale Middle School (6-8)	2%	66
Dorothy J. Vaughan Academy of Technology (K-5)	1%	60
East Mecklenburg High School (9-12)	5%	205
Eastway Middle School (6-8)	1%	21
Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School (K-5)	2%	86
First Ward Creative Arts Academy (K-5)	1%	55
Garinger High School (9-12)	0%	12
Governor's Village STEM Academy (K-8)	2%	80
Greenway Park Creative Arts & Sciences (K-5)	1%	29
Harding University High School (9-12)	1%	35
Harper Middle College High School (11-13)	1%	52
Hawthorne Academy (9-12)	1%	41
Highland Mill Montessori Elementary School (PreK-6)	3%	114
Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School (K-5)	2%	63
Idlewild Elementary School (K-5)	2%	70
iMeck @ Cochrane Collegiate Academy (9-12)	1%	27
Irwin Academic Center (K-5)	3%	132
J.M. Alexander Middle School (6-8)	2%	83
J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori School (6-12)	3%	121
Kennedy Middle School (6-8)	2%	68
Lansdowne Elementary School (K-5)	2%	65
Levine Middle College High School (11-13)	1%	38
Lincoln Heights Montessori School (PreK-6)	1%	61
Long Creek Elementary School (K-5)	1%	24
Mallard Creek Elementary School (K-5)	1%	52
Marie G. Davis K-8 School (K-8)	0%	16
McClintock Middle School (6-8)	2%	93
Merancas Middle College High School (11-13)	1%	24
Myers Park Traditional Elementary School (K-5)	5%	209

Q10 - Which school(s) was your student admitted to?	Percentage	Count
North Academy of World Languages (K-8)	3%	123
North Mecklenburg High School (9-12)	3%	122
Northeast Middle School (6-8)	0%	12
Northridge Middle School (6-8)	1%	42
Northwest School of the Arts (6 -12)	6%	261
Oakhurst STEAM Academy (K-5)	1%	60
Oaklawn Language Academy (K-8)	2%	67
Park Road Montessori School (PreK-6)	4%	181
Paw Creek Elementary School (K-5)	1%	37
Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology (9-12)	7%	276
Piedmont Middle School (6-8)	8%	319
Quail Hollow Middle School (6-8)	1%	42
Randolph Middle School (6-8)	8%	320
Ranson Middle School (6-8)	0%	13
Rea Farms STEAM Academy (K-8)	4%	152
Shamrock Gardens Elementary School (K-5)	2%	99
South Academy of International Languages (K-8)	9%	386
South Mecklenburg High School (9-12)	3%	105
Statesville Road Elementary School (K-5)	0%	14
Tuckaseegee Elementary School (K-5)	0%	18
University Park Creative Arts Academy (K-5)	1%	34
Walter G Byers School (K-8)	0%	18
West Charlotte High School (9-12)	1%	58
Whitewater Middle School (6-8)	1%	27
Wilson STEM Academy (6-8)	0%	19
Winget Park Elementary School (K-5)	2%	77

How would you describe the magnet application process? 5,830 ⓘ



How would you describe the magnet application process? 5,830 ⓘ

Q11 - How would you describe the magnet application process?	Percentage	Count
Very difficult to navigate	6%	329
Difficult to navigate	16%	920
Neither easy nor difficult	35%	2,034
Easy to navigate	33%	1,930
Very easy to navigate	11%	617

How would you describe the magnet application process? 5,830 ⓘ

How would you describe the magnet application process?	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Very difficult to navigate	1.00	1.00	1.00	329
Difficult to navigate	2.00	2.00	2.00	920
Neither easy nor difficult	3.00	3.00	3.00	2,034
Easy to navigate	4.00	4.00	4.00	1,930
Very easy to navigate	5.00	5.00	5.00	617

No.

No

Clear description of due dates- the fact that students have to interview even though school doesn't have opening-

No. Tengo conocimiento ya que recién llegamo a este país.

I don't have any idea

Fix transportation system.

it is very hard to know which schools are better than others. There are some very poor magnet schools and it is difficult for a parent to know which ones are not good. It's also frustrating because the good magnet schools are impossible to get into and the poor ones will immediately admit all students.

Make it part of the enrollment process if a parent wants to explore the magnet schools offered. The fair was a great 1st step in seeing what each school offers followed by a tour

NO

For parents with two kids, make the process easier to accept both students into the magnet program when one student is enrolled and the second students is in transition into the school the following year. Once the 2nd student enrolls it should be automatic to accept the 2nd student into the program given the first student (both siblings) is already in the magnet program.

Todas las instrucciones son buenas o conafiables

Keep it goin & school investments

NONE

My opinion is cms is doing an amazing job at letting everybody know about the magnet program and giving them ample time to complete applications. They make the process very easy.

No

No

No

Si quiero que mi hijo asista pero no puedo llevarlo y ir por el se que son muy buenas escuelas

Need to remove lottery system and include entrance exams for Magnet schools. Student selection should be on the basis of intellectual not based on the luck or recommendations.

No b tengo idea

I think what the kids that want to attend these schools is the most important

Assistance enrolling in classes that helps student to get into the early college program

no

How CMS approaches satellite bus stops for high school students seems to be a bit discriminatory towards parents who work outside the home. No career/job will allow you to leave every day at 2:30p to pick up a child from the neighborhood high school to take them home to go back to work. I understand the thought but the kids at the neighborhood school also has to take a bus home because its not walking distance, so why leave the magnet school kids at dead end destination with no supervision? Great way to keep low income, single parent home kids out of magnet programs. Adverse effects is a thing.

The process could be streamlined. The mix of form and human interaction jut made the process convoluted. Magnet schools close to home should be given some priority.

Stop separating the student ID application process from the magnet application process. It should be one form submitted at one time with one deadline.

No

No

A me gustaría que entre a la escuela magnética mi hija x es muy difícil de aplicar

It's been awhile for me, I know 6 years ago it was confusing and staff were unhelpful

Ninguna

More help

No

No. Quiero ayuda para que mi hijo asista

No,

Si mandar el link directamente

No

Whomever apply should be accepted.

Streamline enrollment and application dates. Advertise information about dates and deadlines to preschool age parents to spread the information early especially for pre-k programs like Montessori.

Pued es las escuelas son buenas para los hijos algunas las entendí otras no

No

No

Need to publicize the magnet offerings more. Also, Mecklenburg public school reputation needs to improve. Parent opt out of CMS because of that and they have no idea of the magnet offerings. Had no idea of all the schools until I attended the school fair. Also need to publish the acceptance rates because people think their child is not going to get the school because of the lottery system.

Transportation was always an issue for me being a single parent. I always had to a shuttle stop for my scholar. Which is scary because I have to find someone to pick them up at the shuttle stop when I'm at work versus them walking home by themselves.

No

I only took the survey to ask you to PLEASE stop calling, emailing, and texting so much. I can't imagine needing to hear from CMS so much.

N/A

Do not allow students to audition for NWSA if there are no seats available.

no

No

Make it application based so that schools aren't getting random students but conversely getting the best ones.

Deseo que mi hija entre a la escuela magnet. Como hago para aplicar a mi hija esta en 5th. Grado. I want my daughter to go to magnet school. How do I apply? My daughter is in 5th grade. Degree.

Create a clear step by step process on the CMS website

No

I think more kids should get an opportunity to attend a magnet school.

No

I am very satisfied with the magnet school program and the process and have recommended the CMS Magnet School program to family and friends.

No sure if the correct information to answer. I havenver been to a Magnet school, nor have my children. But i feel like my 5 year should. She has been showing early warning signs of reading speaks really well for her age!!

No

N/A

As parents we need more notice of deadline dates if we would like to be selected for a magnetic program. Offer more spots.

The dates need to be more visible, especially for families that move mid-year. Everything is centered around the normal school year, not taking into consideration those families that move during other times in the year. Also there needs to be more clarity about the virtual school. There is barely any information online.

No

no

No

We could also look at grade averages

Por ahora no

North Charlotte could use more magnet schools. We are in Davidson and it is discouraging how few are local.

Ser más corta las solicitudes

Please make clear to all through school or all students attending school will get information with portal Thanks

Change the waitlist. We were told we were not on the waitlist at all for our second and third choices even though we did not get into our first choice.

I am not aware of the process yet sending me/sharing me some thoughts would give me some insight

No

Increase seating for students

It's so confusing to tell what counts as a magnet school, what the process is, when it starts, how someone is chosen to attend or not, and to get accepted. It really needs to be more clear and transparent.

Show the benefits of the program, put the funds in the extra activities to help better the students while learning.

No

I felt the magnet application process was straightforward and transparent.

provide bus stops for students in their neighborhood like we used to have. my daughter was late all year because i had to go and drop her at school everyday

Easier reading material for families of Title One schools. Most of these schools are in areas where the parents or families are not able to look up things online or check their emails. My school in particular has parents constantly coming to the school to have staff help them with something that has to be done online. I think mailing more information instead of just sending home their school assignment letter would help. Maybe host an application fair for parents to come in and have someone assist with the application.

No

No me acuerdo para hacerlo porque me ayudaron en la escuela

The process for Piedmont M.S., East Meck H.S. and Harper Middle College High School were straightforward and easy to navigate. The K-6 Montessori was more difficult. However, persistence with the Montessori magnets ultimately was successful.

When we went through the initial process to registering our student in our county back in 2016, I felt an absence of available CMS administrators to guide us. Therefore having an easier access to staff both from CMS and the actual magnet school to answer questions about the process for school applications and about the curriculum would allow the parent to be able to make more knowledgeable decisions when selecting their magnet school choices.

Technical issues, procedural issues, lack of communication and follow-up.

Tratar a todos los niños por igual sin importar sus raza y religión

Not so much the process, but making sure every parent knows their magnet options and what each has to offer (well ahead of time before needing to apply) would be helpful. Also expanding and spreading the word about Express stops. They've made a huge difference.

Try to make it simple and easy and make sure that different nationality know how the procedure work and what to do.

No

The application process was great especially with the support of the school when I had questions. The only issue we experienced was that the CPCC application didn't open when it was scheduled but it wasn't an issue.

No

No

Open more ASEP locations for parents who want to enroll their kids to Magnets outside of their transportation zone. No bus transportation and no after care options means less access, specially to underserved populations

No ninguna

Make them more available as an option

Mas personal que ayuden con el proceso de inscripción.

CMS should increase the number of full IB magnet seats available throughout the CMS footprint. Many families select other middle school magnet programs because their odds of obtaining an IB seat at Piedmont or Randolph are not great; and they'd rather have a good chance at a less-preferred magnet option than risk trying for a full magnet IB seat and not landing a magnet seat at all. CMS should base transportation zones on proximity of the magnet option to the lottery applicant.

Lotería lugat

Ayudamos a poner la traducción en español

No

Look at common questions that the magnet office receives and look at ways to answer those so that people don't have to call. A hub that explains things in more details. . Have a series of meetings for those that need help through each step of the process. A hub that lets you know when the student assignment was received, lists next steps, lets you know where you are on waiting lists.

Making it more accessible to multilingual learner families to make process more equitable.

N/A

I don't think my opinion can count at this moment went my son did no really admit to the high school I want him

N/A

Transportation

None

Que sigan haciendo eventos o feria sobres las escuelas Magnet y que Ayuden a llenar la aplicación porque no todos sabemos llenar la aplicación. Gracias a esos eventos que hicieron yo pude aplicar para la escuela Magnet que están ahora mis hijos

The shuttle stop transportation has been very challenging this year. I hope We can move back to how it was.

Specific information link for the Montessori program as the entry is at 4 so the registration/application is earlier than traditional school

Advertise it more

No

No

Pas de suggestion

make the application simpler and more accessible. The process is too long and too complicated.

Se nos podría facilitar a nosotros los padres que estos procesos fueran directamente con la misma escuela,,para no tener que tener tanta comunicación externa la cual ,al no estar actualizados en estos programas lo sea un tanto difícil .

I think that the magnet options need to be more clearly outlined and available, as well as the application process with deadlines. Information is difficult to locate and since it can vary from year to year, you can be looking at outdated information without realizing it.

N/A

explicar de una forma mas facil a las familias de la importancia de las escuelas magnet.

Stress management for teachers better pay rate and more counseling for students, help the food gap some children come to school just to eat.

Better system of notifying of deadlines.

No

Not an idea but a suggestion, 1. Application form is not user friendly - while filling the form if you want to change any data it frequently goes to the first field and again need to fill the form from beginning 2. Parents who are new to such process (like me) should get more of information from current school like school can arrange a session and provide the details (personally I get very less information about the magnet fair and magnet school application before actual application starts) 3. In addition to Lottery process, the gifted students from closest schools should get a chance to participate in first screening test to magnet schools 4. Magnet school fair location should be convenient (as I observed for 2023 magnet fair location was not convenient for all) 5. My suggestion is every elementary school should arrange a magnet school fair before minimum one month before actual application process starts 6. Honestly speaking I am not satisfied about the magnet school process because didn't get clear idea 7. I observed many parents around me are not aware about the magnet school proces, it's importance & benefits so need more information spread regarding the same 8. I must say regular CMS schools are doing very good and teachers are taking great efforts for students (I'm referring homeschool of my kids and heard from other schools parents also) 9. Sorry if I had mentioned any point incorrectly Thank you for providing this opportunity to share parent's view.

Not really

A better guide to know how to navigate the system, there is not an easy way to see the steps that you need to do.

not at this time

More advertising for new student families, or those entering pre-K and K

make it is very simple. 1) On the website, right side put link as "CMS Magent enrollment" 2) Click the link 3) Let it redirect your lottery or information page if there is lottery closed or next lottery. Give all the information which is required to fill the lottery application

First you all need to strengthen the access to transportation for the magnet programs. If you want to see them thrive, parents/caregivers have to have support transporting their children to schools outside of their school zone for better educational opportunities.

L'utilisation du site cms nest pas facile.

Change the grading scale back. Get quified teachers that has experience. Put principles that has a great school switch to low performance schools and see if there is a change.

Yrs provide transportation For high school students the satellites bus stops suck and i'm very inconvenient for most parents

Better communication about due dates

Not right now.

To train the transportation drivers .

No

No

Make magnet programs descriptions more in depth to how it will help students for college.

Ninguna

No

Many parents with pre-k and younger children are not aware of the CMS Magnet school options

No sabría decirte por q nunca mis dos hijos a asistido una

clarify the meaning and intent for the ranking of schools in the lottery application. It seems choice 2 and 3 are only valid if their are open spots. Consider adding children to waitlists for their 2nd and 3rd options. Make individual families respond by a set date to accept their lottery spot. The current leniency bogs down your enrollment and you loose interested families due to arbitrary deadlines. To clarify, we waited two weeks into the school year (starting at another school) to accept our spot b/c the correct paperwork was not filed for a family who moved and the school knew they did but had to wait 10 days until they officially released the spaces to my family. This was harmful all around. Deadlines work. Thank you.

The charts and transportation zones and chart are a little confusing all together if you haven't done it before. Breaking it down into smaller parts and easier transportation maps. School codes as well. A better description of each program and what they do very briefly. Links to school websites attached

No

Don't change it every year. Don't send the letters out late. Don't give the placement letters directly the students

Schools magnet program must have an office to help new parents to apply or assist with help and resources.

n/a

It would be great if there was more communication about Charlotte's magnet schools. I feel like parents need to actively search to find out about these different magnet programs. A lot of parents I talk to are unaware of these programs and would have been interested in them if they had known about them. It's also sometimes difficult to find out about the transportation and which schools offer which bus stops while searching school options. The maps are hard to read because they're too small on screens. Maybe a program where you type your address and get bus options would be better.

Provide more detailed but concise information. Currently there is a lot of communication but it doesn't say much.

stop changing the dates, the # of rounds of lotteries, etc. It is extremely difficult to follow the timing YOY

No

My student is enrolled in the Horizons program at Charles H Parker. The existence of the Horizons program isn't very well advertised- I had to do a lot of the searching and research on my own. Then the application period was so brief, I had to wait for my son to be evaluated for admission until the following year. The Horizon's program is such a worthwhile program, that I have been extremely pleased with-but there are LOADS of parents that know nothing about it and children that may be getting overlooked for the opportunity to apply.

Cuando me tocó hacer el proceso fue fácil.

No

No sé qué es magnet

Instruir a los padres principalmente con lo que cada programa ofrece incluyendo beneficios y que en las escuelas ayuden en el proceso de aplicación!

It's kind of confusing so maybe having the kids at the school doing a fun song (our magnet focus) or a video or something to walk us older adults through the process might be neat.

Muy bien amables con nosotros padres de los estudiantes gracias

Realizar el esfuerzo de llegar a todos los niños y mantenerlos en la escuela.

Send out info about the schools

No

More seats available

The online process appears to be more user friendly and transparent regarding process and timeline.

Make it easier to navigate to parents as to what the benefits / specific focus areas are for each school that is in the magnet program. There are many options and it can be overwhelming

Children should have access to this program at every school. It should not be a bid on basis 🙄.

N/a

No por ahora

Communication about the lottery system & updates in the process would be helpful. We made multiple phone calls to the administration to understand what was happening in the process, and often there was no update.

There is a critical need for students who are accepted in magnet school of one district to be able to transfer their acceptance into another district in the event the family of the child has to move to another district/county due to unforeseen circumstances. All magnet schools should include an option to accept a student from another district who has won a lottery and was accepted in his/her school choice but cannot attend due to a move. I have contacted the district we're moving to (from CMS to Gaston county) and they stated nothing they can do. This is unacceptable.

No, no se cuales escuelas son .

Improve transportation options & reduce waitlist options

More consistency in the process, and less contradictory information being provided by school vs. CMS.

Yes or no questions would make applying easier

We navigated the process with the assistance of teachers and other parents, but it would have been very nice to have the steps and details posted on the school website. The information is available in different places but centralizing it specific to the school would have been helpful.

Give clear instructions that aren't subject to misinterpretation. Regarding the sibling policy, be clear that they still have to apply and that it's not automatic. Clear, simple and transparent communication that aligns with the process

Make it easier

Reduce redundant requests; refer to pin and student number as either synonymous or separately

I wanted my kids to go to magnet school all three of them are A and B students but they never win the lottery to get there. I wish if they can get a chance

It could be clearer that students living in a Magnet School Bus District / Bus Zone have priority. This helped us get into the Magnet system, but only because we read the tiny fine print about this ~10yrs+ ago and spotted it. This may have been improved since then, and we would not know or not. But many families might miss this important information.

No

The initial magnet application process was a while ago for us so the details are not clear in my mind. However, the reentry process (testing in and reentering CMS through neighborhood school before transferring to magnet program) was extremely convoluted, and deserves to be looked at for the purposes of simplifying.

No, I do not. Thank you

Make it easier to see which schools can be chosen based on zoning.

Streamlined simple step by step instructions with deadlines. Info scattered and not clearly articulated.

Siempre lo hecho otra persona por mi .

More tour dates

None

No tengo ideas

It has been several years since I had to apply so it may be much easier now. It would have been easier to bring registration documents to my neighborhood school, rather than student placement.

More transparency about number of spots, admission rates, and factors like spots reserved for low income students

more accessible information to parents - I ended up learning the most from friends

It was fine for middle school, but I am concerned about high school. The magnet she is in distributes to multiple high schools and she might not be able to move with her friend group which is concerning as it is a crucial transition and having social support would be helpful.

No

Na

No

Have "other" option and with written note section for Every question, because not all questions were intuitive!

Where possible, transition the application process entirely to a digital experience as an option that allows status updates and full transparency along the timeline as to where in the process you are and any reminders of actionable tasks needed by the parent/guardian. Deadlines awaiting for information through the mail led to anxiety and concern about having a plan B, and C in place.

Overall awareness and availability

No idea

No.

que las lotería sean calificadas para todo el que aplique

There is a lot of confusion in charlotte, particularly about pre-k options and how to apply and what you are applying for. The process should be simplified and streamlined. Now it involves so many steps- applying to cms then separate application for the magnet. Then you don't get letters for weeks or months with the info you need so you end up needing to call for your student ID. More info over email is needed, more explaining to the community the difference between the prek options. And a simpler process that doesn't require so many steps and confusion

No tengo ni idea,

With Montessori starting at age 4, lottery application period starting at age 3, more communication with community about this outstanding program. Most parents don't start thinking about school til closer to age 5 and miss out on the lottery.

Perhaps list all the zip codes that would have transportation with the schools.

Use an AI interactive tool for parents to select location, priorities, etc and explain which magnet programs are an option for their specific situation. The current magnet process is extremely confusing.

I appreciated that NWSA was by audition. My child has taken it seriously because of this and values this school.

Stability in application process was poor. Every year I registred my children the enrollment dates changed, the process of reporting proof of documentations was different (online or in-person). I would suggest that dates of enrollment are twice a year and around the same time.

It's been a few years since I have had to do the magnet application process, but after some recent Magnet related emails I think there has been some positive changes. I still think clear & concise communication and a friendly employee (not a recording or computer generated response) is key. Hire people to help with this process that actually care, are friendly, and don't mind answering questions. This is such a high anxiety process and it's nice to actually talk with a knowledgeable kind human and know that they care.

More waitlist transparency. I have to call/email for updates. Would be nice if there was a personalized student profile page or other way to check without needing to reach out. Also, the letter that said she was not enrolled in the magnet did not make clear she was on a wait list. Or if it did, it didn't stand out.

Le muy bien porque mi hijo es muy inteligente

Please restart the bus transport instead of express stops

The process has already gotten better but it is very challenging to get what should be a very simple set of information in a consistent place. When we went through the process, we had to rely on old and outdated school webpages (these no long exist now), and call to multiple sources to get what we felt were simple answers. Having a single portal with all of your information, and keeping that information updated, is critical. Having dozens of emails with various notifications and updates that do not match what is on your websites is a recipe for chaos. I'd recommend making sure any updates that are communicated out in any way are also verified as the most up to date information on your websites.

No

It was no a lot of spanish information available at that time

N/A

Each family should have a liaison who helps walk you through the process. We were brand new to the state and district when we purchased our home at the beginning of September. It took almost 3 weeks to get the children into the virtual program.

I believe applying is the easy part, however if your scholar is in high school bussing becomes an issue. The express stop has challenged my child being able to stay in the magnet school.

Send out reminders frequently to parents' email and text

A community for new parents. There are so many different programs and volunteer opportunities, it would be helpful to have someone to aid in how to identify what programs are opportunities are a good fit for our family.

no just have at least 2 busses per slot because people are cramped(me)

It's overwhelming as a first time applicant but easier after tgat

Deberían de hablar un poco más sobre el tema cuando uno va a inscribir a los niños

Ease of getting my older student into my younger student's school. I didn't know about the program with my first child. My 2nd child is rising 11th and doesn't have the same options as my rising 9th grader now. I'd also like an easier way to view sports, clubs, programs, and classes offered by the school.

No

None

I would recommend allowing more children into the program that do not have another family member currently in the program.

More open houses in Randolph, Myers Park and other popular schools to give parents a fair chance.

No

Many parents including me believe that the siblings of the current student in magnet school could be enrolled and accepted in priority.

I was unaware of the options and what available from Magnet Schools. Now that I know they exist and what they are, we may need to make changes.

I put Irwin Academic Center 2nd choice and Lincoln Heights 1st for my son. However, later my family decided to transfer my son from Lincoln Heights Montessory to Irwin Academic Center on Sibling Confirmation seat but my son did not get the seat of Irwin Academic Center Kinder Garden program. We were told by CMS that we had to put only Irwin Academic Center in the lottery to get the sibling confirmation seat. It should be informed the parents in advance.

There are too many options of magnet programs for real purpose except the language immersions program is different. My son did the learning immersion and is now at an IB school. Outside of one teacher, I didn't think the program was an more challenging. The IB program is disappointing as it is not challenging and the classrooms are too crowded. Instead of magnet programs, the focus should be on improving the curriculum for all schools.

Release the lottery results online, especially since the rest of the process was online.

Make the process easier rather than first going to home school

Hasta el momento no, muchas gracias por el apoyo ya que denota la importancia de la educación de los jóvenes para este país.

My son attended Kennedy and was accepted into Olympic and participates in the advance manufacturing program. I am not familiar with the magnet school application process. I do feel that the magnet schools offer student access and exposure to their potential careers which benefits them in the decision towards college or the workforce.

Evaluar a los niños para fortalecer sus debilidades en alguna área que tengan dificultades usar diferentes técnicas y aplicar la que mejor funciona. Por qué hay niños que se distraen con facilidad, niños lentos, niños que les gusta todo excelente, niños que les cuesta dominar la antiedad . Unas buenas terapia sociológica para fortalecer los miedos que están causando el problema. Porque hay niños que necesitan mejorar la autoestima.

No

For a Magnet school that are not full leave the window of opportunity open longer

The process is great!

No

No

Continue to make parents aware of the early preparation time they will need. I think he pretty much need to decide a year and advance about magnet schools so you can attend school fairs and apply in time.

No

No

Reinstate transportation for high school magnets.

Advertise it more

It's been many years since we applied, so I don't know if the process has changed, but I would recommend breaking it down as much as possible, getting parents all the steps. Step One. Step two.

Side by side comparisons of curriculum

Not at this time

The lottery process connected to magnets is not clear and gives hope for opportunities that may still be left to chance or the luck of the draw

Everything was easy to do. Don't need to change anything

Invest in all your public schools. Not just magnet school. Every kid deserves to have programs and opportunities that can help them be successful regardless of which school in the district they attend. INVEST IN ALL OF YOUR SCHOOLS. Kids can feel and notice when the district doesn't invest in them in the same way you invest in your magnet schools and that sends a very clear message. Invest in all your student and the future of Charlotte and its surrounding cities will excel in more ways than imagined.

I can't remember the process exactly (it was 9-10 yrs ago) but I seem to remember it being easy in some ways but difficult in some ways. I think processing the transportation was tricky...

Better visibility to all schools performance, open enrollment spots, and process of selecting magnet students.

Support from our child's school is very helpful when staff can provide cms websites, contacts, and other resources for families to get questions answered. This survey however was difficult, and I didn't even understand a question that had a lot of school choices on it about magnet Fair.

A needed to better informs parents that don't know about magnet schools.

More promotion / advertising within pre school programs. More discussion at pre schools

No la tengo Me gustaría tenerla

Assist parents with an application help session where it get done..with help. Stop holding spots for kids as favoritism. Does magnet schools help connect students yo careers.

No tengo idea

NA

No comentarios

Which zones vs. transportation need to be clearer Also- the middle school magnet application process vs. the pre-K process were very different. In PreK you got your acceptance letter then got to accept. The middle school process is not the same. This was VERY confusing for several families. Families don't go through this but ONCE or TWICE the entire career of their child. So the only reference I have to the process is what it was like 10 years ago when we did it at the PreK level. If the process is different between the two applications (PreK vs. Middle vs. Highschool), this is no way for us to know.

No tengo idea

There should be more than one magnet fair. I was not able to attend the fair due to previously scheduled obligations. Two options for attending would better suit more CMS families.

I would suggest better visibility at (non-magnet) school events. For example, we discovered NWSA at our zoned middle school but I did not know it was a middle school and high school program. If we had been introduced to it earlier, in elementary school, it's possible that we would have applied earlier. It's never too early for parents to be exposed to upper grade options, For example, there's still some community confusion about early colleges vs middle colleges. Educate parents early and often so they're exposed to all the resources CMS has to offer.

No tengo idea

Required pin not a parent square password not finding mail with pin force no selection no school open on final entry date confusion over if I needed to reapply to since she was in feeder pattern from Myer park to quail hollow ..

Make it more convenient to login to the site and have available staff to assist to technology errors if needed assistance.

No

1) an way to receive the pin without having to call 2) Make it clear that your kid can go to any school, transportation may not be provided 3) I'm not 100% clear on the transportation policy when it comes to neighborhood stops and express stops. This is extremely important to me. This could make the difference of whether or not she can attend the school.

Not at this time

Make sure you read everything. I had missed a couple of questions.

Communication. When we applied we would get one message from one office and the opposite message from another office. We just kept calling people until someone said she was accepted and we kept contacting that person until she was enrolled.

Alguna oficina donde uno pueda aplicar personalmente y hacerles una evaluación a los hijos para que realmente merezcan estar en esas escuelas magnet ya que me parece que hay adolescentes que realmente pudieran ser aceptados donde ellos quieren desarrollar su intelecto gracias por aceptar mi opinión como padre que se preocupa por la educación de sus hijos

No

No

northwest rejected my child after her audition, which is the process and we accept. What is frustrating is continuing to receive emails asking for students to audition to fill spots. My child auditioned for musical theatre and we asked to audition for theatre but were turned down. The middle school doesn't have tech and costume options but the high school does. I understood the rigid audition process and accepted the rejection until we continued to receive requests for applicants. Not every child will be the lead of a show or wants to be, why not admit children who are ready and willing to work? Very frustrating experience.

No

None

Not at this time

Our situation was unique with a second semester transfer. This process seemed different than an initial application process.

Hasta ahorita en linea, creo que esta bien.

Have better schools ... chose to go private for middle school

Make sure the deadline isn't at a time when staff is out of the office.

It was a lottery and we weren't even aware that it was an option. We found out last minute and not sure if that ruined our chances to get in. This was when it was called barringer. Awesome principal.

Step by step, user friendly applications are stressless.

Text and link via mobile phone to apply

I found out late in the educational process being that my wife did most of the planning. I would suggest showing the program as early in the process to parents as possible if you are not already doing that.

I have known idea I m trying before but I can't get it

I don't think it is a fair process it seems to be an all in who you know type of system. I have been trying to get my daughter in a magnet school program for years and I have friends who know ppl that work for the school system and their kids are in the door the same year.

No

Fortalecer lazos de confianza para padres hispanos que no hablan Ingles

The way to strengthen the application process is to give EVERYONE a fair opportunity in attending a magnet school. Have information sessions at a few schools and open to everyone that can attend; be sure to let individuals know that there is no need to go to all sessions because it's the same information (allow space for others). Virtual information sessions also work as well. Be sure to update families if they are admitted to the school or not, in order to ensure plans (uniform, transportation, after school plans, etc.) can be made for the transition, this is extremely important! Give extra points for students that YOU KNOW AREN'T GIVEN FAIR CHANCES BECAUSE OF THEIR LIVING ENVIRONMENT. Thank you for allowing for this opportunity.

Provide more transportation options/information at the events.

more thought needs to be put into the online application mechanics

Just tell people they have no shot at getting what they want. There aren't enough seats, and all the seats that are available are being pursued by families who want to get out of their home school situation; they don't care about the particular attributes of the school (language, stem, etc.). So if you do want a seat because you want another kind of learning or skill, the algorithm will weed you out in favor of those fleeing their home school assignment.

Not really other than the jump from middle to high has us extremely disappointed.

It can be difficult to find student information needed to complete applications. Like id# or pin# needed. Maybe have online access for that information.

no.

NA

The application website is atrocious. It tried to put my son in the wrong grade and wouldn't allow changes after telling me everything was fine. It took weeks of back-and-forth with the magnet office to rectify the problem. The changing application/response dates made things difficult as well.

Transportation system that was changed this year for the magnet students is very of awful to both the students and parents. Why can't we have school buses that comes close or to the streets where this students stays - this will help. 2. Giving internet access to kids 3. Needs some sponsored trips to historic places, that is paid by govt.

Earlier communication about the middle school magnet offerings.

Maybe explain what a magnet school actually is. I have no idea.

My husband was in charge of most of the process but he had spreadsheets and data. Magnet schools and lottery were all new to me but not to him. So many of us in our neighborhood would discuss the confusion and it was hard to get answers.

None

Lottery system is bad and I believe every interested household shouldn't be given admission. If not make all schools offer magnet programs.

Ensure the window to apply is communicated to parents in a timely manner using different platforms and gives plenty time for parents to apply.

Ensure consistent timelines annually. Having 2 kids at various stages and having attended magnet elementary, middle, and now high school programs the 2024-2024 school year lottery was incredibly confusing - and I have done a few times. The dates/timing was pushed way too early, you could not get to school tours bc they were operating on the previous years schedlue... so better, clear communication and consistency across the board would be helpful.

No, I don't. But you send the kids that are supposed to go to Harding or Garinger back to their respective schools from Palisades . Y'all have over crowded this school like crazy !!!!!

N/A

We did not get our letter with our daughter's ID in a timely manner and had to call several times about it before someone told us it, which allowed us to enter her into the lottery. There should be an option to receive this letter/information via e-mail. An informational session on the application process would have also been helpful.

No

The process needs to be easier to access for the non-English speaking and families families with social media challenges.

Equity as it relates to low poverty students in a school. Elementary to Middle was an extremely different experience from Elementary and the magnet program and deliverables became the least of my concerns. (ELIZABETH TRADITIONAL TO JM ALEXANDER). The overall school environment always takes precedent over a program in my experience. This issue has to be solved. High income earners are not buying sending there children to a title 1 school with a unique magnet. It's just not happening.

The school lottery process is kind of a pain

Make student ID and assignment available via email or online. Clearly outline the steps in the process, and show parents where they are in the process. Send confirmation notices via email.

Lottery system is bad

No

Que no aya tantas páginas para poder ingresar porque cuando dice ingresar para inscribir al estudiante por supuesto, te abre otra página igual y es confuso

No

No tengo idea

Um no idont but thanks for asking

La verdad no tengo idea

take out the center city zone; it makes things more confusing and really creates an unfair access to resources, with higher SES families having access to "better" schools for absolutely no reason other than they prefer it. they have the same access as other people in their zone.

Online seminars or virtual sessions on how to go through the selection process

estoy interesada en colliswood lenguaje academic para mi hija 7046063325

لقد جئنى من كاليفورنيا في العام الدراسي ٢٣/٢٤ وهذا العام هو الأول لنا هنا في شارلوت-مكلينبرغ.

Shorter and more friendly website and process

I just came back to CMS and interested.

No

Make it more available to all, offer evening school tours, Spanish language info and tours, offer more info on paper or via the mail

No todo me pareció apreciable y facil de llenar. Para mí el proceso el facil y se entiende muy bien

Begin widespread and general information distribution to potential families at the beginning of the school year, regarding requirements and deadlines. Increase number of Magnet Fair opportunities and hold in central or multiple locations.

No

N/A

More awareness of when the window to enroll is open.

User friendly, but I feel kids need more selections of schools and parents are willing to provide transportation. These kids do not have an opportunity. Most of the schools that are listed for magnet school. You still have to worry about fighting every day it's hard .User friendly, but I feel kids need more selections of schools and parents are willing to provide transportation. These kids do not have a opportunity. Most of the schools that are listed for magnet school. You still have to worry about fighting every day. It's hard for kids to go to school and focus and get their education.

Updated websites, one source of communication, eliminate paper work and communication via post service, improve communication in a timely fashion.

Needs it's own website and simplified

No rats

The bell schedule for magnet schools are so late for elementary. Students can't participate in tutoring, sports or have adequate time to work on homework. This bell schedule is not conducive for smaller children. Change it!!!!

Bus transportation to go further so more people can go

yes

Está perfecto así , aún mis hijos no an asistido ala escuela magnet hasta en agosto pero creo que estaré muy satisfecha

My hope is that they keep the rigor that is expected at a magnet school. I believe all children deserve exposure, but I think schools that are IB should hold students to a high academic and community involvement standard, and if the students can't keep up they should be placed at their home school.

I did not apply to the magnet program. This is my home school with a good reputation within the neighborhood. I applied to the school as a home school. As someone who is not from this country the whole thing was very confusing and the information 7 years ago when we were applying to kindergarten was not clear. I did not even realize our home school was a magnet school. I was under the impression that all specialized schools we had to pay for. It took me a while to learn that this was not the case.

I explored a magnet school over 15 years ago and therefore I will n9t be able to provide a current accurate assessment of the school. At the time I was looking into the magnet school it seemed as if yhe curriculum would have put my child behind their grade level, and I chose to not pursue the program as an option for my child.

No

idk

Do all my work and go to school.

I don't want to skew the survey results. We were at Rea Farms since 2020 and chose to stay.

idk

School is important but what is more important is what curriculum is being taught and the quality of the student you create. You just have to work on what you have now. Don't focus on getting more funds. Because they are obviously going to come no matter what. But the problem could be solved in the community for the future by the quality of students you produce. So how about you help the students learn how important it is to stay focused because without them being strong and able to figure out how to make money then they could be uneducated. And that isn't fair. So maybe just bring God back into the schools. Because all the parents already teach their kids about Jesus. Yall ain't stopping nothing. I remember my sons 1st day of the 7th grade the teachers had a assignment where they asked the students if they are a Republican or Democrat. What a horrible way to start a school year. "Let's divide them real quick on the 1st day" Great Job Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools! One thing I will say is the teachers love their kids. I will give you some help actually. One way to strengthen the Magnet Application Process is to put on the top. "In God We Trust"

no.

no

Yes text confirmation

i feel like if you live in the district it shouldn't be as hard to get into a magnet school as it is now.

No, because it's not the application process. It's the fact that 10's of thousands of children are getting a subpar education, with no real chance of getting into a magnet school. It's the deceit and the lies. We never got a response back for many of the years that we applied. One year, we received a letter stating that something had 'mysteriously' happened with our choices. We know what happened. They 'mysteriously' went in the garage because our kids aren't worthy. All of them ended up back at the same failing supposed STEM academy (Governor's Village). It took 4 years for my gifted child to get into a "magnet" school and "it" looks like it's caving in (North Meck). It's dilapidated. I even question the rigor there. It's the only giving 3 day to fill out a survey that's supposedly so important, knowing that most of the population will miss it. It's the only giving parents the opportunity to talk about strengthening the magnet application process, knowing fully well it's not the process. I'm not sure who will get this or if they will even care but the whole school system is a farce and this survey is literally playing on the intelligence of parents, students and families. You all know fully well that the "Magnet Application Process in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is the least of our worries.

We need more options and STEM schools that are in good locations not just in low SES neighborhoods.

Some of the most common themes offered by magnet schools, according to Magnet Schools of America, are: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Fine and Performing Arts. International Baccalaureate, International Studies.Sep 18, 2023

No

no

Would like communication by phone also to inform of the dates I received only emails

No. But why can't all schools be a magnet school? Why can't we strive for excellence across the board?

There needs to be more transportation options for high school kids for magnet schools. An option was not available for my kids so they did not go to high school magnet even though I wish they had that option

Todo debe ser eficaz para entender y realizar bien el proceso

Provide virtual and in-person workshops that walk parents through accessing and completing the application. Provide clear easy steps online to complete the process.

No

La solicitud es muy buena pero el transporte para las escuelas del 9 al 12 es mala porque ya no pasa el bus por los niños . y por eso tuve que sacar a my hija de la magnet high school estaría muy bueno que regresaran los bus a recoger a los niños eso sería muy bueno y podría regresar Amy hija ala magnet high school

More Montessori options

Está bien así como lo hacen

Friendlier staff at school to help with the process. Application to be available online and easier access.

No tengo idea

Que nos ayude a los padres para poner aplicar tengo dos hijos y quisiera poder aplicar uno me lo han mandado pero no tengo transporte

We don't have ideas about magnet school

The high school magnet process was difficult to navigate, being that we were only able to apply to certain IB programs and not others.

Make it more clear that the Montessori schools are a separate application with a different deadline than the Magnet schools for pre-k programs.

Creating a link to enroll more than one student at a time. Giving families more information on schools prior to the "window" for the magnet program submission. Extending the deadline, every family does not have the opportunity to participate, which is truly unacceptable due to the timeline.

Please Magnet Schools for CMS Kids.

Explanation or mention that language selection isn't available during middle school and will be done at a future date.

Some of the school transportation zones make no sense. For instance I live in area code 28210 and 4 miles away from Myers Park High School. Instead of my child getting selected for the IB program at Myers Park he had to go to East Meck High which is 8 miles away. I am not sure what choke hold the Myers Park Highschool neighborhood has on that school. My son ended up having a great experience at East Meck so everything happens for a reason, it's just that geographically it made no sense. Collinswood language academy, the students there we are prewarned during new student orientation/open house may not be on the same reading level as the rest of the students in the county because they are learning two languages. Fast forward years later and I notice scores are still not great for these students. A school like this should have free tutoring, convenient tutoring offered for students. Especially knowing they are at a disadvantage from the start and expected to be behind. Instead of that being the expectation there should be extra staff in classrooms or extra staff who can pull groups of students out for small tutoring/extra learning. They should work harder and push the kids more so that they are not poor readers or poor in math. I feel like the students whose first language is Spanish tend to do better at this school, but I could be wrong. The only homework I have seen since my 4th grader has been here is math. No spelling assignments where you have to define words, spell them, write them in sentences. No book log ever to track reading. I know education has changed over the years and in a lot of ways I see our children being dumbed down. This whole new way of teaching math that has like 4-5 steps to be completed before solving a simple multiplication problem leaves students with too much room for error. If they mess up on the 1st or second step the whole problem of course ends up incorrect.

Guidance counselors in neighborhood schools will need to advertise this option.

No

some

no

No

No

No . We recently moved here from California and I am struggling for my 6th grade daughter.

Lottery should open earlier. Or dates for the application and lottery should be easier to find.

No

As a working parent, I often cannot attend informational meetings. It would help significantly if CMS would record the sessions and post any Q+A.

Reintroduce merit base admission. My child was white and was discriminated against.

I would have appreciated having available staff to assist me in Harding. I wanted him transferred due to the low test statistics and bad reputation. Once I appealed the denial to get the approval of my son's transfer South Mecklenburg High transportation was okay until my vehicle got totaled. With that came hardship with transportation in his senior year. It has been difficult getting help from the school regarding alternative options.

None

Needing a number from the school is the biggest challenge; also when trying to transfer to magnet school, the process online is confusing

Have ppl on site that are versed enough to answer basic questions for the parents. My questions weren't answered because the class attendant didn't know. The tour wasn't helpful at all.

Have an assessment and merit-based component as well. This would mix in higher achieving students and not segregate them to alternative schools.

Mas. Informacion a la comunidad Hispanic Para mejorar la calidad de vida nuestros jovenes

Transportation is a very BIG problem

I think there should be a GPA requirement for the magnet schools and it not be a random lottery system

N/A

No

Yes

Stop taking kids based on skin color instead of academics

I had never heard of the term "magnet" or "magnet school" before now and had absolutely no idea what this was or what it meant. This needs to be explained on a more basic level in everything that mentions "magnet" to help spread an understanding of what it is so parents get an understanding of what this is. I would LOVE for my child to get more involved in STEM activities and fine arts, but since this is not clear in hardly ANY communication at all from the schools, there are so many opportunities lost. Unfortunately, this is the case with ALL school communications. My child misses out on opportunities and I don't find out until the event is over, what it even was, because it was so unclear as to what was meant in the school announcements. Please help correct this - it is hurting our future generations to miss out on self-enrichment because school communications are so vague and unclear what it is.

Include the neighborhood schools more in helping families exploring those magnet options. Never received any information past the connect Ed calls about magnet school fairs

I would day provide a more rapid response to which school our student is admitted to. Hopefully the 1st choice.

Equity in placement around ALL CMS schools

More information, it was implied to me that my child would not be eligible as the only ones near us were foreign language ones and we did not apply in Kindergarten

The application was considerably more difficult to navigate for one of my children who was entering kindergarten and not yet enrolled in a cms school.

Did not attend a magnet school and as such once we select no why does this continue?

En realidD al ingresar a la página es un poco Confuso la diferencia entre las diferentes escuelas

Stop all DEI and/or any form of Social Justice. Practice and emphasize Meritocracy. Only. At all levels for faculty and students.

Not so much paperwork or asking for certain documents. Parents have to take off work to bring certain documents and a single parent can't do that

A few times when I called the magnet office to ask questions the hold time was way too long.

Para mi esta bien como se representa el personal

N/a

Allow longer time to apply later into year and allow families to obtain student ids throughout most of application window. School tours and open houses with outreach to low income residents in zone and onsite Q&A sessions. Events to explore schools through deadlines to make choices. Home and neighborhood schools also host open house during magnet exploration window. Be transparent about process and odds particularly for transportation zones, walk zones, existence of secret zones like center city zone. Magnet transportation at all levels provided, not just at cluster stops.

It's very complicated, I want to sing my son up but I could not . I still mad thinking about , I am unable for my son to get in the school my friend son and daughter in sc are way excellent and well informed about the school activities that I don't have in Charlotte NC , I am planning to move back Sc I don't like the NC school system, 0 information what the kids are learning unfriendly staff it's existing and frustrating of Nc school system , I hope You will explore more from SC. Especially for single moms it's very hard I am talking my experience I don't know about others .

No tengo idea

Make ways for all parents to apply.

At the pre-K Or kindergarten registration office and testing facility parents should be handed out a list and description of all magnet schools and what they offer. When I personally applied to the lottery I didn't know anything but recommendations and experiences from other people so I limited myself when it came to pick for a magnet school due to a lack of information about what all of them have to offer

Claro que si,

I have no idea because I have never attend magenta school before like I said on the top

llegar alas escuelas y orientar mas alos padres latinos

No

To continue helping latin moms how to know or fill out the application. That help the moms who does not know, how to fill the application.

None

Quiero inscribir a mi hijo pero no encuentro mucha información ni enlaces.

Always be clear about the deadlines a s keep communication at a high level always. Other than that, I believe CMS has always done a great job!

The website seems overcrowded with information. Streamlining the information would make the process more clear and easy to navigate. Making thr Excel list of currently available open schools easier to find upfront would allow parents to apply for schools they are more likely to get into or at least have a back up plan if the lottery doesnt go in their favor.

Make it year round. Give the same programs to ALL schools and get rid of the program all together. Why do certain schools get some benefits and others don't. This was not how it was back in the day. Why make it so complicated?

N/A

Select students to apply versus have anyone apply. Lessen the confusion with better communication/timeline/etc.

There's no transparency around the acceptance criteria which is frustrating. Above everything, improve the neighborhood schools. If you're seeing an inordinate amount of families applying for magnet schools in a particular zone/area, there's a problem. Fix it (incentives for teachers, professional development, accountability, etc). The system is broken.

None

Wish more schools were included

Yes my daughter she very smart she like attending

N/A

A diagrammed timeline with definition of each step would be helpful.

Communication from the district in terms of acceptance or waitlist could improve. I never received communication (email or letter in the mail) when we pursued this opportunity for pre-k. As a CMS employee I was disappointed in that. Additionally, having no opportunity for employees to get their child into a program is disheartening. We work day in and day out to ensure the best education for every child in our building, and I couldn't get my child into a pre-k program. NAWL has been a blessing for our family and we have loved the tours, programs, and school culture. As an employee who works for a magnet school and knows that parents struggle with the multiple steps for application to our program, but we have resources to support them through the process. I know that many people still do not know about the middle college program. It is not being communicated to students and parents in their traditional high schools.

No ninguna

Bring more awareness to the process. Eliminate the requirement for auditions to admit to art programs. Level the bar by not using SES to force diversity in the programs at the exclusion of certain groups

Continue to have real people available to answer questions. Send information. Tell parents to share their stories/testimonials.

None. At the moment

Make schools partial magnets until the partial magnet fills up- it is not the best use of new buildings to make full Magnets without knowing the interest level. NAWL for example and the idea for North Meck to turn into a full magnet instead of a neighborhood school- it should start as partial magnet and partial neighborhood school and then reassess as the partial fills.

Offer more "life-long, useful, skills based" magnet programs that will allow CMS students to have more profitable, contributing careers to society once graduating high school and stop focusing on drama and arts magnet programs which are hobbies of high school students but don't actually produce noticeable effects in society and what these students actually study in high level education.

No

I never received anything about magnet school program , we just moved 2yrs ago from Pittsburgh Pa.. And ask about program. Never even received information about online schools sites for CMS

I didn't even know we have magnet schools

CMS should increase the number of full IB magnet seats available throughout the CMS footprint. Many families select other middle school magnet programs because their odds of obtaining an IB seat at Piedmont or Randolph are not great; and they'd rather have a good chance at a less-preferred magnet option than risk trying for a full magnet IB seat and not landing a magnet seat at all. CMS should base transportation zones on proximity of the magnet option to the lottery applicant.

Provide transportation for JT Williams Montessori instead of express stops.

No

More support for the teachers that come from a different country so that they can teach die NC Standards in a different language.

It would be helpful to add a short message on why someone might chose a certain school and have that be part of the process. Not just luck with the lottery. That is a more complicated approach but maybe placement is made better suiting the students in the first place.

We moved to the district this year and had no idea what a magnet school is. Still don't really understand the options. Info is not advertised enough. We did not even receive the numbers for my kids to apply to any programs until the day before applications were due. Info and numbers need to be given out well in advance.

Es una muy buena oportunidad para los alumnos

Better to have more seat rather then juts people applying and getting rejected

Transportation especially foe 6tg graders

No

Algún asesor que nos guíe a mi si me costo un poco hacer la solicitud y gracias a Dios las consejeras de las escuelas ayudaron mucho con la guía

More options and awareness of best fit for student. Many parents don't know their options

No tengo idea de esas escuelas

I applied a long time ago so I am not sure if the process has changed since then

No

I don't know much about the magnet school options. My kids just go to the schools they are assigned to.

We ended up not applying to a magnet program after the tours. (Collingswood and MPTS) Please do away with MPTS. It's not a magnet. Still can't figure out what is "special" about the curriculum that earns it the Magnet designation. It is simply a school on the way to downtown, where parents drop off / pick up kids to suit their work schedule. Therefore, it lacks community involvement. Return it to a neighborhood school.

Better communication and clarification about the options

Clearer information regarding the year two process. There was conflicting information that if you already attended a school, if you had to apply. The wording regarding the home/assigned school is confusing for folks that haven't been in the school system.

Consistent timing, better cagorgization for program and listing of current name and former names.

I did not apply applied for a magnet school,I did for 4 years old bright begins pre-k .

None

The timelines were somewhat confusing and getting student info for applying was stumbling block

Fire administration. Too many leaches taking money from teachers. Make-work BS jobs and indoctrination curriculum are pushing kids to vouchers. Wake up

The choices available should be strengthened. Some school programs are well funded and staffed. Others are not.

I would like give more opportunity to the students in urban areas

There are not enough!!!! The magnet school selection in Charlotte Mecklenburg Co is also subpar from where I came from (Clearwater, FL). Do better CMS. Do better...

NA

The school should offer magnet school information and options, more often.

Stop it. Invest in our core schools and stop doing Charter Schools as well. It weakens the whole district.

no

No

I have two kids in the magnet program, going to two different schools. The one concern I have both kids vs neighborhood school is ability to make friends outside of school. In both cases they don't have kids in there classes that live near us. Not sure if solution exists, that one regret I have of putting them in the magnet program.

Sometime results coming to late .. so parents or students has problems to decide some other things like moving or not ,etc ..

User friendly website. Public announcements

Making the transportation language and process easier to understand.

No

Así considero que esta bien

Open more spots for the engineering HS program

No

I think the resources that were available were extremely helpful and easy to navigate. I honestly couldn't have asked for a better process.

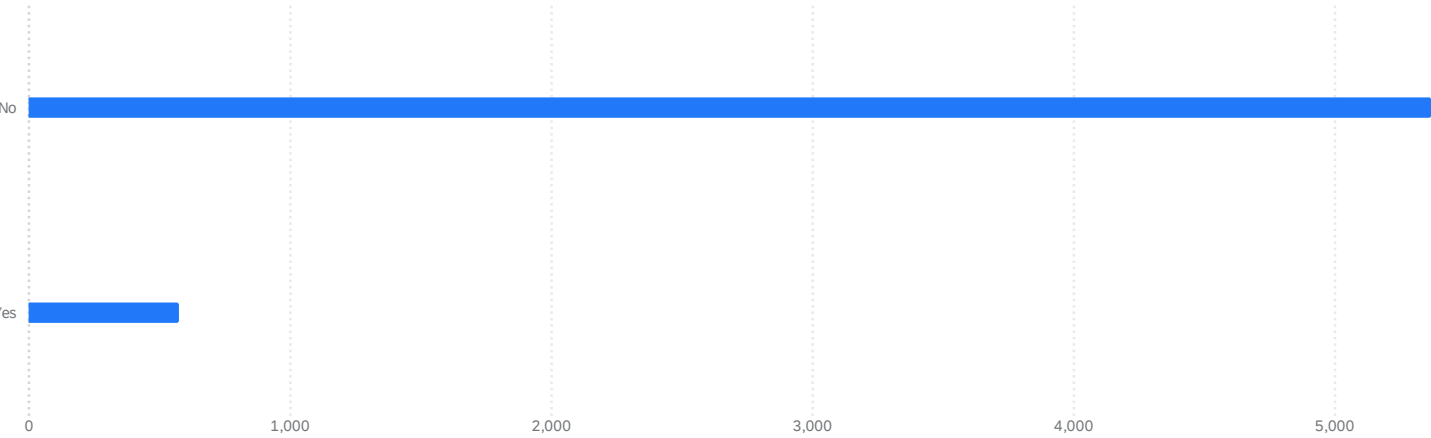
Have full transportation. Not just an express stop

Have a yearly set deadline

Make it easier for international teachers to retain their work visas.

I'm really not familiar with it but will look at it for high school.

Did your student get accepted to a magnet school but you later decided not to have them attend? 5,942 ⓘ



Did your student get accepted to a magnet school but you later decided not to have them attend? 5,942 ⓘ

Q13 - Did your student get accepted to a magnet school but you later decided not to have them attend?	Percentage	Count
No	90%	5,369
Yes	10%	573

Did your student get accepted to a magnet school but you later decided not to have them attend? 5,942 ⓘ

Did your student get accepted to a magnet school but you later decided not...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
No	1.00	1.00	1.00	5,369

Did your student get accepted to a magnet school but you later decided not...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Yes	2.00	2.00	2.00	573

It was a charter school with transportation at a cost.

تعلق ابنتي بمدرستها الاصيله و عدم ارتباطها للتغير

Attended 1 year then applied to another magnet school because of distance

Porque le estaban haciendo bullying y la escuela no hizo nada al respecto (Middle School piedmont) fue con mi otro hijo (con autismo)

The student body was horrible administration did not address bullying and the overall environment was toxic.

She started at Randolph, but the magnet program wasn't as good as expected, so she was switched to Albemarle Road.

Transportation was not available

The area was challenging

he's better off in the same school

Distance

I opted for a charter school with smaller class sizes and more individual attention. Plus regardless if magnet or not, CMS schools lack communication.

Learning Spanish, during Covid, virtual learning was impossible.

My 10th grader, who is enrolled in the IB MYP program at East Meck, was accepted into the CATO Middle Years program but declined the offer to remain in the East Meck IB program and do the Dual Enrollment program instead.

Because I wish she attend piedmont middle school..

Her test scores dropped and the school seemed complacent about it. As long as she scored around the 50th percentile on MAP, even though that represented a significant drop, they didn't seem to care.

No

Por el transporte

The pandemic threw everything off. It ended up that East Meck was not a good fit for our daughter. She was really happy that she was able to transfer to Harper Middle College and has had a very good experience!

No

Transportation issues and distance from home. Between a 45 -60 minutes commute on a normal day one way.

We hadn't heard anything about the school and after further research, it didn't seem like the right school for our rising 6th grader.

Because she had already the year at another school.

Por que quedaba más retirada de mi casa y ella tenía la escuela que le correspondía según nuestra dirección aquí más cerca

Needed an option for both kids, didn't want to split them up

Oakhurst Steam Academy did not provide enough science as we would have liked. The school I teach at had more science opportunities.

Not that we decided but the school said they qualified

Distance. The school was too far away after we moved.

I decided because of transportation issues that it was not the best choice for us.

Attended Northwest SA for two years, but moved to Levine for better academics, better time at school, better logistics. The dual hit of bell change to 7:15 and bus fiasco made the decision easy. Levine is closer than our assigned HS and our child is only on campus about 1/2 the time of NWSA, and there's no 3 hours a day on the bus

Por la oportunidad ke nos an dado de estar en este paíz y puedan aprender el idioma de inglés

Porque es mejor la educación que la que le iba a tocar asistir

She wasn't admitted to the one we wanted her to attend and her current school is a better option for us than the one that she was admitted

My child decided he liked his old school

Transportation was not there

Another option opened up

Problems with another student who was attending

Child was accepted into Cato but decided to stay at JT Williams magnet due to the ability to be dually enrolled and take advantage of great programming and educational opportunities at JT Williams.

Preferred to attend my home school as a magnet student. We wanted to attend the school in our neighborhood but also found the magnet element appealing for middle school/high school planning.

Proximity to home and availability of transportation

Travel distance.

Tuckseegee elementary school

language immersion program

Porque nos mudamos de casa y no tengo todos los documentos que se necesita para poderlos Registrar me piden Registro de vacunas Resivo de luz Resivo de agua contrato de Renta

He preferred his homeschool

No es mi caso

Switched to a different magnet school.

Better opportunities

Got into another better and closer school.

Invest in all your public schools. Not just magnet school. Every kid deserves to have programs and opportunities that can help them be successful regardless of which school in the district they attend. INVEST IN ALL OF YOUR SCHOOLS. Kids can feel and notice when the district doesn't invest in them in the same way you invest in your magnet schools and that sends a very clear message. Invest in all your student and the future of Charlotte and its surrounding cities will excel in more ways than imagined.

Si va asistir

Solo fue que hice cambio de es cuela por en una de ellas me agredieron ami hija

Transportation- Takes much longer to commute than the homeschooling. Also got feedback about lack of teachers in 6th grade.

Distance, Location & school review

For persin centered experience and approach, tailored to my child's needs and learning style.

Por el grado de nivel académico

No

CMS is not focused on academics and students ... so went private for middle school

Because we moved and I was told that she couldn't get transportation. And I really felt disappointed.

Decided to keep my child at a different school, his current school, so that he is at same school as sister who was admitted to a different magnet program.

The curriculum was going to be rigorous, and my child would be challenged and supported.

Transportation. We would have been putting our 5 year-old on a bus for two hours a day. We couldn't get comfortable with that.

Transportation changes

I wanted her to go to school closer to home and Palisades is better then East Meck

My child was accepted to and attend Oakhurst, issues with the principal and intimate hr teacher 07-08 lead to put him back in his homeschool. Same child was accepted and attended Randolph removing his bus stop and moving it to plaza rd. From Idlewild rd. North forced me to move him to Albemarle rd. Muddle.

Transportation. Express stops for magnet schools did not work for my schedule so I had to pull my kid out and enroll into home school. All the work to get into the school and then had to pull him.

The school was to far away from my child's home.

Really not much to choose from when it comes to high schools for your kids do to the transportation and Zoning. I shouldn't have to sell my home that I can afford for my child to have an opportunity if I'm willing to provide transportation

We got our second choice for magnet lottery and decided to stay at our home school for consistency and try again for our first choice the following year.

The bell schedule was ridiculous. Most magnet schools are later schedule. That's not equitable at all and you need to look at that especially since other bell schedules to non-magnet schools are earlier.

no

Because I did not like the curriculum. I was not fond of the program either, especially with kids from multiple grade levels learning simultaneously.

idk

no reason

Middle school sports at k-8 schools are not the same at other CMS middle schools. Hearing stories of how it is handled by CMS (no or few spots in teams for the K-8 students, busses getting them to practices so late it's almost over, etc). The magnet middle schools should offer what other middle schools offer to make them competitive.

No transportation options for magnet high school

Racial disparity at the HS. Student's demographic made up less than 18% of the population. I am looking for a more balanced approach.

El tiene Autismo y su diploma sera occupational. La escuela dise que como no es local no puede quedarse . Es muy triste por qu a el le gusta mucho south mecklenburg

Por el transporte para los de high school magnet y tuve que sacar Amy hija de la escuela

She initially attended the magnet program and then left because it was too much work and not a healthy learning environment.

Understaffed classes/school, and bussing issues (also understaffed so commute took way too long)

We were in the walk zone for Elizabeth traditional but got in to Chantilly and opted to go there instead. We were rezoned to Park rd Montessori but opted to stay at chantilly.

Because we didn't want her to have to go to her home school.

His kindergarten he went to the school I worked in

The home school seemed more versed and knowledgeable and safer.

Mis hijos ya no pudieron de asistir porque me mudé de área

Because of the location and transportation.

Siblings guarantee did not include transportation

Because it was more important to import skin color than good students.

Had already accepted enrollment at a different Magnet school.

Too far

Social Justice and not emphasizing being the very best - at the individual level.

Na

Child wasn't interested and dad felt it wasn't a good fit for our child.

Transportation was late every day the two years she attended. Most days she missed her first block class which created more work outside of school to stay caught up on assignments. This also caused her GPA at the end of 10th grade to be 1.6 because there was no flexibility in making up lost instruction time due to the bus situation. She graduated from her home high school with 3.1 GPA, which could have been better had the first 2 years not been so chaotic

The bus ride was too long

When her little sister registered for school, she was not assigned to magnet school so I pulled her out so she can be the same school as her little sister

My kid is in spectrum. So bit difficult to decide about his school programs.

poor academics after covid

They did

Transportation/New Shuttle stops did not work for my family's schedule. Unfortunately we had to enroll him in our home school.

They were accepted too late

Montessori wasn't a good fit

Bell schedule did not suit our schedule, decided to leave at school already attending

Transportation and the Bell schedule ... the bell rings at 4:15 and buses leave about 4:30 and there are always late buses arriving between 5-6 pm. That is unacceptable and too late for elementary age kids to be riding home

Por el cambio de dirección

Just the distance from our house to the school. Overall we felt he'd get the same out of attending the CMS middle school closer to us.

Transportation Time. The school bus took 1:30 hours one way for the school which is 15 minutes away!! No support from transportation department to change the route. Also the school timing is office rush hours.

decided to try again the next year for our first choice

Lack of structure and college prep.

Transportation and late start time for elementary level at Myers Park Traditional.

The school was virtual. I decided to that my daughter needed interaction.

The extra commute time and the lack of control of the kids on the bus. My child was attacked and nothing was done and I pulled him out.

I already had one child attending a magnet school. I choose a charter school for the second child based on the programs offered and it was a closer to home.

My child was accepted into East Mecklenburg's IB program. She ended up not attending because the school boundaries changed. She now attends her neighborhood school. We liked EMHS, though; it was a difficult choice.

No aplica

Too far

Transportation

transportation and poor reference

Sibling attending another school.

Changed school districts

Assigned school is faraway

Concerned about transportation and late start time because of work commitments for parents; child was accepted to an Independent School and will attend school there.

Decided neighborhood was a better plan

We attended and then left Randolph. It worked well for one of my kids, but the schedule didn't accommodate us for later kids. Late bell schedule meant she couldn't participate in her after-school commitments. I also want to say how disappointed I was that Randolph did not hire administrators with IB experience. In fact, the interview process didn't even contain questions about IB. I was the parent rep in an interview process and was so disappointed bec it did not convey focus on the IB foundation - it was why I sent my kids there but they assistant principal and principal they hired had zero experience or exposure to IB.

The school is poorly managed

To leave the CMS system.

JT Williams Montessori, no sports.

Started out at Waddell /SAIL, but location was no longer desirable post-COVID due to transportation concerns. (Did not want kids to ride bus and could not drive them ourselves due to work schedules.). Other magnet school -Rea Farms Steam Academy- was our neighborhood school so we switched.

I had to reconsider my options

Bell schedule conflicts

Curriculum, Culture

Porque le quitaron el transporte

determined we would rather stay at home school

Porque quedaba muy lejos de casa y no tenía acceso al transporte escolar

Transportation problem

Received second magnet choice and was made aware of space opening up at first choice after we attended open house.

It was a very new IB program and we decided we didn't think that IB mattered in kindergarten. We were also happy with our home school, but were simply exploring options.

I gave up my child's IB seat at JM Alexander due to COVID and enrolled her in the CMS Virtual Middle school her 6th grade year, August of 2021.

La escuela en la que el fue aceptado , no abrió con los propósitos iniciales, y fue hubicado en otra escuela

Mis hijos van a escuelas magnet

We transferred to another magnet school the next year.

Two older children attended the magnet school they were accepted to. My youngest did not due to his dyslexia and our uncertainty about the school fit for him. It would be great if the Exceptional Children's department helped guide students with IEP in the process of magnet school selection and which schools would be good fits.

The school allotted was very far from my home

The class sizes were larger, the school was much further away, and my son didn't want to go there after hearing about it.

He attended for a few months but there was no transportation to pick him up and take him to school. For this reason, he had to change schools. Transportation is very important and since there was no such tool

Dije k si asistuera

Found what we needed at a different H.S. Bridge programs and college Cambridge Program.

Better choice

We had something important to do

That would have been my child's third elementary school and we did not want to have that instability.

Irwin academic for transportation reasons

Por que este enfermo

They attended but we ultimately left after second grade because of the poor math instruction at Collinswood by international teachers, and the fact my child regressed after second grade with math scores.

Accepted off the waitlist. Only given 3 days to accept, which is not enough time to manage to organize transportation and alternate childcare.

Por el transporte

Our daughter decided to stay at her current school instead of moving to a new school.

Grading system in the school district

Our child equally enjoys the arts and sports. Sports are not offered at the school they were admitted to.

Collinswood hours are late (8:45-4:15) and I learned the bus for our neighborhood (Park Crossing) arrived at 5:25 pm. I could not stomach sending my kindergartner away for that length of time.

Too far away from home

Bell schedule in comparison with my work schedule. I work early hours, the magnet was a late bell.

We realized that the school was not the best fit for him

Our neighborhood school offered most of the things that the other two schools offered and had better growth scores over the years than the two schools I got into.

We won't be moving so student will go back to her home magnet school

Because I decided I wanted to go to another magnet school with my friends.

transportation logistics made for too long of a day for the child

After 1 year, switched to home elementary school because it was a better fit in academic style and a lot closer to home

We did attend

She went, but the teachers over shared personal adult information, told kids they hated teaching, and lots of fights. We returned to Carmel (our home school) and have not experienced any of those issues.

Por que tubo problemas con la maestra de sustitución

Por el horario de la escuela

Preferred neighborhood school experience for middle school in preparation for high school transition.

We had been attending BCE as a neighborhood school but applied for a magnet seat because we were moving and wanted to stay there. During that school year we realized our child had a learning disability and BCE didn't have the resources to support him (no psychologist to write an IEP, no certified Orton-Gillingham tutors on staff, etc), so we switched to our new neighborhood school (Olde Providence).

This happened once, the bus ride was too much, so we gambled with the home school based on our address (an IB partial magnet) and came to regret it.

Test scores were low.

Covid shutdown. When school opened the next year she did attend.

My son is now a sophomore in college. He went to Kennedy the first year they had the magnet program. When we started the program there was a pick-up at Endhaven Elementary School and he had a 20 minute bus ride. The second year the pick-up at the elementary school was eliminated and the transport time was going to be over an hour and that did not work for our family. It was really disappointing that this service was eliminated. I think it has since been reinstated. We live in Ballantyne and there is are very few magnet schools that are less than an hour away. Location/travel time is very important to my family.

Transportation and siblings

After visiting, it wasn't the best fit and it was choice 3

School dismissal time is too late and conflicts with sports practice

We first were accepted to Huntingtowne Farms (2nd choice) and decided in the end not to go there regardless. Wasn't the right fit. The last minute we were accepted to Parker. Great school and the right fit.

Distance

Safety and bell schedules

Got accepted to our second choice, then got accepted into our first choice so we decided not to attend our second choice.

Didn't know anyone there.

Transportation access.

Schedule conflict with other students

Distance from home. Length of time on school bus. School hours not desirable. Hard to play sports or activities getting home after 5!

Northwest school of the arts high school

Accepted to Horizons program

Language emergence

I found that communication from the schools were slow- over 2 weeks to hear back with email communication. I can't imagine having to wait that long with my child there so I chose not to attend.

My son was previously attending the technology high school at Harding University Highschool, but we transferred him to his home High School due to the high number of issues with weapons and violence at the school.

Application process

Placed both children at a private school, firmly dictated by my oldest dyslexia diagnosis. We felt an independent program would better equip him long-term

child wanted to be with friends a more social school than original school

Did not like the test scores of the school, did not like the parent involvement as well as the talks about administration coming and going in a short period of time

Transportation. As a parent who heavily relies on transportation the fact that my child would have to walk to a shuttle stop that's 5 miles away at 5am just to get a ride to school is unacceptable. It's not a safe place to walk, it's dark, and it's not ideal. I cannot afford to Uber my child to school everyday it's too expensive.

Opted for better support at a private school

Better opportunity at another school

Different year - we got into a Charter school that was a better medium-term fit

Too difficult with working and traffic for school to be so far away. Also the start/end time was not compatible with my job and no before or after school at the school would help.

Better educate new environment more resources

We were accepted to two of the three Magnet Schools that we applied for through the lottery, but we were waitlisted for our #1 pick (Rea Farms STEAM Academy). Since we preferred Rea Farms STEAM over our current neighborhood school, we moved to get into the neighborhood to be zoned for RFSA (This was before it turned 100% Magnet).

I did not get to tour the school nor did I get to see the school and classroom environment. Also felt the school was too crowded.

No transportation available

Mu student was expected to both schools she applied to we decided with the one she liked the most

because it's bad

Transportation route too long, concerns about next school and relationships.

Park road

Got accepted into private school

Please keep in mind that this was a long time ago, and it was the first time that transportation was changed in the beginning. My child was picked up in our neighborhood around the corner from our house and the second year. He was supposed to attend that school, you changed it to transportation drop off sites that just didn't work with my husband and my Work schedule in addition at the time Marie G Davis was not a K8 school. It was the global military leadership Academy that my son attended for his sixth grade year and his plan to attend for the remainder of his CMS academic career. Unfortunately we simply could not make the logistics work and we had to enroll him into his school .

Covid happened and attending Spanish immersion virtually was impossible.

Harding High School isn't what is going to feed my child education. Plus social media and the news have made Harding not a good place for my kid to be at.

We went to Irwin for one quarter and it was not a good fit. My oldest two kids cried everyday for the entire first quarter except one weekends when they did not have school. The mix of students just after the pandemic did not work for my children. Also my child with ADHD did not thrive with the methods of support utilized at that school. My kids struggled to adjust and missed their homeschool. The kindergarten teacher and program was great but since it did not work well for my oldest two, we moved all three.

My child attends long creek

Liked the idea of learning Spanish at a young age

Not the right fit/learning environment for student

Por la mala ubicación de la escuela en un sector que no nos gustó ya que se ve un sector peligroso y afectivamente lo es al ver fotos de la escuela nos pareció horrible y vieja

My older child completed 1 year at the magnet school but was withdrawn from the district for better opportunities.

Was not impressed with the program

We ultimately transferred our child out of the Collinswood program as he transitioned to Middle School because he is a social child and we wanted him to have a social network that was more accessible than the friends he made through the program.

Couldn't get both students in.

Last year she was accepted to Bruns and we ended up not attending due to lack of ability to reach anyone in the office to arrange a tour.

Student wanted to be at school with his friends

My student attends the magnet school

Fue a steam academy q no es cms

Porque me pusieron en espera Porque muy tarde aplique Porque no sabia q día era

We got a late acceptance (August) for the AY 2020-2021 for our child's pre-k year. Unfortunately, this was mid-COVID and CMS was not going back in person, but our child's preschool pre-k program was going in person, so we decided to stay at the pre-school. In any other set of circumstances I think we would have gone to Park Road Montessori. Later we learned some families had attended both in-person pre-k and CMS zoom, but we didn't know that was an option at the time.

Si asistiré

We chose to attend a charter; however, since then we have left the charter and are attending our neighborhood school. We adore our neighborhood school but I regret not attending SAIL.

Attended but left after 2 years. Principal change had a negative effect on the way the school was run.

Con más visión hacia el futuro

Behavior and environment

My child attended First Ward Creative Arts Academy for two years. We had a very poor experience there so decided not to continue. I would not consider that school an arts magnet. My child had more art experiences at a regular CMS neighborhood school. This was about 7 years ago though.

older sibling wasn't accepted

No transporte

She chose to attend her home high school versus the IB magnet highschool due to her personal choice and the new transportation stops.

Couldnt change the program

Length of time for transport to and from school.

Because his dad changed his mind and would not let him attend. He took me to court and won the right to take him out of CPEC.

School violence and open campus situation feels very unsafe

It was not my first choice

Attached magnet school

My daughter is completing 8th grade at Nwsa. For 9th, she will return to our home/neighborhood school. The main reason is that it's hard being this far away from school when they have before/after school activities. My daughter started Nwsa on the tail end of Covid. The traffic was light if she had anything before/after school. With every passing year the traffic has gotten excessive and it's no longer worth 2-3 hours in a car just for one after school club meeting. And, before/after school activities are very important in the high school years for building the college resume.

I wasn't impressed with the online curriculum

Because no transportation to high school has changed

We decided to send her to another magnet school that was closer to our home with a transportation option.

Late acceptance and confusing process

My kids were at Myers Park traditional k-2 and k-1 and we moved to a new charter school That opened.

Overall environment at school; was a partial magnet and while magnet IB program was good, IB students had to mix with general school population for non-IB classes (science, gym, electives); environment was poor with many fights, lack of teachers, etc.

NA

My daughter was selected by magnet schools because of her high-level of academic success . I have absolutely no interest in undercutting the quality of public education by sending my child to schools that diminish that. Magnet schools circumvent traditional rules and framework of public education and diminish a more balanced education system throughout communities. My son will not attend a magnet school either.

We attended & then left. The horizons program is poorly managed & does not integrate the students into the wider community. That leaves the kids very wanting in social areas.

Myers Park Traditional

Transportation and distance. I can't pick up my high schooler at a nearby school at 2:45 every day. The decision to not offer bus transportation to a nearby stop was a big factor.

1. For the first year, because my child got accepted but then was told the school was full. 2. For the second year, because the first choice school was again full.

One child attended, one child decided to finish elementary at zoned school.

We got Randolph IB instead of Piedmont IB which was my first choice. We are also close to the bottom of the waiting list. Would like to understand how they got in one IB school and not the other.

Not applicable

Mi hijo cambio de opinión respecto a lo que quería estudiar

Choice between two magnet schools

We observed the culture of the school based on the experiences of our older child. We did not think it would a good fit four our younger children. Our home school also has a magnet program that better aligned with our your children's interests.

No magnet school nearby. We feel it is too long for commuting to school. Almost 49 mins travel one way

Yes

My son wanted to attend regular school

Initially to challenge them and keep them interested in learning new things.

School rating was poorer than his current school, the other magnet school that I applied didn't get through lottery.

My kids were accepted to Blythe about a week after school started. They were already settled in Barnett's so I opted not to move them.

La escuela asignada, se encuentra muy retirado de donde actual mente vivo con mi hijo.

Got into a charter that we liked

After learning more about the Lansdowne IB program from a teacher who works there, it was apparent it wasn't truly a special program at all. It wasn't worth the bother to drive further. I would prefer fewer magnet options if they were truly differentiated options, not just a cursory exploration in other styles. Also: you need way more than two Montessori schools.

Campus was too far out

We should not need a pin number to apply. My child's school took so long to pass out the sheets, that I nearly missed the deadline. Also, he was accepted. Then, at orientation, they said that they were closing the program. A huge waste of my time!

My child is in magnet school

Porque la escuela quedaba muy lejos de casa y yo no podía llevar a mi hija a la escuela. Ella necesita transporte escolar para ir a la escuela y a su after school.

Because the school does not accommodate all students learning wise

Cato Middle College

They were also accepted into a non-magnet school through the lottery and it was a better option for our family.

They did not have transportation for my child for the UNC Early college program.

My oldest daughter was interested in the CTE pathway at the UNCC campus, but ultimately decided that choir and theatre were too important to her to miss out on them in high school. Youngest daughter is at Northwest School of the Arts and my middle child - son - is auditioning there soon to attend 9-12 grade because little sister has had a good experience.

Due to the time schedule of the school and my work schedule. I would like for my child to remain at their current school but the district is giving me a hard time transferring him back. I have asked for assistance with this matter but unfortunately no one has provided it.

The magnet schools closer to home had no spots by the time I applied. I tried to make the best of it, but the schools available would have caused a lot of stress due to commute time.

It is not an academically rigorous school. My daughter was in honors and advanced math. After asking questions, we realized she wouldn't learn more in at least 6th and 7th grade, because of where she was in elementary school. There were actually a handful of students who attended and I know of two who came back to our home school after the 1st semester. It was due to lack of academics and fear of lagging behind, according to their parents.

NA

it was unsafe and had no true benefits

It was 2020-2021 school year and when we learned that school would be virtual, we pulled our rising K student and put them in TK. We reapplied the following year and got in again,

South Meck has TERRIBLE AP scores. Small classes, students get an A in the classes but make a 1 on the AP tests. LOTS of APs just no one is passing the AP exams. Quite sad when MPHS/AKHS have almost DOUBLE the number of children in the classes and a way higher pass rate Pre/Post Covid.

I had to see my daughter re-attend the magnet program. However, I need the information so that I can pursue application.

It was during covid, for prek. It would have been virtual only and we needed an in person option because my husband and I work full time.

Distance

After 6 years in the magnet program, my student determined that they would prefer to attend their home school for middle school, in preparation for high school.

Por la zona peligrosa que estaba la escuela

Our place of employment changed

It was too far. Also, the high school program is very rigorous and more than we wanted to commit to at this time.

Curriculum and proximity

Yes

We are seeking a transfer to South Meck. We were rezoned to ballantyne Ridge and did not have a choice. We would LOVE to give our student's spot to someone who actually wants to be there on the very long wait list that they have. Ballantyne Ridge will not support the academic needs of our student, while South Meck can.

Closer to home and kids learn more

They do not have EC program

It wasn't the experience we were looking for at the time.

Falta de transporte

Because I didn't like that school of choice

The location of the school and then also when I went to visit the school I was not impressed with the organization or the administration of the school.

Home school was closer and had a better math program

Student decided to leave magnet program in high school to pursue other study interests/focus.

His father would not let him.

We were waitlisted, and the school did not tell us we had a spot until late into the season, and we had already made other arrangements.

We applied to a different magnet school, got accepted, then decided to stay at our current position. Life situations change and sometimes we have to stay where we are instead of forcing a move that would cause more damage than good for our students.

My high school student didn't get assigned a Spanish course during his sophomore year as outlined in the description about how the courses will be offered. The guidance office was not responsive in a timely fashion about my inquiry into his schedule for 10th grade. I chose to remove him from the program.

I decided to keep her at her current magnet school.

West charlotte

We chose our neighborhood school over Billingsville in 18-19 school year

My child attended for the first semester and then I removed her. There were too many fights and my child had to serve the consequences of other students one too many times.

I sent my child to one of the school and she experienced some racial tension there so I decided to pull her out.

Because the school wasn't safe

yes

Because the transportation options that were available were not relevant to my home. The express stops were a very big factor as I personally feel it's only beneficial for the bus drivers.

Transportation

Because I did not want my child in a school where skin color was more important than intelligence

Travel time and the later bell schedule made it difficult to participate in other extracurricular activities.

School demographics - his demographic group represents only 3% of total student population

My child got into Northwest through the highschool art portfolio process but was placed on a wait list...this was super frustrating as the application process was quite extensive and the magnet slots available in 9th grade are entirely dependent on how many current NWSA students choose to continue. We ultimately chose to continue with registration for IB at East Meck as a result, many weeks before Northwest offered my child a slot off the wait list.

My child instead attended a charter school at the time

They attended for the first few years, but the quality of the magnet declined, so they moved to their assigned home school, which was also a magnet.

Por que son mejores en la educación

We think our daughter needs an extra year of TK

Due to distance and long travel time. He is in 1st grade.

My son made the choice for himself to go to his 'home' school. He choses AP classes over IB.

My son did not acclimate to the Chinese program

It was far

The curriculum overload and IB track. Seems to be too early and unnecessary at these grade levels. Large school size and classrooms sizes. The entrance limited with long car lines for drop and pick up .

friends not going

Transportation and unsure about the quality of program/teachers

Porque no le daban bus i se me dificultó llevarla tan lejos en carro

We got in off the wait list and it was logistically easier to be at our neighborhood school. The school wasn't that compelling to override that obstacle

Están asistiendo

Our daughter could have gone to South Meck for the language program because she had done a K-8 immersion school. However, we decided for her to attend our neighborhood school for a change and because it was closer to us (and high school starts soooo early!)

One child dropped her IB spot at East Meck when accepted at CTEC. East Meck was impressive, but CTEC was a better fit. Second child dropped his IB spot at East Meck to attend a non-CMS school (Fletcher) CMS as that was what he needed. It would have been very difficult for him to do well in IB in 11th/12th and did not want him to have to change schools at that point.

We didn't know anyone else interested in attending. And the decision came so late that we had already worked hard to get our kindergartner excited about going to her home school that we could not change.

Chantilly. I did not like the environment.

My child did attend.

Es una escuela con un programa bueno, pero el programa solo se queda en el papel, mala educación, no hay control sobre los alumnos, no aprenden nada en las clases, es un programa que en esa escuela no sirve para nada.

Decided against Montessori after visiting as it wasn't a good fit for my child. Very happy that I had an opportunity to visit in person before committing

We chose the school closest to our home instead.

La mandaron a una escuela virtual para el año 24-25

Distance from home, difference in test scores and school quality was not big enough to make the switch.

More friends attended our home school that year so my children attended the home school too.

Porque se me complicó el transporte ese año

After a few weeks at Greenway Park, it was evident that the Principal discouraged parent involvement. There was a sign on the door that said parents may not come in the building. Parents were not allowed to have lunch with students. Curriculum night was a lecture about absences and tardies. It seemed more like a prison than a school. We went back to our home school that has a lot of community involvement.

Better option (private option) came available

School of the arts had a application process and my daughter had to create 3 art pieces. Wish we known that before applying through the lottery website.

She chose to continue in the Montessori magnet track rather than switch to Northwest School of the Arts in 7th grade

Found out that change in staff would result in less academic support than initially expected.

Not really a true magnet school and not really different from traditional school as far as programming etc. Transportation zones are not created equal as far as choice school offerings. Magnet School program options vs. school academic performance. Building facility and cleanliness Environment.

Child wanted a smaller learning environment.

The school director since day first doesn't accept my kid and put myself and my son under stress all time. Very bad director and stuff.

Communication issues in getting more information based on the website. Voicemail was not responded to until almost a week later and no email response. Ultimately child did not want to attend due to being ostracized and making new friends.

We were initially admitted into our 3rd choice. Before school started a slot in our first choice school became available and we took the opening!

No way to get there from the northern part of the county. Shuttle buses promised never happened. Announced the secondary school would move even farther south without much reasoning as to why. Killed our options of continuing with our community.

JT Williams Montessori was full of terrible students

The time changes of my place of employment (CMS) did not allow for flexibility with transportation

Transportation, straight up. The express stop was not convenient for us to drive our child to it, but also it is not walkable. Our express bus stop was 3 miles away in the opposite direction of NWSA.

The school report was not favorable. Also when I inquired I was told 10-11% of the population is magnet. That is not a sufficient number for my liking.

The academic level of Charter school in our area (not CMS) was 20% lower then public school of the same area.

Main factor was transportation. The school day ended at 4:15, but bus did not arrive at our stop until 5:30 or even 6:00 some days. That plus the extremely high amount of homework assigned made it impossible for us to continue attending.

Bus took hours to bring them home arrive home.around 7pm

I taught in a title I school yet put the magnet choice for my child in a non-title I school. Even though he was accepted, I decided it wouldn't be okay for me to teach in a type of school that I wouldn't send my son. The next year we did the lottery for a Title I magnet school.

Felt like home school was better for our student.

It wasn't where student wanted to go (2nd choice)

South Academy of International Languages was Wadell. Couple of my friends' kids studied in Wadell and very good experiences. Also, we were interested in language programs

Better learning

Better school better learning

Found a better school

Transportation

We chose our assigned school over Randolph Middle because we decided we did not want to add extra transportation time to our day.

Transportation options were terrible. The school (CPEC) presented as very unorganized, when we came they were not prepared. The class schedule seemed far too harsh. Very low standardized grades. Overall seemed very stressful for the student. No sibling guarantee.

I felt there were better options

They went to marie g davis for a years and tbh is was the worse year ever my son was in first grade and my daughter in kindergarten and i think that school should not be a magnet school . Barely teachers theres, teachers no focusing in the kids academic and principal with the worse attitude. My kids really did not had a good experience there. Now they got to winding springs elementary and i rather have that one as a magnet school the whole school stuff are so focus on the kids doing great and looking for better ways to teach them which makes it easier for kids to focus and learn . Everyone is helpful and friendly

Our younger child attended Collinswood from Kinder through the fist half of 5th grade. We pulled him due to a title IX issue, which left him feeling unsafe (even though we tried to resolve it and have in counseling for it). We had him transferred to Pineville for the remainder of 5th grade, and are trying to have him transferred to SAIL for middle school, so he can continue in the world language program.

Changed mind as schedule was different than older son and they wanted to go to same school

My magnet school moved and the travel was too much for my family.

The program was very complicated. There was an extreme amount of homework and parent involvement required compared to where our child was going.

We moved from south Charlotte and we had no choice

La maestra,y los demás maestros no me ayudaron a que mi hija tuviera buena comunicaci3n con ellos la maestra me la umillo por llegadas tardes d3nde no fue culpa de ella si no q de nosotros por el horario q ten3amos de trabajo y ella me la umillo dici3ndole q se Hiba a quedar a lavar ba3os como la abuela si segu3a llegando tarde a todo eso al final me la aplaso de grado y los ni3os me le isieron bulim por consentimiento de ella

We realize that CMS does not understand what the magnet school is.

For my oldest, we got into MPTS off the wait list but it was two weeks before school started so we had already committed to our home school, Selwyn.

Decided against a language academy.

She got into one and waiting list for our first choice. Once we got off the waiting list, we opted out of the other.

Por el transporte no tenia

It wasn't our top magnet school choice and so we decided we'd rather attend our neighborhood school. Also it wasn't clear if odds are better to only select 1 choice, vs adding additional choices.

We removed our children from Park Road Montessori as the learning curriculum was not going well for them

My child got into Collinswood but I decided to have her stay at Chantilly because it is closer to home and a better fit for her academically

We got in to our second choice, Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School. Myers Park traditional was our first choice. We decided to give up our seat at ETES and hope for a spot at MPTS. We got in off the waitlist mid July. We were planning to go to our home school.

He got selected in NCSSM for 11th grade.

Bullying and racial diversity

N/A

my mom didn't let me she said "it was to far"

Went to a different magnet school.

I sent my student to a different magnet school.

We got our third choice school, extremely disappointing. The principal of the school is impressive but the school as a whole doesn't feel like a good fit (for reasons I am not comfortable discussing here). There wasn't enough information provided about the IB courses. We were under the impression that the school was transitioning to 100% magnet when we applied. This is not the case, the school has neighborhood schools and doesn't seem like an actual IB school to the academic level of say, Randolph IB.

Transportation option changes & School was not doing as well as presented during tour.

We are new to the area and decided to stay with our local public school which has the same rankings as the magnet school.

Student did not enjoy the environment of the school

It was in a prior year. My son got accepted to Myers Park Traditional, but it was during Covid.

It wasn't one of my choices

We moved

Lack of good transportation options. We don't like the express bus. Rather see all outside school activities onsite not at home school.

I withdrew my child from CMS completely. My child was bullied, overwhelmed, and not safe at her CMS school. She needed accommodations faster than the district could allow, so we decided to leave for her mental health. We thought about coming back but the disorganization and disregard for staff hinders us from coming back. Everyone we interact with is disgruntled, overwhelmed, or leaving.

Felt the school needed more culture for my child. Wasn't enough diversity with students and staff. Curriculum was great.

We attended a charter school instead but have recently come back to a magnet school

The leadership at DJV was poor especially the principal which led to a number of good staff leaving the school.

It was a Montessori school and we decided that structure may not be a fit for my son.

Choice of school student wanted had availability

Sent to private school. Negative image in the community.

Waiting for space in NWSA. Auditioned post lottery and passed. Now we are in this purgatory of admission. Will we get in? When will we know?

home school better

location

Was informed that the school pushed and supported a LGBTQ agenda. While we accept and advocate for the LGBTQ community we don't want to see any agenda, LGBTQ, political, conservative, liberal nor religious pushed upon anyone

Far away from home

Park Rd. Montessori Pre-k was far away with tuition you had to pack a snack/meals & she got accepted to Meck Pre-K which was free, closer, & she had already been attending that daycare, & snacks & meals were included. Also, both of my neighbor's kids were held back at Park Rd. Montessori (parents are a Dr. & a school teacher). <-- What!? Is this from self-guided Montessori learning?

For musical theater

My middle child (2022 CMS grad) was accepted for 8th grade to a magnet but since it was IB and he had not taken foreign language before that seemed like it was going to be an issue. He also wasn't wanting the general computer classes (he'd been taking PLTW middle school classes) so we homeschooled for 8th grade instead and then he returned for high school.

She left the district for a smaller charter school

Our local school is Paw Creek down the street but thought a better fit would be Irwin due to my daughter being advanced since birth.

No transportation cms is pathetic

We chose a charter school that better suited our child.

I wanted them to attend their home high school for transportation reasons.

DISTANCE VS GRADE LEVEL, I AM SCARED TO SEND MY CHILD SO FAR ALONE AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE

Too far

The late bell schedule is not accommodating to students participating in extracurricular activities that have sports practices at 5 or 5:30pm. When riding the bus they don't get home from school early enough to allow them to get to sport practices and both my husband and I work full time and are unable to wait for two hours in carpool line to pick our child up to make it to sport practices.

We got into our second choice and chose to go there, so when we got off the waitlist for our first choice, we declined it. The main reason was that we didn't find out until late summer that we got into our first choice and already felt committed and excited for our second choice.

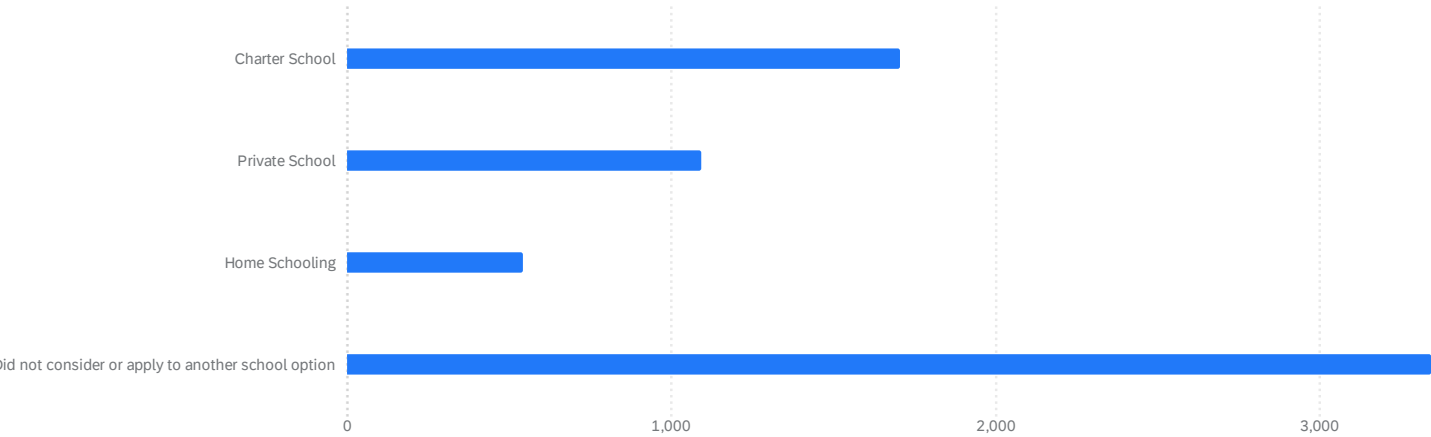
Because of the school reputation and the school rating

We did not get into our first choice magnet school- Rea Farms. We got into our second choice- Quail Hollow. Quail Hollow is also our neighborhood school, so we would have been admitted no matter what.

The first time, we decided to keep her in private school for kindergarten. In first grade, she was accepted to our third-choice school, but then was accepted to our first choice thanks to a waitlist spot opening.

Initial acceptance at number two choice, wait list for number one. Didn't attend number two choice after receiving a spot off wait list for number one preference.

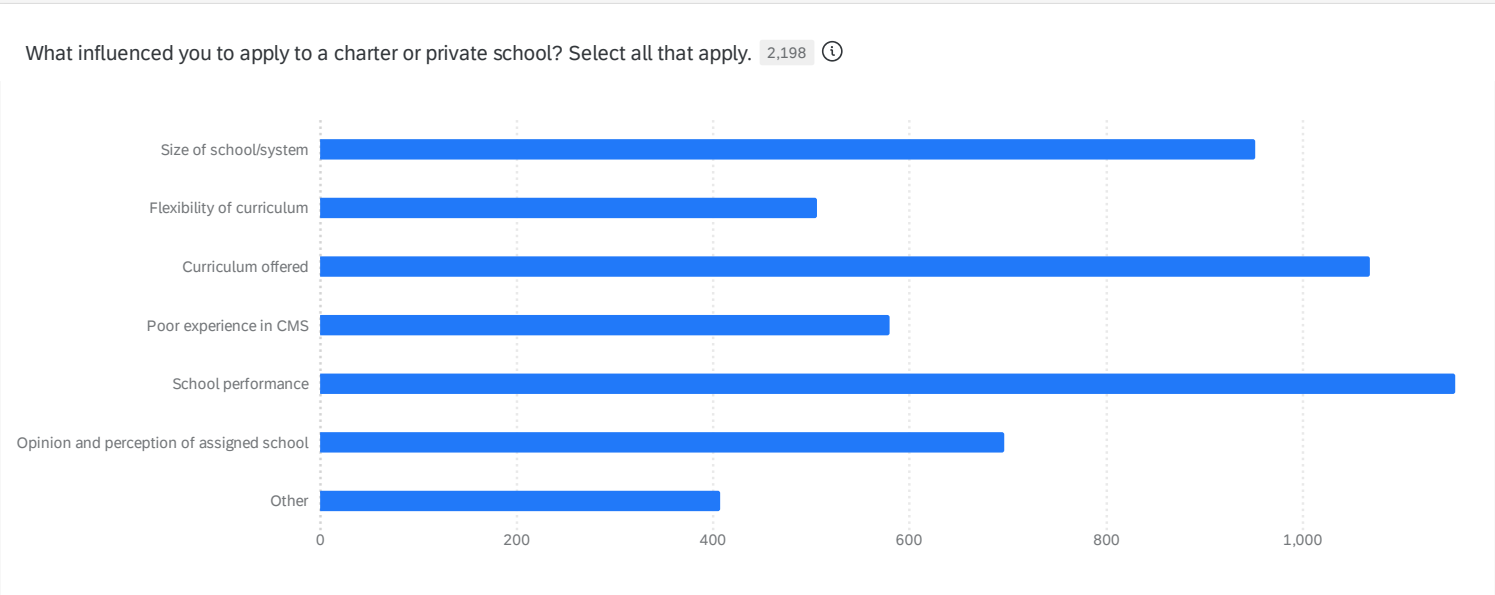
In addition to magnet schools, did you apply to or consider any other school choice options available in the community? 5,782 ⓘ



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Q15 - In addition to magnet schools, did you apply to or consider any other school choice options available in the community?	Percentage	Count
Charter School	30%	1,707
Private School	19%	1,094

Q15 - In addition to magnet schools, did you apply to or consider any other school choice options available in the community?	Percentage	Count
Home Schooling	9%	542
Did not consider or apply to another school option	58%	3,344



What influenced you to apply to a charter or private school? Select all that apply. 2,198 ⓘ

Q16 - What influenced you to apply to a charter or private school? Select all that apply. - Selected Choice	Percentage	Count
Size of school/system	43%	952
Flexibility of curriculum	23%	506
Curriculum offered	49%	1,069
Poor experience in CMS	26%	580
School performance	53%	1,156
Opinion and perception of assigned school	32%	697
Other	19%	407

What influenced you to apply to a charter or private school? Select all that apply.: Other ⓘ

More recess and outdoor time and focus on positive discipline offered at charter school

Did not get s seat in magnet school

My child was placed in a middle school with horrible reputation, we applied for transfers through cms and we're still waiting on responses but if she isn't able to transfer we'll have to consider charter schools

Child need more help

Relationships with other parents and prior experience with school staff

We were disappointed that we didn't win the lottery for the first year of application and had to attend the zoned school. Then the second year we were evaluated to enter our magnet school. And last, when the school closed during covid, we considered homeschooling. It was a terrible decision that schools closed and masked. In future we hope that countries around the world reflect on how detrimental this was for the students.

Recc of other parents/students

Location of magnet school eas too far away after we moved.

Districted elementary is low performing.

It was closer to the place where living in.

I did not apply, but we did look at all options.

Situation management like bullying

I have not applied but had definitely started putting thought into it. I'd prefer smaller classroom settings which I think helps kids with learning disabilities better. Also the level of resources and instruction.

Proximity to home

Friends feedback

Distance

Communication among staff and students as positive

Poor History and reputation of local CMS assigned school.

Location

Location

Educational and Developmental theories implemented

To have option because Gary into a magnet school is very very very very, very good

We previously lived in Indian Land. We moved to Mecklenburg County to get away from the crazy Trumbers.

CMS continues to fail in changing its culture and focusing on students learning to read, write, learn math and science. For charlottes sake I hope this changes.

Transportation and distance

Opinions of current students/parents

COVID - we went private during COVID so our kid didn't throw herself off a balcony with boredom and frustration with the awful virtual learning

New school

Seems like two many ESL students at CMS these days. They should be in a separate class where learning English is a focus. I'm afraid they are holding my child back because they take more time of the teacher. Also difficult for her to make friends when so many others don't even speak English. I feel bad for those kids - must be very very difficult. Something should change.

Outdoor access and less screen use

The opportunities that students at those schools have more access to robotics, school learning trips, and smaller classes to push them harder in The Stem arena.

Level of education; higher academic standards

more physical activitiyd daily

Bell schedule

yes

Not alot of magnet schools with diversity and high academics

Transportation

Mejor rendimiento académico, esfuerzo de los maestros.

Location. There are multiple ones near me. The magnet schools are farther away and CMS there are bad stories of transportation with no busses, late busses, and bus rides that are hours long each day.

Recommendations from other parents

Not teaching to test, forced over-emphasis on testing and grades

If I didn't get into the magnet I wanted, I wanted to explore other schools as I wasn't happy with my assigned home elementary school.

Discipline and respect for students and staff is more important at charter and private schools.

Safety

Community involvement

Because it is a lottery which is rigged for people with non American names.

Rising middle schooler. Love our elementary school, hate the middle school option. Poor curriculum offerings, unqualified teachers resulting in poor testing results

Quisumos encontrar una opción donde se involucre mas a las familias en la formación de los niños donde se cuidando sus relaciones interpersonales mucho más, do de exista menos bullying

Wanted something different than CMS because the district seems to be in a downward trend.

I would love to get my child away from the politicized public school system. Get the kids back on track with learning what they should and not about gender ideology, race based curriculum and put God back in our schools and more would want to keep their kids in the public school system.

We lived near one he went when he was in kindergarten threw first

Overall safety and disciplinary policies surrounding

Experience as a CMS staff

Our public middle school is an F!!!! Horrible school

Provided transportation to and from school where as Cms only provided satellite bus service.

Busing issue due to how far away NWSA was

we could actually get accepted

looking for schools that the parents and child shared good experiences; teachers who are happy to be there and still feel passionate about teaching

Easy asses for transportation

Siblings attend

Resources and inclusion efforts with disabled students

location

Needed a school where a gifted child could thrive. c

Support staff for additional assistance.

More advanced curriculum

Space available, no lottery

Location

I'm first generation German-American and wanted my kids to learn my mom's language.

house prices are high in better rated schools.so magnet schools is better option to trade off between house price and CMS 10 rated school catchments

My daughter has dyslexia and she has not gotten the services she has needed to be at grade level in her classes.

Overcrowded schools, too many fights and low grade and no staff retention

Horizons

Unsure of magnet lottery results

Christian Curriculum

High percentage of Black students, Black staff, and culturally responsive culture

Parent worked there

Parent worked there

thought about it and applied, but there was no transportation at the time!

Availability of EC programs

Safety, quite a few bad, disrespectful, bullying, non motivated students are in CMS. The pandemic a

CMS is known to not provide excellent or quality education in some neighborhoods, in which my area was one

Location

I'm tired of my scholar having events and "rewards" taken due to the poor behavior of other scholars.

Teacher turnover at middle school

Cms is horrible when it comes to the EC children how to handle them because they aren't regular students

Did not apply, but considered it

Student doesn't like present school

Higher education opportunities

To much Violence I'm CMS schools

I am a cms employee so I wanted the my school calendar & my son's school calendar to match.

location

Transportation

Love Montessori

Distance from our house is a big factor

Bus transportation was eliminated.

Just to explore all options.

Wanted flexibility to live out of school zone

Resources for smart but disabled kids are poor in cms

Poor experience with school administrators

Waiting list was LONG! It's ridiculous

Language

CMS seems to be getting worse after the Covid protocols

Class size

There is an abundance of testing in CMS and the curriculum does not always meet the needs of all students.

School data for my child's assigned home school.

Distance from home

Behavior was terrible at Crestdale. Students are mean and Principal Jennifer Schroeder is a dictator who takes away bathroom privileges and is suspending students for no reason.

Did not apply, only toured

I didn't actually apply, I was just trying to identify all my options in case we were unhappy with the school we were assigned to

Not Cms

Extreme Bullying

Lack of learning support at CMS school

options

Recommend by a friend

Teachers appear to be happier, better supported and there is less turn over in charter schools.

Combination of high black student population and decent test scores.

Student need not met in traditional setting.

Decreased chance of not getting accepted into a magnet middle school

Less focus on test scores and more focused on learning how to learn. My kids are both gifted and test well but I do feel like CMS curriculum often is focused on performance over exploration, failing, learning how to learn, questioning, etc. that is good for the gifted profile. I think the performance driven focus can increase anxiety that is so often present. That anxiety often shows up for parents at home as the kids often will not act out at school. It's been hard getting schools to understand that and make policies accordingly. I feel there is often a "just get through the curriculum" feel and overly punitive, just comply take on discipline. When I proctored for fifth grade EOGs last year the level of control and strictness felt like school to prison pipeline. The policies around lunch and recess (SPA) at my daughter's middle school (NWSA) the kids often comment are "giving prison".

Location of school close to home

exploring all options

Ridge road was where my son was supposed to go and I have not heard great things about the school.

Higher education so they can compete when they leave North Carolina for college

online hybrid options for absent days so attendance is not impacted

Worried about not getting into a lottery school

Behavior

CMS district is far too large. Putting poor performing kids next to good kids just brings down everyone. My daughter was sexually assaulted at Mint Hill Middle and CMS did nothing. The district should be broken up and the entire board should resign.

Safety

Had attended private school for elementary

public school not meeting student needs

School violence, bullying and lack of safety

Feedback from others who had attended LAB school

location and transportation

New boundaries in south charlotte

Montessori (cont'd from preschool)

K-12 possibility to stay in same school and have long lasting friends.

I wanted my children to experience a charter school I drove them to school daily

Proximity

Having options if in case my child did not get in to CMS magnet

Transportation

My daughter is EC - I couldn't figure out which of the magnet schools had good EC programs. It was much easier to visit the charter and private schools. You speak to the principal directly and the head of EC directly. Most charter and private schools at wtenasparwmt about EC. Can't get that from a CMS school website. Leadership feels hard to contact.

My son has autism and I am not confident that he is receiving intensive support.

Ability to handle ADHD issues, quality, duration and prestige of IB

Our child was not being taught the skills that would enable him to read and write in a public school setting.

My daughter is assigned to an F school.

Small class size

Language

Dual language immersion program

El asiento de mi hija fue el 65 mucho tiempo de esperar

Emphasis on applicable learning rather than EOG testing

Specific school, location and reputation

Flexibility to travel with kids

My daughter being bullied

Location

in case didn't get admitted by SAIL

Private for smaller class sizes

Teacher to home personalization and invitations to connect seemed more welcoming at other school options.

Older sibling was unhappy at assigned middle school.

Location

Horror stories I heard about CMS

It was a secondary choice of the desired magnet school was not available to my child.

Low student to teacher ratio and was not pleased with home school scores

Diversity

Diverse staff

Proximity to that school

Less school violence

Just wanted to see what else is out there. ultimately decided to stick with CMS.

Charter and private schools ability to discipline and remove disruptive children which impacts our child's education and concerns over things that may be taught in the public school systems

Access to Middle School sports

Test & data scores of home school were poor.

Specialized for our child's special needs

I previously worked at a Charter school and had one of my children enrolled there but disliked the direction the board was going in and left my position and withdrew my daughter.

Additional extracurricular activities (music, sports) at a higher level

My student is an AIG student who did not get placed in our magnet choice. She was placed at our homeschool which is failing school.

AP Test Scores/SAT/ACT

More individual focus.

my child has special needs

Venimos de otro estado.. y mis niñas están aprendiendo el inglés

teacher/student ratio

lack of rigor in middle school

Did not like the school options even for magnet. We have schools that are super close that we are not allowed to apply to even if we provide our own transportation but there is a magnet school that we are eligible for 30 minutes away with no traffic (52 minutes in rush hour) Things like that are frustrating for parents.

I didn't apply but thought about it because I wanted to see if any charter schools offered specialized study like a magnet school on top of a charter school already being known as a so called better school than public schools

Catholic school

Foreign language options

School discipline and functionality of Charter schools over CMS.

student population, diversity, teaching staff, property and facilities

Special needs child with IEP

Local school tours were not very enticing. The staff was not friendly or helpful and not enthusiastic to be showing us around.

Values are more aligned with mine

Close to home address

Smaller class size

Neighborhood school options

recommended by friend

Proximity

my mom

Transportation

Moved from another city, where we attended private school

The classism of magnet schools. The ignorance & bigotry of interacting with Special Needs Students. Some of the things I've had said to me I let slide bcuz at least it was a bigotry of ignorance not hate. The classism is something at this point I think CMS embraces as much as it's practiced & from talking to parents in various other CMS schools. ATP I wonder why we're asked if nothing will be done to address the issues? Satellite stops aren't safe bcuz we play hope a child isn't hit daily & only helps CMS not both CMS & Students.

Capacity of the school- both of my kids can attend

Yes because I am not afraid my child will die. Plus cms teachers don't care. My expirience is in very suburb schools and the teachers don't care and the fact CMS lets kids wear pajamas to school set the tone

closer to home than the magnet school

Transportation and shuttle stops

I am highly concerned about the sexually explicit books found at JM Robinson middle school. I am highly concerned about adults discussing sexual orientation with children. I am also highly concerned about staff trying to make my children feel guilt or shame over their race and/or religion and based on other parents' stories, I have concerns about antisemitism.

Cost

A retired teacher recommended it to us

Middle and high school ratings and concerns

Looked at all options

Although we haven't had a bad experience, I believe CMS is too big and has some gaps

Our home HS and MS are not places we want to send our children.

SPED

Some schools were graded a C and below on the scorecard for education

Board does care and listen CONCERNS OF ASIAN COMMUNITIES so kind of rasiat

During Covid kids in CMS were not attending in-person school at one point

We are considering leaving NWSA because of the major strain of having our busses taken away.

Stupid redrawing of elementary and middle school districts. We also love half of a mile from a magnet school that we have to apply to attend.

CMS has the WORST literacy program that I have EVER heard of! My two children are, thankfully, very bright. But neither could read or write when they entered kindergarten and there was very little in the EL program that aided in their literacy development. I have been in education for 20 years and I was TERRIFIED that they would not learn to love reading and writing because they were taught under the EL program. Luckily, against the wishes of their school administrators, the teachers they have had for the last three years have taught outside of the EL curriculum. So my children have learned and have thrived.

Location to residence

Daughter's interest in theater

Outdoor time

Closer to home and Childs age

Concern about behavior issues in CMS

Location and start time

I don't trust constant boundary line changes. No idea of what you are gonna get in a school

The pitch about diversity was really good. Everything sounded great, looked great, but the school decided to merge all the grades into one building and everything seemed to fall apart.

Diversity

Location

Board guidelines

We tried for charter when our son entered kindergarten- didn't get into any decent ones - I'm actually glad now because CMS exceeded expectations. Public money should be spent on our public public schools.

Transportation issues when neighborhood busing was taken away this year

Better middle school athletic

Location and physical Facility Environment. Behavior & discipline. Class size. Values

Safety, caring facility, educational success

Drugs at Hough

Could not get my student(s) in magnet program as CMS employee

No tenemos la capacidad de pago de la mensualidad actualmente

unfavorable home school

Reputation, school scores/performance, parent feedback, rigorous program

Shuttle stops and poor regards to rival schools and students. Unsafe neighborhoods

The over poor education CMS provides even in Magnet Programs

Not able to get into desired magnet.

Transportation

With two well behaved, gifted students I don't find that CMS always serves them. There's too much focus on testing and performance rather than exploration, questioning, failing well, and developing a zest for learning.

Distance

Wanted my child to have a more personalized experience

CMS middle schools in our area all have the same very later bells schedul

Athletic Program

Behavior is horrible at long creek and nothing gets done about it

Highly gifted programming, language immersion, and European calendar system (with shorter summer and longer breaks)

Current school

Assigned school only had one class per grade & I had twins. It was important to me that they be in different classes.

I would like a 4 day school week and some. Hatter schools do that

Too much redistricting in our home school area (Dilworth)

Leamer support services

School atmosphere: events and activites for students to create a well rounded experience, newer building and amenities with in the school, uniforms, smaller district more autonomy to make decisions that meet the needs of the students with in their school. The size of CMS is to large to best support all learners and it becomes too institutional and 1 size fits all.

Lots of CMS schools report cards in our area have a D or F rating. I also do not like how CMS teaches towards the EOG. I don't think the kids get enough critical thinking training. And they are not able to be taught on their academic level

for a pre-k student, CMS options are limited

His current teacher said he was too advanced for his current school.

Timing of the when the decisions were communicated. Had my child not been accepted, we would have been without childcare had we not applied to elsewhere.

Wanted to know all options available

Did not apply. Only explored the option.

2nd Language offerings

religious beliefs

Proximity to school

CMS class blocks too long.

Diversity

As a parent and an educator, I think the 1.5 hour classes are too much for kids. To expect them to be able to concentrate that long seems like a pipe dream given their preponderance of focusing for seconds on scrolling social media posts. I also don't see the need for such long classes, except in the case of those taking college classes. Having a class every day also makes for continuity of learning. Also the CMS policy of a child receiving 50% for very minimal effort (in many cases) is not serving the students and helping them to grow in accountability. It's not realistic to either college or the working world.

It's our first year in CMS and quite frankly, I've been a bit frustrated by the size of the classes and the school grounds. I don't place any blame on teachers and staff (they are doing the best they can with what they have), but to learn that the district is increasing the 6-figure salaries by 15% of like 11 employees at the top (are they even in CMS or just consultants to the district?) is maddening. Good teachers are leaving and it directly impacts the quality of public Ed that our kids are getting. Teachers deserve better. Class sizes are out of control and not manageable nor make for a conducive learning environment.

I am not seeing Diversity in the Magnet schools. These schools are either predominantly Black/Latino or White. I'm not finding a good diverse environment.

The middle and high school scores

Resources available

Middle school- Too much "free" time to play on computers. Even my 6th grade son says there is too much downtime

available resources at private school

Teachers less burnt out

Close to where we live

School tour, Lower class ratios and school environment was positive. Resources were available to meet the needs of my child without me having to ask for them.

Transportation

Ongoing bullying in CMS that is being overlooked by staff, poor experience with teachers who seem uninterested in teaching, schools more worried about the test scores and public perception vs actually connecting with and teaching students, lack of communication with parents, failure to listen to parent concerns after receiving feedback from almost the entire 3rd grade

Son is advanced academically, behind socially.

Location. CMS' bus situation is a mess. And our high schoolers are paying the price. Some "express" busses make several stops and kids have super early/late times and that's in addition to driving to/from the stop and/or walking to/from the stop and, in many cases, putting their lives at risk from crossing busy intersections and walking on busy roads without sidewalks in the dark.

Better Bus transportation

School Hours

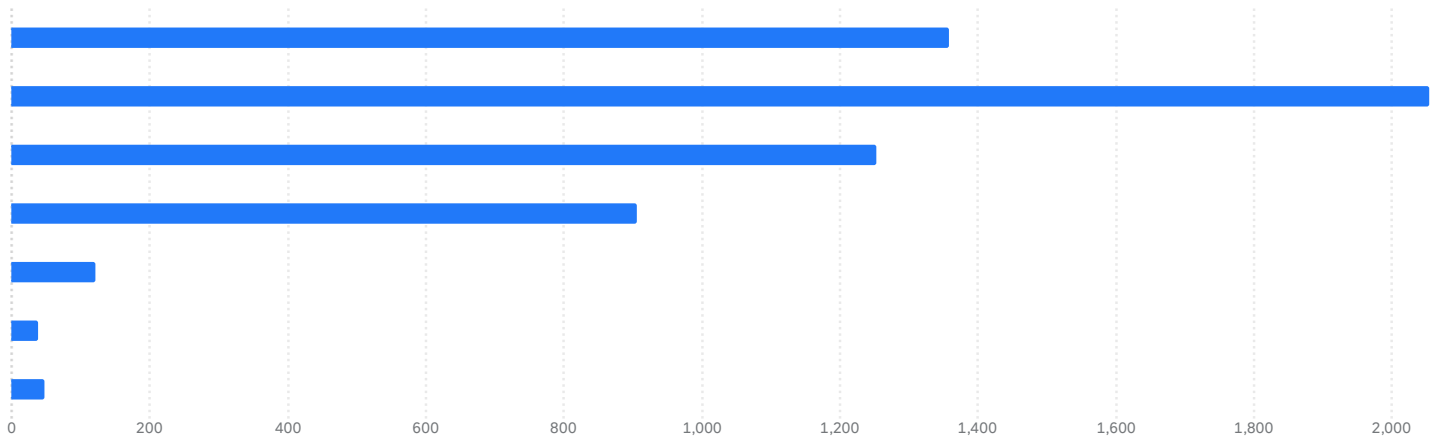
School morning/afternoon bell schedule

During Covid, we worried that CMS would be all virtual so applied to a charter.

Had actual issues at currently assigned home school and lack of care and response from leadership

I did not apply but visited. It was location and academics based curiosity

How many magnet programs did you apply to? 5,782 ⓘ



How many magnet programs did you apply to? 5,782 ⓘ

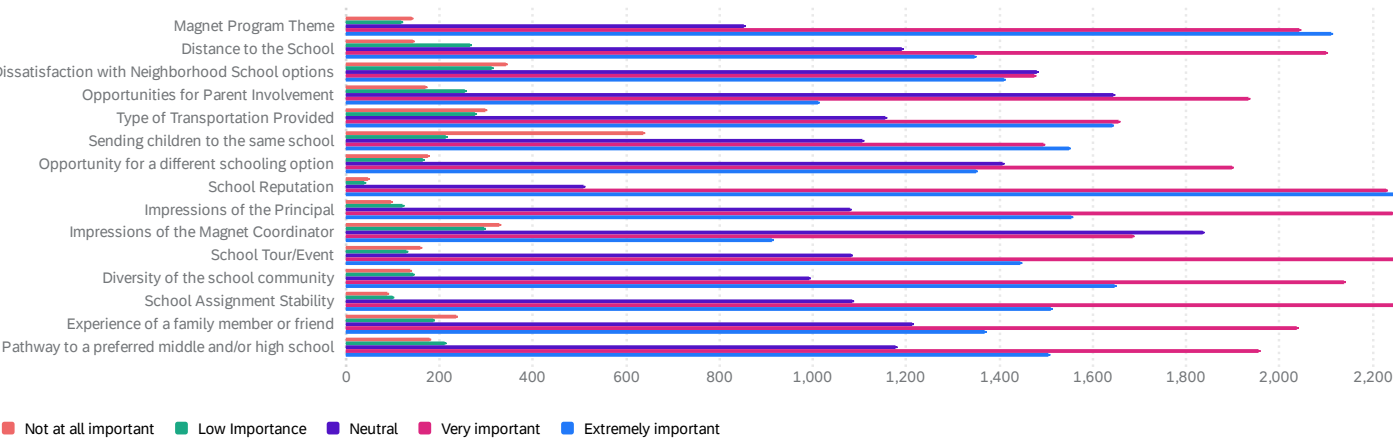
Q17 - How many magnet programs did you apply to?	Percentage	Count
0	24%	1,359
1	36%	2,055
2	22%	1,254

Q17 - How many magnet programs did you apply to?	Percentage	Count
3	16%	906
4	2%	122
5	1%	38
6	1%	48

How many magnet programs did you apply to? 5,782 ⓘ

How many magnet programs did you apply to?	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
0	1.00	1.00	1.00	1,359
1	2.00	2.00	2.00	2,055
2	3.00	3.00	3.00	1,254
3	4.00	4.00	4.00	906
4	5.00	5.00	5.00	122
5	6.00	6.00	6.00	38
6	7.00	7.00	7.00	48

Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply for a particular magnet school in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. 5,351 ⓘ



Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply for a particular magnet school in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. 5,351 ⓘ

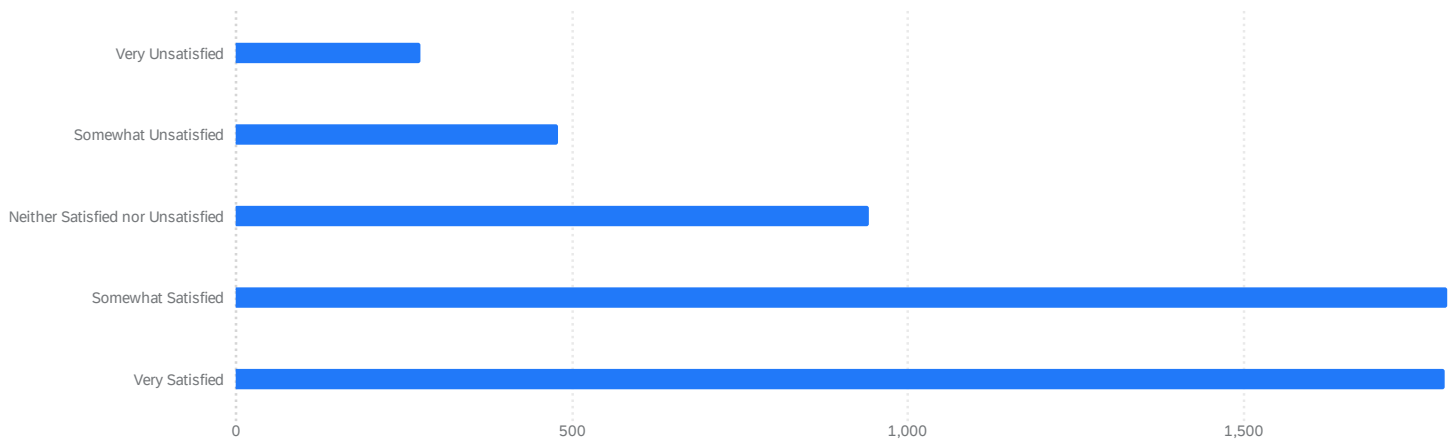
Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply fo...	Not at all important	Low Importance	Neutral	Very important	Extremely important
Magnet Program Theme	145	122	857	2,049	2,116
Distance to the School	147	271	1,197	2,107	1,353

Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply fo...	Not at all important	Low importance	Neutral	Very important	Extremely important
Dissatisfaction with Neighborhood School options	346	318	1,485	1,480	1,414
Opportunities for Parent Involvement	176	260	1,649	1,938	1,015
Type of Transportation Provided	304	281	1,162	1,660	1,647
Sending children to the same school	641	218	1,111	1,499	1,554
Opportunity for a different schooling option	179	170	1,413	1,904	1,355
School Reputation	51	44	513	2,233	2,327
Impressions of the Principal	101	127	1,083	2,247	1,560
Impressions of the Magnet Coordinator	332	301	1,840	1,690	917
School Tour/Event	165	133	1,086	2,255	1,449
Diversity of the school community	143	147	996	2,144	1,652
School Assignment Stability	94	104	1,090	2,257	1,517
Experience of a family member or friend	241	192	1,217	2,043	1,375
Pathway to a preferred middle and/or high school	182	215	1,183	1,961	1,510

Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply for a particular magnet school in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. 5,351 ⓘ				
Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply fo...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Magnet Program Theme	4.11	1.00	5.00	5,289
Distance to the School	3.84	1.00	5.00	5,075
Dissatisfaction with Neighborhood School options	3.65	1.00	5.00	5,043
Opportunities for Parent Involvement	3.67	1.00	5.00	5,038
Type of Transportation Provided	3.80	1.00	5.00	5,054
Sending children to the same school	3.62	1.00	5.00	5,023
Opportunity for a different schooling option	3.81	1.00	5.00	5,021
School Reputation	4.30	1.00	5.00	5,168
Impressions of the Principal	3.98	1.00	5.00	5,118
Impressions of the Magnet Coordinator	3.50	1.00	5.00	5,080
School Tour/Event	3.92	1.00	5.00	5,088

Please rate the importance of the following factors in deciding to apply fo...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Diversity of the school community	3.99	1.00	5.00	5,082
School Assignment Stability	3.99	1.00	5.00	5,062
Experience of a family member or friend	3.81	1.00	5.00	5,068
Pathway to a preferred middle and/or high school	3.87	1.00	5.00	5,051

What is your opinion of the magnet choices in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 5,301 ⓘ



What is your opinion of the magnet choices in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 5,301 ⓘ

Q19 - What is your opinion of the magnet choices in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools?	Percentage	Count
Very Unsatisfied	5%	276
Somewhat Unsatisfied	9%	479
Neither Satisfied nor Unsatisfied	18%	942
Somewhat Satisfied	34%	1,804
Very Satisfied	34%	1,800

What is your opinion of the magnet choices in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? 5,301 ⓘ

What is your opinion of the magnet choices in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Very Unsatisfied	1.00	1.00	1.00	276
Somewhat Unsatisfied	2.00	2.00	2.00	479
Neither Satisfied nor Unsatisfied	3.00	3.00	3.00	942
Somewhat Satisfied	4.00	4.00	4.00	1,804

What is your opinion of the magnet choices in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools...	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Very Satisfied	5.00	5.00	5.00	1,800

There were more options of Montessori schools due to the very long wait lists!

Si

If they taught diversity and inclusion strategies early. In my experience the children have been mean but not bullies. They teach about that but no one teaches acceptance and a lot of kids might not have a great example at home about race and class or acceptance and inclusion of other types of people.

Safety and drugs/guns/vapes would not be allowed on campus. If teachers would be more willing to go the extra mile.

Provide better marketing campaigns and stats/data points to highlight the impact of the programs via Parent Square, District Calls to Parents, PTA meetings and Quarterly updates from the School Principal.

Si

Absolutely

Lottery system is the selection process in some of the schools we need to select kids based on interviews

I think it would be better if we didn't have magnet (or charter) schools at all... We initially sought out magnet schools because we were worried about the reputation and rating of our assigned home school, but not getting into the magnet lottery was the best thing that could have happened to us because we fell in love with our neighborhood home schools and despite their low ratings, have grown to appreciate their diversification socioeconomically and racially and feel like everyone should embrace their home schools instead of running to magnets or charters

I was pleased with Collinswood Language Academy program until the principal change. I was pleased with South Mecklenburg until Dr. Fur left. My younger child's experience in these schools was night and day compared to my oldest at the same schools. My younger child had none of the magnet school experiences- more like pipe line to prison experience

There was improved communication via preschools and daycares about what the local school options are, differences between magnet / charter, and timeline for applications (so this communication needs to occur well in advance). Partnering w local daycares and preschools is important and is what the private schools do.

Si

Hacen demaciado con ayudarnos con ropa uniformes ayudarnos a darlos de alta en las escuelas. Muchas gracias y que dios los bendiga

Diversity, staff that care not only about kids but the parents too, safety, kind, opportunities for involvement

Si

Si fueran más selectivos

Si

Need for more magnet opportunities, particularly if the ones that are very popular

Wish more STEM options closer to me

I am currently very dissatisfied with CMS.

Leave mpts leadership at the school

They were more advertised/ well known

If there was more space, I know schools have a limited number of students and all but opening up more space would draw more students and parents.

My student was accepted in the 2nd grade to First Ward. She was able to continue at Crestdale Middle, but when it came to high school she was not interested in continuing because she is also an athlete. It is impossible for her to get to her home school practices with my work schedule and being all the way in Matthews. Hawthorne was a though because of her career path but again no sports and impossible to get to the home school in a decent amount of time to participate. I do not think it would be hard to have one of our high schools with sports become a partial arts magnet. Similar to how Crestdale became an option a few years ago. I believe the interest from certain areas would increase if more information and hands on help were available.

Si

Si

It is good opportunity if I get for my son and it's good opportunity for our community

If CMS would help create stability for the schools with the hirings and expedite the process. There are too many teacher vacancies and it is extremely important that the schools are allowed to operate more independently and efficiently, even using the J-1 visa program to bringing teachers from other countries if necessary.

Diversity and Inclusivity were met in all magnet schools,

Transportation, distance and time was reasonable from our home. Even with the option of dropping students off at a hub would creat conflict with our work schedules

We had more Montessori schools and the middle/high Montessori was kept located North of the city to serve more diverse populations than in south Charlotte.

They need to make the distinction clear with STEM and what the magnetic program entails. Dome think magnetic is and automatically STEM school.

Had a parent friendly description of each, share parent testimonials, explain the long term track of magnet to parents, and clearly describe the philosophy is the program so parents are making an informed decision for their child, especially if they have special needs.

N/A

I was extremely impressed with the quality of education that my son received from Piedmont IB and is currently receiving from Phillip O'Berry.

They made it more known in middle schools of how many options they really had. This could help open the opportunity to make the schools more accessible

High school bussing was accessible and equitable

Providing transportation to to J.T. Williams from neighborhood stops. To single out our children to go to Express stops was extremely unfair and detrimental to families. Schools transportation should be a priority for students.

More about the manget program

C'est normal

teachers and staff were paid higher wages and had better qualifications

Estoy completamente segura .

Information was more clearly disseminated to CMS families or potential families. Along with what different curriculum models (like Montessori) actually entail. For the high school programs, it seems to be a draw for many students of that age to want a "traditional" high school experience. There should be some thought put into how non-traditional magnet offerings within CMS could still provide a more "traditional" experience (ie. sports, for example).

We have many magnet schools in every neighborhood.

estas estan conformadas con mayor porcentaje de estudiantes por loteria (magnet) que por la direccion de la escuela.

Tuvieran más escuelas y hubiera más cupo para más estudiantes

...there were more options for programming within the magnet schools themselves. The Cambridge Program would also enhance available options.

Buses or better transportation

Si

If transportation was available again.

More variety of programs - not alot of h.s. options. Offer more programs for where there are large job openings and programs where the skills offer opportunity for entrepreneurship.

Si

There were more student slots

Had more diversity in the programs offered

The magnet school were more equitable in resources, opportunities, staff, and expectations. Also, trying to problem solve the transportation situation to support families that desire magnet options, but transportation is a barrier. Consistently holding high expectations with testing results and curriculum with all magnet schools because some of their data is trending downward along with the growth of higher performing students. These are just some factors to start...

Each parent get more information about the magnet school program, it's importance & benefits. Lack of awareness is the main bottle neck. "Magnetic" can be considered as attracting the metallic properties towards it so need to attract maximum parents attention and spread the word. Also providing opportunities to maximum students who become the good human being in all ways(not only scholars) who can make the country proud.

I am not sure

I think there is such a huge demand for the Montessori program. I know there are waiting list at the Montessori elementary schools. Why not make a Montessori "wing" as many elementary schools as possible? I had asked about this in the past, but was told by someone that it would be too expensive, but I don't think that actually makes sense.

Our favorite magnet school experience was Morehead Stem Academy which was attacked and dismantled because it was a very successful program. CMS decided to make it a partial magnet and bring in another elementary school, since that school had a low grade. It drastically changed the educational experience for our students in a negative way. Also the transportation (express bus) situation isn't equitable to children of color who want better educational opportunities but can't access transportation to go to a school outside of their zone. Please look at the transportation process and find a way to adjust it so all youth, from all neighborhoods can have a quality education

We could eliminate Express Stops. This is placing an unfair burden on many families. Only families that have support, two cars, or a flexible work schedule can really utilize this option. We deliberately had to choose our newest apartment based on the proximity to the nearest Express Stop in order for our son to continue with his final two years of high school. For the previous 5 years, he could walk to his busstop. And now he cannot. Also the change in start time has been terrible as he has to get up at 4:30am. And this also makes performance evenings a nightmare trying to figure out how to get him back to school in a timely manner when he used to be able to stay there when school dismissed at 4:15pm. 7:15-2:15 is not optimal for an arts school with such a vibrant program and regular evening events. These changes drive students away from making this choice because it can't work for them!

We have 3 children, 1 1 still at SAIL and 2 at MPHS. We have been very satisfied with our experience at Waddell/SAIL and the rating of "somewhat satisfied" should not be construed as anything to do with SAIL. With regard to the options, I'm disappointed because, our 9th grader at MPHS was supposed to go to the new aviation magnet located in the Waddell building. However, that did not end up happening due to "low interest" which I believe is a marketing issue, not a true reflection of the offering itself. For example, when we were going through the decision process during his 8th grade year, his middle school counselor was not aware of the Aviation option. Happy to talk more about our experience, contact me anytime!

There were better / more options for individualized curriculum for gifted students.

The schools had more than one focus area. Combination of steam and language.

Yes

schools were more inclusive in recruiting practices.

Sii

The school was a high-performing school and with a good reputation.

The students have great support with mental health counseling and tutoring as well as national scores of students performing at grade or above.

there were magnet fairs so that parents could find out the difference in magnet, public, and charter schools.

They knew about the options and how to apply

Parents and students knew the significance of how the magnet problems are different than really cms schools.

Strive for more equity. There is still a fair amount of disparity between magnets. The best I can tell it is driven by parental involvement. Schools with higher percentage of high SES have more extra curriculars and more resources.

More of the STEM AND STEAM magnet schools were 100% magnet schools instead of partial magnet.

Si le dieran la oportunidad a los estudiantes de asistir aún pero es muy difícil muchas veces que acepten a nuestros hijos

They tightened up the lottery process, had better communication and more staffing to field questions and support parents through the process.

My Husband and I enrolled my son in a partial magnet that we just happened to hear about. After a tour, I fell in love with it. He started Kindergarten in the school's second year as a magnet. He is currently in 4th and the magnet percentage seems low. Most of the kids in my neighborhood go to Magnets (or private), but no one has heard of my son's school on the play ground. We love the school and the teachers. The enrichment he gets would not be possible at other schools. If CMS is trying to drive families with higher Socio-Economic Status to the magnets, they should do a better job of marketing to where those parents are. An annual Magnet fair is not going to cut it. My other thought is parents hop on a trending school and that infusion of high SES drives success. There is a magnet school in our area that is very popular and has drawn more economic diversity. I see parents following along with the trend and enrolling there children where the majority is. No one wants to be the first. At my son's school the magnet percentage and high SES is so low it is hard to move the needle. I think the larger question is the equity at schools regardless of magnet. I assume CMS is using the magnet to try to drive high SES to a school, but why? Is it to make up the gap in funding that hopefully higher SES parents will be able to provide through PTO, etc? Does my one son in a classroom really drive educational improvement for his peers? What other methods could CMS use to drive parity/equity at schools?

The magnet schools were all designed the same, had great parent and PTA involvement, access to resources, help rom the community, and chances to experience different field trips and have speakers, performers, and special interests events at school.

They gave children the adequate education they need and challenge them to succeed.

We need to focus on making the neighborhood schools more magenta so more families want to attend their neighborhood schools

N/A

There needs to be more communication about the magnet options. A lot of parents are unaware of them unless they happen to know a parent whose children are going to a magnet school. Also, I discovered that Waddell was going to be an aviation magnet school after the program was cancelled. I'm sure there are students interested in these different options (my kids would have been interested!) but when you're unaware they exist it is hard to apply for them. I liked that there was a virtual visit of all the schools in one place at one time one year, during the pandemic, but this event needs to be extended so that this is available online on multiple days / times to accommodate different working schedules.

More time was allotted for Magnet Schools to teach the theme and if district behavior expectations for magnet schools were higher.

the magnet themes were available closer to the students who use them. If you are in S. Charlotte, the only option for elementary you have (and that opened after my children were in middle school!) is for STEM. Overrated. I needed more challenging schools, and had to drive halfway across the county to get it.

If there are more opportunities to code instead of just learning.

Pienso si atraerian más estudiantes.

Si

Si, pero en mi comunidad se conoce muy poco sobre ellas y sus programas!

There were more varied options to pursue

Si por las oportunidades ke nos brindan

Siento que no falta nada.

We need a CMS language immersion HS for NAWL that is located close to NAWL.

They were more inclusive with children with special needs

Si

Si por su puesto

They were more diverse; offered more programs. Ex: Computer Technology for those students that are more into technology verses drama, art and music.

Me gusta mucho que los padres y maestros estemos en comunicación vía mensaje, pero estaría mejor si tuviéramos una reunión mensual físicamente para tratar más directamente su desarrollo académico y también que se tomara mas importancia en temas sobre el desarrollo físico y mental de todos ..

Transportation was more available and not restricted to zones

It would not be a bidding game and be a stance of sustainable quality program for all Mecklenburg county schools.

Si

If the LI/TD elementary schools fed into an LI/TD middle school.

They invited parents for a tour or event. The only event i've attended was a district magnet fair. I have not been invited or notified of any tour at my son's designated magnet high school, Phillip O Berry

No estoy segura sobre el programa de esas escuelas pero me parece que es muy importante. No tengo mucha información sobre ello.

Transportation were easier

Provide good chance of selection Transportation More near to home most magnets schools are far from my home in

School busing to magnet programs was restored.

Better transportation options & multiple school options

...the process were not so complicated, and I am s.o. with multiple degrees. I shudder think of how it might be for someone who never attended college.

Too many questions being asked so people wouldn't take the survey

I still talk to people who do not know about the program, much less the many options available.

Able to reach all parents especially those who do not have children in that magnet school yet. I did not hear any information about language magnets or immersions when my older two were younger so we missed that opportunity for them!

Greater focus on content/ academics and less need to have to address "problem" behaviors - ie too many fights we hear about weekly at our kids school

When you removed bussing options for magnet high school programs, it was very impactful for our family - and not a positive change. We ended up pulling our other child from her magnet K-8 program bc we thought the bus issue would follow suit and the school wasn't close to us and would not be possible for taking and picking up. The magnet programs will not be as attractive due to transportation issues.

They could offer smaller class sizes and more attention to students who are either struggling or are not being challenged

additional awareness/ information was provided to preschools or neighborhoods

Specifically students with high efficiency need more magnetic school so they can get more chance to explore knowledge. I really wish if my kids get a chance to magnet school

Less teacher turnover, fewer virtual classes (understood this was pandemic driven, but still really bad), better teacher training, and better facilities / modernized / improved.

Si

Si

I think CMS needs to do a better job marketing all magnet schools. All seem less desirable compared the MPTS PRMS. We love where we landed but how special the school is is lost on most

Parents could get more insight on what the magnet schools offer & benefits of students attending.

You would draw more students if you had not taken away neighborhood transportation. Express stops are TERRIBLE! We are VERY unhappy with how it has gone this year.

Si sería muy bueno

Si

Neighborhood busing or Express Bus within safe walking distance such as Neighborhood School.

Probablemente

I think they are the best thing about our district.

There were more income diversity, convenient transportation, and interesting themes

again, more information and transparency around the process

The elimination of the Express Bus Stops. Putting bus stops back into neighborhoods, particularly unserved communities. There is no equity in CMS magnet program with Express Bus stops because if your parent/guardian can't make provisions to get the students on the high school level to stop they aren't able to take advantage of the magnet program. Additionally crime rates vary across the city making it unsafe for students at times to navigate to stops by themselves.

There were options from middle to high school to sustain relationships built on the middle school magnet program.

No

More available in different locations

Transportation would be available and more slots opened

They were better advertised

Si

They had transportation available to all their students, and not forcing parents to drive across Charlotte if their children live out of range.

There was more funding to support resources, facilities, and staffing.

Awareness

Successful

Transportation was reinstated. Not everyone has the ability to make it to consolidated stops.

They were closer. If they offer seats based on credibility, instead of lottery. We were interested in early engineering college and believe my child is very talented just because it was lottery and didn't get the V opportunity.

N/a

Montessori were offered to more students without making student body too large. Considering the wait lists post-lottery, it's obvious these people are underserved.

Not sure.

They seem to be placed disproportionately at low performing schools. More students would enroll if they are at "higher performing" schools. Also, more active recruitment and awareness.. thinking of the programs at Eastway and Albemarle Rd MS

Transportation was provided to all students; even if it meant a shuttle stop

...they were more like Myers Park Traditional Elementary! There needs to be other schools that also adopt Leader In Me (practicing the 8 Habits and Ron Clark Academy Houses). That way it ensures that more children get the opportunity to learn all these amazing things while taking ownership of their education. As a parent of students that attend MPTS, I can tell you my children enjoy school and look forward to going. They have learned through the 8 habits to make good choices, think about others, and be quick to take responsibility for their actions. This magnet program is molding strong leaders. I have learned the 8 habits alongside my children, and I believe it has made me a better parent and just overall person. If it can help me as a parent outside the classroom environment imagine how it can help students within that environment! I wish there was an MPTS that went 8-12th grade too!

There were more spaces.

Si deberían

Si son pocos alumnos en la clase, y maestros más calificados.

Communication was simplified. Showcase the great schools but don't leave so much outdated information on your websites. Don't make it challenging to find basic information. The SAIL PTSO website has everything I wish the actual SAIL website has. You shouldn't be relying on outside organizations to showcase the schools and set expectations for you. The schools are great. Keep it simple and let people see them for what they are.

Si nunca dejarán de bajar su buen nivel académico y personal del plantel

Yes

Na

If when it comes to high school if the student doesn't drive they can get door to door drop off and pick up. Being a single working mom it is difficult get my child to transportation to get transportation.

Siblings can be guaranteed spots for the same school

IF there were evidence from each of how the programs are implemented and how they are successful. Evidence of how the programs differ from home school options, especially when the magnet focus is implemented in a "whole school" capacity.

More parents knew about the program options.

we had more busses for the same slot (slot 18 of quail hollow middle school) had at least 2 busses

LANGUAGE IMMERSION IS SO INCREDIBLE!!!! What an incredible opportunity we have!

They were closer to our home. We live on southeast side (outside of Mint Hill). There does not to be much choice this side of town so i never considered it for both my students in their entire schooling.

Si

Themes were available equally in each transportation zone.

Parent wish better for their child

Advertise on social media platforms

Si

I think they draw a lot of interest currently, and think more magnet options for those who don't get in are a great idea!

Easier application process and transportation option. Also clear path to middle and high school .

They have some international languages classes like Chinese. And more summer camps.

Fomentaran la oración.

My child is an honor student. I have never heard or been presented with alternative school choices other than private or charter.

Improving the process of sibling confirmation seat by providing proper information such as only put one school in the lottery to get the sibling confirmation seat.

Transportation was available door to door

Develop a better curriculum; bring back using textbooks; the chromebooks are not a substitute for books, especially for low income families that do not have the internet at home; address school safety and improve it; reduce class sizes

We need quality not quantity.. only the qualified students. Nothing is gained by dilution of quality

Sería muy bueno que la escuela realizara reuniones presenciales entre los profesores y padres de familia donde tengamos la oportunidad conocer no solo a los profesores sino también un informe periódico de su desempeño.

Advertised and mor people were made aware of options

IB was not the driver for acceptance into a magnet school. Some students struggle with the demands of the IB program and because they are at the school for IN they are forced to perform or they have to their home school by the close of 10th grade if they don't meet the mark. Opportunities in South Charlotte should be offered in North Charlotte, these CTE pathways should be available to all schools.

Tras porte, buenas recomendaciones y buenas calificaciones.

They offered more IB programs at the high school level

Admission based on performance not random selection. That is how magnets work everywhere else in the country.

Si

Bussing is a big issue with Magnet school now especially going from high school level

Diverse

NA

There was a TD magnet in south Charlotte.

The language program is like a hidden gem in my opinion. Parents need to know there are other options available and do the research. We bought a house because of the strong schools in the area, but we ended up not even using those local schools.

NA

The Pathways were more PERTINENT to the current economic Trend/Demand. The Teachers/Instructors were Well Versed i.e. Highly Experienced, Practiced, or Skilled; Very Knowledgeable; Learned.

Pienso que si.

CMS seems to be killing the strong magnet programs (intentionally or unintentionally) through a series of poor decisions. Magnet middle schools are not being built at the correct size to provide the same options as neighborhood schools and the removal of county transportation for high school magnets is an additional obstacle. It used to be that there was a strong language magnet from k-12. Now the 6-12 options have been weakened, which weakens the overall pipeline.

Advertise it more

It was not so hard to get into them

Transportation options would be provided

We chose a magnet elementary school because my academically gifted kids were not getting taught at their level on the neighborhood school and we wanted more rigor. My older kids continued in the magnet program to Randolph but we did not find that the supposed IB magnet program there maintained that rigor so we did not send my youngest there. The magnet program would be more magnetic for us if it was more selective and truly offered challenging academics.

I think they does a good job of drawing students to the schools

Considero que si

I prefer schools fully dedicated to magnet and advanced curriculums

I think the options are pretty great but there might be a tool like a video tutorial that outlines how the process works for parents that want to pursue it but may not have time or resources to research the process. I learn often through videos and can look at them when I'm available... I don't have to go to a particular event.

You removed the barriers to submit for them.

If transportation was provided even for those students who live far away in another zone. This is especially true for South Academy of International Languages. I would prefer to keep my child in the same school for kindergarten through 8th grade and not have to reapply or change to the North Language academy because we live in that zone.

If there were a school that focused on teaching cursive writing, managing credit cards, avoiding getting into debt, successfully keeping finances in order, learning about mortgages and paying rent, etc. Kids don't even know how to sign their name for the lack of teaching cursive, and there's a great lack in understanding of daily financial and economical situations in adult life, there should be a magnet school that teaches about these topics.

People knew more about them. It did not occur to us to apply to a magnet school until our pediatrician recommended it. Maybe it was just us, but I thought of it as something that was for other people, not us. I mistakenly thought a child had to have a special ability or something to go to one, but I realized later that was not true. I'm not sure if there are other families out there who are aware that magnet schools are an accessible option for many of them.

I think this where the parent and student should get more involved in decision making, because not all parents had knowledge of magnet schools.

There was better communication around the opportunities

Si

I was very satisfied with First Ward school and staff and saddened to see my children leave. The principal was excellent as the staff always attentive to students needs.

La escuela donde me dieron el traslado para mi hijo me parese exelente y si atraería mas niños

There were more of them.

They are failing, and can't read. The community is vacant of options for youth.

Si

If we do more project and lab work activities

More options for STEM school .Also extended transportation facilities to the children outside of the area..

Year long option offered, JROTC and science Olympiad should be in all schools, and k-12 is starting to become more important when you have 3 kids going to 3 different schools

teacher and staff stability was consistent.

Tuvieran más idiomas , y más deportes esa es mi opinión

They stopped moving around in location. It is very hard to keep up with changes. If there were LESS options, but more opportunity/seats/locations (ie. more Montessori schools in more locations). The options for themes are dizzying. And getting the word out. Sell your programs, but make sure you have room for the people that want to get in.

Focus on rigorous and engaging curriculum. Increase STEM, Montessori options. Recruit AND maintain enthusiastic and passionate teachers. Clearly communicate the why of magnet schools. Targeted outreach for potential students. More open house events.

We had more of them

Si

Si se diferenciara en su pensul academimo de las otras escuelas.

There were greater collaboration between magnet programs and home schools. For example: no one could answer my questions about my early college child playing sports in their super senior (5th) year.

Dar más información sobre este programas a padres nuevos en el sistema, (pre K) sobre todo a la comunidad hispana. Personalmente le he dado información del programa y no tenían idea de este programa magnet y sus beneficios.

Si

Computer entry no possible on deadline date due to extra sin in required

If they had more quality and caring teachers for the students. And better quality food for the children. Have vocational training and actual real life courses.

Si traería muchos estudiantes más a los de hight school pero si les pusieran el bus en su dirección de su casa porque a muchos padres se los a echo difícil ir a dejar a nuestros hijos a otras escuela para que los recojan los busses de sus escuela porque hay padres que no saben manejar o no tiene cómo transportarlos

There were options for independent study and more languages offered at the language academies, specifically languages like Kru, Xhosa, Cherokee, or Gullah .

Eso depende de la forma de pensar de nosotros los padres si queremos que nuestros hijos se superen para un futuro mejor

Si

No

Si

Ratio per race was balanced

If I knew about them at all.

If there were a guarantee that students would get into their top choice

Deep commitment to an understandable and/or established theme- like world language or montessori

N/A

Ami me gustaría que mi hijo estuviera en una escuela Magnet

No tardaran tanto tiempo en el autobus escolar. Tienen hora de entrada por lo tanto de salida muy tarde. No todas las escuelas tienen o califican para cursos de verano con transporte incluido.

they offer more choices outside of core subjects

There was more information about them available in sources other than CMS website.

We knew more about them. And the application process. Also, maybe all schools should be magnet schools?

If there was more advertisement, publicity, direct sharing of information about each magnet program/schools, interests would increase.

If opportunities that are available at their home schools like drivers ed., sports or other activities were available at the magnet school.

Enrich study program. push them study .adding more work study and apply skills from learn and book.

Classes were smaller

Por supuesto que si

Transportation were easier

Stand alone programs vs being "built into" or incorporated into existing school buildings.

Si

Yo creo que si

Everyone is given the opportunity and information. Allow everyone to attend invest in ALL of the Magnet Schools allowing access to the same funds enhancing the school. It's imperative that equality is shown, the children are shown love and educated to their fullest! Magnetic means to attract other substances; allow all magnet programs to allow various students to attend in order to hone their skills based on the theme that that particular student. Remember Charlotte is becoming a melting pot; people are coming from all over to make a life. Some community members that are new to the area do not know what a magnet school is. If one is coming from a rural town, then the schools are smaller and funding is equally disbursed. They are unaware of the multiple school options and differences being offered.

People have more info

If they can provide transportation from regular school buses stops,and not making kids walk long distances AM and PM while parents can't drop them off or pick them up because of the working hours schedule. It is very dangerous those news stops that you guys created this year it a danger the kids in bad neighborhoods. Please have bus stops in regular stops in each neighborhood it is more safe for the children,because safety comes first.

The schools curriculum focus shifted to support lower learns. I believe the support is needed but my child is in the Magnet program to challenge her and to prepare her for greater post high school career/life's outcome.

Transportation wasn't an issue and if schools enforced the eligibility guidelines.

The options where wider to getting the school that you are really interested in having your child attend.

physical locations were in different parts of the city

....if you didn't use awful puns in already poorly worded surveys? YOU NEED MORE SEATS. Conversely, you need to fully standardize the curriculum so that magnets aren't needed. Is it time to stop dividing and differentiating? What if French was the second language of CMS (and every school taught it, K-12) and all students had access to music lessons? What if you chose the best elements of magnet experience and brought them to everyone? And then we could all stop complaining that we aren't getting what so-and-so is getting and that there aren't enough seats at this school while there are empty ones at that one? And we could get down to the brass tacks of why people are leaving their home schools (because we know it's not just because they don't have STEM classes)?

Better options and better transportation. No kid should have a 45 minute bus ride. And better options. What took so long to get another language academy north?

Its campaigns could produce more of a visual need to show its sportsmanship.

Given the right opportunity to every student.

In NAWL's case, if it was staffed appropriately and actually gave every student the language immersion that was promised, that would help. As would having a language high school for them.

Teach cursive and math the old fashion way

They had full support staff at each school

people understood what they actually were, what the benefits/drawbacks are, etc.

less testing.

Transportation was provided to high schoolers by address and other just magnet stop this disenfranchised so many kids!!!

None

You increased the enrollment allotted. I tried to get my first child in a PreK magnet denied. Same K denied. He went to home schools in HS when he wanted to go to EEC denied. His home school at the time was divided into 5 different schools in 1. His top 2 choices were denied. Finally based on scores he was admitted to Harper Middle which we were very pleased with. Second child was only attempted and admitted to Harper as well as we were not interested in the process for other schools. Now my third is in his home school and am hoping that he is successful as the magnet school process in general is disappointing. Currently reviewing charter/ private schools as future options.

Transportation is provided. Limiting transportation limits the options for students.

We never got admitted after multiple attempts and finally decided to give up. It is just not fair selection process where a kid is denied the opportunity based on some some random lottery pick

The magnet offerings were the same across the different parts of the county.

The option of separation of higher grade levels classes separate from lower grade levels. And program focus being moved or removed from the school options is difficult

The staff at Kennedy Middle School is great. The opportunities that the district provides the students and teachers with are limited. If the local business population was tapped into and used to provide their input in what they want from their futures employees would be a major draw to CMS magnet program from Charter and Private schools.

they were promoted more and if there was a consolidated list of magnet schools with a short description of their program widely disseminated via emails, flyers, postal mail, etc. to parents.

Si recomiendo Oakland lenguaje academico muy estricta me encanta porque es de dos idiomas

There were more options for career exploration and innovation.

Personally, I feel there are TOO many options available that allow / push families to look outside of the "home schools".

Diversity based on income status with a strong leader and responsive to the needs of the community. Not delegating concerns to an assistant or office staff.

Si tal vez

Si

If there were neighborhood bus stops. The "express" stops are quite inconvenient at times.

No creo que atraerían más niños. Por el problema del transporte. Ahora ya muchas escuelas magnéticas . Ya solo tienen paradas express. Y desgraciadamente uno como padre no tiene tanto tiempo de ir a dejar y traer a los niños a las paradas express. Porque trabajamos.

Curriculum was more transparent and provided stability in retaining teacher throughout the year. Instability affects students' grades

I wish there were more options at the HS level for Creative arts school. My son has attended First Ward and Now Crestdale but will have to attend Independence since NW is the only HS option I found.

Por el tipo de educación que reciben los alumnos

I don't know

Pienso que atraerían más estudiantes

you are more equitable with your access and distribution of resources. take out the center city zone; it allows for an unfair access to resources, with higher SES families having access to "better" schools for absolutely no reason other than they prefer it; and simultaneously encouraging higher SES families to put their resources into another zone. Everyone is allowed to apply out of their zone, but the center city zone is so much more inequitable.

The overall test scores were better, excellent leadership, great teachers, school awards, extra curriculars (Robotics, Science Olympiad, unique sports/music/drama offerings, etc), field trips, corporate partnerships, better school hours (magnet schools get out very late, then the busses get stuck in traffic), better discipline (deal with fights among students better— ie. send kids to their home school if they can't behave after 2-3 incidents).

There were more specifically in the South I live in Ballantyne and the only and closest Magnet school is REA Farms Elementary and it is basically impossible to get in with the number of applicants

School rating improvement Safety in school overall Students scores on tests

They will continue to innovate their specialized program, strengthen their partnerships with the community, and maintain a commitment to excellence in education.

If there was transportation given to students who attend magnet schools which are NOT their home school. I don't like having to take my child to school and pick him up. Luckily, I work from home which enables me to do so.

Keep Irwin a full TD magnet

Se tuviera más posibilidades de ser aceptado en el proceso de la lotería

Actual ability to get in one of them. I have found that unless you are a low income family you will have a very hard time getting your child accepted into the school.

1)Transportation is secured by CMS for students attending a District-wide Magnet program. 2)Information highlighting the achievements of magnet students is shared publicly about ALL magnet programs. 3) Community partnerships are secured to help engage and grow each program in a dynamic way.

Good.

Transport was provided

They guaranteed a pathway to Piedmont from Shamrock Gardens and explicitly articulated what high school options would be. I also believe getting it in writing from school that your child would have xyz option regardless of change in administration would help people believe there is stability and not that they would be effectively subjected to a bait and switch. I don't think CMS does that, but I chose SGE in part on premise my daughter would then go to Piedmont. I am still not clear what her high school options are. I'm preparing for private school applications for middle school (she's in 2nd grade now) and helping her with test prep as she's got an outside shot at Horizons. She will not attend Grainger even if we have to move. I taught at Hopewell.

They were better schools to choose from

Transportation

Si

there was no rats and better food.

Better options than just STEM. Better bell schedules and more options for better equity.

The busses could go further and go more distances to get students

More people knew about them.

yes

Les ponen más disciplina

Transportation waa available to all students.

I am happy with my children's school. Piedmont open middle school offers exactly what I was hoping for.

Made sure kids were well prepared to take the EOG

I am not for sure at this point because I haven't explored a magnet school as an option in over 15 years. I would need to do some research to be able to accurately answer this question.

idk

More Focus on Special Interests—Educators at magnet schools are highly specialized and often receive additional training and professional development. Those who excel in math, science, the arts, and other areas of interest will be able to share their own experiences, passions, and techniques with their students.

idk

I think you have enough of a population of kids at the schools. I would only help Governors Village Stem Academy. I don't know about these other schools. Just follow GVSA Upper and Lower Campus and do what they do. Great School.

idk

ok

People knew more about them and the options for busing and applying. I didn't know anythjnt until a friend told me about nawl

Late entry language immersion and Montessori

En mi opinion que fueran más exigentes con los alumnos más tareas .. y maestros mejor calificados y exigir más participación de padres de familia !!

they were more organized

There was more rigor at the regular schools. Many aren't prepared to go to a magnet schools. Many of the ones that are won't get it.

Finding more creative ways to promote the school attributes - i.e. social media. Not just posting, that doesn't reach many, but using popular platforms and spending a small amount to target prospective parents through boosts/paid. In other words, people consume media in more digital ways and I'd take advantage of that.

CMS had a better transportation program than you currently have. CMS had a policy of removing the disruptive students from the Magnet School

Si claro que si

If we had more options and magnet programs that are not in low SES neighborhoods. The uncertainty of boundaries and constant revision of neighborhood schools has left most of us feeling unsatisfied and frustrated.

People were more aware of the awesome options

More Focus on Special Interests—Educators at magnet schools are highly specialized and often receive additional training and professional development. Those who excel in math, science, the arts, and other areas of interest will be able to share their own experiences, passions, and techniques with their students.

Si

No tengo mucha información acerca de las escuelas Magnes , pero si me gustaría la oportunidad para mis hijos .

Better transportation options. The so-called "express" stops have left many without transportation and some making dangerous walks to/from their bus stops. Some express busses are not very express, making several stops and resulting in early/late pickup/drop off times. The magnet high schoolers are paying the price for all of CMS to save money on transportation and it isn't equitable. We will continue to lose more and more high schoolers in these programs as current students graduate that are more dedicated to figuring out transportation to not change schools.

More parents understood what it means to be a magnet school, if there were a magnet school for each area and if there is let it be known to all parents in the area by all types of communication. I might be in a magnet school area but don't know it.

Tuvieran más material didáctico.

They had more schools that included the arts.

People were more knowledgably about the different magnet programs and know how to apply.

Student outcomes were better communicated. Student make up was balanced and academic requirements were utilized in selection of students.

Tubieran mas recursos para niños con problemas de aprendizaje personas mas calificadas

Si

Si y si hubieran más escuelas magnet Serca sería mejor porque están muy lejos

More transportation options. Easier application process. More information on magnet website about different programs.

Language schools should go all the way through. There should be options from 8-12 grades.

Exactamente los niños necesitan aprender mas

Hubiera transporte por qué muchos no vivimos cerca de las zonas

Outcomes and succession schools are more successful

There were more options and full magnet programs instead of integrating magnet programs into underperforming schools.

There were more qualified teachers and diverse learning opportunities for kids on the spectrum.

- there was stability in staffing - transportation options weren't limited for middle and high school

They actually enforced the code of conduct and handbook at ALL CMS schools. Created more diversity in the program and feeding into more magnet schools, thus providing transportation for ALL magnet students regardless of where they live!

P.O.B

There are limited options for high school.

Student Scores for the schools were consistently high. Affordable before/after school care. Transportation zones more flexible .

Communication from the school system was better but I think this applies to the entire system not just the magnet programs.

The overall marketing - awareness - of the schools in the greater Charlotte area and school benefits could be better. There is probably an opportunity to compete with area private schools for students (likely there is a tough balance to not compete against neighborhood schools). The application / lottery process is intimidating and stressful as a parent.

IF this option is known in the community. We were unaware of Merancas Middle College because Cambridge was so highly advertised with our neighborhood school back in 2016-2019. My eldest would have benefitted more from taking classes at CPCC than going through the Cambridge program.

Si

Very qualified teachers are hired and school officials takes illegal drugs matters very seriously on campus.

We actually spread the wealth of the educational program opportunities, then we wouldn't need magnet schools.

There were more options and more focused on Leadership principles

Posiblemente..

n/A

if the district prioritized the unique curriculums required to make the magnet school excellent

No

Transportation/ bussing could be made easier.

The district invested in the schools that have them, especially in lower income areas.

Everything is difficult. Distance from home to school ,timings and admission as well

Stability was there. We got a letter in the mail that we were kicked out of our magnet school and our son was going to another magnet school. Then CMS decided to potentially de-fund the magnet program. Then the middle school for Montessori was combined in a regular middle school that had the potential to dilute the curriculum away from Montessori. I would and have told everyone to expect nothing but instability if they choose a magnet route. Good programs but you have to have a level of tolerance for CMS craziness. Which you do anyway with regular schools.

Si

Focused on courses that were more marketable to be hired upon graduation for seniors.

More information was sent home or pushed to us via alerts, website content and a trusting relationship with the original school's leadership to have a candid conversation about what may be best for my children.

Meraris B L

Reintroduce merit base attendance. Stop being racist.

It was easier to apply and they were more publicized

There was more flexibility with testing. Way too many standardized assessments, and teaching to the test.

They were located equitably throughout the county. North Mecklenburg has insufficient offerings and the movement of Trillium Springs to Lincoln Heights resulted in the loss of students and families in magnet programs in Davidson, Cornelius, and Huntersville

Ofrecieran más acceso y oportunidades para los estudiantes que tienen un IEP y/o reciben ayuda de ABA dentro de las instalaciones escolares

Not enough. Hard to get into

Simpler explanation of themes for each school

Si deberian

N/A

Yes

Philip O'BERRY

There wasn't such overpopulation, and such an exhausting application process

Providing transportation was equally provided to students attending

parents were educated on the role these programs would play in their child's academic success. A lot of parents tend to just accept what they are offered and not research and explore better options.

More variety of school themes and transportation options.

They had good retention rates for their teachers.

Stop taking kids based on race take them based on academics. My opinion of the school was the kids poorly performed because the kids that went there couldn't preform and were there strictly on race.

communications were clear about what "magnet" meant and were described in detail for parents. Schools should have information available about these programs for parents to learn about all year-round, informative resources on school websites that are easy to find. Detailed descriptions of what things are, need to be in EVERY-SINGLE email, social media post, and communication, just like it was the very first time mentioning them and the audience wants to know more about it-because for some single parents with extremely busy lives, it might be.

More parents were aware that they have more options other than their home school options.

Different learning styles

Fairness in placing magnate options across the geography

They were approachable and had transportation and information provided about them

Transportation was easier (ie: students had to spend less time on the bus getting to and from school, buses were calmer and felt safer to students)

We are not in a magnet school this survey is a waste of my time. In further surveys value our time by once selecting stopping the survey.

Eso depende también mucho de los padres. En informarse en relación a las escuelas magnéticas y si tienen importancia para cada padre

Fuese mas clara la oferta

Re-read previous comments entered

The teachers provided equal opportunity for all students and not separating students just because of their academic needs. Put more teachers in the class to even out the ratio teacher vs student. Faculty needs to be diverse and staff need to be trained on how to greet parents and the importance of customer service

I feel like there is a lot of interest in magnet schools.

Si

n/a

Transportation from home was provided to all students and transportation zones were expanded. More outreach was focused on nearby neighborhoods, where students would benefit from additional opportunities and variety of school options.

I have not submitted the application it's very difficult, if it's possible I would like to sign my son up

Si

Es muy difícil que acepten a nuestros hijos

...there was a better ration of student/teacher, less homework, more library time, an adequate amount of lunchtime and more time outside versus always sitting at a desk for 7 hours/day. STEM!

Parents where advise and educated and more informed about all the options since the moment they enroll the kid for early start, pre-k or kindergarten

Si

I don't know about it

orientan mas a los latinos

Si claro

The people know about it

Assignments virtually wasn't extremely extensive. Students struggle to meet goals and deadlines.

If schools were more transparent with opportunities available to students, such as school program connections, volunteer opportunities in specific path or even summer intern programs that would be a made available to students to really learn their path of interest outside of school. This could include but not just limited to more shadowing opportunities for the students.

They were advertised to up-and-coming kindergarten parents that may have no other contact with schools yet.

How about making all high schools better and give all magnet worthy education to all at their home schools in THEIR own community?

N/A

Si, me encanta la escuela que asiste mi hijo. Puedo notar su desarrollo y crecimiento y como el comenzó a amar el idioma español luego de entrar a su escuela magnet.

Magnet schools are good, but every school should offer same program and not have separate magnet schools. Having separate magnet schools is challenging for many due to transportation issues (I don't have this issue, but many I know do). Also, not exposing magnet style curriculum to all kids is not equality.

There are limited options for language, performing arts and STEAM across the district...minimal specialization options

No idea, never toured a magnet school

Si diera la oportunidad a muchos niños más creo que les ayudaría más a los niños

N/A

There were more public discussions about magnet schools and how early one has to apply. I never would have assumed that I needed to apply a full year before my children were old enough to get into the school. A lot of people do not know and miss out on these opportunities unless someone they know tell them.

We need more Montessori options, especially outside of center city. We live in Mint Hill and have a child who would excel in that setting, but there's not a local option for Montessori education out here.

Students could meet with students to host panels. They don't want to hear from adults!

You could make sure you look at not just diversity of background but also kids from an individual perspective. It's not listed on your choices to select from, but my oldest went to Barringer/Randolph/east meck for the IB program back before the criteria for acceptance were updated. He was white and in a good school district. The reason we switched him was because he was high functioning autism and the way that our home school worked wasn't a good fit for him. I know they're tailored more towards increasing economic mobility and I agree with that, but I do think there are other situations out there that might benefit as well and bring in a different type of diversity in the process.

Claro que sí

Las escuelas magnet soy muy buenas por qué mi hija le encantó como les explican cada materia

The process was better understood. The transportation process was more transparent. For example, what is the culture of the bus environment? Are there other adults on the bus with the dispersement of student ages? If additional Before and afterschool programming has been limited for years this is a real issue for working parents. Can the schools partner with programs other than ASEP, such as JCC or the Y? PreK options should be more available.

If the current school years transportation system was changed, it would improve and draw a lot more students. I know several families that opted out of magnet schools this school year because transportation was no longer set up with bus stop availability as it had been in the previous years. Also, if there was a more representation for the CPCC program with greater detail to families during the application process and even before the application was available.

Advertised, school systems offered them more.

It was easier to get to them with provided transportation

students who are coming to learn a new language are prepared to also keep up with reading in English so that both languages are acquired in a strong manner

Thought children real life situations and prepare them financially for the real world in this era. Allow children to be responsible and let them be creative

More parents knew about them, if parents had more assistance applying for them, and if there were more room for more students.

I do not know anything about

Parents knew what was offered I have no idea what a magnet school is or where they are located within CMS

CMS increased the number of full IB magnet seats available. Full IB magnet middle schools Piedmont and Randolph have large wait-lists year after year, and these lists are significantly smaller than the actual demand in CMS because many families select other magnet options as their first choice, knowing that they will likely be waitlisted for the full magnet programs at Randolph and Piedmont. Relatedly, available seats at partial magnet options do not bridge the gap between demand and supply. These seats remain open year after year because CMS families do not view them as equivalent or even desirable options for their students. All of the partial magnet IB middle schools have seats available in all 3 grades after each lottery.

More immersion languages were offered. Also, if JT Williams had transportation provided instead of express stops. Express stops make it impossible for some families to send their kids to JT.

Si

Si

They offered more resources for tutoring or and ensuring the kids aren't left behind

Teacher would get more support to teach the way they learned it in there country. The teacher from the different countries have mostly a better university degree but don't get a chance to show their potential because there is no support for the teacher from that come from a different country.

The choices were reviewed and changed at least every three years and students vote on what they would like to see added to the themes/studies/majors that would be in line & help with college of course.

An IB student could attend any IB school as long as they could provide their own transportation like it used to be

Perhaps I'm not understanding the difference between magnet and charter school. I think all children should have a school nearby that provides a quality education and transportation.

Pienso que si

Las esuelas son muy buenas en educación y además esto tolerancia al bulin ya q mi hijo fue muy afectado al bulin

Seats are more rather then getting rejection every year

Transportation Arrival Time

The curriculum was more magnetic. My son is in a computer science program but only had one CS class for part of the year.

You pick your top school choice and are asked personal questions that should not be apart of the process.

If transportation was more available. Having to drive the student to the express drop up took just as much time and distance as if I drove the student directly to school. Ended up having to jump through hoops to get my student to school on their senior year because of the policy change. Will not be sending any other children to magnet schools because I need assistance with transportation. Pay your bus drivers more.

Lower teacher to student ratios, higher testing scores, fair and compassionate teachers

We had one nearby that was an actual job focused curriculum that will help my kids get better college/job approvals later on. Language school?? Get real what a waste. Everything else is far and not worth the squeeze

If CMS took parent feedback and concerns seriously in regard to moving Magnet schools to other locations in favor of other non-Magnet schools. This has affected at least three Pre-K-6th grade Montessori schools and makes it seem like Magnet schools are not a priority for the district and the opinions and concerns of parents from certain schools are not important.

Si

This survey assumes people know about all the magnet school options, which is not accurate. This is a poorly designed survey.

there were a school specifically designed to support students with ADHD. Focus on their learning styles.

We had better teachers - in order to do that we need to pay them more.

Easier transportation to and from schools

Si

All schools need operate as magnet.

It was marketing, put in more high demand programs and eliminate one offs not working. Access to areas where we lose students.

Transportation was more convenient.

Not sure

This year had been a challenge. My first experience and expectations are have disappointed.

More awareness, to get looped into peoples social algorithms and I front of them. The importance of diversity and education paths is critical for our city's future

Magnets exist b/c parents are sick of the poor product of neighborhood schools. Teachers like Justin Parmenter in magnets make parents use vouchers/home school

There were also opportunities to engage with families that live in our neighborhoods. The downside of a magnet program is that you lose some of the community building with people that live nearby. Maybe have subgroups within the parent group.?

Transportation was readily available at a child's home and not at an express stop

The Bell schedules and buses actually worked well

Stop excluding Norrh Mecklenburg from Montessori schools. With Trillium AND JT Williams moving south several families left the magnet program.

My children are at Long creek, an arts magnet school and the regularly do art for kids hub on YouTube in art class and watch movies and color coloring pages in band. Very upsetting. Theater is the only high quality arts class.

The schools were not so POORLY managed the administration at jma is abysmal. A teach can can call me in the middle of class but the administration cannot take time to talk about your child and I have to hear about discipline action from my kid never from the school and when I do talk to the administration they ALL talk about the students like they are all criminals and the school is more of a prison environment. They control the populace like a prison mentality trying to keep the kids docile and obedient instead of try to cultivate a learning environment very disappointing but lives up to the rest of the way the world thinks of our schools and how the administration is and acts. Disgusting way to handle our growing youth.

There were more options in the suburbs of CMS. Our area (Steele Creek) has almost none!

NA

This option was offer to more students.

We have more elective options instead of only 5 elective options.

Si

I think the bus transportation is the biggest complaint I hear about from parents. But it seems to differ from school to school. One son is at Charles parker and that is number one issue. My other son is at SAIL and the bus schedule is perfect

There is more information about what the school offers (themes) I was not aware about other schools which offer STEM etc

..

I would like to keep siblings together.

you made transportation easier and advertised the programs better. The only reason I knew about the language program is because I went through the German program when it was at Bruns and Smith. My parents only found out about the program because at the time it was year round and the year round schedule worked better with their work schedule.

Di

Si atraería más estudiantes

I feel that school administrators need to be more aware of all populations at a school.

There were more opportunities for acceptance

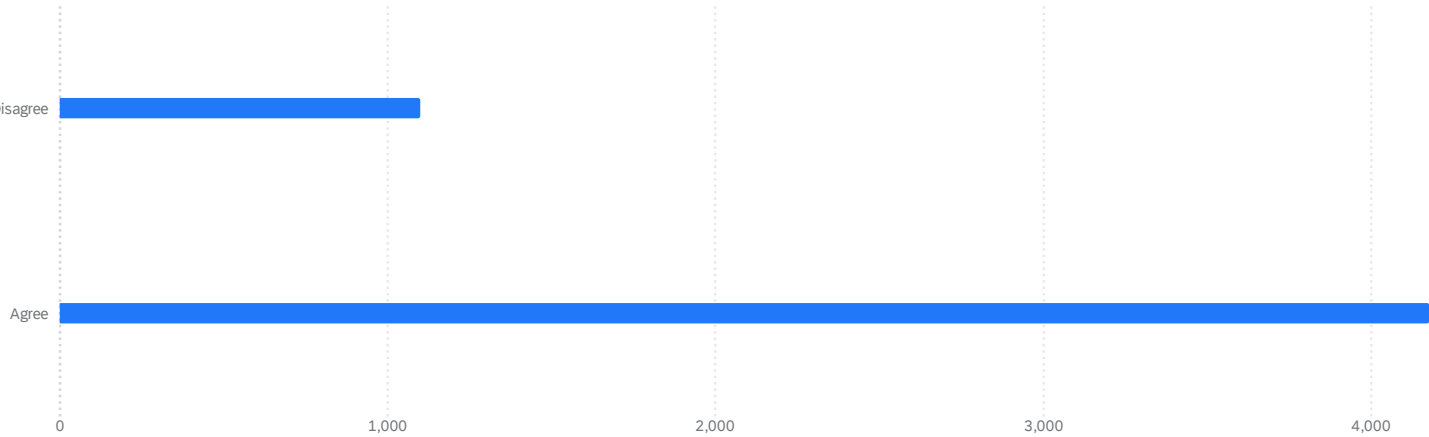
There were more magnets that focused on language immersion.

My son NEEDS a full magnet program. He is very bored in his courses thus far. Increase the number of full IB magnet seats available. Full IB magnet middle schools Piedmont and Randolph have large wait-lists year after year, and these lists are significantly smaller than the actual demand in CMS because many families select other magnet options as their first choice, knowing that they will likely be waitlisted for the full magnet programs at Randolph and Piedmont. Relatedly, available seats at partial magnet options do not bridge the gap between demand and supply. These seats remain open year after year because CMS families do not view them as equivalent or even desirable options for their students. All of the partial magnet IB middle schools have seats available in all 3 grades after each lottery.

There were magnet options at more schools

People understood the what these options were offering and the differences in the programs. I am a CMS employee and feel like I only understand the differences because I work for the district.

School diversity should be a goal for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools. 5,282 ⓘ



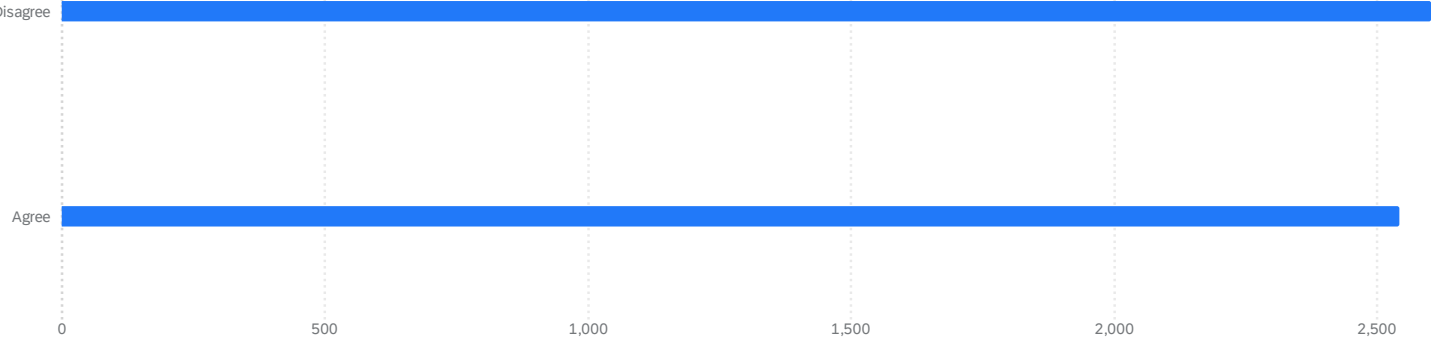
School diversity should be a goal for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools. 5,282 ⓘ

Q22 - School diversity should be a goal for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools.	Percentage	Count
Disagree	21%	1,102
Agree	79%	4,180

School diversity should be a goal for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools. 5,282 ⓘ

School diversity should be a goal for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools.	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Disagree	8.00	8.00	8.00	1,102
Agree	9.00	9.00	9.00	4,180

There are just the right number of magnet schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. 5,147 ⓘ



There are just the right number of magnet schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. 5,147 ⓘ

Q23 - There are just the right number of magnet schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.	Percentage	Count
Disagree	51%	2,604
Agree	49%	2,543

There are just the right number of magnet schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. 5,147 ⓘ

There are just the right number of magnet schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Disagree	1.00	1.00	1.00	2,604
Agree	2.00	2.00	2.00	2,543

The programs selection are great but should be in more areas allowing more students in different neighborhoods to participate. We currently have 2 magnets schools near by but chooses a different one because at the time of enrollment they were not available yet.

Invest in neighborhood schools and if some bussing needs to happen to provide a better racial and socioeconomic mix then bring that back vs setting up chargers/magnets that tend to only serve those w means to get kids to/from them and continue to drive a divide between haves and have nots

Escuelas de inglés para padres ee hijos hispanos , ayudaría mucho ya que no entendemos mucho el idioma

Waldorf, additional Montessori,

I think Vocational Education programs with a Career & Tech pathway that provided students with theroy and hands-on learning with a curriculum that will allow these students to recieve a high school diploma and industry certifications. I have taught in programs such as this in other school districts/States would be a good addtion or students that have a direct craeer path in mind that does not require enrollment in a 4-year college but instead an industry certification. for and provides theory and f I feel this wiil pro

Art. And Cheer Both of my daughters are artist children. They love different kindsbof art and have made and drawn some pretty cool things for theor Ages.

I think we could use more medical/science themes as well as mathematical themes

Private schools

Silencia , técnico y arte

I'm not sure but the magnet schools need more funding as the supplies are often more expensive than traditional schools.

More early colleges.

Deportes

NA

Some school say STEM and they do not do much STEM programs.

I don't think we need to have more themes. The focus should be in getting the current themes right based on the philosophy of that theme. Poor training of staff can make the program weak so less is more for now.

N/A

None

More opportunities for 9th graders to enter an early college program

More Montessori programs and an upgrade to location quality instead of giving them run down schools.

Computer programs

Pas de commentaire

better local schools. less investment in magnet.

Sería bueno dar capacitaciones tanto a docentes e estudiantes para que haya mas entendimiento para saber observar intuir las capacidades que puede tener cada estudiante. Tal vez haya las capacitaciones pero tendrían que poner más énfasis en cómo saber llegar a cada estudiante para hacerlos brillar y ser exitosos .

Animal care is a program that I think would be innovative and is something that has drawn a lot of interest at the secondary Montessori level. Exploration of biology programs not human focused in general would be interesting.

Vocational school.

LESS XROWDED SCHOOLS

More STEM centered programs and project-based learning options. FIRST Robotics programs at EVERY high school would be a great start.

Art and hand writing

Trades and vocations

Carpentry, Nursing, hvac, project management,

Programas para los estudiantes hispanos y comunidad hispana

Math

Automotive, more 2 year college offerings for children who don't want to go to a for year college.

Provided options are good mainly STEM, innovative themes can be focused on 1. Students below average and finding their best in term of STEM (regular school generally focus on average students) 2. Sports Management & Medicine

Maybe the one so my children to make nails

More schools even if it's the same magnet.

CMS is very segregated and diversity is an issue. Most magnet schools are people of color. The quality of programs has gone down and the resources are lacking. Parent participation has decreased and the curriculum isn't as robust. There needs to be a lot of changes. Please involve community to assist. Thank you

Les programmes actuel

I think overall CMS is doing well with the breadth of offerings. To enhance that breadth, I would like to see Aviation & Experiential learning (similar to a Lab concept).

Financial institutions

Aerospace/engineering, Business or trades.

Free summer programs or free magnet programs

Aviation engineering, my student was interested but the program did not draw much interest from the community as a whole I guess.

No

We are happy with the language immersion option we have selected.

Programs that help with lifeskills such as cooking , managing finances and balancing life with a busy schedule. Also a nutrition program such as a vegetable gardenso students understand what vegetables provide what vitamins. Also, students can participate in making well balanced meals.

I would like to see more college bound classes for high school students.

Nursing

Would like to see more STEAM magnet options.

Pues la seguridad de nuestros hijos más que todo que se cheque mucho que aiga igualdad respeto tanto los estudiantes y el personal de las escuelas

College Prep- helps students build schedule and skills to prepare for applications and scholarships Business Management-classes and skills to set up for a business degree Vet Medicine- help get vet tech certification and get ready for vet med degree Social Media Management and branding- as times change and more young teens are interested in an online career. Learning how to manage, set up, create, and responsibly post and monetize accounts.

I think what we have is what we need. It just needs to be improved.

We need to make the programs we have accessible to all students, ie one in each transportation zone and bring back the bussing before we add more

Music Art Gardening

N/A

I think the aviation and aeronautics idea was a good one - if it had been more widely advertised. I also think that some kids are very interested in trades, perhaps some schools with professional trades would be popular especially for high schoolers. I would also have loved to see some STEAM schools for high school. The STEM schools do not offer as many art options but it's nice to have science, math and the arts for high school.

TD/Gifted for middle school. SOOOOO needed

No not really

Advanced study opportunities for gifted children.

Tecnología.

Magnet

Sobre la violencia la seguridad

I would like to see an immersion program for rising high school students of North Academy of World Languages (K-8) so they can continue their language program as high school students. This is is needed dearly on the North side of CMS preferably near the current NAWL school.

?

Cursive, carpentry, sewing, cooking, how to handle finances.

More Montessori and IB

Computer Technology. Anything technology based. Technology is the way of the world, at this point. My child is not interested in any of the curriculums at the school he currently attends. He is only attending this school because it is close to our home. Otherwise, he would not attend.

We loved the 7habits theme at MPTS.

Music, dance and art programs.

N/a

Aun no se

I am happy with the current themes, However, we have to move and some themes in Gaston County magnet schools that match my son's current theme are available but i cannot get any help with getting him into one. If he won school choice lottery in CMS, there should be a process to transfer to another district if student family has to move out of Mecklenburg due to unaffordable housing

Cursos de manualidades, bailes etc.

Nature based

More stem

N/A

There's many good options

no suggestions here

More language programs, engineering focus ones

STEAM Academy

Programs for kids with disabilities and schools geared toward special learnings needs / disabilities / 504 plans. We understand there MAY be LEGAL constraints around this, though.

Arts

More leadership and IB school opportunities

More Montessori locations

Menos estudiantes en las aulas para que los maestro tengan mejor oportunidad de enseñar

Language-immersion

NA

Mas programas

I am very satisfied with the choices.

Math. Science. And engineering should be the focus

Trade schools - electricians, HVAC, plumbing

Ciencias de la salud Artes Musica

Unique developmental programs for sports and academics combos not offered at school such as scuba diving/marine science/under water photography or ice skating/hockey/ sports management/theater on ice.

No

Nature school

More steam

Performing arts in south Charlotte area

Let me think about it

Aerospace engineering or physics on a level that children can comprehend

Stem

Library visit

Learning Is Fun.

Themes are good. Having STEM themes in more schools would be great.

Yes

Low tech options where there is more emphasis on writing and outdoors versus learning on screens. Focus on practical life skills like taxes, finances, business, health etc

N/A

More trade and vocational school options, such as electrical, mechanic, culinary, horticulture and/or construction.

Expand IB options since this seems to be popular, open IB schools in far north/south areas of the county

Bench marks and some Saturday class

More STEAM like Rea Farms that are more central to the city

Learning second languages

Language immersion. Farming and environment. Mathematics and STEM.

Si me gustaría ingresarlos

Multicultural

Na

N/a

Language, sport

Nature integration More Montessori offerings More language immersion Spanish

I'm pleased with the international language option.

nothing

Las ayudas que dan a os migrantes y las oportunidades lo

Can't think of anything

Trade school

Introducing children to careers at an early age maybe doing more college tours to get them interested in going to college

Computer programming

should have some international languages class like Chinese.

Aprender un idioma

Medical

Music instruments teaching in the school.

Steam- science, technology,, art, engineering and mathematics

No themes, just equal fair education for all students; there is clearly a difference in schools in richer neighborhoods just based on the PTAs alone; PTAs can offer benefits to a school by funding opportunities so lower income school also means families give less to the PTA so those schools rely only on the district for a fair education; no magnet schools are not teaching; no sure why all schools can't provide a great education; schools are also too segregated

STEM particularly involvement with local colleges and/or businesses

Cursos más intensivos de inglés para los estudiantes hispanos y también de herramientas tecnológicas.

Project management, GIS, AI and cyber security, and an environment science track

Clases de psicología para fortalecer la auto estima de los niños y el idioma Español cómo segunda lengua.

IB

Fix the current magnets first

School abroad new fields technology and aviation

Language and it programs.

More opportunities to take AP courses

Finding new ways to interpret math skills and reading skills making it more understanding for kids to learn better.

ENGINEERING PATHWAYS and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH and SAFETY.

Regresar a la comuni3n con Dios en las escuelas.

How about keep the programs strong that you already have. Then you can further expand. Current CMS doesn't know how to support their existing magnets, so while more options would be great, CMS should not expand until there is a comprehensive support model - including transportation - in place.

Computer law criminal

Waldorf

I would go with fewer themes and meaningful differences between themes and between magnet and neighborhood schools. Maybe save number or more magnets but closer to people's homes.

Que haya una materia de Estudios B3blicos.

Invest in all your public schools. Not just magnet school. Every kid deserves to have programs and opportunities that can help them be successful regardless of which school in the district they attend. INVEST IN ALL OF YOUR SCHOOLS. Kids can feel and notice when the district doesn't invest in them in the same way you invest in your magnet schools and that sends a very clear message. Invest in all your student and the future of Charlotte and its surrounding cities will excel in more ways than imagined.

Your previous question on "School diversity should be a goal for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools." as a yes / no is a framed question and should provide multiple choices like the previous questions. It is unethical.

How might a magnet school improved one learning.

Si

Ethnic studies

Programa que puedan ayudar a los ni1os de bajos recursos

More Montessori, more programming for gifted students that need structure.

Carpentry, student councils, feild work that includes community service , volunteer opportunities for students 5o connect with community and community to connect with youth. SHOW TIME, HAVE AN EVENT WHERE THE COMMUNITY CAN come and see a display of what the youth are learning, could be a demonstration or performance.. If you say it's magnet then show us

No tengo idea

Robotics

Prefiero no opinar

LESS Themes. More seats at the distilled themes.

Rehabilitación física ocupacional de lenguaje lenguaje por señas

More Stem options, more Montessori options more arts and music offerings.

More advanced middle school options that aren't just IB. A STEM middle school, etc.

Que pusieron las clases de cosmetologist para las niñas

More arts & financial literacy programs.

I think there's a need for offering more popular magnet programs - for example: Montessori is a more convenient option for some families in central city area than south/east Charlotte.

Seguridad y defensa personal

A few more trade academies, as well as industry-based learning for economics, accounting, and finance. Another industry of interest that a magnet school could support is agriculture and eco-sustainability.

Coding STEM

Programas prácticos no solo académicos

No lo se

No

Que los niños hispanos reciban las clases en. Español e inglés

Academic standards Teachers that we pay higher And higher salaries and increased days off without improved performance, over reliance on computer teaching and refusal to actually grade papers and tests

Engineering, Computer Programming and Medical themed programs are interests of our family.

Occupational education schools for careers in HVAC, Carpentry, auto mechanics, culinary arts, etc. Available at regionally located schools (North, South, East, West) where students who are interested in a career and not college can attend.

Smaller schools/class sizes/no trailers

Increase Workstudy ,science and math. Encourage them to advanced class or honor class.reduce unnecessary and too much sport activity but too much.

Tutores para los estudiantes En matemáticas y español

Aviation

Coding

Special education theme

Temas religiosos

La naturaleza

Educación financiera y emprendimientos y entrenamiento laborales

One theme should be for students that want to pursue teaching, especially that there is a shortage. Allow students to start the process as they transition to high school. I understand that there is dual enrollment available but the student may be intimidated by the term, not know that the work load is not too far from the traditional; dedication is needed.

Fair and safe transportation for the students in neighborhoods stops.

Trade school Magnet programs that address student who desire a opportunity to learn various skilled trades.

Mental Health theme or programs

Charlotte desperately needs a "technical" high school option.

Back up to the last question: what do you mean "diversity should be a goal"? If your algorithm isn't working, fix it. If you are wondering why certain groups don't apply to magnet schools (or why they do), ask them directly. And "just the right number"? How on earth would I evaluate that? There's a few I think aren't needed, but they could translate to seats that I do think are needed. Should we build more magnet schools? No. And while we are at it, stop splitting magnet schools. Either it is a magnet or it's not. And if it is a magnet, every student needs to be held accountable to magnet standards, whatever they are. But having no standards is a very silly way to deem a school a magnet school. New/other themes? Good question. I would love to see the list of answers on this one.

More arts and more technology

NA

Nature outdoor education

None

Arts Science

Vocational magnet with diverse trade options

TD/Gifted student options for middle and highschool. Only option seems to be an IB program currently.

A blend in STEM and Communications Arts

We are a major hub for Several airlines. Along with motorsports and other major industries. Start catering learning to that. My daughter ask all the time, why she can have the same experience as her friends at Jackson Day, Gaston Christian, or Charlotte Latin. Let's be innovative, get kids started in coding, introduce more than. Just one Aerospace class. Kids love them and do well in them..

Music engineering. Social Media development. Graphic arts in literary and digital platforms.

Stem Business and Financial theme Sport and business

Music & arts, STEM

En las escuelas regulares en algunas no tienen programas para los niños como ejm deportes campamentos

Que tuvieran más apoyo

Extra curricular

Not sure

Clases de piano, guitarra y música en general

More scholarships to private schools

Don't know

Temas cristianos

Not sure

Life skills,

Social Emotional approach, medical, bussiness

Better opportunities on the middle school level

One suggestion is an entrepreneurship team program - where students learn about business concepts and develop skills.

No tengo conocimiento si existen otros programas

Add Art to the STEM Programs(including High School) to make them all STEAM Programs.

Language only high school instead of merging into South Meck

I don't know.

Barber School

Traditional - fully - like you'd see at a private school: no new-fangled math, etc. that is like whiplash for students when it comes in with one superintendent - who was marveled by a sales pitch with commissioned studies to facilitate or who has political aspirations and is trying to make a splash but not for students at root - and is gone along with the tax bond money that funded it.

More languages to be taught at magnet schools such as Arabic French Dutch....

STEM, technology, art, aviation, environmental, trade schools

Finance Coding

Fine and performing arts, Trades, life skills, year round, international studies

Trade Programs

None

NA

yes

Financial literacy, it is imperative that is taught in school over some of the current curriculum options that do not get used in life.

idk

I don't know

idk

The boys need to do some outdoor stuff The girls need to do some girly clubs Of course they could be together in some clubs. Maybe not though. Uhh.. Let the Kids know the rainbow ☁️ is actually God's promise to never flood the entire earth again. Teach them more in depth about how to save 30-50% of all your money, no matter what. And then they could choose to spend the last 70-50% or save that too so they could be owners of things. So mabe a savings class. Movie Clubs Chess Clubs Maybe a club called the secret club where they have specific cool things to do after school. (For the kids who already can spend money) and maybe find a way to get other kids involved by them helping eachother pool their money together. (A regulated money club) to help them get together at sporting events outside the school) like once a week they agree to meet at a Baseball game or Something and they each bring \$10. (Just some kind of structured club) This is a good one! "The no phones club" Where they just use their creativity to draw, storyboard, and make cool entertainment for the school morning news. I have a lot of more ideas.

idk

no

Law, critical thinking and writing. A school where kids who were exceeding their regular/Ap classes could go that wasn't 45 minutes away. Plus a place where bullying and rule breaking was actually taken seriously. My daughter was bullied out of NAWL due to her being a minority, the teachers were amazing but it was my opinion that either due to cms rules or the principals lack of understanding about the damage being done to my daughter and doing basically nothing about it - we left Ana returned to Bradley middle school.

All girls school Previously homeschool small school program

after achool programs.

N/A

Religion

Talent development, hands on learning, outdoor education

Some of the most common themes offered by magnet schools, according to Magnet Schools of America, are: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Fine and Performing Arts. International Baccalaureate, International Studies.

not really

Culinary Arts photography horticulture

Job preparation - skills needed

You need more trades, especially automotive mechanic labc or other life skills.

More arts programs.

Enviar actividades escolares por semana cortas a los niños para fortalecer el Estudio donde se necesite y así avanzar al ritmo

Overall good. Just more of them.

Community college information

Español

Shop, home economic,

Mara mi sería también que hubiera personas que hablen español en la oficina en las escuelas magnet porque no ahy personas que no hablan español y es muy difícil cuando ahy un problemas

Matemáticas el respeto acia las personas el respeto acia los animales la importancia de cuidar las plantas y ablar mucho sobre el tema de la adolescencia ya q la tecnología trae cosa buena y malas

Deportes

Montessori options

Montessori

medicina ,música etc.hasta ahorita desconocia las escuelas magnet pero he leído que son super importantes me encantaría

Más programas de dónde los niños se puedan inscribir y les interese

School for Arts that includes drama, writing, singing, dancing and technology like stop motion animation, video editing, streaming and vlogging.

NA

Blended themes such as Montessori with language immersion

Magnets dedicated to trades (electrician, hvac, plumbing)

Magnet schools in Elementary and middle schools that centered around home economics, hands on experience (trades), and etiquette skills.

Biomedical and IT technology

Career readiness options at more schools. Cosmetology, personal training, allied health should be offered more programs

Arts, STEM

Other programs for kids to spend more time outside, perhaps have a trail to explore or have an area to take classes outside, more time to move and use that energy

More magnet schools focused on the Arts and not just Northwest School but additional one on the northside of town.

Not sure

Legendary school

Actividades campeonatos deportivos.en la misma escuela eso ayudaría a distraer a mucha juventud..

Hospital jobs and teaching

none

Engineering

Na

With maths accounting and business marketing management programs and some professional training for kids to cope up with stressful situations

Más programas y oportunidades para los hispanos

Curriculum dedicated to teaching kids organization and the importance of deadlines, submitting work ASAP. How do you interact with adults for tough convos when you're missing school?

Meraris B L

African Immersion

Cambridge and a schooling option that partners with virtual homeschooling.

La incorporación de servicios de ABA dentro de las escuelas públicas, Charter y Magnet para todos los estudiantes que tienen una IDD y trabajan con un IEP

What drives people to magnet schools are very poorly performing 'regular' schools...not so much a desire for a theme of magnet. All of the schools should be 'magnet' quality.

Muchas mas ayuda para q nosootros los padres nos interesemos mas

Adding a dance/performing arts program to most schools would encourage more students/parents to look into the theatrical side of the arts more.

N/A

Youth Financial Education

More programs for job readiness or job placement. More trade job programs, more college prep programs. Leaving high school kids could go straight in to working in a decent field to make a living, or they can go to college with possibly some classes completed.

Computer/IT

For my children, the current themes offered were adequate.

More traditional schools

More Parent-Teacher-Community involvement and programming.

Neighborhood schools only stop bringing in kids from the hood to the suburbs. Any idiot can see what that has done to schools. Fix the root problem of bad schools and bad parents and kids. You guys blame everything but the problem. Parents and kids. Fix the city schools and stop sending issues to the suburbs.

Expose children to ALL trades and professions in life. Help them learn about what is there, so they can have the knowledge and power to know what they might be interested in. Explain all communications on an elementary level.

waldorf method

I think CMS is doing a great job @ this time with the programs they currently offer for the students in CMS schools.

Rigorous academic programs that are tailored to children's capabilities - ie gifted vs alternate learners

Math and science

Additional focus on neurodiverse learners, eg: students with ADHD. More opportunity for project-based learning and less testing.

None

La libertad de exponer cada Niño lo que le interesa a cada uno de ellos

Formacion integral con las familias

Meritocracy

CMS is filled with administrators who are the most incompetent people I have ever seen in any field

Para mi todo esta bien

N/A

More seats in popular programs Currently there is a good variety of options

Quality education in all way possible

No sabría

Pues laverdad ami nunca me an dado información sobre las escuelas magnet

Every area in Charlotte faces different issues. Redirect your themes and programs to their needs.

Expanding language options to include more variety of language immersion

I will see in the future

tecnologia reparacion

More STEM programs for Intellectually gifted students.

Arts, differents sports.

Technical Programs, Workforce Programs ((Hands on)

An Environmental Program

Financial acumen, home ec,

N/A

Una de actividades diarias como limpieza, cocina

Another school or programs like NW School of the Arts.

Engineering

Hospitality, aviation

More STEM based schools

More Montessori. More options for art/music focus. More options for neurodivergent students who don't thrive in a rigid school structure.

Free college tuition after graduation from. CEEC

Trade schools Women's stem

Dar clases de español que los colegios sean bilingüe

Ami me gusta que a mí hijo le en enseñen todo clase de temas La mejores estudios los tiene las escuelas magnet

I believe CMS should not have magnet programs and should focus on core instruction for neighborhood schools. The magnet program is a distraction to the leadership and outcomes. It's impossible to be everything to everyone and the magnet program is further contributing to the poor outcomes of all schools by distracting leadership from being able to scale effective solutions to all schools to improve outcomes.

Language electives in non-language schools.

Finance/business

I hace none in mind at the moment.

Engineering, coding

None

No se exactamente

Montessori

-

Nursing, Psychology, more arts related programs/schools!

I don't know what magnet theme means

Que los alumnos se interese más por estudiar

I would be interested in more tech school that include culinary and wood shop certificates.

There should be a medical career focused school in bussing distance of every part of CMS. Same with computer science/programming.

Inculcar más el deporte en las escuelas y más actividades al aire libre

Automotive, Cosmetology, welding

EC students that are not "bad" enough for special needs school - but difficult in larger class sizes.

It probably isn't an option, but Waldorf education and/or ecology/experiential science

Deportes

Too many magnet programs - stretched too thin; strengthen the top or replicate them at other schools. I.e. more than one language academy, if demand warrants it. In lieu of MPTS.

Montessori and language immersion combined

Music

Trades/ skill training Investment portfolios, stocks, annuities, trust, real estate, government policies regarding taxes

Vocational and local employment opportunity training/mentoring/intern

How about dropping the garbage and teaching kids to think vs feel.

Na - just make the home schools great before adding all the extra

N/A

NA

Other programs that will help my scholar succeed.

Trade schools

nothing to change for this topic in my opinion

Highschool Stem school

STEM

Science fair, Paper presentation, Drawing presentation , Speech on important world leaders Birthday ,etc You can take like more active participation from students. Thank u

Public speaking, creative writing

Aviation

Temas religiosos

AI, finances

More early college options that focus on high demand fields.

NA

Language Immersion, Special Education Focus, Arts Focus

Not familiar with all magnet school offerings

Not sure

Nature Based Schooling, Waldorf School (no/ low tech)

Yoga meditation and teach kids on how to deal with depression

Target vocational programs to provide out of college jobs. Focus on ones that give kids a license to go directly into a field, such as Pilot, Aircraft Mechanic, Air Traffic Controller, Car Mechanic, Electrician, ect..

Language programs Science programs

None

Better tutoring opportunities

Trade high schools, fashion design and creative arts

AVID. Based on two middle school daughters experience, this program would've been extremely helpful. Especially with my 8th grade student shonis transitioning to HS next year. We support her at home, but if writing, reading and organizational strategies were reinforced through AVID at Crestdale, it definitely would have been an additional layer of support as she prepares to enter honors English and World History next year. But, we've made plans to reinforce these practices over the summer to make sure she's fully prepared for a Successful 9th grade year. Based on a conversation with the English department at Providence HS, the writing and critical reading skills are typically areas that need additional support as students transition over.

School for neurodivergent / adhd types of learning

International travel, ways to introduce different countries to students

Music, IT development, Agricultural

Economic development Cosmetology Finance Homebuyers Job readiness

Entrepreneurship, Trades

Business/finance entrepreneurship

Culinary. Government. Law.

More schools offering diverse world theme programs to make our student competitive on a global aspect.

Schools for business acumen teaching financial literacy, stocks, and credit information. Also schools that teach about entrepreneurship

STEM

Finance or Entrepreneurship

Charter Schools

Montessori

Music/Arts at a younger age maybe?

I would like to see more schools offering more classes that focus on mental health of the students in ALL grade levels. There needs to be more awareness and focus on offering students more outlets where they can gather in groups to discuss their thoughts of how they feel about the school, teachers, and curriculum.

Que ayuden a los niños que no saben inglés para evitar que pasen horas sentados sin entender mucho, pues son niños y se deprimen. Mi hijo preguntaba a sus compañeritos que decía en inglés el maestro y lo regañaron y se lo prohibieron...

Technical programs and Blue Collar Skills programs in Schools. After Graduating high School being able to get a good high paying job.

More play based learning mixed with traditional learning

AI / new technology

No se

Unforgettable Experiences STEM ITI Up

Arts

Programas a padres en español

More creative arts. More language immersion

I really like the leadership theme that we have at Elizabeth Traditional. I wish that there were more leadership themes for middle and high schools.

Art programs fir every grade regardless of iep restrictions.

seguridad y diciplina y programas recreacionales

Can't think of any.

N/a

More after school programs and tutoring

A safer advanced language school for high schoolers

Cursos de inglés para los padres

I don't necessarily think there should be more programs, just streamline the schools.. make them more accessible and better performing and fix the regular public schools so that its safer and more attractive for students to attend local schools. For students that attend magnet schools, students should also be able to participate in their home schools sports and music programs, as well as tutoring and as it stands with tutoring it is not allowed and for sports/music the transportation/bell schedule doesn't allow this to be a reality. A student must chose their priority whether it be academics or sports/music, which is quite discouraging.

Business/Entrepreneurship

Sports

Gaming and robotics,

Foreign Languages

Primarily interested in more rigorous educational options. Also arts programs.

Programs geared towards skilled or trade work.

Programas militares

Talent school to prepare for college application

Art and sport activities besides academic programs

Aún no se sobre este tema

There should be a focus on Career readiness skills business and trade skills

A culinary program would be a great addition to NWSA.

Mechanics (auto, aviation, etc.)

Language, technology, science, arts

La lotería

There should be fewer

I'm happy with Montessori

Piedmont was very interested but very hard to get in, liked the curriculum offered there

Spanish is not taught in the language academies. Why? That is ridiculous.

AI, more career training

Forest/nature based learning, "Unschooling" or unschooling time built into the schedule as a part of a TD program.

Additional Stem opportunities.

College prep courses our environment and sustainability

Dual language immersion, STEM elementary schools, college preparatory prep story schools like the Charter schools offer.

No tengo idea por qué no e tenido la oportunidad de asistir a una escuela magnet.

more partnership programs with UNCC

Art

Journalism for example

Mas acceso para los ninos en sus ideomas

I love the idea and opportunity for language immersion schools.

schools which are not focused on test grades

better makerspaces in schools more community expert to school relationships

I was only interested in a language option for my student and now that he is a senior and I have no other children, this question is better left to those who have a dog in the game.

AIG/TD

All the schools should have an interesting magnet program.

??

Additional HS Art school

Terapias para niños que no tengan seguro . Eso sería importante en nuestra comunidad.

Yes

This is too broad a question. Everything interests me.

Si claro

-

Good study curriculum and teachers

Refuerzo de inglés para los niños migrantes

More language immersion programs and more steam programs

STEM Robotics Fashion Art related specialisations

N/A

Stocks and Trade programs Real Estate Programs

Mid

An increase number in World Language Schools

More science-based programs that are not medicine related

Keep language immersion, please!!

Art

More and better arts school choices

Social emotional learning focus

More trade skill focused programs, more arts focused programs.

More trade programs so students can graduate with certifications and a job. For example, dental hygienist, vet tech, Medical billing, project management.

Neutral

Programas de Prevención de la Salud Oral

A magnet for kids with dyslexia to provide them with intensive Orton Gillingham support

Trade schools

More performing school of the Arts should be available.

Financial literacy

More arts and music options, more language options

Legal / public policy focus

Actual academics taught at children's levels. Ie both gifted and other spectrum children taught on their level, in classes groups to those abilities.

na

Nothing at this time

Schools with a diverse pool of sports

The themes are fine, it is the number of schools the issue

Include and encourage more extra curricular activities

Not sure

More IB options and TD-focused middle and high school. Keep high performing students in CMS.

The ability to know years in advance that a child is accepted to a school, to allow time for relocation if necessary, and proper planning by parents.

I think more programs leading to different trades would be nice.

I believe the themes are great. But increasing the number of schools for more popular themes and decreasing those for less popular would be key.

Athletics

Trade magnets, as we are in the process of our economy changing, the ever steady opportunities in the trades is a viable learning path. Also, I would add an auditing process to determine periodically if the magnet program at a school is living up to its stated purpose. For example, if there were a textiles magnet, and the kids weren't learning how to weave well. The audit could evaluate that and put in processes for it to change. There needs to be more emphasis and endorsement on the non math/English core of what the magnet is supposed to be and do.

Not sure what all is offered at this time

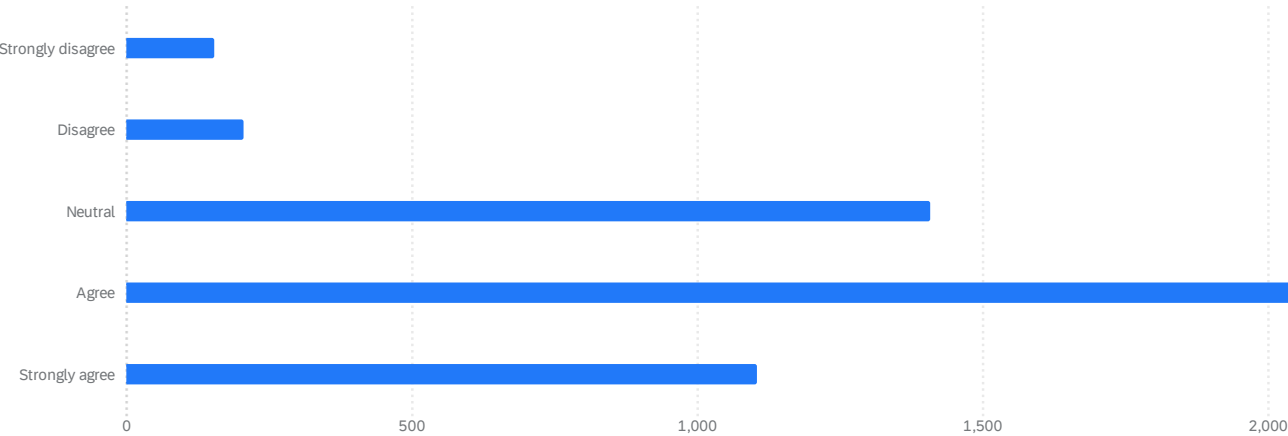
Language programs are so important!!!

Todo bien

Emphasis on language learning

Introducir nuevos idiomas

Magnet Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg offer high-quality instruction. 5,172 ⓘ



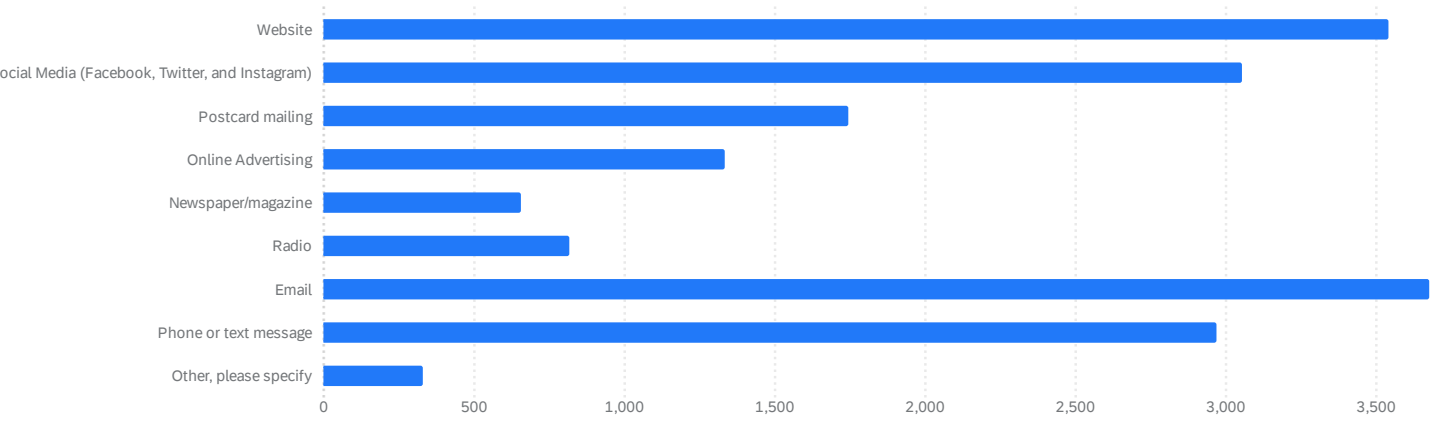
Magnet Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg offer high-quality instruction. 5,172 ⓘ

Q25 - Magnet Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg offer high-quality instruction.	Percentage	Count
Strongly disagree	3%	153
Disagree	4%	206
Neutral	27%	1,410
Agree	44%	2,298
Strongly agree	21%	1,105

Magnet Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg offer high-quality instruction. 5,172 ⓘ

Magnet Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg offer high-quality instruction.	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Strongly disagree	1.00	1.00	1.00	153
Disagree	2.00	2.00	2.00	206
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	1,410
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	2,298
Strongly agree	5.00	5.00	5.00	1,105

In order for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools to share information effectively, what are your suggestions for communicating news and events? Please check all that apply. 5,073 ⓘ



In order for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools to share information effectively, what are your suggestions for communicating news and events? Please check all that apply. 5,073 ⓘ

Q26 - In order for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Magnet Schools to share information effectively, what are your suggestions for communicating news and events? Please check all that apply. - Selected Choice	Percentage	Count
Website	70%	3,542
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram)	60%	3,056
Postcard mailing	34%	1,745
Online Advertising	26%	1,334
Newspaper/magazine	13%	657
Radio	16%	819
Email	73%	3,679
Phone or text message	59%	2,970
Other, please specify	7%	331

New CMS Parent Orientation meetings when registering to help all new parents are well informed and reduces challenge some may face due to access or language.

Arranging informative sessions in home school for parents

Office hours for magnet SMEs. Parent liaisons; Partnerships with neighborhood associations

Billboards, bus ads, news

Mobile app

Online events with information that are advertised in advance via mail, email, phone and text messages would be good. Just more communication in general!

Giving a letter to the child to give to the parent(s).

Just keep current on parent email. It is very hard to get CMS to update / refresh parent email addresses (even though we submit the forms annually). And don't change apps year to year.

Multiple fairs per year would be helpful

Specific App

Isn't Parent Square the preferred method?

local TV

everything

flyers provided by the school

Teacher

Communicate through the schools

La escuela siempre esta compartiendo información sobre las actividades y demás de tipo académico.

On the CMS website & send out to all parents in this area

Local news

More Magnet Fairs at Various School in CMS.

Email a video to parents that presents information a different way

I. Person communications at pre schools

Do whatever it takes to save our children

Parent square or peach jar

Please, don't make me download another app.

En las mismas escuelas directo a los alumnos para que nosotros podamos ver el interés de los hijos

Llamadas telefonicas

Billboards in at risk areas, and along major highways within the city. I

DON'T SPEND MONEY for heaven's sake. Plenty of free bandwidth to use.

We need up to date information on the websites. Hire college interns to do website development.

School meetings

Just text, no phone.

Bus boards, billboards, signage

Segments on local news stations... Info stations at stadium events (Panthers, Hornets, Checkers, Knights)

posters around the school

idk

I don't know

You have to talk with the parents and ask them to do simple tasks such as "scan this link" or "take out your phone now and fill out this form" you just have to interact some more with the parents, maybe??

no

Hold events

Educate neighborhood school staff.

news

parent square

Assigned school emails could let parents know about alternative options

Parent square worked well

community nights in school and with regional businesses county and state-wide for all magnet school options within CMS magnet schools and small businesses

Don't care until it is on merit never interested.

Communicating with all parents about what things are, how they can get more information, learn more about it, how it can affect you and your child, and host events to have discussions about this. Talk to people in the REAL WORLD, not just online.

Information provided from schools

Tv

TV

Get rid of incompetent administrators

In person assistant and enough instruction simple applications forms

Parent Square is an awesome communication tool!

Meeting/zooms like Covid times.

News on TV

Student led video

television

The website just needs to stay up to date and accurate. Too often with CMS there is inconsistent and conflicting communication.

put out information in local neighborhoods if possible

Parent square

Career Fair

I had to seek out the dates to apply for the lottery and I think it should be sent to everyone

Billboards, Sports Event Ads, TV Commercials, Media Coverage

more than one local TV station and their streaming versions (ads on the latter should be cheap or free)

TV

Whatsapp

Pediatrician, hospital, daycare educational material (provide for parents in these locations)

e-mail newsletter

Billboards & offer info sessions at daycares so rising pre-k parents can be informed of options. Parents tend to not know options and then end up in a TK program at a private school. Then find it hard to come back to CMS

Integrate magnet selection into enrollment.

Individualized materials

Through feeder schools

Parent square

Partner with early childcare centers to spread the word at an early age....not all parents are aware and it's important to be informed BEFORE the child enters kindergarten.

Returning phone calls or emails would also be nice.

ParentSquare

Parents teacher meeting

Amigas

word of mouth

Billboards

Na

Parent square

CMS is using so many ways to communicate - ParentSquare, PowerSchool, text and phone calls it's hard to keep up

School fair information

Visit neighborhood schools to inform students and parents of their options

If anything, less communication. I receive multiple emails/app notifications and or phone calls daily from longcreek elementary. I would prefer one weekly update

school newsletter

See the recipient of the message, since one does not find out due to the lack of language

Partnering with nearby local schools to help parents learn about the magnets.

Television

School newsletters

notes send home with student

In person representative at the community school level to offer parents and students information and guidance.

Admissions fairs

Parent Square messages

Moralesyolanda924@gmail.com

Local News stories,

Hacer reuniones escolares informando del tema

Community fairs

I learned via word of mouth, that was enough

Magnet school recruiting event

Interview students/families and staff then share it on social media.

Give an opportunity for the families to apply at the school be school lets out for the year and an opportunity in the beginning of the year

Occupied tables of information at community events to let the public know about schools. We need more than just a one day fair for magnet schools.

Parent portals

District officials, in person, at parent events at feeder schools

Every communication outlet possible

Forums in different communities

Word of mouth- current teachers should be able to say I think your kid would do really well in these 3 programs and mean it.

Billboards. Publish research studies in various modalities

Parent Square

Mail information.

rallies. partnerships with large companies that are major employers of CMS parents

Who is the intended recipient of the information?

Charlas presenciales con personal profesional y bilingüe

Doesn't matter

Tv

Parent Square

ParentSquare

communication is at the highest level in our magnet school

talk person to person

A catalog of offerings would be nice. Something to hold and compare programs.

Magnet School Fair

Information distribution to local preschools

Flyers

Make a APP service

none

Daycares and other community agencies

Information sessions in the elementary schools. I knew more than the cms counselor on how to apply for middle schools

posters or qr codes around school with info

Television news stories

Work with PTO/PTSAs at feeder schools, bring magnetic student work to feeder schools

Through the CMS elementary schools

Key informed families spreading the information via neighborhood community meetings; local non profit events; large kid friendly city wide events.

Schools

This is one area for growth in my opinion. I wonder if you are not "in the loop" of CMS communication how you find out about magnet programs. Beyond parents who seek out information, do other parents realize they have this as an option?

Grupos comunitarios.

App based communication from schools like Parent Square.

Letters sent home with children.

Word of mouth

More magnet school fairs and awareness of options

I dream of ONE weekly, collective email where staff, teachers, principal, room parents, etc get their info together

Visit preschools

parent square app

Host fairs at non-magnetschools

Flyers sent home

Using Apps. There needs to be more digital communication overall.

Keep the students up to date so they will inform parents. Information need to be given at least 3 weeks in advance

Community events

Expand exposure to church based preschool programs

School based newsletter in partnership with participating PTO/PTA

Parent portal

banner in front of school

Email, text and Parent Square is the best way for working parents

TEACHERS

Equity means targeting populations underrepresented or historically marginalized from educational opportunities. Different strategies are needed for different populations. Grassroots organizing with intentional information channeling—through trusted community members (CIS reps, school counselors and admin, maybe church members, staff at public library, etc)

ParentSquaree

Connect Ed

Send in Thursday folder for younger kids

Non-Magnet School newsletters

Focus resources on public education

Anyway

Informacion en carteleras de supermercados

School could send this information at home too

Ferías en horarios más flexibles para padres que trabajan

School Counselors were so helpful - Hornets Nest Counselor Mr. Busbee reminded parents and helped them apply on time.

give students the information on a flyer from the school

I do think radio could be more important - people listen to NPR in the morning and the morning talk radio shows.

Community events at rec centers; visiting area preschools to speak to parents

No one listens to any of these. Find something more effective

Ways that every demographic is able to view

I canot comments as I have not used

Including more material in new student packets at all schools especially non-magnet. Public/private partnership.

Space out communication. Sending text / voicemail / email at once means that people miss it if they are busy when it all comes in

Advertise in the private school before kids start K (elementary).

send representatives to preschools

Por medio directo en la Escuela escogido por el padre

Working with daycares and Pre-K's

Speaking engagements in community hubs, ambassador families to host events

Parent ambassadors - asking them to share info in groups, invite friends to tour, etc.

Apps like ParentSquare

CMS simply needs a better overall marketing plan and strategy. Maybe you work with the observer to create a CMS schools insert that focuses on school options. This could be distributed with the paper or used as a mailer, or a separate booklet. Partner with Axios to do a big online push.

TV/News

I would love to see less reliance by individual schools, PTAs, and CMS as a whole on social media. We now know that social media is harming our kids, it is major distraction at best and ruining emotional health at worst. Let's put far less on social media and communicate via websites, email, phone voicemails, mailings, radio etc.

Visits to schools to talk to the students and let them know what kind of choices are out there.

Events

Kids games ad

Parent square has worked well at nwsa

Papers given to students at school.

Local Spanish newspapers

Apps escolares como parent squares

Why ask questions like kids aren't getting signed up by their parents.

An App

Coordination with pre schools and area daycares

Public library, parks and rec, and neighborhood events

Local social influencers and "news" accounts on Social + interviews with school administrators on local news

Q and A sessions especially regarding new full and partial magnet schools. For instance why was Waddell Language Academy K-8 rushed out of our site and it still sits empty. Also what, if any, theme is going into Ballantyne Ridge.

Parent square

video/dynamic SMS text pushes.

CMS app works well

Word of mouth. Facilitate word of mouth. That is the single most effective recruiting tool.

Daycares, Preschools! usually those parents with young kids don't know what are the options

Parent square

flyers in public spaces?

Local preschool info sessions

current parent outreach, informal meet and greet events off campus.

Community Involvement

Promotion at community events

Website must walk parents through step by step.

Don't care. Cms is more obsessed with pride and race than education.

Community outreach. Compensate teachers from magnet schools to

Visit local schools and offer info sessions

Presentations at preschools and CMS schools

Como hacer que personas de nuevo ingreso al colegio puedan saber que existen y como entrar orientación

txt most appropriate

Billboard

Hire someone who knows what they're doing and let them figure it out. People get paid to do that.

There are actually too many communications. Email is great but there is way too much to actually understand what's important

Parents Squar, power school , canvas are the best ways to communicate & get

Specific outreach into preschools

Anything that is manageable for staff that is easy for parent to access. Parent Square has been a challenge and this is not a school based decision.

Reaching out to families in CMA database!

Town meetings or formal assemblies to give status of progress.

Billboards around the city / county

Sessions in preschools, daycares, centers and classes in community that serve families with young children

Having people sign up for a newsletter in their power school for more information.

ParentSquare works for communication, doesn't need to be anything beyond that

Weekly or biweekly information calls

WhatsApp

Pick one and stick with it! Social media and post daily.

At LEAST 5 different methods for communicating, as we all have access and pay attention to different forms of media.

Television

Cuando se ingresa un niño a la escuela

The CMS app has been a great resource

parent square

QR Codes

CMS newsletter

All in multiple languages

Local news

Daycare centers, community centers, ymcas

message directly from school

Go away. Don't exist.

Youtube

Teacher recommendation

television news stations

Send home flyers with kids.

Partnering with local health dept & medical offices/hospitals with information

I believe everything listed has done a great so far

Many ways!

SMS or Whatsapp

In-person

Not my area of expertise, but I do wish local schools would let us know that there are other options

sent home information

Outdoor, any means of becomming part of the local conversation

billboards/signage at parks/libraries..etc...

Current parent distribution to neighborhood channels (social media, HOA communications, etc.)

TV commercials

Parent app (like Parent square)

Tv ads

Mail

At local preschools- for example ymca

Email and text are still good, but avoid bombarding inboxes

ParentSquare

I think the public school system can promote other opportunities and education on opportunities for kids.

LOCAL NEWS STATIONS

Information provided at libraries, daycares, community centers, anywhere you would reach families with young children especially in low SES populations.

Target preschools / daycares directly. Directors would not mind forwarding an email about CMS School Choice

Hire support staff to be available to meet with parents directly.

Info sent home by non magnet programs

Whatever medium you use, give more notice! Communicating events a few days prior instead of weeks/months ahead is not real communication.

Blasts on Parent Square; District phone recordings

Parentsquare

Ads at CLT sporting events

Parent square

WFAE and other local outlets

Teacher referral or phone call to the parents

Information sessions at non-magnet schools to familiarize families with the process.

Community events connected to Black Churches.

See previous comments

My neighbor's child had attended Highland Mill and spoke highly of the staff and curriculum. I was familiar with the Montessori philosophy and was impressed that there was a public school option.

provide a little bit more funding to magnet schools for more rigorous curriculums.

Meeting with school principal

Visitation of school and meeting teachers and principal to get more information on what they offer and communication with parents. I was not going to send my son to a Magnetic school after the district merge a great school with a home school. The district did not listen to parents and many great parents and students left that school. They got a principal that was not parent friendly she had deep district connections and no one listened to staff and parents. I removed my son to a full magnetic which was Irwin and my son had an amazing experience at that school from 3-5.

Conversations with experienced staff and families who have been in the program a long time.

Specialization in school (My child is autistic and not doing great in school, but he's artistic and loves music. I have to think for next school year, which school has art and music to enroll him in Middle School and i found it.)

Mail. Because they can have the opportunity to read, very careful, and they can choose the right program for every single studen. Is important to mittle school give more Information or education to the students so they can be involved in all programs and opportunities, equally.

School tours with teachers participating

School diversity was very important as well as a school working toward equity.

Bueno no fue la primera que yo quería pero me asignaron esa pero aún así estoy sastisfecha porque sé que les enseñan y ellos pienso que cuando terminen la primaria ellos automáticamente tienen el paso para la secundaria en una Magnet

Outcomes of children who were schooled using the Montessori method- so many successful adults which need to be discussed more.

Pas de commentaire

La búsqueda surge porque mi hijo veo que tiene falencia en el Inglés ,lo cual estoy preocupada y solicité la ayuda en la escuela misma .Y espero que mi hijo empiece lo más pronto.

The tour of the school provided the information that I needed to make a firm decision about where my children should attend school. All the information at the magnet fair, on the website, via word of mouth, etc. just doesn't hold a candle to actually seeing the way that a program's day to day process is experienced.

Using CMS website.

primero que todo el tema de enfoque de los niños y sus gustos por el estudio que mas les llame la atencion, la ubicacion de la escuela.

Discussions with educators in the community who had insight into various CMS programs and opportunities.

The school report card

The program offered. That was the best detail itself.

It was initially the academic reputation of the school that was the main decision for my choice.

Other parents experience

I donde ha e one

The history of the school, on how good is the program and how much will benefit my children in the future, how much will impact on the education for his future!

Overall academic performance of the school.

recommendations of acquaintances

Visiting the school, and taking a tour was a huge help!

school distance and transportation

Quality in staff and curriculum matters!!!

Un ami qui est parent ...

word of mouth from other parents

Experience from a family in our neighborhood. Also, we were just generally interested in language immersion and likely would have sought it out regardless. However, it requires knowledge of the existence of the magnet program, that's the starting point.

School tour

The connection between bilingual programs and overall academic success

Magnet fairs that provide all school information, how to apply, transportation options, focus areas, and school grades.

Reputation/reviews of the school

They teach very well

Word of mouth and individual exploration of each program

..

Receiving feedback from a family friend of the high quality experience and education that their children received.

National ratings compared to public schools in the community.

It would be talking to other parents who children have gone to Magnet Schools, as well as staff and administration.

Discussion with another Parent- very pleased with the school we were looking at

I chose the school because I believed it would challenge my son and give him the opportunity to learn a second language.

How the school I chose graduation rate and students who go onto college with scholarships was a major factor for me. It shows that the teachers, staff, and parents really do care about our future children's education.

The open house and tour of the South Academy of International Languages school were very well done with special credit to the school's PTA members. We were extremely impressed and decided to make SAIL our #1 choice for our soon-to-be kindergartener.

Ninguna

School theme

For my family it was the Magnet theme and the growth scores. The staff & administration were also key. I was turned off by a magnet based on my interactions with the administration at one of the magnets.

The language immersion programs are magnificent

All my kids from age 23-11 have attended or are attending magnet schools. Final selections were based on theme and how that fit with my child. My daughters have attended the first years at CEEC and NAWL. Then having a good experience at CEEC her brothers followed her and my son will be graduating next year from his 13th year. My daughter currently attends NAWL and will be attending CPEC in the fall. She loved the early college option but not engineering. CPEC was a better fit. My older sons attended Piedmont and my youngest will attend next year. Piedmont still has teachers and administrative staff from when the older ones attended and love the IB program and school.

The fact that it received high marks as a Magnet School in the nation for several years prior.

Tour, school info session and principal presentation

The program they have and the school average score

N/A

I discovered most of these schools through recommendations from other people. My kids helped make the decision because we picked schools offering subjects they were interested in.

The tour. When I attended they were virtual. Highland Mill gave a very energetic in-depth presentation. Chantilly on the other side just said it was a golden ticket and did not provide details or answer questions. Due to that I put Highland Mill first even though I was in the Chantilly transportation boundaries.

NC School Report Card

Ms. Range at Parker is the absolute best!!!! As soon as I met her, there was no other TD magnet option for our family. She's a rock star.

The CMS online information regarding Horizons program, once I was able to track it down.

Una maestra me habló de las escuelas magnets y busqué por la página web de CMS para saber como funcionaba. Me ayudó mucho la búsqueda.

A gut feeling at the tour of feeling like it is a place that our son would thrive. We weren't wrong. We love our school community!

La ayuda de una profesora que lamentablemente se fue del estado.

Our tour of Northwest was just magical. Our son never quite felt like he fit in at his elementary school and as soon as we walked into Northwest, he felt at home. Every step of our tour gave him hope for school and fellow students who are like him, and who would except him. It was the most amazing experience. Thank you northwest school of the arts!!

Pedir ayuda a los maestros

School ratings, diversity, and safety for my child.

Positive f back of SAIL and a new opportunity at NAWL. My only worry is there won't be an immersion HS soon enough for our children to continue their education.

Curriculum offered

No tenía nada de experiencia en este tipo de sistemas en una escuelas , tuve conversaciones con algunos conocidos que ya la conocían y me dieron muy buenas referencias por lo cual me decidí.

Opportunity to ask questions during tours and open-houses as well as having not just a school representative or contact but also a parent contact for questions.

No he tenido ninguna experiencia

When we explored schools, the school tours were still virtual. The virtual experience & the fantastic video Irwin hosted & put together were what made the difference for us; the passion of the teacher/staff/parents/students showed, & we were impressed with the demographic diversity of the students and teachers. (The other magnet school we toured virtually was Highland Mill Montessori, which seemed fine.)

District magnet fair that was held in Fall of 2023

Direct Email responses from the school admin

Atmosphere at the school: diverse and positive.

School tour... Dorothy J Vaughn was amazing... Northridge Middle seemed average & has proved to be underwhelming at best. I wouldve already removed my kids from there if I had easier transfer & transportation options currently

I chose to want to be a magnet student because I really love the school I go too and without any transportation I wouldn't be able to go

Our son is a member of the Japanese Language program. Having a language immersion option in a diverse environment was key to our decision.

Reputation of school and what is offered

Information provided on the website of the different pathways and ease of being able to find information

Conversations about the language magnet at SAIL and how it was like a family and the middle schoolers looking out for the elementary kids. The ability for immersion students to pick up a second language in middle school. How welcoming the school staff and pto people were.

Quality, challenging, supportive academic environment

We attended the school choice fair (not sure if that is the actual name of the event) where we were able to see on the handout all the high schools and all the magnet programs and talk with a few people at their booth. That was very informative bc we were coming from an independent school and did not know how to navigate the CMS system

Speaking to trusted pre-K and TK friends because they were also sending their children there as well as the area of focus of the magnet program; for us, it was language immersion starting at Kindergarten

With our middle school search, our tour of our 'neighborhood' school was disappointing. While a diverse school, it didn't seem equally diverse as far as classes. We found what we wanted at Randolph IB with a great education and exposure to a very diverse student population.

The "School Digger" website was very helpful. The Magnet tours / Magnet fairs helped us screen a lot of schools OUT. Word of mouth and parent testimonials really helped with the transition from elementary to middle and to high school; all within the CMS magnet programs.

The in-depth language immersion my children would experience.

School tour - it was so good that I knew on the spot that I wanted my students to go to the school.

Researching the themes

Tour of NW. Impressive facilities and diverse student body.

School Tour gave sense of environment/day to day

Asked for my children's input, took them to the schools tours and other activities during search.

La enseñanza y el lenguaje.

Temas de especialización

I knew my children needed to be challenged with more than the typical school offered. Language immersion gave us exactly what we needed.

We were told that there would be less kids per teacher and more personalized learning

Parent conversations

the school tour

No comment

Rápido y fácil

Referral or family friend Referral

Personal experiences of neighbors and friends

We always knew Collinswood was the option for us. As a Latin family, being able to share our language and culture with our child is a priority and we knew Collinswood was the right choice based on the experienced our family and friends have had.

Personal recommendation

Conversación con un familiar satisfecho y contento con la educación de su hija.

Starmount Elementary Administrative Staff were EXCELLENT

Combination of the school's proximity to our home, the reputation of the school, and direct testimonial feedback from a parent with children at Irwin all equally factored into our decision. But, the only reason we looked to a magnet was the very poor things we heard about our neighborhood public school Bruns. Ideally, there would be great equity across schools, and we could have confidently sent our daughter to Bruns, which is only one block away from our house.

Having a conversation with my child's TD instructor helped push me to apply to certain schools that she felt like would be beneficial to their continued academic growth

Family and friends

School zoning and transportation offerings... we would have driven to MPTS each way, but having the bus as an option in the Violet zone is a game changer for our family/work schedules

North East middle School

Apply.

A family member had their child enrolled in the Montessori program at Highland Mills. Their experience and the principal at the time, Terri Ropic, along with faculty solidified my decision in enrolling my children in the Montessori program.

N/a

Hearing the experiences of friends already in the program.

School tour

Geographical location/proximity- maintaining neighborhood school feel while obtaining magnet level instruction

NWSA was our only option for Fine Arts program for school

In person magnet info session at a library. (Back in 2018?)

Word of mouth. Reputation and school fit what one child needed, and has been life changing. Home school fits what other child needs.

Tours of schools.

NA

Student to teacher ratio. Access to sports. Language immersion. Good math and science programs. More focus on environment and farming.

The quality of the Open House and the passion that oozed from the families & staff. You could feel the love and joy when entering the school building. There was a student alongside an adult volunteer for each tour group helping to lead and answer questions. Our student guide was in 1st grade and I remember thinking to myself how mature she was and passionate about the school.

Sería que nos ayudarán más porque no todas las madres saben ablar inglés y tampoco pueden entenderlo

En el sitio web, comparar las escuelas de mi preferencia.

The school tour. Meeting the staff and getting the vibe of the environment was everything.

El buen nivel académico y el la lengua (inglés y español) Academic language

The school rate

My children are competitive with swimmers, and we moved to the state for the opportunity for them to swim for the school in the nation. It was imperative that they do a virtual learning program to support their athletic endeavors, as well as maintain relationships with their family, who lived in South Carolina. We were grateful for the opportunity to do a virtual program through the public school system.

Magnet school offerings that aligned with students aspirations

Excellent in school tour from staff and students.

The school tour. Interacting with other parents and hearing their shared experiences.

The language immersion program.

nothing, i explained everything

The in person parent's prospective night when many different cultures were highlighted and the diversity of our school was apparent

Una amiga me hablo

Student success stories from the school

There was a lady at the rental office helping us she knew my kids was smart and told me to apply. My kids graduated with 4.0 and 4.1

Diversity Score ratings

Decided to choose a school that will introduce my children to the Arts was very big my family and I. I want my children to be well-rounded.

Ser más fuerte con el English a los nuevos estudiantes que no saben el idioma

Word of mouth

Estrellas. Veo la calificación que tiene la escuela (si es una buena escuela)

Diversity, structure, location

Good

The audition and interview sealed the deal for us

I picked learning immersion because I know CMS standards are low and I wanted a challenging program; outside of one teacher it was not as challenging as I expected; the IB program does not require any effort and there is too many behavior issues and confusion with the district's curriculum; I'm considering charter or private school

All my children are in the gifted program and we don't own a car.. the only way they could reach their full potential is if transportation remains available and bus pickup is close to my house

El personal de la escuela en especial Miss López que siempre está dispuesta ayudar a las personas.

A middle school field trip to see a NWSA musical production led to my daughter's interest in attending the school for her high school years. I chaperoned and saw first hand the quality of the production.

This does not apply as we didn't apply to a magnet school. I did teach at North Mecklenburg HS and I will say the programs that are offered to students should be diversified. Automotive is okay but what about advance programs that are linked to the projected job market.

Me motivó buscar una escuela magnet porque mi hijo lo molestaban mucho en la escuela donde le correspondía, mi niña no tenía el nivel de lectura y escritura para el nivel que estaba.

Realizing that this is a lottery system and not based on achievement

Higher education to compete with the local private school in Charlotte mcglenberg

The program coordinator engagement and going above and beyond to assist me through the process until acceptance

NA

We looked at three magnet school options, as well as our homeschool options. The language option was an easy yes for us, because my mother speaks German, and we wanted our children to learn the language. The school tours, the teachers, and everything blew us away and let us know we were in the right place. Both of my children attended the K through eight language program and we have zero regrets. It was a fantastic experience for the kids and parents!

Quisiera inscribir a más hijos en una de las escuelas magnet pero no se cómo hacerlo

Make u work for it

School atmosphere

Impressive kids and engaged principal at school visit.

Magnet school have more activities for the students to get involved

Las recomendaciones de otros padres, son datos de valor.

Invest in all your public schools. Not just magnet school. Every kid deserves to have programs and opportunities that can help them be successful regardless of which school in the district they attend. INVEST IN ALL OF YOUR SCHOOLS. Kids can feel and notice when the district doesn't invest in them in the same way you invest in your magnet schools and that sends a very clear message. Invest in all your student and the future of Charlotte and its surrounding cities will excel in more ways than imagined.

School visits were most important to me, as it allowed us to discuss curriculum and expectations with teachers and administrators (particularly the Principal)

Word of mouth

I like the quality options available and the passionate and quality of the teachers was so great!

N/a

What helped us make a selection with seeing the evidence of what kids had learned in their time at a magnet school, that is projects that they had created and creative things they had made.

Definitely the school tour. I attended it unsure if it was the right program for my daughter and left feeling 100% certain it was a great choice. I think school tours are a hugely important component of making the decision and was grateful to the staff and parent volunteers that administered them.

Final selection was the friendliness of the teachers on the visit to kindergarten. It was very important to put my children in a friendly secure environment.

The conversations that I had with the women and men that would ultimately be my son's teachers at these magnet programs and the magnet program coordinators were key for me.

My sister

Transportation

The presentation during open house and tours of the school premises.

Me reservo .

Other families experiences + school tours

Per pupils spending at the school. All my research showed that the on consistent and key factor to high performing schools was the amount of per pupil spending.

Other parents who were apart of the presentation/tour at the school.

Pues tener faculty acceso para cambiar al estudiante a una de ellas gracias

Magnet fair

Recommendation from staff at current school who is familiar with my student and options available.

En una reunion.sobre escuelas del CMS

The experience of current students/families has been helpful to us

The lack of diversity in schools in West Charlotte my daughter was going to West Charlotte schools was like me going to school at new kent elementary back in sixty's we lived on wrong side bridge so 30 mile bus ride. being wight was the minority. magnet school was to keep from being transferred to a failed school and not to be forced to go to school as one of the 3 wight girls. West Charlotte is more mixed than that. Still considering options renting my home and moving to transfer systems it still a option being a minority is not acceptable in today race relations may end up being attacked due to race and has been.with stepping on feet in parks don't tell me black cannot be racis treat us well we will do same.

I can't recall

Porque son más estrictas

Website

The unique program offered and a friend's personal recommendation of the program.

En verdad me ayudo poco por que esa escuela donde ahora asiste mi hija es la que estaba disponible en ese momento por que mi hija quería asistir a otra donde la dejaron en lista de espera me disculpo por mi opinión personal

Me an dicho que las clases son más avanzadas, mi hija en su escuela sufre de bullying y que ella pudiera asistir a una escuela magnet sería maravilloso

No

Ninguna

Children learning experience and school report card.

The recent announcement by phone has brought awareness of the Magnet School options for me.

Social Media. The CMS district is so large that navigating to a specific school of interest can get confusing.

Su alto porcentaje academico, sus tipos de programas y la cercania al vecindario.

Principals' and councilors' passion about the school

Academic focus ... not work agenda

Test scores in the IB program

Interaction with school principal

I didn't search because I wasn't aware they existed. New to the area. Should be in info packet that goes to new families moving here.

First impressions with administration, teachers, and students because they are the people who interact with our children daily and can/will make a difference and have a lifetime impact on our children.

word of mouth works

Review and rating

Talking to former and current faculty members at multiple schools in the county

I very thankful

Talking to current students

The Fair was the best experience for us to determine a choice.

Conversation with staff at std school around options.

Transportation is a big factor

Fue recomendada por un familiar por que no sabíamos como inscribir a mis hijos

La ayuda del consejero y coordinador de la escuela y experiencia de conocidos

Recommendations from the principalS and people with children that have attended.

Demographic data Test score data

Phone and texting

High rating

The teacher turnover rate and the school academic performance on standardized test.

None

The transportation was for me very important at the time my daughter get accepted on her magnet school at that time transportation was provided, then 2 years later they change all that to express bus and that being a life change for me, because interfiere with my job schedule, I being doing miracles to make it work. The problem is I can't change my daughter to other school because the school close to me is really bad school with a terrible score and the magnet school she is currently is appropriate for her career path.

Actual conversations with parents of students who'd already attended or were presently attending the school were critical to our decision.

I made my final selection, but CMS didn't agree with me. So my kid went to her neighborhood elementary school - a magnet, by the way, but she had no tag to get her to the magnet middle school, which everyone uses to bypass the neighborhood middle school. Covid screwed up middle school anyway, but she would have been separated from all of her friends anyway because they all had tags. Putting her in private school was an easy choice. Now she's back in high school, and all of the magnet middle schoolers bypassed the magnet high school to come back to the neighborhood high school. (Tell me again how these feeder patterns work and how compelling it is to continue your magnet program from K-12?)

Na

Direct communication from teachers at that specific school.

NA

Touring NAWL was the big selling point- what we saw was amazing. What we didn't know was how hit-or-miss the program actually is.

Speaking with teachers

School tour and clear communication about the full track options through high school

Talking to a friend who had a child at my school.

None

Speaking with the Principal's at the schools and their reputation and tenure was our deciding factor. They set the tone for the rest of the staff.

La zona o ubicación de la escuela y por el programa bilingüe

It was the only one in my area. Need more options

We knew we wanted our daughter to go to an immersion school so we specifically searched for one prior to moving to Charlotte. We would not have known about S.A.I.L. if we had not actively searched for it, and a lot of parents we speak to are unaware of this great school/program. CMS needs to promote its magnet schools better.

Muy fácil todo

Teacher reference.

The principal has been at the school for many years and shared she would stay until she retires. Many staff members have been there for 10+ years. Some staff members were students and returned to teach there.

Income diversity!!

School ratings and recommendations from friends

I look at school test score ratings to see where it falls.

Program theme.

When I went to the school, I saw children happy, they loved their teachers and that made a difference for me

En si lo que me ayudó fue una amistad en particular que me explicó cómo podría participar en la lotería para que mi niñas estuvieran en la escuela magnet pero al entrar en la página es algo complicado porque lo confunden y lo que me gustaría mucho es que uniera personal en las escuelas magnet personas que hablen español

Redes sociales

A good rating

Hasta ahorita no tengo ninguna experiencia

more simpler/straight forward explanation of the two steps: 1) apply for ID 2) use ID to apply for magnet programs

The test scores (found online) and awards the school received and the tour helped make the decision (Piedmont Middle)

Majority only offer stem and nothing else

School's grades, diversity, community's opinion

Finding programs that meet needs

Recommendation from Neighbours and friends

Specialized Program - which I believe will help my child with essential skills for the future.

The pathways offered by the school

Mi dato particular sería la experiencia que tuvo un familiar en este programa y que me incentivo a yo querer una escuela magnet para mis hijos

For High School: There was a clear disinterest in allowing my student to gain additional(beyond grade level) academic opportunities from the Arts themed program where my student was in Middle School and had been accepted for High School. This was very frustrating and disheartening for my student and for me as a parent. Ultimately, the decision was made to leave the Art program and enter the lottery for the STEM program, to be able to access more academically challenging and expanded academic offerings that were not ONLY for Art centered classes.

Web research

None.

N/A

Hearing the principal speak at an open house.

The ability to send my child to a better school than what is offered within my school district.

The theme that aligns with my child future goals

Ease of open house dates/times

Recommendation from a teacher

My oldest son went to Tuckaseegee Elementary where he enjoyed learning, and being a student there. My youngest son will be attending for the Fall for Kindergarten.

CMS website

no

When I went on the school tour for my sons middle school, I noticed how diverse the school was and how the principal seemed proud of the languages and countries that were reflected at her school. We had recently relocated back to the states from living in the middle east and this was extremely important to us.

The actual school tour and experience meeting the staff along with feedback from the parents of current students helped tremendously in our decision.

Explain what is a magnet school and what they offer that other schools don't. We are at a magnet school but I have no idea what a typical elementary school would offer. My kids are learning the same things that my mom teaches in a traditional primary school in England so to me everything they are learning is what they should be learning. This is our home school.

Grade of the school was very important. Testing information

We were really impressed with the quality of teachers and the opportunities within the IB program at East Meck, along with the stability of leadership.

idk

I really don't know

Conversations with teachers at the School and neighbors

idk

Just make a cool flyer and pass them out at a Walmart or something out front while selling or giving out waters or wrist bands. The Flyer part is important and you have to ask the question "have you ever scanned a qr code before" and if your a baddie then the guys will scan the qr code and possibly sign their sons up. Hence, send a baddie to do the work. It doesn't have to be Walmart guys. Any place where the parents go is good. You are going to need a place with a huge amount of foot traffic.

idk

none

A trusted teacher that we knew from Barnette Elementary. Sadly our experience at NAWL was terrible. I wouldn't recommend it to who're parents. I felt like they needed bodies to get the school going and the kids who attended did not care about academics. My daughter was excited to begin learning French in 7th grade. Unfortunately there was a kid who she did not like- did not want to be friends with and he managed to turn all the African American kids against her- to the point where she hated going to school and now totally mistrusts people and has had gastrointestinal issues and has been to therapy. Just because it's a magnet does not make the bullying or the problems go away because it is still cms and there is not enough done to actually punish kids who are awful in our schools. It's sad. She loved the teachers but I feel the admin let us down totally.

My oldest daughter attended Dorothy JVaughn. The principal and staff were very patient and supportive of the students and parents.

En mi caso que mi hijo .. pudiera aprender dos idiomas .. y que son menos alumnos de cada grado y así los maestros y personal de la escuela los pueden conocer mejor

Reference / word of mouth from a parent of a current student.

NWSA had an excellent reputation

The concern about school boundaries and changes our neighborhood school. Magnet would least provide security.

Meeting the principal at Highland Mill Montessori (Miss Maria—this was a long time ago)

Connecting students' interests to theme-based learning experiences.

The schools tours are vital. At least with language immersion. Watching the classes in person is amazing and what sells the program. However, many people never even hear about the programs in the first place to know to sign up for a school tour. Better marketing must be done to get the info out there. Maybe make professional videos of a shortened sample tour - seeing the classrooms in action. Kindergarten students learning in their immersion language and singing songs, class work, etc. And have a FAQ segment with principal and/or staff and/parents. Also hearing about the middle school sports and transportation issues is a big impact on decision making (in a negative way).

Website

The in-person tour at Irwin Middle School. Students and teachers were engaged, and all the right things were happening.

Yo conocí la escuela magnet de mi hija por medio de familiares, sus hijos llevaban buenas notas y dominaban el idioma elegido. A base de la experiencia de ellos y la búsqueda de información en páginas sociales de la escuela, decidimos que era una buena opción de vida académica para mi hija.

Visiting the open house for Piedmont Middle School was the deciding factor. Our child loved the school and the teachers they met.

I wish the assigned non-magnet school didn't have such a terrible reputation and so terribly overcrowded that people didn't feel like they failed their kids if they didn't get into the magnet they wanted. Or have to physically sell their home to move.

Events

I was new to the district and was trying to navigate the schools system to determine the best school to send my students. I had an opportunity to speak to my supervisor who informed me about the different magnet options. My supervisor got me in touch with someone in the magnet office that walked me through the process and ensured that I completed the application correctly. Without that support I would not have been successful in navigating nor understanding how to complete the process online.

Conversation with my wife about the school's in question's make up . The academic performance and academic opportunities seemed to fit what we were looking for. Athletically it was mixed from a sporting perspective., Overall she would have been of a demographic that made up less than 15 percent of the school population. After doing that in middle school, I wanted her to have a more balanced experience.

Que tuviera buenos comentarios en lo académico...

Extra college credits and the rating of the school.

La manera de aprender aplicar para el programa es muy sencilla y fácil

Internet

The type of magnet school offered.

Oh porque ví que enseñan medicina ,y mi sueño es que mi hija se tan solo 6 años sea médico ,ya que yo no lo pude lograr en mi país natal

New building for Collinswood

Poor neighborhood school reputation

We had no other choice. Our home schools are critically underperforming and we needed to find magnet programs that offered opportunity for our children.

The CMS website is confusing

Meeting with the Principal helped us decide as well as touring the school and seeing the classrooms and seeing the students show off their leadership skills.

My child's assigned school being a high performance school was the most important deciding factor.

I entered CMS mid year and availability (or lack of) was the major determining factor in our decision of where to apply.

Word of mouth/Other Parents experiences at that particular school

Touring the schools with my child, witnessing the environment and learning at each school. Then comparing them with data to decide which schools to apply for.

Great !

Teachers from the school that live in our community. It's nice to know they value the school enough to teach there and have their children attend. The middle school tour and info session we attended showcased work review & tutoring options that student Could sign up for voluntarily. I thought that was amazing to teach accountability for getting the help that's available with ease.

Porque me ayudo mucho que estudiarán virtualmente

Her current school counselor was very supportive.

Student scores

That there was a better chance to be accepted in a school in our transportation so it's easier to select one of those as first choice.

The entire staff at Merancas was very welcoming during the school tour and you can tell that they're invested in the success of each student. Ms. Tanner and Ms. Durr ARE AMAZING!!!!

Las sugerencias de los maestros actuales de mi hija sobre su capacidad intelectual y su importancia de tener que desarrollarse en una escuela magnet .

For my high school student, I looked for college readiness opportunities, or certifications they could graduate with, skills for job experience

Got to be well secured for students safety and free from illegal drugs on campus

Referrals from other parents.

Llame a un programa pero duro en responder así que medio me informaron en la escuela y eso se iso no ayudaron mucho..

n/A

the school tour made the decision

I was very impressed with the language learning and component of our school. We WERE thriving, but have been very disappointed in CMS as a whole and how their poor decisions have negatively impacted our school through the years. I've pulled one child out and still have one there, but am waiting to see if we'll keep him there or not.

There is not one factor, but a combination of factors. The school was close enough to my home to feel like a neighborhood school, the program was rigorous enough that I knew my children would get a good education, the school felt like a community and has since then, and it was diverse. Diversity is especially important because the world is diverse and I wanted them to attend a school where they would meet all kinds of people because I wanted them to learn how to be friends and empathize and have compassion for all kinds of people and especially people who are different from them. I did not want them to grow up in a school where they thought everybody was like them and their family.

The school tour and clear explanation of curriculum done by the Montessori schools. Could not understand the curriculum differences when we toured the traditional (Elizabeth traditional magnet) schools.

No tengo ninguna experiencia es el primer ciclo escolar que cursan mis hijos

Meraris B L

Touring the school. Their social media page. The principals background and experience. The exposure of different languages.

Someone told me their children attended a Spanish language immersion school so I looked into the options

Speaking to a teach about how they felt about the school and if they would send their kids there.

Seeing videos of CMS students fluent in languages other than English.

Speaking with a staff member directly about the program offering

We had limited options because of availability and we were totally unaware of the lottery process so missed the deadline. We are refugees and did not understand this. In our home country all schools are equal. Also it does not help to 'grade' the schools as this May or May not be relavent to actually how good the school is.

Reputation of principal and school.

Mas oportunidad de diferntes idiomas

After researching the schools stats and curriculum, tutoring the school with my children made them at ease and they felt comfortable with the school and the process of it all went smoothly.

I looked for the amount of attendance, diversity, & was transportation easy to get to from work & home.

Our son was looking for smaller class sizes, with less distractions.

STEM Programs

Learning the ratio of students that graduated and went to college from the high school.

Website data

My family currently attends Winget Park as we are districted for that school and we wanted our 5th grader to be able to continue his journey in a magnet program because the experience at Winget has been so wonderful. The 5th grade teachers at Winget Park were very insightful on making this decision and the transition for my 5th grader and learning about Middle School has been phenomenal.

Transportation provision affording my children to receive a quality education experience away from our failing neighborhood school

Word of mouth. Speaking with existing parents about their experience has helped me tremendously.

Reputation of the school, whether it was available online or word of mouth

The staff had limited resources and help with events hosted in their school.

As soon as I saw the school and how it tested because they were more worried about diversity than performance I knew CMS as a whole sucked

I would get involved if I knew about them. Explain all details of everything like it's the very first time you said it and engage parents and kids with real world communications to learn more.

My experiences of satisfaction stemmed from being a parent of older children who attended the school & I was very padded with the experience. I was looking forward to my older children being a part of that same environment.

Lack of options within transportation zone

Understanding where the magnate schools are in the the county, from a map. It caused me to go back to my neighborhood school as my only option at CMS

Since we moved to CMS after the deadline for Kindergarten and the only magnet school near us is a foreign language school we were told we would not be eligible. In addition there was no transportation.

I had a personal relationship with the principal whom I hold in the highest esteem. She was able to speak to the school's global mission as well as their focus on child-centered learning, which was a natural fit for our family.

Recommendations from other parents whose children already attend

Again my daughter is not in a man's school

Yo me enteré por otro padre de familia

Talking to parents of kids that already were in that particular school and their feedback and experiences.

Algunas escuelas magnet son bilingües eso para mis hijos es muy beneficioso ya que en casa tiene español y en la escuela también en conjunto con el Inglés

Talking to CMS officials at every level, I realize how many useless people are at CMS at every level

N/a

The amount of options in the area is important. For example, there should be multiple high school options that may not be in the area of which you live.

How happy current students and parents were with the school.

Por una yamada telefónica Ooh por mensaje de texto

I don't know I don't even apply for that. I don't even go to school on the United States. I just learn English on adult school

Visiting the schools and engaging with the remarkable teachers

I see how my friend kids way advance in the there school and I had the ability to attend Florida megnat school I like how structured Andries involving and how the kids are excited to go to school less school dram

Knowledge staff who ACTUALLY cares!

At the moment it was time for my kid to start kindergarten I was living in an area that had bad school reputation. Two of my friends told me about the lottery option and magnet school. I was very amazed to see the quality of education that magnet schools offer and that my kid could possibly be able to attend for the whole elementary school and possibly more years later in her life. I am bilingual and thinking about the possibility for my kid to be able to be trilingual without me having to spend extra money in expensive tutoring classes or programs and she could be able to learn not only academics but also another language at the same time was like a dream and that's what drove me to apply to Waddell not known as SAIL. We absolutely love it! It was a life changing and the best decision so far.

Yo elegí la escuela de mi hija, porque ahí tenía la oportunidad de manejar el Español e Inglés, he visto muchos niños Latinos que no hablan bien el español y yo no quería eso para mis hijos.

Talking to people with children at the school

I don't know yet

no pude inscribir ami hijo porque estan con la hermana menor en la misma escuela y soy padre soltero no puedo viajar a dos distancias distintas

It liked me, because is good that my children are in a great enviroment as SAIL, I love that my children are safe in comparation with other schools.

N/A

It was helpfubgir me to select a school that provided a career path option.

Connecting the specific programs to how they will benefit my child as an adult.

Limited locations away from MY neighborhood, no transportation

N/A

Me recomendaron la escuela, la investigue y tenía muy buenas receñas.

Grade of school, Principal, curriculum, school tour

Recommendation of friend

No seleccioné o busqué una porque es muy difícil

I had excellent tours at Park Road Montessori, Waddell Language/SAIL Academies, and South Mecklenburg High Schools.

Academic rigor

The theme of the school is so important. If a school can hone in on that and build a school culture then parents and students will see their future opportunities

Meeting the other families that were going with us.

Desarrollo físico y mental

Ami me dijo una amiga que la mejores escuelas eran las magnet

The people: the magnet office was extremely helpful, the staff at the school was helpful, the people at the fairs and back to school nights were helpful.

I have not encountered any offers... I have heard Magnet schools offers elevated education at a rather faster rate

strong leadership in the school as well as high achievement

The prospective student zoom session offered by the principal at SAIL. Dr. Eybl was very informative and very knowledgeable and even spoke several of the languages offered at SAIL. We were impressed and confident that our child would receive a great education at South Academy of International Languages.

Que son más disciplinados con los estudiantes y les exigen más. Me da un mejor aprendizaje

We chose SGE for several reasons but what helped us make our final selection was the understanding that students in SGE's magnet program had a continuation guarantee to Piedmont's IB program.

Tratan a todos por igual

It would be my past favorable experience as a student in the magnet program.

-

I acted out on pure faith bc I didn't have all the resources I just knew what my daughter's interest was & no one at the school assured me I was making the best decision for my child.

Considering I don't know the difference between a magnet school or a charter school, or how they vary, or why someone would choose one over a neighborhood school, perhaps providing the information on the very basis of it

Meeting with Principal and tour at PRM.

Mi hija participo en 5 grado pero no fue aceptada pero como madre si me gustaría que participe en una

Siempre escuché q eran muy buenas por enseñarles inglés e Español años niños

The promotion of computer science as the concentration.

I wanted my daughter to attend North West School for dance, so she can pursue her dream to be a dancer. So I was happy about my final selection even though she did not get selected.

I spoke with my student's 5th grade music teacher and he suggested she continue education to play in orchestra because he was impressed with her skills

The programs near us are worthless. Even if I thought foreign language was worthy of a fully immersive schooling experience, they don't even have SPANISH??? Who comes up with this??

A mis hijas les gusta mucho el arte buscaba algo para que ellas aprendan más

Inclusivity

I strongly believe in and support most aspects of Montessori education, including practical life skills and a sense of community. As a parent of a neurodivergent child, I do have to say that teachers and other personnel would benefit from up-to-date continuing education about teaching and supporting neurodivergent/dually exceptional children—especially from the perspective of neurodivergent students and adults who were in the school system.

Making it known that they exist and are an option would be a first step.

When I scheduled a tour of one particular magnet, I was provided with a tour directly by the assistant principal who personally walked me through the school, took time to answer my questions, and introduced me to several teachers, staff and the Principal. This sold me.

Language immersion taught by native speakers.

Interactions with principal Carol Rodd when she was at Huntingtowne Farms. Then she left right before we started :(

Courses offered and continuation options were a major consideration. South Mecklenburg High School is where our son will attend and we're impressed by the diversity and strength of AP courses offered along with the diversity of the school make up itself.

Pathways to higher education

Parents because the process was hard and discouraged people

School tour

Video posted on school website virtual tour

The tour and interaction with the students

Watching my high-performing kids be stuck in classes with low-performers and weak teachers year after year. The system protects itself. For shame.

Her acceptance letter after her audition.

An opportunity to visit an active classroom with students was the most critical factor

Bus information from previously being an employee and getting admin confirmation that it had not changed or gotten any better

The number of open teacher positions and the turnover rate of teachers.

Stop treating the kids like they are animals and they won't act like animals. 1 counselor for 400 kids is a joke

NA

Electives I love have the option to do it all year.

The staff at Collinswood clearly had a vested I retest in my child

My kids future job opportunities

Friends asking ..

My own experience as a Magnet student, I think CMS should be reaching out to former Magnet students especially the ones like me that finished the program and decided to put their own children in the same program.

Quiero que mi hija baya a un escuela magnet

Lo increíble le que aunque que tiene facilidades para ayudarle a uno con el idioma

I wish I would have known about language immersion when my kids were young.

Sería los resultados en grupo y en singular por qué eso quiere decir que la escuela está enfocada en el aprendizaje del alumno

There were several factors that contributed to my decision, but I'd say the in-person tour was a game changer. So much so that after visiting my 2nd choice, I later wished I had made it my first. We got a chance to really get a feel of the school. To interact with the staff and some current students. I enjoyed how thorough the school displayed the programs and gave us a chance to get honest feedback from the students and staff.

The old principal at Randolph helped us chose the school. He was warm and welcoming.

The report about the number of students who actually got in the previous year

We chose SGE because we lived in the neighborhood. As we watched our son grow, we realized he needs MORE in academics. He's bored even in TD. We were excited thinking he could go to Piedmont or even Randolph. But we are learning they have extensive waitlists every year. We cannot afford Private. Moving is not an option.

Distance to my home

Word of mouth and other's experiences are what led me to each magnet program that my children attended.

An IB seat allows me choice within the district. My child may be zoned for JMA and North Meck but we can apply to other IB middle and high schools.

Extra curricular activities

open house

word of mouth

Take the best rated magnet schools in NC and other states and apply what was successful for that particular magnet school.

In choosing Shamrock Gardens li/td magnet program, we had several priorities: a local school (school friends in the surrounding local neighborhoods), diversity of the student body, and the understanding that we would have an increased access to Piedmont Middle school (with both magnet status and li/td placement).

Interaction with staff and teachers at magnet events.

Location

School ranking websites

Social media and friends

Not having any idea of the Magnet School as an option.

The tour was great at chantilly

I wanted my kids all at the same school.

The tour and in person magnet schools events

The information is very poor and also the comparison between a magnet school, charter school and private school will help too.

My girls wanted to continue in school from home post Covid. With the virtual school that is possible. I have 2 girls who have been in the virtual school - and they love it. I love that I am able to sit "in class," and hear what they are learning. I'm able to see the curriculum as their books are sent home with us. After viewing some of it, I presented concerns that I had about it directly to the teacher. She reassured me that though it was in the curriculum- what I was concerned about would not be taught. I've been thrilled with the program and the quality of teachers therein.

Google research

Word of mouth

North Academy tour. It was amazing.

It was the diversity of the school and the way my black boys were treated in a positive manner.

I'm in the tech industry and it's the future I want that for my children although I also wanted them to be multi/lingual

School tour during school hours

Direct engagement with the school staff at school tours or magnet fair events.

School Performance

More diverse schools seem to have better overall scores.

The school tour and meeting teachers was huge, as was knowing a teacher at the school well and knowing he was sending his son to the school.

In my experience there was ABSOLUTELY NOTHING that I found helpful. Why??? Relevant information for the Magnet programs are always sent out late. Ironically, the postmark or letterhead shows a date created about 2 weeks prior even though the actual physical mailings never make it to you in a reasonable amount of time, Then you have to rush in making a selection before the deadline.

A Magnet School that prepares Students for College or Blue Collar Skill Workers

Open houses- seeing the school in person and hearing about what they offer. Getting the vibe of the school

Neutral

No

The participation and care the principal showed the interest first impression to help out the students or the school and how involve he was in school activities.

La nesecodad de que mi hijo estudoe

Facebook posts from PTA members/parents sharing positive experiences at their school. I trusted these women and their experiences, and we are extremely happy with our teachers and our school community.

My husband knew of people at our church that went to Elizabeth Traditional. We did our research and decided this was the best school for us. After the school tours, we made Elizabeth Traditional our first choice.

Hearing the student experience

no fue facil

Reputation, transportation and conversation with friends.

I was looking for a school that had flexibility that would allow a gifted child to earn at their own pace. The Montessori (first choice) and LI/TD programs gave the best chance of this. By the way, this survey is way too long. I expect that many drop out without finishing.

The school tour

The in-school tour.

The fact that this school really invests into the character the child not just the skills or talents.

School tours and interacting with the teachers directly

Buen conocimiento

School tours/presentations and asking questions of the staff/principal/teachers to get an overall impression of the school, what they're invested in, how they pour into the students, what they think really matters and how they perceive student/parent engagement.

The ability to visit the schools via tours to get a feel for the school and the area surrounding the school.

My own experience in IB and wanting my kids to do it

Excellent staff members!

The school tour was informative

I had a conversation with a former student in a magnet program, I was so excited and moved about how they had such a great experience and support with staff and resources.

The Fair at West Mecklenburg was helpful, but it was not equipped to handle the number of people attending. There is a huge demand, do a bigger venue or more dates may be needed.

The principal and magnet coordinator at the time when we toured were the biggest deciding factor in sending our children to McClintock.

School tour

My daughter is an American-born Chinese. She was in a Jewish preschool, and she felt self-doubt since she was not Jewish. So I decided to send her to a Chinese program, this did help her to find her own identity. Other than that, I was disappointed to notice that many American-born Chinese students can't speak Chinese anymore, which made me feel it is the correct choice to send my daughter to SAIL, a Chinese program. However, even though the Chinese community did care about their language very much, this program is not popular among the Chinese community, since it is too far away from Ballantyne/Matthew/Waxhaw, and it is not built based on Chinese culture(encouraging hard-working, to excel in the academy) which makes new charter school Telra Institute(location and culture) and Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy(culture) much more popular choices among Chinese Community.

International curriculum

n/a