

Unleashing Educational Excellence: The Time is Now

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has made significant strides toward improving student achievement. Our students outperformed their peers in other urban schools on the National Assessment of Educational Progress in math and reading. Average SAT scores and the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses are on the rise. And our graduation rates rose to a record high of 81 percent last year. But there is more we must do to build on these positive trends and prepare every child, every day, for a better tomorrow. It is essential that we accelerate the level of investment in our students. Average per-pupil spending in North Carolina has dropped to 48th nationally. The 2014-15 Operating Budget Recommendation seeks nearly \$403 million in county funds -- +\$46.2 million from last year -- to provide the educational supports our students, staff and community need and deserve. Here are the four critical needs the county budget request would support:

A minimum three percent raise for CMS employees

\$26.7
million

Did you know?

- **59%** of CMS employees earn less than a Mecklenburg County living wage and **83%** reside and pay taxes in Mecklenburg County.
- NC ranks **46th** nationally for average teacher pay – that's lower than all NC neighboring states. This makes it harder to retain and attract the best teachers for CMS.
- CMS employees teachers have received just **one** raise in the last five years - 3% in 2012.
- NC teacher salaries have decreased **15%** since 2002-2003 when adjusted for inflation.



\$3.5
million



Increased academic choice and personalization

Did you know?

- Greater access to high-demand magnets and programs is a top priority for CMS families and students.
- CMS is adding several new academic options for 2014-15 and plans to begin the development of digital portfolios for each student to help further personalize learning and instruction.

More psychologists, counselors and social workers for our schools and students

\$3.7
million

Did you know?

- The American School Counselor Association recommends one counselor for every 250 students. CMS counselors serve two to three times that many students.
- The National Association of School Psychologists recommends one school psychologist for every 1,000 students. CMS school psychologists serve more than three times the recommended caseload.



Intensive literacy training for teachers to help nurture strong readers by third grade

\$1.2
million

Did you know?

- Learning to read by the end of third grade is a key gateway to future success.
- Children who are not strong readers by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school.
- The training would complement plans to add new Pre-K classes, summer reading programs for young learners and more literacy materials in classrooms.

How to Support the Budget Recommendation

While the CMS 2014-15 Operating Budget Recommendation includes a request for county funding, state funding remains a key factor in our total budget. CMS will continue to advocate with state legislators for funding to make CMS employee salaries more competitive nationally and with local officials to make them more competitive within North Carolina. If you support CMS' budget proposal, let your voice be heard. Write letters, call and send emails to the people who will vote on the budget. Share your preferences and your personal stories about why the budget matters to you. Remember to be polite, ask for their support and thank them for their consideration.

N.C. Senate

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