

# CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

<b>POLICY</b> School Accountability System	<b>CMS/NEPN Code:</b> AE
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The mission of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is to maximize academic achievement by every student in every school. The Board holds itself accountable for building and maintaining high performing organizations that ensure all students will successfully acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for success.<sup>1</sup>

Further, as stated in Board Policy IKF, "Graduation Requirements," the Board intends that CMS graduates "should be prepared to be productive members of society and to pursue educational or employment opportunities."

## I. District Wide School Accountability System

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### A. General Parameters

In order to exercise oversight and ensure that the goals set forth above are attainable by every CMS student, the Board will institute and maintain a district wide school accountability system that is rigorous, fair, difficult to manipulate, easy to understand and describe, and designed with the purpose of holding all schools and their staffs accountable for student achievement results and success in meeting other operational performance goals. The accountability system shall be concise and simple so that it may be easily understood by the general public. The Board will establish standards and schools and their staffs will be rated on how well they achieve those standards, as indicated by their performance on a variety of measures. Ratings will be reported to the Board and publicized to the community on a yearly

<sup>1</sup> These principles are stated in the "CMS Board of Education Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs and Commitments," adopted by the Board of Education on February 14, 2006. To put into place the structures necessary to achieve this goal, on February 14, 2006, the Board adopted a Theory of Action for Change that called for significant redesign of all district systems so as to provide a stable, long-term framework for improving student achievement in CMS. "Accountability," defined as "holding people responsible for meeting standards," was one of the elements identified under the broader heading of "Managed Performance/Empowerment."

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or more frequent basis. In addition, schools and their staffs will be rewarded or sanctioned based upon their ratings.

## B. Key Components

To implement the accountability system, the Superintendent is charged with developing and, after Board approval, implementing an accountability system consisting of three key components, described in further detail below:

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- School performance classification system
- Program of rewards and sanctions
- Communications plan

### 1. School Performance Classification System

The school performance classification system shall be a reliable measure of how students at each CMS school perform against appropriate benchmark academic standards and how each school meets other performance and operational goals. The classification system must also measure each school's progress towards meeting all standards. The ratings within the classification system will be based on a combination of numerous criteria.<sup>2</sup>

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### 2. Rewards and Sanctions

Schools and staffs that achieve high levels in the classification system shall be recognized and rewarded. Rewards may include teacher and staff bonuses, pay-for-performance, salary differentiation, increased site-level freedom, and flexibility in certain aspects of the instructional program and school operations. Schools, principals, and teachers that do not achieve a rating deemed to be acceptable shall be sanctioned in a variety of ways,

<sup>2</sup> The criteria shall be aligned with the CMS "data dashboard," described in detail in Policy AEC.

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which may include loss of site-level freedom and flexibility in their job duties that may have been earned previously. There must also be a process to provide guidance and assistance to schools that do not achieve an acceptable rating, including directions for developing and implementing plans for addressing the areas for which the ratings are not acceptable.

### 3. Communications Plan

An effective communications plan shall inform and educate employees, students, parents, and the community about the accountability system and provide assurance to the Board that the school performance classification system criteria are widely disseminated through the district and the community.

## II. **Timeline for Development; Adoption by Board of Education**

The Board intends for the accountability system to be operational for the 2007-2008 school year. For the first year following the adoption of this policy, the Superintendent will report to the Board on a quarterly basis regarding the progress in developing the school performance classification system and in accomplishing the other tasks necessary for the successful implementation of the accountability system. Upon completion, the Superintendent shall present the finalized school performance classification system to the Board for adoption as an Exhibit to this policy.

## III. **Timeline for Board Oversight**

The accountability system shall be piloted during the 2006-2007 school year. At the end of that school year, the Superintendent shall report to the Board regarding each school's performance according to the classification system. No rewards or sanctions shall be imposed. Beginning with data

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from the 2007-2008 school year and on an annual basis thereafter, the Superintendent shall report to the Board regarding each school's performance according to the classification system, the awarding of any rewards or imposition of sanctions, and the status of district and school plans for addressing the areas for which the ratings are not acceptable.

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After the accountability system has been operational for two full school years, the Superintendent will provide the Board with an evaluation of whether or not the accountability system is contributing to increased levels of student achievement throughout CMS. The Board may choose to evaluate the overall success of the program at that time or may choose to do so at a later time. In any event, after the Board has been presented with no more than five years of school performance reports, the Board will evaluate the effectiveness of the system and whether it should be continued in its current format or modified. If the Board decides to continue the accountability system, in its current or modified format, it will also establish a timeline for further evaluations of the program's effectiveness.

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