



EDUCATION MATTERS

MeckEd Impact Report **2009**



Mecklenburg
Citizens
for
Public
Education

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This has been a year of vexing challenges and signs of progress for our public school system. CMS schools were hit with record budget cuts and reductions due to decreased tax revenues. As the School Administration and Board worked to find best possible solutions to worst possible times, CMS teachers and students continued to teach and learn with positive results. In December 2009, five newly elected School Board members will take office at the same time the Superintendent is announcing a bold Pay for Performance plan for all CMS employees to move more students forward with stronger academic gains. A lot is at stake.

MeckEd has been working hard in 2009 to support our public schools by raising more than \$3 million dollars to date for the School Leadership Fund which supports strategic leadership initiatives within and for CMS. Over 1,220 people attended MeckEd events designed to inform and strengthen our community's investment in our public schools. Eleven of the 19 School Board candidates came to our School Board Leadership Workshops prior to announcing their candidacy. MeckEd has engaged more than 35 senior executives to work on targeted advisory groups or projects for our public schools. We have provided historical information to reporters, donors, and community leaders about the history of housing patterns and school assignment that can inform and enlighten present-day discussions. We can all be proud of the progress and changes that have occurred and that are planned for our schools. We can all share responsibility for the challenges of poverty, low-achieving students, preventing dropouts, and improving measurable academic success for all students.

MeckEd is proud to be a community leader, advocating for strong schools and providing reliable information to inform our citizens as they vote and decide what matters for this community.

To make every school a strong school, we believe it will take:

- Strong school funding
- Excellent teachers
- Strong principals
- School Boards (policies, strategies, and political will)
- Parental involvement and leadership
- Leaders and community will

To MeckEd, that's what matters.



Krista Tillman
Chair, Board of Directors



Kathy Ridge
President and Executive Director



Our Work-2009

Our goal is to encourage our community to be informed and interested in public education and CMS, involved with School Board representatives, motivated to take informed positions on issues facing CMS, and ready to support our schools financially.

► STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP OF OUR SCHOOLS

Sponsored Potential School Board Candidate Workshops.

More than 100 people attended four workshops we conducted for potential School Board candidates. Eleven of the 19 candidates attended one or more of the workshops.

Sponsored Candidate Debates.

Sponsored five School Board candidate debates in the five uncontested districts. Partnered with WTVI and the League of Women Voters to film school board candidate videos and profiles.

► ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Provided Community Forums.

More than 400 people attended three forums on global education competitiveness and the state of our schools.

1. **Community Forum on Student Competitiveness** (January 2009) With Rep. Becky Carney, North Carolina House of Representatives, as keynote speaker we discussed the ability of our students to compete others worldwide.
2. **Education Forum** (April 2009) featured Leonard Pitts, Pulitzer Prize winning national columnist and author.
3. **Workplace Forum at Duke Energy** (August 2009) to inform its employees about issues impacting education and opportunities for involvement.

Co-Sponsored CMS History Tours. Conducted three CMS history tours in partnership with the Levine Museum of the New South for the media, educators, and community leaders.

► BUILDING LEADERS' AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

- Raised financial support for key CMS initiatives through The School Leadership Fund
- Developed a comparative snapshot of CMS progress with other regional and national school districts
- Convened business round tables with corporate executives and managers to talk with CMS senior leaders about planning and budgeting matters.
- Facilitated a community conversation about the Harlem Children's Zone and potential implications for Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
- Served as a resource to local media on public education issues and current events including appearances on WFAE's "Charlotte Talks", and WBT's "Morning News", and articles in *Charlotte Viewpoint* and the *Charlotte Observer*.
- Offered accessible information about best practices in public education and national research through expanded development of MeckEd's social media.

MeckEd 2009 Programs and Operating Budget

Projected Expenses	\$542,501*
Number of staff	3.5 FTE (full time equivalent)

* MeckEd made a 25% reduction in its 2009 approved program and operating budget. The MeckEd 2008 audit and 990 tax forms are on the MeckEd website (www.mecked.org).

► **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FUND**

In partnership with the private sector and civic leaders, the School Leadership Fund provides support for the following four initiatives.

1. **New Leaders for New Schools**

NLNS creates a pipeline of leaders to become principals through a rigorous year-long training program.

In 2009, NLNS hired nine New Leaders who completed the Summer Foundations training with New Leaders across the county.

NLNS has launched the recruitment process for second cohort, with 200 leads through October. By 2011, NLNS will place 50 New Leaders as principals in Charlotte's highest-needs schools.

2. **Leaders for Tomorrow**

This program provides CMS-customized developmental training for future assistant principals in partnership between CMS and Winthrop University. The program is tailored to CMS requirements and will create a pipeline of senior administrators and school-based leaders. CMS will identify 25 educators annually who are preparing for assistant principal certification through the program.

3. **Parent University**

Parent University is a community collaborative led by CMS to help parents become full partners in their children's education. CMS partners with community agencies and organizations to offer courses, family events and activities that will equip families with new or additional skills, knowledge, resources and confidence. Parent University offers parents, grandparents and caregivers a chance to learn how to help their children thrive and achieve in our schools.

4. **Professional Development for CMS Leaders**

MeckEd sponsored a session with New York Times columnist and Pulitzer Prize winning author Thomas Friedman for CMS executive leaders.

MeckEd involved business leaders to CMS' annual professional development conference in May. For example, three Target Store executive managers co-presented a workshop for about 60 principals who attended two 90-minute sessions, called "Business as Unusual." The session focused on leading and energizing staff through tough economic times using applicable human resource management strategies.

School Leadership Fund (2008-2010)

Raised (through November 2009)	\$3.0 million
Expenses (projected through December 2009)	\$2.2 million
Projected 2010 Expenses	\$1.4 million



CMS Superintendent Dr. Peter C. Gorman and New Leaders for New Schools CEO Jon Schnur announced in 2008 that following a year-long, national competition, the New Leaders Board of Directors selected Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools as its newest partner. CMS Principal Darius Adamson, NLNS Charlotte Executive Director Eric Guckian, CMS Chief Academic Officer Ann Blakeney Clark, and University of North Carolina President Erskine Bowles spoke at the press conference.

KEY FACTS

Total number of schools	-----	176
Total number of 2009 graduates	-----	6,635
Total number of students enrolled (excludes Pre-K)	-----	133,664
Percent of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch	-----	51%
High School graduation rate (2008-09)	-----	66%

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2010

OUR MISSION

Mecklenburg Citizens for Public Education (MeckEd) is a 501c (3) nonprofit organization that mobilizes leadership, rallies resources, and engages the community to support the goal that all Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools students achieve significant and measureable academic success.

Mobilizing Leaders

- ◉ Initiate skill based volunteer and partnership opportunities for business managers and executives to aid CMS in targeted projects.
- ◉ Develop and offer new Public Education Leadership Workshops for community leaders, prospective candidates and interested parents, PTA officers, and School Leadership Team members.
- ◉ Partner with the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce on member information about Public Education

Rallying Resources

- ◉ Complete fundraising for first phase of The School Leadership Fund (initiative funding through 2010)
- ◉ Complete assessment and recommendation on local private funding for CMS based on national best practices and CMS priorities



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Providing Reliable, Trusted Information

- ◉ Deliver research on best practices in highly accessible methods and media to best inform the leadership and community of Charlotte/Mecklenburg about Public Education trends, issues, challenges and developments
- ◉ Provide annual "Snapshot of CMS Progress" with an independent and comparative view



Engaging the Community

- ◉ Continue to offer CMS History Tours in partnership with the Levine Museum of the New South.
- ◉ Expand the development of community conversations and blogs via Social Media
- ◉ Deliver Work Place Forums on Public Education
- ◉ Convene community conversations with recognized public education thought leaders and practitioners

EDUCATION MATTERS





Carolinas HealthCare System



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