

# BOARD UPDATE

Oct. 12, 2012

## Millard House, Chief Operating Officer

BOARD UPDATE

### National School Lunch Week

We will celebrate National School Lunch Week Oct. 15-19. This year's theme is "School Lunch – What's Cooking?" CMS events will promote the benefits of healthy school lunches. District events include "Breakfast for Lunch" at Crown Point Oct. 17, "Right Bites" of fresh blackberries at Polo Ridge Oct. 16 and "Breakfast for Lunch" at Crown Point Oct. 17. The week of recognition puts a spotlight on the healthy foods and positive changes that Child Nutrition has made in menus at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

## Ann Clark, Deputy Superintendent

BOARD UPDATE

### Report Cards

During the 2011-12 school year, CMS kindergarten, first- and second-grade teachers began using the new North Carolina Standard Course of Study that includes the Common Core State Standards and the North Carolina Essential Standards. It became evident that the existing report card did not provide adequate information for teachers or parents. In January, a team of principals, teachers, facilitators and central-office specialists began revising the K-2 report card. The team reviewed standards-based report cards from around the country and the world. A draft report card was developed and presented to elementary principals in April 2012. Principals were enthusiastic about the new report card, particularly the feature that allows it to serve as a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for a K-2 student.

The new report card is comprehensive. It allows teachers to assess students on specific skills. The report card also informs parents about the student's progress on the General Learner Outcomes (GLOs). General Learner Outcomes chart a student's progress toward becoming a successful school citizen. These soft skills have historically been difficult to measure. The new report card measures six such skills: self-directed learner, community contributor, complex thinker, quality producer, effective communicator and effective/ethical user of technology. A student can receive one of three numerical ratings: 3 (the student meets the standard consistently), 2 (the student meets the standard sometimes) or 1 (the student meets the standard rarely).

The academic portion of the new report card is standards-based. It identifies what a student should know and be able to do at the end of the school year in literacy, math, science and social studies and reflects what progress a child is making toward meeting the year-end standards. CMS Technology converted the paper report card to a SharePoint-based online platform that teachers can access from either home or school. Student demographic information will be automatically entered and teachers will select from a dropdown menu to grade students. If a student requires a PEP, the teacher can indicate that and details will be completed in a text box. The ability to export the report card into a PDF document allows teachers to email report cards to parents should this be requested.

We have provided schools with a letter to parents that can be used with mid-quarter progress reports. In October, we will prepare a Frequently Asked Questions document, PowerPoint presentation and webinar posted on the Intranet. We will address comments and questions as the new report card is used for the first grading period. Two examples showing what the new report cards look like are attached to the *Update*.

### Professional Development Master Teacher

The PDMT Initiative offers leadership opportunities for CMS teacher leaders who choose to remain in the classroom while providing guidance and support for their peers. Three cohorts of teachers have earned the Professional Development Master Teacher (PDMT) designation. To earn the designation, teachers must meet established criteria, have completed or will complete intensive training and be committed to this initiative. Their classrooms have been designated as Professional Development Classrooms and they help promote effective teaching. Last year, teachers visited more than 500 PDMT learning labs for the purpose of professional development either individually or as part of a professional development course. To date, almost 3,300 CMS teachers have participated in these labs. This year, the lab visits began Oct. 1 and 22 visits have been requested.

### Book Study

The second annual CMS JROTC Global Studies Book Study began Oct. 1 and will run through January. It is a collaboration between JROTC and the humanities department of CMS. Cadets will study *Soldier, Statesman, Peacemaker: Leadership Lessons from George C. Marshall* by Jack Ulrich. The book study will help cadets gain an understanding of global leadership and how basic, universally accepted leadership principles can bring significant accomplishment and service to others. Major events during the book study include a field trip to the George C. Marshall Foundation in Lexington, VA, area competitions in each zone and a final competition/award ceremony.

### Urban Education Academy

Our professional development department is offering an Urban Education Academy. It has three courses that examine specific strategies to benefit students. Overview of Diversity Topics is a self-paced online course that looks at stereotypes and biases, cognitive differences, socioeconomic considerations and cultural differences. A supplemental face-to-face course addresses the importance of incorporating movement and other brain-based instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

The second course, Culturally Proficient Teaching, helps participants build background knowledge about diverse learners and examine their own cultures and biases.

The third course, Implications of Poverty for Teaching and Learning, is being developed as a self-paced online course in collaboration with the Family and Community Services department.

### Reading Partnership

We began a partnership this summer with Columbia University Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. A weeklong summer institute focused on Readers Workshop instruction, an important part of a balanced literacy framework. Readers Workshop consists of targeted whole-class instruction, independent reading, small-group instruction and individual conferences and is differentiated. Master teachers from the Teachers College will provide additional support for Readers Workshop this year.