

# Merry Oaks International Academy of Learning



## A Message from the Principal

To our Merry Oaks International Academy of Learning families:

This is the first School Progress Report for Merry Oaks International Academy, part of our effort to keep families informed about our students' academic progress, our staff and our achievements.

At Merry Oaks, approximately 88 percent of our students receive free or reduced-price lunch. Our student population speaks a total of 19 different languages.

For the 2007-2008 school year, Merry Oaks had a composite proficiency rate for the math End-of-Grade test of 54.2 percent. Clearly, we have challenges to overcome, with only half of our students in grades three through five being proficient in math.

Although the overall composite score of 48.2 percent is lower than the previous year, the school is noted for achieving High Growth and is recognized as a Priority School according to the state ABC standards. We did not achieve Adequate Yearly Progress, the standard set for schools by the No Child Left Behind Act. We met only 14 of our 21 targets.

The state introduced a new reading test in 2007-2008. As a result of more rigorous expectations, reading scores declined across the state, including in CMS. Since the new test covers different material from that covered in the previous test, direct year-over-year comparisons are not necessarily accurate.

The staff is dedicated to raising student achievement by using multiple programs and resources. We recognize that our biggest challenge is the high number of Limited English Proficiency students. Students begin school at a grade level appropriate to age

*(Principal's message continued on back.)*

## KEY FACTS

### Principal

Philip Steffes

email: [philip.steffes@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:philip.steffes@cms.k12.nc.us)

### Grades

Pre-K - 5

### School Population

- 727 Students
- 56 Teachers
- 1 Assistant Principal
- 1 Student Services Specialist
- 1 Social Worker
- 49 Support Staff

### Student Demographics

- 35.6% African American
- 3.0% White
- 47.1% Hispanic
- 14.3% Other
- 87.8% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch

### Learning Community

Northeast

Area Superintendent: Scott Muri  
2750 E. W.T. Harris Boulevard  
Suite 101

Charlotte, NC 28213

980-343-1459

email: [scott.muri@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:scott.muri@cms.k12.nc.us)

Data effective as of spring 2008.

## Merry Oaks International Academy of Learning

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Charlotte, NC 28205  
980-343-6422

<http://pages.cms.k12.nc.us/merryoaks>



# Merry Oaks International Academy of Learning PROGRESS REPORT

CMS 2010 Strategic Plan Goals	Key Performance Measurements	CMS 2010 Goal	School Result 2007 - 2008
<b>High Academic Achievement</b>	Students performing at or above grade level overall <sup>1</sup>	—	<b>48.2%</b>
	Students performing at or above grade level in Reading	95%	<b>42.2%</b>
	Students performing at or above grade level in Math	88%	<b>54.2%</b>
	Students performing at or above grade level in Writing	80%	<b>38.4%</b>
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in Reading	10%	<b>38.8%</b>
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in Math	10%	<b>16.4%</b>
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in Writing	10%	<b>21.4%</b>
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in Reading	10%	<b>15.6%</b>
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in Math	10%	<b>-1.6%</b>
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in Writing	10%	<b>-9.5%</b>
<i>Disparity between socioeconomic groups is shown as a positive percentage when non-economically-disadvantaged students outscore economically-disadvantaged students; a negative percentage indicates the reverse.</i>			
<b>Effective Educators</b>	Teachers deemed “highly qualified” having appropriate educational backgrounds and state certification(s) for the grade levels and subjects they are teaching	99%	<b>98%</b>
	National Board-certified teachers	16%	<b>7%</b>
	Teachers with graduate degrees	34%	<b>29%</b>
	Teachers’ average years of experience	11.2	<b>12.3</b>
<b>Adequate Resources &amp; Facilities</b>	Student/Computer Ratio	5:1	<b>4:1</b>
<b>Safe &amp; Orderly Schools</b>	Passed the CMS “safe school audit”	YES	<b>YES</b>
	Parents perceive the school as safe <sup>2</sup>	70%	<b>93.0%</b>
	Students perceive the school as safe <sup>3</sup>	80%	<b>79.7%</b>
	Teachers perceive the school as safe <sup>1,4</sup>	—	<b>97.2%</b>
	Number of incidents resulting in in-school suspensions <sup>1,5</sup>	—	<b>0</b>
	Number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspensions <sup>1,5</sup>	—	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Freedom &amp; Flexibility with Accountability</b>	Principal has been granted additional freedom and flexibility <sup>1</sup>	—	<b>NO</b>
<b>World-Class Service</b>	Parents perceive the school as responsive <sup>2</sup>	80%	<b>82.6%</b>
<b>Strong Parent &amp; Community Connections</b>	Parents that give the school either an A or B grade <sup>1,2</sup>	—	<b>86.1%</b>
	Number of volunteer hours <sup>6</sup>	Increase by 25% district-wide	<b>0</b>
	Number of business and community partnerships	Increase by 25% district-wide	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup>Not a Strategic Plan goal

<sup>2</sup>Based on completed parent surveys

<sup>3</sup>Based on completed student surveys

<sup>4</sup>Based on completed teacher surveys

<sup>5</sup>Incidents per 100 students

<sup>6</sup>Per 100 students

# CMS Accountability Measures

In this section, we are highlighting several key performance indicators for our school and its students.

## ► Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Our school **DID NOT** make AYP  
(14 of 21 goals met)

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires that every school make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). State test results are used to set AYP proficiency targets for every grade. Targets are set for the school as a whole, as well as for nine separate subgroups. The subgroups are: white, black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, multiracial, economically disadvantaged students, students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities. A school's attendance and graduation rates are also measured for AYP.

The subgroup measurements are intended to prevent an overall score from masking poor results by one or more subgroups. Because the number of subgroups can vary depending on a school's diversity, the number of targets varies also. Some schools may have only a few targets to meet; others may have as many as 41.

AYP is an all-or-nothing standard that says every target must be met. No Child Left Behind also requires that every student be proficient by the 2013-2014 school year.

For a more complete overview of AYP, visit [www.dpi.state.nc.us/nclb/abcayp/overview/ayp](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/nclb/abcayp/overview/ayp)

For details of AYP results for our school and its student groups, visit <http://ayp.ncpublicschools.org>

## ► ABC Designation

Our school's designation: **Priority School**  
(DID meet growth expectations)

**Proficiency: 48.2%**

The North Carolina ABCs program was introduced more than a decade ago to better target school improvement efforts. Two basic measures determine a school's designation: the Average Growth of students (at right); and the Performance Composite, which measures how well students performed against a set standard of proficiency.

Schools are given one of seven designations (in descending order): Honor School of Excellence; School of Excellence; School of Distinction; School of Progress; No Recognition; Priority School; Low Performing.

For more information about ABCs, visit <http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org/abcs>

## ► Average Growth

State Standard: 80%  
**Our School: 85.3%**

Each year, the state sets individual growth expectations for each student. A student is expected to perform as well, or better, on the End-of-Grade (EOG) assessment for the current year as he or she did, on average, during the previous two years. The Average Growth is calculated by comparing *actual* performance versus *expected* performance and then averaging the difference across all students and all subjects. The score above reflects the combined growth rate of all of our students. A school classified as making expected growth would have a score of 80% or higher.

## ► Students Making or Exceeding a Year's Worth of Growth

State Standard: 60%  
**Our School: 71.0%**

This measurement assesses whether students have learned as much as they are expected to learn in one year. Expectations are set for each student based on individual performance for the previous two years. Across the state, about half of students typically meet or exceed their growth expectation. High growth is defined as a score of 60% or higher and having met expected growth.

## ► Amount of Growth for Students in the Lowest Achieving Group

**Our School: 85.2%**

Narrowing the achievement gap is widely recognized as one of the biggest challenges in public education. The lowest achieving group for CMS includes certain minority groups and those receiving free or reduced-price lunch. If lower-achieving students grow at a faster rate than better-achieving students, the achievement gap is narrowed. When the above percentage is higher than the Average Growth for the school (see Average Growth above), the school is closing the achievement gap.

## ► Positive Responses to Student Surveys

**Our School: 83.9%**

Student feedback is a subjective, but essential, component of the measure of our school's performance. We want all of our students to have a caring, supportive environment at school. This is a measure of the positive reaction from our students covering the areas of school safety, engagement and encouragement.

For more information on our school's performance, visit <http://pmd.cms.k12.nc.us>

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

REACH FURTHER. **Global competitiveness starts here.**

# ► Merry Oaks International Academy of Learning

*(Principal's message continued.)*

with limited skills and educational experiences. To address this issue, teachers work to plan across grade levels, and our English as a Second Language (ESL), Exceptional Children and Talent Development teachers provide services within the regular classroom.

We are proud that 98 percent of our staff members are highly qualified, with teaching experience ranging from one to 34 years. Two academic facilitators, both master-level teachers, work closely with teachers in using data to determine the needs of students and plan instruction on the appropriate levels. We have two ESL teachers from Colombia in South America allowing us to better reach our Limited English Proficiency students. All staff members are invested in the students and are dedicated to providing the best educational experience possible. Teachers work extended hours to provide tutoring for students using a variety of technology.

In addition to our dedicated staff members, Merry Oaks has been fortunate to have the support of community agencies. A full-time social worker, parent advocate and Communities in Schools representative are available to help our families dealing with hardships. This is the situation that most often hinders student achievement. Mental Health provides services for students at the school, and a nurse is available full time to address the health needs of students. Academic support is provided through our partnerships with Johnson C. Smith University and Holy Trinity Episcopal School.

With the multiple resources and dedication of the staff and community, we know that all students will achieve academic achievement and social growth.

Sincerely,  
Philip A. Steffes  
*Principal*

## What is the School Progress Report?

In 2006, we introduced the *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Strategic Plan 2010* outlining our vision and strategy to educate our students to compete locally, nationally and internationally.

The plan outlines seven areas of concentration: high academic achievement; effective educators; adequate resources and facilities; safe and orderly schools; freedom and flexibility with accountability; world-class service, and strong parent and community connections.

In this report, you will notice how our school performed in the 2007-2008 school year compared to the stated 2010 goals. On page 3, you will also find an explanation of federal and state accountability measures with a specific emphasis on growth.

As educators and parents, we have a common goal of preparing our children to compete in an ever-growing global community. This goal requires constant dialogue between school and parents, so please feel free to contact the principal or any staff member at our school with your questions, concerns or suggestions.



REACH FURTHER.

