

# ► Independence High School



## A Message from the Principal

Dear Independence High School families:

This is the second School Progress Report for Independence High. We are sending this to you so that you may be fully informed about our students' academic performance, our staff and our school environment.

This report clearly shows excellent student achievement. On the state End-of-Course tests, 77.2 percent of our students demonstrated proficiency. In fact, the tests revealed that our students averaged more than a year's worth of growth on eight of the 11 End-of-Course tests. These are our best results to date and earned us recognition from *BusinessWeek* magazine as the most improved high school in North Carolina.

We are pleased with these results, but we have more work to do. We will continue to practice what works, such as double-blocking the majority of our students in core subject areas and providing after-school tutoring two days a week. To support our students and teachers, we are committed to keeping class sizes as small as possible. Furthermore, teachers are provided opportunities for consistent team-planning and relevant training.

We are constantly seeking ways to improve, and we have identified some areas requiring attention, such as our dropout rate. We are concerned that too many of our students are not completing high school. We are also examining school safety and security. Our safe school audits have been nearly perfect, but we will continue to focus on maintaining a safe and secure environment for our students, staff and families.

The needs of Independence students vary dramatically. Some students need the challenge of college-level courses, while others require the support of the English as Second Language department.

*(Principal's message continued on back)*

## KEY FACTS

*Data effective as of spring 2009*

### Principal

Mark L. Bosco

email: [mark.bosco@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:mark.bosco@cms.k12.nc.us)

### Grades

9 - 12

### School Population

- 2,479 Students
- 181 Teachers
- 5 Assistant Principals
- 8 Counselors
- 2 Social Workers
- 67 Support Staff

### Student Demographics

- 58.5% African American
- 16.5% White
- 18.6% Hispanic
- 3.3% Asian
- 3.1% Other
- 56.7% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch

### Learning Community

East

Area Superintendent: Nancy Bartles

9601 East Independence Blvd.

Matthews, NC 28105

980-343-1461

email: [nancy.bartles@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:nancy.bartles@cms.k12.nc.us)

## Independence High School

1967 Patriot Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28227  
980-343-6900

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



CMS 2010 Strategic Plan Goals	Key Performance Measures	CMS 2010 Goal	CMS Result 2008 - 2009	School Result 2008 - 2009
<b>High Academic Achievement</b>	Students performing at or above standard on EOC composite tests	80%	76%	77.2%
	Students performing at or above standard in English 1 <sup>1,2</sup>	—	76%	71.1%
	Students performing at or above standard in Algebra 1 <sup>1,2</sup>	—	79%	81.1%
	Students performing at or above standard in Civics & Economics <sup>1,2</sup>	—	77%	85.5%
	Students performing at or above standard in U.S. History <sup>1,2</sup>	—	79%	80.0%
	Students performing at or above standard in Biology <sup>1,2</sup>	—	78%	85.7%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in English 1 <sup>1</sup>	—	25%	71.6%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in Algebra 1 <sup>1</sup>	—	24%	19.7%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in Civics & Economics <sup>1</sup>	—	25%	18.9%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in U.S. History <sup>1</sup>	—	24%	11.4%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in Biology <sup>1</sup>	—	24%	10.5%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in English 1 <sup>1</sup>	—	21%	11.3%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in Algebra 1 <sup>1</sup>	—	16%	7.7%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in Civics & Economics <sup>1</sup>	—	20%	14.3%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in U.S. History <sup>1</sup>	—	19%	7.9%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in Biology <sup>1</sup>	—	17%	6.6%
<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>				
<i>Data effective as of 7/14/09</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%	96%	93%
	National Board-certified teachers	10%	7%	9%
	Teachers with graduate degrees	46%	35%	30%
	Teachers' average years of experience	14.9	11.2	11.2
<b>Adequate Resources &amp; Facilities</b>	Student/Computer Ratio	5:1	3:1	4:1
<b>Safe &amp; Orderly Schools</b>	Passed the CMS safe school audit	YES	YES	YES
	Parents who indicate this is a safe school <sup>3</sup>	70%	96%	Insufficient Response
	Students who indicate this is a safe school <sup>3</sup>	80%	85%	78.3%
	Teachers who indicate this is a safe school <sup>1,3</sup>	—	89%	92.2%
	Number of incidents resulting in in-school suspensions <sup>1,4</sup>	—	—	68.6
	Number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspensions <sup>1,4</sup>	—	—	85.3
<b>Freedom &amp; Flexibility with Accountability</b>	Principal has been granted additional freedom and flexibility <sup>1</sup>	—	—	NO
<b>World-Class Service</b>	Parents who indicate satisfaction with the responsiveness of staff at this school <sup>3</sup>	80%	88%	Insufficient Response
<b>Strong Parent &amp; Community Connections</b>	Parents who indicate satisfaction overall with this school <sup>1,3</sup>	—	86%	Insufficient Response
	Number of volunteer hours <sup>5</sup>	Increase by 25% district-wide	—	78
	Number of business and community partnerships	Increase by 25% district-wide	—	27

<sup>1</sup>Not a CMS 2010 goal

<sup>2</sup>Required for graduation

<sup>3</sup>Based on responses to 2008-09 survey; multiple survey items may have been used to create a composite

<sup>4</sup>Incidents per 100 students

<sup>5</sup>Per 100 students

# CMS Accountability Measures

The learning of students in public education is measured in multiple ways. There are assessments given at regular intervals by CMS—tests that we use to measure how students are learning as the school year progresses. Other tests are required by the state and given once or twice a year, such as End-of-Course and End-of-Grade tests. Some of the state test results are also used to calculate district progress on the federal standard of Adequate Yearly Progress for each student. This page provides brief explanations of some of the measures and tests used in CMS.

## ► Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Our school **DID NOT** make AYP (*14 of 28 goals met*)

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires that every school make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is an all-or-nothing standard: Every target must be met.

State test results are used to set AYP targets. There are separate targets for the school as a whole and for nine subgroups of students: white, black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, multiracial, economically disadvantaged students, students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities. Subgroups of students are measured separately so that an overall score for a class or a school does not mask poor results within a subgroup.

Some schools are more diverse than others, so the number of subgroups varies by school. Therefore, the number of AYP targets varies by school, too. Some schools may have only a few targets to meet; others may have the maximum, which is 41. School attendance and graduation rates are also measured for AYP.

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: **No Recognition**  
(*DID NOT meet growth expectations*) **Proficiency: 76.3%**

The North Carolina ABCs program was introduced more than a decade ago to help schools improve. It uses two basic measures to assess a school's performance: the Average Growth of students (below); and the Performance Composite, which measures how well students performed against a state-set standard of academic achievement.

Schools are given one of seven designations. In descending order, they are: Honor School of Excellence, School of Excellence, School of Distinction, School of Progress, No Recognition, Priority School, and Low Performing.

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

## ► Average Growth

State Standard: 80% **Our School: 84.6%**

Did our students meet the state's expectation for academic growth? Each student is expected to perform as well (or better) on the End-of-Grade assessment as he or she did, on average, during the previous two years. Average Growth for a school is calculated by comparing actual performance to 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. To make expected growth, a school must have a score of 80% or higher.

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

State Standard: 60% **Our School: 65.9%**

Did our students learn as much as they were expected to learn this year? As described above, the state sets expectations for each student based on individual performance for the previous two years. Across the state, about half of students typically meet or exceed this growth expectation. To earn the high-growth designation, a school must meet the average-growth standard described above and also have more than 60% of its students make expected growth.

## ► Adjusted Pass Rate on Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

Expectation: 100% **Our School: 65.9%**

AP tests are administered by the College Board and give students the opportunity to earn college credit. Some high school students are predicted to pass AP tests, based on their performance on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT).

This measurement reflects the cumulative AP test success rate among those seniors predicted to pass. It is important to note that all students are encouraged to take AP tests, but in order not to penalize schools for having high expectations for all students, all scores are not included in this measurement.

## ► Participation Rate in Weighted Courses

Expectation: 100% **Our School: 80.2%**

Students with the skills to be successful are defined as those on grade level when entering high school. We offer weighted courses to those students as a means of challenging them academically and encouraging in-depth study within a single subject. The proportion of students who started high school on grade level, and who take three or more weighted courses by the end of senior year, measures how much a school encourages students to push themselves.

## ► Participation Rate in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses

Expectation: 100% **Our School: 93.3%**

AP and IB courses are the most challenging programs available in high school. The International Baccalaureate is a global educational program recognized for its rigor. Some high school students are predicted to be successful in AP courses, based on their performance on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). This measures how many of these identified seniors have actually enrolled in AP and IB courses.

## ► Graduation Rate for Students who Enter Ninth Grade

State Comparison: 70.2% **Our School: 66.8%**

Students completing kindergarten through 12th grade is a goal for everyone involved in education. We compare the number of students who start ninth grade with those who earn a diploma within four years, taking into account that some students transfer in from other schools and some transfer out of our school.

## ► SAT Rates and Results

Percentage of seniors taking the SAT:	Nation	46%
	State	63%
	<b>Our School</b>	<b>46.0%</b>
Average SAT Score:	Nation	1509
	State	1486
	<b>Our School</b>	<b>1347</b>

The SAT is a nationally used assessment of high-level math, reading and writing skills. It is used to assess college readiness and the results are calculated by the state. (*Data provided by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.*)

## ► Positive Responses to Multiple Student Survey Items

<b>Our School's Results:</b>	<b>Safety</b>	<b>78%</b>
	<b>Encouragement</b>	<b>92%</b>
	<b>Engagement</b>	<b>87%</b>

Do our students perceive this school as safe and welcoming? This measure is subjective—it is taken from a student survey.

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

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

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

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*(Principal's message continued)*

Many others, of course, fall somewhere in between. For our struggling students, we will continue the very successful reading program called Fast ForWord. We will also offer ninth-grade students who are not on grade level a chance to catch up before beginning high school English and math. To further support our students, we will continue to embrace initiatives that focus on dropout-prevention and rely on the resources of Communities in Schools, a mentoring program to encourage students, introduce them to new opportunities and help with setting goals. At the same time, we are working hard to increase the rigor of our honors- and Advanced Placement-level classes. In short, we are doing everything we can to meet your children at their individual academic levels and lift them higher.

Much of our success is because of the work of our staff and a very low turnover rate. We have more than 200 staff members, including 20 National Board-certified teachers, and 30 percent who hold master's degrees. Nearly half of our teachers have more than 10 years

of experience in the profession, and we have 10 former Independence students who have returned as teachers or administrators. I credit the stability and experience of our staff as major factors in upholding the strong tradition of academic excellence at Independence.

Our goal at Independence is simple: ensuring success for all students. We are coming closer to reaching that goal every year, but we cannot do it alone. We need your help. Please review the School Progress Report and begin to think about how we can all work together to prepare every Independence student to be a successful, productive citizen.

Sincerely,  
Mark Bosco  
*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. This report summarizes how our school performed in the 2008-09 school year in making progress on these seven goals. On page 3, you will also find an explanation of federal and state accountability measures.

Educators and parents have a common goal of preparing our children to compete in an ever-growing global community. Working together requires frequent dialogue between school and parents, so please feel free to contact the principal or any staff member at our school.

