

▶ J.M. Alexander Middle School



A Message from the Principal

To our J.M. Alexander Middle School families:

This is the School Progress Report for J.M. Alexander Middle, part of our effort to keep families fully informed about our students' academic progress, our staff and our school environment.

As you will see, J.M. Alexander made Expected Growth on the End-of-Grade math test with a proficiency rate of 70.5 percent. This represents a year of student growth for a year of instruction. We are pleased that our students continue to improve—but with 30 percent of students not reaching grade level, we still have work to do.

Reading scores showed some growth, with an overall proficiency rate of 60 percent. We are focusing this year on helping every student improve reading skills, because we realize that these skills are the key to our students' success throughout their education.

We made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), the standard set for schools by the No Child Left Behind Act. While this is good, we know that students and teachers will have to work very hard to maintain this standard. J.M. Alexander has a diverse student body, which means that we have many targets to meet for AYP. With consistent effort, we will be able to meet all of them.

So what are we doing to improve our students' academic progress? We are using differentiated instruction, a flexible teaching approach that adapts the curriculum to individual students' learning needs. We are also using data to help identify if, and how much, our students are learning and tailor our teaching accordingly.

J.M. Alexander has a very well-trained and enthusiastic faculty, experienced in working with middle school students. Many of our teachers hold, or are currently working to attain, advanced degrees.

(Principal's message continued on back)

KEY FACTS

Data effective as of spring 2009

Principal

Joanna Smith

email: joanna.smith@cms.k12.nc.us

Grades

6 - 8

School Population

- 1,402 Students
- 87 Teachers
- 4 Assistant Principals
- 5 Counselors
- 34 Support Staff

Student Demographics

- 53.9% African American
- 27.5% White
- 9.7% Hispanic
- 3.9% Asian
- 5.1% Other
- 43.1% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch

Learning Community

North

Area Superintendent:

Dr. Monique Gardner-Witherspoon

16630 Northcross Drive

Huntersville, NC 28078

980-343-1457

email: monique.witherspoon@cms.k12.nc.us

J.M. Alexander Middle School

12201 Hambright Road

Huntersville, NC 28078

980-343-3830

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



CMS 2010 Strategic Plan Goals	Key Performance Measures	CMS 2010 Goal	CMS Result 2008 - 2009	School Result 2008 - 2009
<p>High Academic Achievement</p> <p>Students in grades three through eight who do not pass the End-of-Grade tests may take the test again. Retests often raise a school's score at least slightly, because some students pass the test on the second try. Retest results were not included in school scores until 2008-2009. Comparing the 2007-2008 scores and the 2008-2009 scores is therefore not valid, because the scores were not calculated the same way.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Data effective as of 7/14/09</i></p>	Students performing at or above grade level overall ¹	—	72%	66.0%
	Students performing at or above grade level in reading	95%	67%	60.1%
	Students performing at or above grade level in math	88%	78%	70.5%
	Students performing at or above grade level in science	80%	64%	62.0%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in reading	10%	36%	36.5%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in math	10%	28%	32.6%
	Disparity between racial/ethnic groups in science	10%	40%	35.0%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in reading	10%	28%	23.5%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in math	10%	20%	19.8%
	Disparity between socioeconomic groups in science	10%	30%	20.4%
<p>Effective Educators</p>	Teachers deemed highly qualified, having appropriate educational backgrounds and state certification(s) for the grade levels and subjects they are teaching	96%	97%	100%
	National Board-certified teachers	17%	9%	6%
	Teachers with graduate degrees	35%	32%	30%
	Teachers' average years of experience	10.5	9.6	11.5
<p>Adequate Resources & Facilities</p>	Student/Computer Ratio	5:1	3:1	3:1
<p>Safe & Orderly Schools</p>	Passed the CMS safe school audit	YES	YES	YES
	Parents who indicate this is a safe school ²	70%	96%	Insufficient Response
	Students who indicate this is a safe school ²	80%	85%	75.8%
	Teachers who indicate this is a safe school ^{1,2}	—	89%	74.8%
	Number of incidents resulting in in-school suspensions ^{1,3}	—	—	19.8
	Number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspensions ^{1,3}	—	—	39.7
<p>Freedom & Flexibility with Accountability</p>	Principal has been granted additional freedom and flexibility ¹	—	—	NO
<p>World-Class Service</p>	Parents who indicate satisfaction with the responsiveness of staff at this school ²	80%	88%	Insufficient Response
<p>Strong Parent & Community Connections</p>	Parents who indicate satisfaction overall with this school ^{1,2}	—	86%	Insufficient Response
	Number of volunteer hours ⁴	Increase by 25% district-wide	—	316
	Number of business and community partnerships	Increase by 25% district-wide	—	6

¹ Not a CMS 2010 goal

² Based on responses to 2008-09 survey; multiple survey items may have been used to create a composite

³ Incidents per 100 students

⁴ 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** make AYP
(37 of 37 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

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: 66.0%

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 (at right); 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: 79.8%

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: 49.9%

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.

► Amount of Growth for Students in the Lowest Achieving Group

Our School: 78.9%

Are we helping our low achievers catch up? Historically, some poor and minority students have trailed their classmates in academic achievement. This is called the achievement gap, and closing it is one of the biggest challenges in public education. If the lower-achieving students at a school show academic growth at a faster rate than higher-achieving students, the achievement gap is narrowed. When the percentage for this measure is higher than the Average Growth for the school, the school is closing the achievement gap.

► Positive Responses to Multiple Student Survey Items

Our School's Results:	Safety	76%
	Encouragement	91%
	Engagement	92%

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

► J.M. Alexander Middle School

(Principal's message continued)

We have no new teachers this year. The opening of nearby Ridge Road Middle School has reduced our student body and faculty, but our remaining teachers have been with us for several years and our turnover rate is low.

We scored more than 100 percent on the safe school audit last year and more than three-fourths of our students said that they feel safe at school. Our teachers take pride in creating a fulfilling, secure and flexible learning environment. As we change from a large school to a smaller school, we will work to ensure that all students have the support they need to be successful.

We will continue to work on raising achievement. We hope to begin our after-school extended learning program during second quarter and continue until End-of-Grade testing in May. This program provides students an opportunity to work on topics they find

difficult, with the help of teachers. We are confident that we will continue to see improvement in student achievement.

We truly appreciate the support of our parents and community partners and the many hours they have donated to school activities. This year, we plan to increase the number of our community partnerships.

At J.M. Alexander, each student's strengths are noticed and weaknesses are addressed. We will continue to build on our tradition of excellence by improving student achievement across the board and helping our students become lifelong learners.

Sincerely,
Joanna Smith
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.

