CMS Budget Survey Results
Board of Education
February 26, 2013
Engaging Our Community in the Budget Development Conversation

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools invited parents, staff, students and community members to participate in a survey as part of a critical conversation about how best to determine budget priorities for the 2013-14 school year and beyond. The Budget Survey was designed to gather community input on significant programs and initiatives outlined in the superintendent’s 100-day report, *The Way Forward: Listening, learning and the case for change*.

Timing: Jan. 23 – Feb. 8

Survey topics included:

- Budget Funding Sources and Budget Types
- School Security and Student Safety
- Budget Priorities
- Teacher Salaries
- Class Size
Over 11,000 Participants

Staff and parents were invited to participate via an email with a unique link to the survey. Students and community members were invited to participate through a public access link on the CMS website. Over 60,000 invitations sent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responding Group</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>4,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>6,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Members</td>
<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,392</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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- **36%** Parents
- **54%** Staff
- **9%** Students
- **1%** Community Members
8 Budget Survey Insights
Insight #1:
Awareness of funding sources for the annual CMS budget and factors that affect the CMS budget is high
About 90% of adult participants were aware of funding sources and influencing factors, with students slightly less aware.

Did you know that all of the money for CMS' total annual budget comes from local, state and federal sources?

- Overall: 90%
- Parents: 88%
- Staff: 92%
- Students: 77%
- Community Members: 91%

Are you aware that many factors affect the budget, such as the state of the economy, student enrollment and new initiatives?

- Overall: 89%
- Parents: 88%
- Staff: 91%
- Students: 74%
- Community Members: 90%
Insight #2:

Awareness of other budget information such as types of budgets, lottery funding, and per pupil expenditures was somewhat lower.
Adult participants were somewhat aware that CMS has two separate budgets with distinct purposes - students were relatively unaware.

Are you aware that the total annual CMS budget is made up of two distinct budgets that must be kept separate?

- Overall: 54%
- Parents: 48%
- Staff: 56%
- Students: 25%
- Community Members: 64%

**Operating budget** - pays for the day-to-day expenses of running the district, including salaries and benefits, textbooks and transportation. The majority (83%) of the operating budget is tied directly to salaries and benefits.

**Capital budget** - pays for the design and construction of new schools, along with major renovation and replacement of existing schools to meet education standards.
Participants were least aware of NC Lottery funding support for teachers and capital and of details on CMS’ per pupil expenditure.

**Lottery**

Did you know that in SY2011-12, the NC Education Lottery provided funding through the state for CMS teacher positions, and about $10 million in funding to the county for school capital needs?

<table>
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<th>Parents</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Community Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>39%</td>
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**Per Pupil Expenditure**

At $8,565 per pupil, NC is ranked 42nd nationally in average per pupil expenditure. The budgeted CMS per pupil expenditure for 2012-2013 is $8,589. Were you aware?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</table>
The safety of students and staff is the highest priority at CMS. As part of the budget development process, the school district is exploring other opportunities to further strengthen security measures in CMS schools. Survey participants were asked to indicate the level of importance they would give each topic.

**Answer Options:** Very Important, Important, Somewhat Important, Not Important, No Opinion
Insight #3:
Participants ranked “camera monitoring and buzz in systems at entryways to maintain a single point of access at every elementary school” the top security priority
Camera monitoring & buzz in systems were the top priority across **all** respondent groups

- **Parents**: 62% (Hire more security associates) 73% (install internal and external cameras for all ES and MS) 80% (strategic fencing for mobiles at all schools to ensure access only through school building) 78% (camera monitoring & buzz in systems at elementary schools)
- **Staff**: 57% (Hire more security associates) 61% (install internal and external cameras for all ES and MS) 82% (strategic fencing for mobiles at all schools to ensure access only through school building) 73% (camera monitoring & buzz in systems at elementary schools)
- **Students**: 49% (Hire more security associates) 61% (install internal and external cameras for all ES and MS) 80% (strategic fencing for mobiles at all schools to ensure access only through school building) 67% (camera monitoring & buzz in systems at elementary schools)
- **Community Members**: 58% (Hire more security associates) 69% (install internal and external cameras for all ES and MS) 70% (strategic fencing for mobiles at all schools to ensure access only through school building) 72% (camera monitoring & buzz in systems at elementary schools)
Insight #4:
Participants ranked “card keys for elementary school employees so front doors can remain locked” the 2\textsuperscript{nd} highest security priority
Card keys for elementary school employees so front doors can remain locked was 2nd highest priority across all groups.
Insight #5:
Parents, staff and community members consistently rank ordered the remaining security opportunities...

but students had a slightly different perspective
Parents, staff and community members consistently ranked “installing cameras” and “more security associates” as the least important security priorities.

- **Parents:**
  - Install cameras: 62%
  - More security associates: 69%
  - Install internal and external cameras: 73%
- **Staff:**
  - Install cameras: 69%
  - More security associates: 71%
  - Install internal and external cameras: 80%
- **Students:**
  - Install cameras: 57%
  - More security associates: 61%
  - Install internal and external cameras: 63%
- **Community Members:**
  - Install cameras: 58%
  - More security associates: 69%
  - Install internal and external cameras: 72%

- **Recommendations:**
  - **Hire more security associates:**
  - **Install internal and external cameras for all ES and MS:**
  - **Strategic fencing for mobiles at all schools to ensure access only through school building:**
  - **Card keys for elementary school employees so front doors can remain locked:**
  - **Camera monitoring & buzz in systems at elementary schools:**
While 70-80% of adults rated “strategic fencing for mobiles” as important/very important, less than half of students agreed.

- Parents: 62% agree, 69% slightly agree, 73% strongly agree, 80% agree strongly.
- Staff: 69% agree, 71% slightly agree, 80% strongly agree, 82% agree strongly.
- Students: 49% agree, 61% slightly agree, 70% strongly agree, 78% agree strongly.
- Community Members: 58% agree, 69% slightly agree, 70% strongly agree, 78% agree strongly.

- Hire more security associates
- Install internal and external cameras for all ES and MS
- Strategic fencing for mobiles at all schools to ensure access only through school building
- Card keys for elementary school employees so front doors can remain locked
- Camera monitoring & buzz in systems at elementary schools
BUDGET PRIORITIES

As we look to develop the 2013-14 budget and beyond, we asked the public to share what they think is most important to advance student achievement.

Survey participants were asked to indicate the level of importance they would give each potential priority. 

**Answer Options:** Very Important, Important, Somewhat Important, Not Important, No Opinion
SCHOOL SECURITY

Insight #6: Participants rated technology to enhance learning, more school safety measures and professional learning opportunities for all employees as the top 3 priorities.
Technology, safety and professional learning are top 3 priorities

- Equip teachers with basic tools to provide technology-integrated learning environments. (91%)
- Expand network infrastructure to enable connectivity and access to technology to provide 21st century learning. (86%)
- Enhance school-based security measures to provide students, staff and families with a safe learning environment. (83%)
- Provide professional learning focused on continuously improving effectiveness for all employees. (82%)
- Expand academic program offerings for gifted and advanced students. (77%)
- Support efforts to help prepare high school graduates for career and college success, such as funding Advanced Placement courses. (76%)
- Expand school-based staffing to assist with matching student and staff needs with community services and resources. (70%)
- Improve access to accurate and meaningful data to monitor, measure and improve district performance and increase accountability. (69%)
- Expand the menu of educational choices for students, including new magnet schools, new innovative programs. (64%)
- Expand diversity efforts to help nurture a culture of inclusion and multi-cultural respect across the district. (62%)
- Increase number of Pre-Kindergarten classes and add additional early childhood programs. (55%)

Additional Priorities: College & Career Readiness
TEACHER SALARIES

Typical for most school districts, the majority of the CMS operating budget (83%) is allocated to salary and benefits. The average annual salary for CMS teachers is about $46,000 which is about $10,000 less than the national average and $1,000 to $7,000 less than the average salary of teachers in neighboring states like Georgia, Virginia and South Carolina. This impacts CMS' ability to attract and retain the best teachers.

We asked participants to let us know the degree to which they agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
Insight #7

Ninety percent of participants agreed that teacher salaries should increase to be more competitive with neighboring states and the national average.

*Consistent across groups: parents 87%, students 84%, community 86%*

Salaries for teachers should remain as they are.

2% 6% 33% 59%

Salaries for teachers should be increased to be more competitive with neighboring states and the national average. This may limit investment in other strategic initiatives.

60% 30% 5% 4%

Legend:
- Green: Strongly Agree
- Blue: Agree
- Yellow: Disagree
- Red: Strongly Disagree
CLASS SIZE

Smaller class size is a common request by parents and teachers. Reducing class size requires more resources, such as additional staff and classrooms. Here are some important facts related to class size:

• adding one teacher in every CMS school costs about $9.6 million
• building one additional classroom costs about $130,000

Given these facts, we asked participants to what degree they agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
Insight #8

Perceptions on class size are polarized, with about as many participants agreeing they should be reduced as stay the same.

Class sizes should remain unchanged given the cost tradeoff:
- Parents: 43%
- Staff: 39%
- Students: 43%
- Community Members: 39%

Class sizes should be reduced despite the cost, even if that reduction comes at the expense of programs that drive academic achievement:
- Parents: 43%
- Staff: 52%
- Students: 38%
- Community Members: 46%
In Summary

• Thank you Charlotte-Mecklenburg community for your input

• Your input will be thoughtfully considered as we progress our planning discussions

• This report and the full report from K12 Insight will be posted on the CMS Budget Information site

  • access from CMS main website www.cms.k12.nc.us

• Reminder: upcoming Budget/Task Force Town hall meetings

  • Feb. 27 at E.E. Waddell Language Academy, 6 - 8:30 p.m.
  • March 4 at North Mecklenburg High School, 6 - 8:30 p.m.
  • March 11 at Butler High School, 6 - 8:30 p.m.