

CMS celebrates its NAEP scores

Charlotte outscored some of the poorest, most-challenged school systems in the nation on last spring's NAEP tests. Often, CMS students outdid their peers in most states. So how well did they do?

NAEP's four levels are below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. Below are the percentages of 4th- and 8th-grade CMS students testing at or above proficient for their grade level in reading.

Proficient in reading	4th	8th
Whites	52%	49%
Blacks	14%	14%
Hispanics	15%	14%
Asian/P.I.	31%	NA
Subsid. lunch	12%	13%
With disabilities	9%	7%
Limited English	4%	7%
Achievement gaps (in points):		
Poor/not poor	34	29
White-black	33	30
White-Hispanic	35	34

Parent education:	
Less than H.S.	10%
H.S. graduate	15%
Some after H.S.	28%
College graduate	41%

More on NAEP results, Page 6.

KIPP to scale?

Audience briefed on 'no-excuses' schools out of Texas ponder what CMS can learn from small facilities with big testing gains

A Charlotte audience Wednesday was bubbling with questions about KIPP, one of the latest models for turning under-achievers into high-achievers.

What magic draws students to a school that meets 10 hours a day and often on Saturdays?

What magic sustains teachers through being on call 24/7 to help students with homework by cell phone?

And would the magic end if what succeeds in a 300-student school were transplanted into one of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's 1,200-student middle schools?

KIPP stands for Knowledge Is Power Program. Marni Mohr, an Atlanta-based KIPP representative, did not have answers to every question Wednesday.



Mohr

But she left her audience at the Charlotte Chamber Partners for School Reform with two keys to unlocking KIPP's secrets.

One was reverse engineering. The other was the concept of "tipping point."

Mohr said KIPP founders Mike Feinberg and David Levin started not with a concept of a school, but a long list of their students' missing skills. One biggie on the list was that most of the students were years behind grade level in reading.

Their new school would focus on what the students needed. And focus relentlessly, in a structured

day, in a no-messing-around environment that, as Mohr puts it, "allows teachers to teach the best way they can."

One school in Houston became two schools in Houston and the Bronx. Donations fueled growth, and there are now 32 KIPP schools, including units in Gaston, N.C. near the Virginia border and in Asheville.

The "tipping point," a concept popularized in 2000 by Malcolm Gladwell in a book by that name, refers to the point at which a fringe idea becomes universally accepted. Gladwell's stories illustrate how a small number of people can be responsible for that transformation.

Mohr told her audience of business leaders and educators that KIPP doesn't want to open the thousands of small schools it would take to enroll all of the underserved, mostly Hispanic and black students it seeks to help.

Instead, KIPP wants to bring about a tipping point, the day when all schools will be being successful with these students.

"Our vision is really that howev-

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And next year...

This is the last issue of *Educate!* for 2003, but not the last forever. Thanks to donations from about 30 readers, we will be back for January, beginning with an edition Jan. 8. Until then, a safe and warm holiday to all!

One school board member's to-do list for next 2 years

For Dec. 11, we invited board members to share their goals. Seven members didn't respond; Louise Woods invited calls while her wrist mends; this response from District 6's Lee Kindberg arrived too late for use last week.

My priorities for CMS for the next two years are:

1. Continue the focus on academic achievement, and on making every school a good choice, academically and in its facilities.

2. Organize the Board to work more effectively, through effective committees, strategic planning, clear measurement of progress and focus on key goals and priorities.

3. Improve communications with the community, city/town and county governments, and the press.

4. With the County Commission, develop a more effective school funding process.

5. Assess facility needs and prioritize plans to meet the needs as effectively as possible. We face rapid growth and renovation needs all over the county (it's not just the suburbs or inner city). Thus we may have to consider creative scheduling or facility use options to accommodate growth and provide swing space for renovations. Innovative facility construction, renovation and funding approaches may be required to avoid significant increases in mobile units.

6. Make school facility planning an integral part of the city/town and CATs planning processes. This requires ongoing communication and cooperation with the planners and those making zoning decisions. It also may lead to more innovative school design to better serve the surrounding homes, support community needs, and take advantage of the neighboring infrastructure.

7. Aggressively seek cost savings and systems improvements to provide resources to meet other needs.

How I would do this:

How high schools can get it right

"Smaller learning communities build relationships between students and teachers. Teachers, students, and administrators in the smaller [high] schools we visited... strongly believe that the small size of the school contributes greatly to their success. Teachers and administrators know all of the students...."

"Teachers are able to call students when they are absent, keep in close touch with students' parents, and quickly identify and meet the instructional needs of students. Students, in turn, feel a close bond with their teachers...."

"When students in these schools were asked why they were doing better 'here' than students in other schools, the universal answer was 'the teachers really care about us here!'"

"The small size of the schools and/or the substructures within them play an important part in creating a nurturing atmosphere which students say is so important.... 'We talk to teachers in and out of class.' In another school a student said, in a voice that still holds surprise, 'The teachers even give us their home phone numbers!'"

— From "Head of the Class: Characteristics of Higher Performing Urban High Schools in Massachusetts," a fall 2003 study by the Center for Education Research and Policy, www.massinc.org

Work closely with new Board leadership to identify needs and opportunities, and organize to operate effectively. I hope to continue to chair the Policy Committee, and would like to be involved in facilities issues and financial framework development. We also need to reaffirm our commitment to the

Excellence and Equity strategy, updating it as appropriate (it is working!).

Then ensure that our goals, methods and measurements of progress are clear to both us and the community, and track and report frequently and clearly.

Lee Kindberg

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A tale of 2 cities?

Last week's focus was on data at the right, in which Charlotte was ranked 8th among a list of U.S. cities in median household income.

Other data from the Census report, in the yellow box below, ranks the city at roughly the same place in terms of bachelor's degrees held and high school graduation attainment. In all cases, Charlotte outpaces the nation as well as North Carolina. As well it might, being a relatively wealthy place.

The Census data, statewide and for Mecklenburg, however, is a reminder of reality.

North Carolina's high school graduation rate lags South Carolina's and the nation's. And in a list on which Wake County came in at 11th, Mecklenburg tied with three other counties for 54th place.

But both Carolinas counties hit one jackpot: In both, average commute times dropped, while N.C. and U.S. commute times were stable or went up.

But if you didn't notice the improvement, there's a possible explanation: The reduction in commute times was on the order of 90 seconds or so in Mecklenburg, and less than that in Wake.

Top U.S. cities by household income

Median household income in 2002 inflation-adjusted dollars:

San Jose	\$76,181
Anchorage	60,728
San Francisco	58,621
Virginia Beach	53,540
Arlington, TX	52,634
San Diego	50,538
Aurora, CO	49,394
Charlotte	48,975
Raleigh	48,553
Bakersfield, CA	47,272
U.S.	43,057
N.C.	38,204

— Source: American Community Survey, 2002

Top U.S. cities by education attainment

Bachelor's degrees or higher, age 25 or older:

Seattle	48.8%
Raleigh	48.0%
San Francisco	47.8%
Washington, DC	42.5%
Atlanta	41.2%
Austin	40.5%
Minneapolis	40.5%
Charlotte	40.5%
Lexington-Fayette	39.7%
Boston	38.1%
U.S.	25.9%
N.C.	23.4%

High school degree or equivalency, or higher, age 25 or older:

Raleigh	92.0%
Seattle	91.1%
Anchorage	91.0%
Virginia Beach	90.6%
Lexington-Fayette, KY	89.3%
Minneapolis	88.7%
Colorado Springs	88.5%
Charlotte	88.4%
Portland	87.8%
Honolulu	86.8%
U.S.	82.6%
N.C.	79.6%

— Source: American Community Survey, 2002

H.S. graduation rate, by U.S. states

1 Wyoming	90.2	19 Maine	86.2	33 New York	82.0
2 Utah	90.1	20 Connecticut	85.5	37 Georgia	81.5
3 Minnesota	89.8	20 Idaho	85.5	38 Rhode Island	81.2
4 Alaska	89.7	22 New Jersey	85.4	39 S.C.	80.2
5 Nebraska	89.3	23 Maryland	85.2	40 Arkansas	79.9
6 Washington	89.1	23 Michigan	85.2	41 New Mexico	79.6
7 Montana	88.3	25 Delaware	84.9	41 N.C.	79.6
8 Iowa	88.1	26 Ohio	84.7	41 Oklahoma	79.6
9 Vermont	87.8	26 Pennsylvania	84.7	44 California	79.0
10 New Hamp.	87.7	28 Missouri	84.2	44 Tennessee	79.0
11 South Dakota	87.6	29 Illinois	84.0	46 Alabama	78.9
12 Kansas	87.5	30 Virginia	83.9	47 West Virginia	78.8
13 Mass.	87.3	31 Florida	83.1	48 Texas	77.7
14 Hawaii	87.1	32 Nevada	83.0	49 Louisiana	77.6
15 North Dakota	86.9	U.S.	82.6	50 Kentucky	76.4
16 Oregon	86.7	33 Arizona	82.0	51 Mississippi	75.0
17 Colorado	86.6	33 Dist. of Col.	82.0		
17 Wisconsin	86.6	33 Indiana	82.0		

H.S. graduation rate, by U.S. counties

1 Howard County, MD	95.1	11 Seminole County, FL	92.2
2 Johnson County, KS	94.5	11 Wake County, NC	92.2
3 Dakota County, MN	94.3	13 Utah County, UT	92.1
3 Lancaster County, NE	94.3	14 Washtenaw County, MI	91.8
5 Dane County, WI	93.7	15 Cobb County, GA	91.7
6 Boulder County, CO	93.6	16 Jefferson County, CO	91.6
7 Norfolk County, MA	93.4	16 DuPage County, IL	91.6
8 Anoka County, MN	93.2	16 Williamson County, TX	91.6
9 Hennepin County, MN	93.0	19 Middlesex County, MA	91.5
10 Cumberland County, ME	92.4		

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H.S. graduation rate, by U.S. counties

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19	Monmouth County, NJ	91.5	85	Franklin County, OH	87.5	158	Greenville County, SC	83.8
21	Lane County, OR	91.4	85	Dauphin County, PA	87.5	160	San Francisco County, CA	83.7
21	Fairfax County, VA	91.4	88	McHenry County, IL	87.4	160	Jefferson County, KY	83.7
21	Snohomish County, WA	91.4	88	Galveston County, TX	87.4	160	Caddo Parish, LA	83.7
24	Montgomery County, MD	91.3	90	Santa Cruz County, CA	87.2	163	Alameda County, CA	83.6
24	Plymouth County, MA	91.3	90	Baltimore County, MD	87.2	163	Oklahoma County, OK	83.6
24	Montgomery County, PA	91.3	92	Gloucester County, NJ	87.1	165	Maricopa County, AZ	83.5
27	Somerset County, NJ	91.1	93	New London County, CT	87.0	166	Northampton County, PA	83.4
27	Collin County, TX	91.1	93	Bergen County, NJ	87.0	167	Guilford County, NC	83.3
27	King County, WA	91.1	93	Onondaga County, NY	87.0	167	Lehigh County, PA	83.3
30	Anchorage Municipality, AK	91.0	93	Spokane County, WA	87.0	169	Jefferson County, AL	83.1
30	Pierce County, WA	91.0	97	Middlesex County, NJ	86.9	170	Ventura County, CA	82.9
32	Clark County, WA	90.9	97	Multnomah County, OR	86.9	170	St. Clair County, IL	82.9
33	Nassau County, NY	90.8	97	Honolulu County, HI	86.8	172	Jackson County, MO	82.8
33	Waukesha County, WI	90.8	99	Essex County, MA	86.8	172	Essex County, NJ	82.8
35	Will County, IL	90.7	99	Henrico County, VA	86.8	172	Milwaukee County, WI	82.8
35	Morris County, NJ	90.7	102	Summit County, OH	86.7	175	St. Joseph County, IN	82.7
37	Placer County, CA	90.6	103	Pulaski County, AR	86.6	176	Tarrant County, TX	82.6
37	Bucks County, PA	90.6	104	Contra Costa County, CA	86.4	177	Escambia County, FL	82.5
37	Virginia Beach city, VA	90.6	104	Chesterfield County, VA	86.4	177	New York County, NY	82.5
40	DeKalb County, GA	90.3	106	Ocean County, NJ	86.3	179	Denver County, CO	82.3
41	Gwinnett County, GA	90.2	106	Cumberland County, NC	86.3	180	Pasco County, FL	82.1
41	Polk County, IA	90.2	108	Rockland County, NY	86.2	180	Kane County, IL	82.1
41	Oakland County, MI	90.2	108	Anne Arundel County, MD	86.1	182	District of Columbia, DC	82.0
41	St. Charles County, MO	90.2	109	Westchester County, NY	86.1	183	Clark County, NV	81.7
45	St. Louis County, MO	90.1	111	Washoe County, NV	86.0	184	Mobile County, AL	81.6
45	Rockingham County, NH	90.1	111	Knox County, TN	86.0	185	Atlantic County, NJ	81.5
45	Washington County, OR	90.1	113	Allen County, IN	85.9	186	Manatee County, FL	81.2
45	Chester County, PA	90.1	113	Worcester County, MA	85.9	187	Lake County, IN	81.0
45	Delaware County, PA	90.1	115	Lee County, FL	85.7	187	Hampden County, MA	81.0
50	San Luis Obispo County, CA	90.0	115	Prince William County, VA	85.7	189	Hamilton County, TN	80.7
50	Richland County, SC	90.0	117	Hartford County, CT	85.6	190	San Diego County, CA	80.5
50	Salt Lake County, UT	90.0	117	Bernalillo County, NM	85.6	191	Cook County, IL	80.1
53	Allegheny County, PA	89.7	117	Tulsa County, OK	85.6	191	Suffolk County, MA	80.1
54	El Paso County, CO	89.6	120	Luzerne County, PA	85.5	193	Bexar County, TX	79.9
54	Ada County, ID	89.6	121	Sedgwick County, KS	85.3	194	Charleston County, SC	79.8
54	Suffolk County, NY	89.6	121	Erie County, NY	85.3	195	Jefferson Parish, LA	79.5
54	Mecklenburg County, NC	89.6	121	Erie County, NY	85.3	195	Orleans Parish, LA	79.5
58	Arapahoe County, CO	89.5	123	Genesee County, MI	85.2	197	Orange County, CA	79.4
59	Sarasota County, FL	89.4	124	Winnebago County, IL	85.1	198	Adams County, CO	79.3
60	Fayette County, KY	89.3	124	Marion County, IN	85.1	199	Berks County, PA	79.0
60	Monroe County, NY	89.3	124	Montgomery County, TX	85.1	199	Spartanburg County, SC	79.0
62	Albany County, NY	89.2	127	Orange County, FL	85.0	201	Lancaster County, PA	78.8
63	Madison County, AL	88.9	127	Camden County, NJ	85.0	202	Santa Barbara County, CA	78.7
63	Burlington County, NJ	88.9	129	Santa Clara County, CA	84.9	203	Riverside County, CA	78.6
65	Madison County, IL	88.8	129	York County, PA	84.9	204	San Joaquin County, CA	78.4
65	Ramsey County, MN	88.8	129	Fort Bend County, TX	84.9	205	Hudson County, NJ	77.2
67	Kent County, MI	88.7	132	Fairfield County, CT	84.7	206	Polk County, FL	77.1
68	Pinellas County, FL	88.6	132	New Haven County, CT	84.7	206	Bristol County, MA	77.1
68	Lake County, IL	88.6	135	Travis County, TX	84.7	208	Wayne County, MI	77
70	Ingham County, MI	88.5	135	Orange County, NY	84.6	209	Queens County, NY	76.8
71	Sonoma County, CA	88.4	135	Marion County, OR	84.6	210	Harris County, TX	76.7
71	Douglas County, NE	88.4	137	Shelby County, TN	84.5	211	Providence County, RI	76.5
71	Hillsborough County, NH	88.4	138	Hillsborough County, FL	84.4	212	Lorain County, OH	76.3
74	Brevard County, FL	88.3	138	Macomb County, MI	84.4	213	Dallas County, TX	75.9
74	Denton County, TX	88.3	138	Forsyth County, NC	84.4	214	San Bernardino County, CA	75.6
76	Fulton County, GA	88.1	138	Montgomery County, OH	84.4	214	St. Louis city, MO	75.6
76	E. Baton Rouge Par., LA	88.1	142	Pima County, AZ	84.3	214	Passaic County, NJ	75.6
78	San Mateo County, CA	88.0	144	Union County, NJ	84.2	217	Philadelphia County, PA	75.4
78	Stark County, OH	88.0	144	Duval County, FL	84.2	218	Nueces County, TX	74.9
78	Clackamas County, OR	88.0	144	Cuyahoga County, OH	84.2	219	Miami-Dade County, FL	74.4
81	New Castle County, DE	87.9	144	Davidson County, TN	84.2	220	Los Angeles County, CA	73.8
81	Erie County, PA	87.9	147	Prince George's County, MD	84.1	221	Stanislaus County, CA	73.7
83	Westmoreland County, PA	87.8	147	Mercer County, NJ	84.1	222	Kings County, NY	73.1
84	Dutchess County, NY	87.6	147	Butler County, OH	84.1	223	Kern County, CA	70.6
85	Solano County, CA	87.5	150	Sacramento County, CA	84.0	223	Monterey County, CA	70.6
			150	Broward County, FL	84.0	225	Fresno County, CA	70.1
			150	Palm Beach County, FL	84.0	226	Baltimore city, MD	69.4
			150	Hamilton County, OH	84.0	227	El Paso County, TX	65.8
			150	Mahoning County, OH	84.0	228	Bronx County, NY	63.3
			155	Clayton County, GA	83.9	229	Tulare County, CA	62.2
			155	Richmond County, NY	83.9	230	Hidalgo County, TX	61.5
			155	Lucas County, OH	83.9	231	Cameron County, TX	56.8
			158	Volusia County, FL	83.8			

KIPP goal is to put education first for all

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er many schools it takes to tip people to the vision that ... all kids can learn.”

Fueling KIPP's growth is a record of raising test scores through hard work. Mohr says the schools focus on high expectations, self-selection, more time on task, effective leaders and relentless labor.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg magnet programs may not have had longer school days, but for decades they have proved the impact of self-selection on raising achievement levels of students.

Among Charlotteans' questions Wednesday about KIPP:

– Does this work in high school?

A pilot opens this fall in Houston.

– Are the principals' backgrounds similar?

Mohr described the 32 principals this way: mostly young; experience levels of between 2 and 25 years; risk-takers; hard workers.

“The one thing they all have in common is they will do whatever it takes to be sure their kids are succeeding.... Each school has its own flavor because the school embodies the school leader.”

– What does it cost?

Students pay no tuition. Budgets vary, but each school operates on the same per-pupil allotment as other public schools in the district. Some schools are charters, some are schools-within-schools. Per-pupil allotments range from about \$6,000 in Georgia to \$11,000 in New York.

A typical school opens with a fifth grade of about 80 then adds a grade per year. The staff begins with four teachers, an office assistant and a principal. Students wear uniforms. Buildings vary from churches to Ys. Computers may be hand-me-downs.

Some districts support their KIPP school with mailing lists of

Would you sign this parent pledge?

Text of the KIPP “parents'/guardians' commitment”:

We fully commit to KIPP in the following ways:

- We will make sure our child arrives at KIPP every day by 7:25 a.m. (Monday - Friday) or boards a KIPP bus at the scheduled time.
- We will make arrangements so our child can remain at KIPP until 5:00 p.m. (Monday-Thursday) and 4:00 P.M. on Friday.
- We will make arrangements for our child to come to KIPP on appropriate Saturdays at 9:15 A.M. and remain until 1:05 P.M.
- We will ensure that our child attends KIPP summer school.
- We will always help our child in the best way we know how and we will do whatever it takes for him/her to learn. This also means that we will check our child's homework every night, let him/her call the teacher if there is a problem with the homework, and try to read with him/her every night.
- We will always make ourselves available to our children, the school, and address any concerns they might have. This also means that if our child is going to miss school, we will notify the teacher as soon as possible, and we will read carefully all the papers that the school sends home to us.
- We will allow our child to go on KIPP field trips.
- We will make sure our child follows the KIPP dress code.
- We understand that our child must follow the KIPP rules so as to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom. We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior and actions of our child.

Failure to adhere to these commitments can cause my child to lose various KIPP privileges and can lead to my child returning to his/her home school.”

prospective students. Some have opened their professional development sessions to KIPP staff. But “we have some districts that have been less hospitable,” Mohr said.

– How high is teacher turnover?

Mohr promised to find an answer. She acknowledged that the school regimen was tough on staff, but said some teachers were delighted to be in a school where all teachers committed lots of hours and energy to the job as they had always done in their own classrooms.

Mohr said the Houston school lost three of its 18 teachers last year. As a percentage, that mirrors the CMS turnover rate.

– How does KIPP deal with the family relocations that force children to move in mid-year, disrupting their progress?

Mohr acknowledged the problem, and said KIPP families did not suddenly become more stable. She suggested that most of the departures were during summer school before students enrolled for their first year.

Mohr said the program didn't target just the smart poor kids.

“We are looking for the parents that are already working three jobs, that may have the interest but not the time to find a school.

KIPP “is not for every teacher, just as it's not for every student.... Teachers are definitely our scarcest resource.”

– What do teachers get paid?

Because of the longer hours, teachers tend to be paid about 20% more than the prevailing district wage.

– Does KIPP leave its kids with nothing but drilled-in

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KIPP goal is to put education first for all

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reading and math?

Those two subjects are “our focus,” Mohr acknowledged, but said the longer school day allowed an hour for science and an hour for social studies. While some KIPP schools have installed sports or music, “a lot of our kids are coming in at the second grade reading level.”

And some students enroll because they’ve heard about annual fifth-grade field trips to Washington D.C., or the seventh-grade college tours.

Wednesday’s audience included Charlotte educator Jim Pughsley. Asked later what ideas he would like to borrow from KIPP, the CMS superintendent mentioned two:

One was the differential pay earned by teachers for working longer school days.

“Maybe we can’t take that to scale across the district but, in certain situations, we could,” he said.

“If I were a teacher that 20% would make a lot of difference to me.”

The other KIPP strategy of interest to Pughsley is the no-nonsense student discipline policy.

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Brown v Board: A calendar of commemorations

The following events have been scheduled to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Brown ruling ending school segregation. Listings compiled by UNCC College of Education. Details will be added as they become available.

JANUARY

- 17-19 Annual NCCJ civil rights youth conference for area high school students, focusing on how civil rights issues affect access to classroom instruction, coursework and other issues. Students will participate in King march and get a preview of upcoming Levine Museum of the New South exhibit “Courage.” \$100 fee, scholarships available for residential program at Four Points Sheraton. For information: NCCJ, 704-535-7277.
- 31 Opening of “Courage: The Carolina Story that Changed America,” Levine Museum. Through Aug. 15.

FEBRUARY

- 1 Exhibit, “Impact of School Desegregation on the Charlotte Area,” Atkins Library, UNCC. Through May.
- 11 Book discussion, “Jim Crow’s Children: The Broken Promise of the Brown Decision” by Peter Irons, led by Louise Allen, 5 p.m., UNCC Library.
- 13 Professional development conference for CMS teachers, “Teaching about Brown v Board and Issues Related to School Desegregation,” 8:30-3:30, Myers Park High.
- 23-27 UNCC Africa and Its Diaspora Week.
- 23 Lecture, “Issues Facing African Diaspora and Education,” Harvard’s Prudence Carter, UNCC.
- 26 Lecture by Mary Dillard, Sarah Lawrence College, “Issues Facing African Diaspora and Education,” UNCC.
- 27 Lecture by Anani Dzidzienyo, Brown University, “Issues Facing African Diaspora and Education,” UNCC.

MARCH

- 2 Film, “The Intolerable Burden” about school desegregation in Drew, Miss., presented by filmmaker Constance Curry, Queens University.
- 3 Panel discussion, “Why Celebrate the Decision?” 7 p.m., Moore Hall, UNCC.
- 18 Book discussion, “Thurgood

Marshall: American Revolutionary” by Juan Williams, led by UNCC’s Ann McColl, noon-2 p.m., Cone Center Room 101, UNCC.

- 25 Book discussion, “Brown v Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy” by James T. Patterson, led by UNCC’s James Lyons, 5-7 p.m., UNCC library.
- 31 Lecture and reception for the Brown sisters, Linda Brown Thompson and Cheryl Brown Henderson, 7 p.m., UNCC Cone Center.

APRIL

- 9-11, 17-18 “Pass the Peas,” a play based on the story of Clarendon County, S.C., performed by the Afro-American Children’s Theater, time and place TBA.
- 14 Book discussion, “Mixed Emotions: As Racial Barriers Fell, a University President Remembers” by former UNCC Chancellor Dean Colvard, led by UNCC’s Cynthia Jackson-Hammond, 4-6 p.m., UNCC Library.
- 20 Panel of photojournalists James Peeler, Bruce Roberts, Don Sturkey and Cecil Williams explaining their work in “Focus on Justice: Carolina Photographers and the Civil Rights Movement,” Levine Museum.

MAY

- 13 Film, “With All Deliberate Speed: The Legacy of Brown v Board of Education,” 6 p.m., Levine Museum.
- 16 Drama, dance, music and art related to “Courage” exhibit, by Northwest School of the Arts students, Levine Museum.
- 17 Anniversary of Brown decision. Levine Museum open.

JUNE

- 10 Conference, “Through the Eyes of the Law”: Lawyers and historians examine case’s impact on education and civil rights, all day, Levine Museum.

Average scale scores in math, reading, 4th-8th grade, by location

4th reading
8th reading
4th math
8th math

The NAEP results released Wednesday include a wealth of information, but a key byprod-

uct for Charlotte was bragging rights: Charlotte had done better than many big cities, and had

outperformed statewide averages in many cases. Math scores were better than reading scores, officials said.

“This community has cause to celebrate,” Supt. Jim Pughsley said. “Our teachers must be recognized for what they have done over the years, because this didn’t happen in one year.”

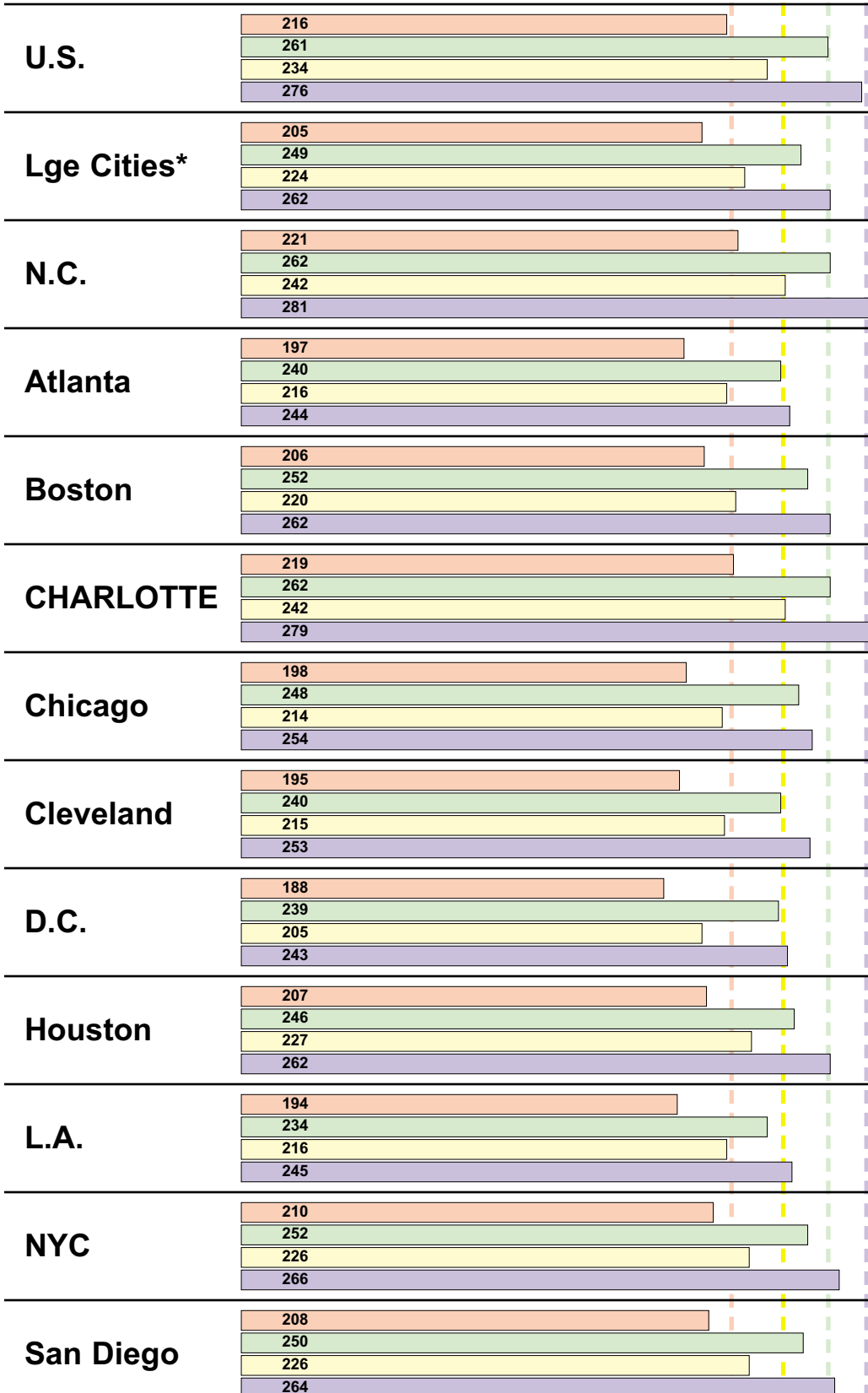
Later, he added, “It is your school system. Take pride in it. We compare with the best in the nation. We still have work to do, however.”

Testing chief Susan Agruso called the CMS math scores “very good,” said the black-white achievement gap (Page 1) was “larger than we’ve seen on our own assessments,” and said results among low-income students were “not as dramatic” as among other demographic groups.

“With some groups we have a lot more work to do,” Agruso said.

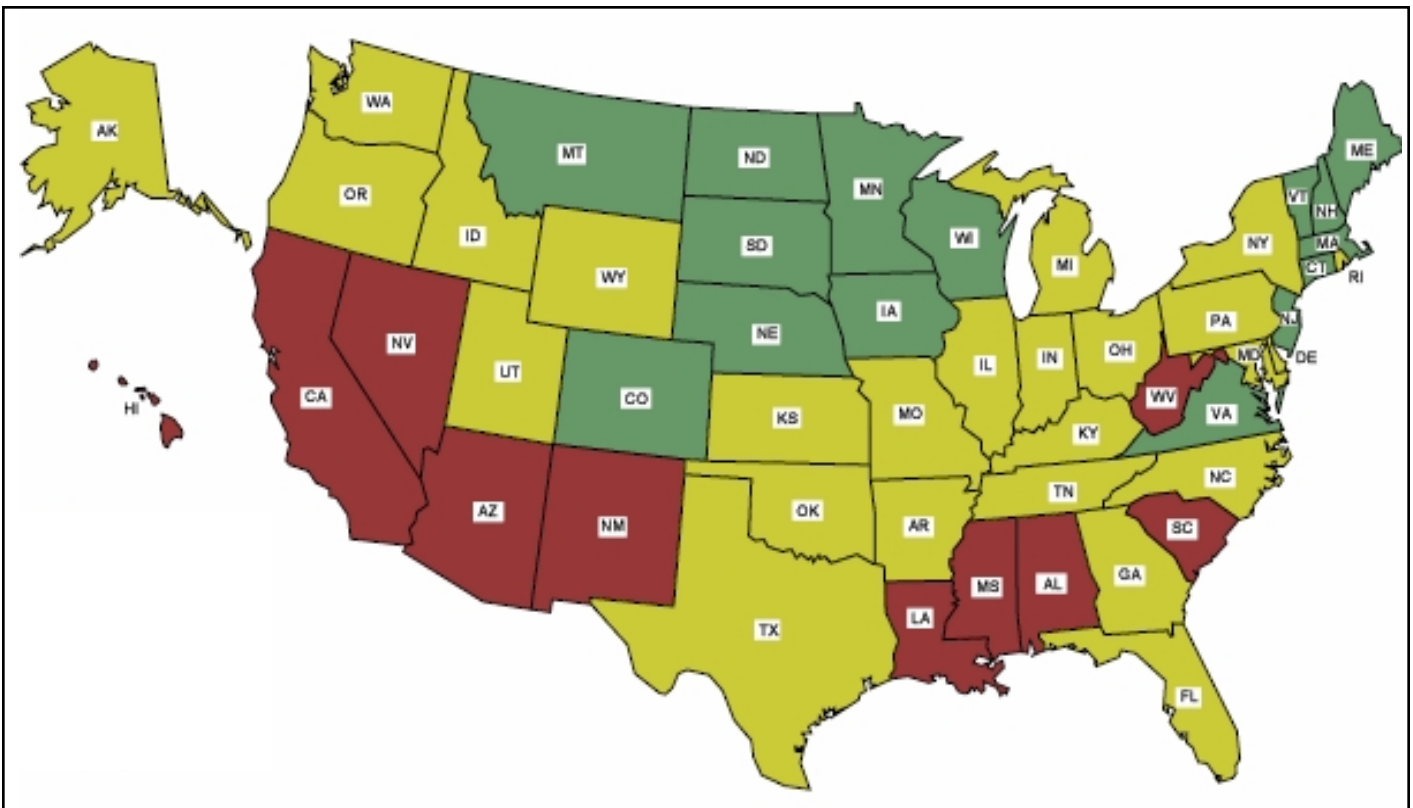
New school board chair Joe White opened Wednesday’s press conference and urged the audience of about 50 to tell the public the good news.

But White acknowledged that “there’s a lot of work still to be done out there.” He said teachers and administrators, “along with the support of



Continued on Page 8

* The “large central city” category includes results from 70% of the tested CMS schools to create a demographic group similar to the other large cities listed.



CMS map uses NAEP data on percent of 8th-graders at or above proficient level in reading. CMS performed as well as 25 states, including Alaska, Texas, North Carolina and other states of the same color. CMS scores were better than those of 10 states, including California, South Carolina and other states of that color. CMS did not do as well as 15 states, including Maine, Virginia and other states of that color.

Continued from Page 7

this community, will get the job done.”

The levels

NAEP, sometimes called “the nation’s report card,” uses four categories that begin at “below basic.”

Basic is defined as “partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade.”

Proficient “represents solid academic performance for each grade assessed....” Advanced represents “superior performance.”

So while the proficient level is far higher than North Carolina’s “on grade level,” it is proficient that is the goal. Basic means “partial mastery.”

Under the No Child Left Behind law, states have used widely varying standards to define “on grade level.” NAEP scores have become immensely important as the only

national standard against which to judge state results.

National report

The Council for Great City Schools, which has lobbied for this series of tests since 2000, said fourth-grade reading gains between 2002 and 2003 in Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles and New York City were larger than their respective states.

While national scores were flat between 2002 and 2003, the council said fourth-grade reading results in five of six big cities showed improvement.

Charlotte testing

CMS said a sampling of students from 51 elementary and 298 middle schools participated. Because NAEP is a sample test, no school scores are released. Nor are individual students’ scores: No student takes the entire assessment. Between 1,372 and 1,761 students were involved.

Charlotte results by achievement level

Percentage of tested students at each NAEP level.

	Below basic	Basic	Prof.	Adv.
4 reading				
CMS	36	33	24	8
N.C.	35	33	24	8
U.S.	38	32	23	7
8 reading				
CMS	29	41	28	3
N.C.	28	44	26	2
U.S.	28	42	27	3
4 math				
CMS	16	43	35	6
N.C.	15	44	35	6
U.S.	24	45	28	4
8 math				
CMS	33	36	24	7
N.C.	29	39	25	7
U.S.	33	39	22	5

– nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/reading/results2003/districtresults.asp

Calendar

For events commemorating the *Brown v Board* case, see Page 6.

DECEMBER

- 18** Finance, Capital & Facilities Committee, Board Conference Room.
- 26** Kwanzaa celebration, 6-8 p.m., Sugaw Creek Recreation Center, festivities, traditional African music, dancing, special guests and vendors. Sponsor: Nubian Rootz. Free.
- 26** First airing of "Upfront! with Dr. Jim Pughsley", 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., hosted by Moira Quinn. Series designed to "cover district topics from the CMS leadership perspective," according to CMS. First episode: "school safety, new student enrollment and assignment, welcoming the three new Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education members and how parents can improve the education of their children."
- 27** Kwanzaa celebration, 2-4 p.m., Sugaw Creek Recreation Center, African American town-hall meeting and community project. Sponsor: Nubian Rootz. Free.
- 28** Kwanzaa celebration, 3-5 p.m., Main branch Public Library. Presentation on African burial grounds both nationally and in Charlotte. Sponsor: Nubian Rootz. Free.
- 29** Kwanzaa celebration, 6-8 p.m., Afro-American Cultural Center Attic Theater. Holistic Economics: Investing in your Mind, Body and Spirit. Workshop for men and women.

Educators at building level are key

"There are researchers, practitioners, and pundits who will argue that it is not possible for schools to prepare students well enough or fast enough that they will all perform proficiently before 2014. They say reaching this goal is a statistical impossibility. They say meeting the goal is not likely when one takes into account the learning challenges facing special education students and English language learners. They say teachers lack the knowledge and skills, and often the belief, to educate all students to perform proficiently. They say communities do not truly want every student to be proficient.



Mizell

"We do not dismiss these arguments, but we know that in the final analysis it is educators at the building level who decide each day what they can and cannot do, and what they will and will not do. What is important is not what researchers, practitioners, or pundits think, but what you think and what your faculties think. In the final analysis, it is your belief, or lack of it, that will make the difference."

— Hayes Mizell, Distinguished Senior Fellow of the National Staff Development Council, in New Orleans Dec. 7 addressing staff from 13 schools that have committed to having all children proficient on state tests BEFORE No Child requires it in 2014.

- Participants learn the benefits of natural maintenance. Sponsor: Nubian Rootz. Free.
- 30** Kwanzaa celebration, 6-8 p.m., Main branch Public Library, Presentation on African and African American Literature and Publishing. Presentation of suggested readings for those who wish to study culture and history, and learn where to find them. Sponsor: Nubian Rootz. Free.
- JANUARY**
- 26-28** North Carolina character education conference, Renaissance Suites Hotel, 2800 Coliseum Centre Dr. Download details and registration forms from pink box at www.ncpublicschools.org/charactereducation.
- 21** State Board of Education Chairman Howard Lee, board members John Tate, Jane Norwood discuss lateral entry teacher training and teacher recruitment, 8 a.m., Charlotte Chamber.
- FEBRUARY**
- 19** Tony Habit, head of N.C. High School Project funded by Gates Foundation, 8 a.m., Charlotte Chamber.
- 29** H.E.L.P. (Helping Empower Local People) town meeting on education for 2,500 people, me and place to be determined.

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FOR A RESERVATION, CALL 980-343-6245