

DISTRICT NEWS

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools was the recipient of 13 awards of Merit and two top national awards from Magnet Schools of America. For more information, visit [here!](#)

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CMS Magnet Schools— Simply the Best!

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district has once again reinforced its record of excellence by bringing home two of the top national awards for magnet schools. In front of over 800 magnet educators from across the country who attended the 30th Magnet Schools of America (MSA) national conference in Dallas, Texas on May 18-21, 2012, thirteen CMS magnet schools were recognized and received plaques as Magnet Schools of Merit, designating them as being in the top 15% of magnet schools in the nation. CMS was only surpassed by the Miami-Dade County school district in the total number of merit awards received.



Oaklawn principal Carmen Concepcion graciously accepts

than 100 elementary, middle and high schools. Currently, CMS has nine magnet programs in 37 schools.



CMS magnet schools and staff were well represented in award winners by MSA

For the third year in a row, individual CMS magnet schools were singled out as being among the best of the best in the nation.

Oakland Language Academy's Spanish immersion program won the Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award as **the overall top magnet school in the nation**. The coveted Simpson award comes with a \$5000 cash prize for the school. A stunned Principal Carmen Concepcion expressed her appreciation to her staff and students, her families, and the school district in accepting the award in front of the audience of education professionals attending the awards ceremony. Oaklawn's magnet program began in 2004 with grades K-2 and has received recognition as a MSA Magnet School of Merit annually since 2008.

Piedmont Middle, an IB World School, won the Dr.

Donald Waldrip award for **top secondary magnet school** and a \$2500 cash prize. The Waldrip award caps off a year in which Piedmont has received several national recognitions including designation as a national Blue

Ribbon School of Excellence and is a finalist for the National Association of Middle School Principals School of the Year award.

Members of the MSA site visitation team who travelled in March to evaluate finalists for the top national awards pointed to the magnet programs at Oaklawn and Piedmont as being exemplary models of innovative student-centered, themed-based programs that engage students and invite and involve families in their children's education.

The full list of all thirteen CMS magnet schools recognized by Magnet Schools of America as 2012 Merit Award winners are listed on our website [here](#) (or visit www.cms.k12.nc.us/magnets and click on Awards and Recognition).



Piedmont staff is all smiles!

From Field to Fork



Chantilly learns to eat healthy through school gardening and nutrition

Students in Christina Roth's upper elementary class at Chantilly Montessori know all about how to make pizza into something that is delicious AND healthy thanks to their year-long immersion in the Field to Fork program. The students already had prior experience with gardening, which is a key component of Montessori education, but this year's vegetable garden had a very personal element: learn to grow, harvest, and cook nutritional food.

The Field to Fork program was inspired by Michelle Obama's school gardening and nutrition movement. Locally,

FUEL Pizza teamed up with the Charlotte Department of Education, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Health Department, and Charlotte Green to bring the program to several CMS schools. Students took part in gardening, nutrition, and cooking lessons as part of the partnership. The lessons included information about how to count calories and make healthy food choices. Chantilly parents built raised beds outside the classroom in which the students planted basil, tomatoes, oregano, and peppers. Mr. Andrew, from Fuel Pizza, led a cooking class to teach the students how to make whole

wheat pizza dough.

One of the students commented that the program provided an opportunity to "try new foods, be healthy, and have fun". Another student suggested that more students should encourage their teachers to sign them up for this program because the lessons provided "helpful information that can change kids' diets".

Ms. Christina's class is looking forward to a trip to FUEL Pizza where they will create original pizzas using the harvested vegetables and herbs.

Chantilly Montessori offers a full magnet program for grades PreK-6 in CMS.

The students in our classrooms are changing—largely as a result of outside-of-school experiences with technology—and are no longer satisfied with an education that doesn't immediately address the real world in which they live.'

-Marc Prensky,

Teaching Digital Natives



21st Century Futures in Sci-Tech

On Tuesday, April 24, 2012, Mallard Creek Elementary celebrated Earth Day by hosting its first Science and Technology Career Fair and Pledge for the Planet Day. Our school believes we must empower our future leaders today. That means we must expose them to experiences that will build foundational skills so they become functional, competitive, and caring global citizens. Our desire is to help students understand the important role they play in caring for our environment and how they impact our world as future leaders in this effort.

MCES students participated in classroom learning experiences that included learning about their ecological footprint. They saw videos that taught them how to be more conscious of the choices they make in order to preserve the earth. Each student made at least one com-

mitment to develop a habit that will make a positive difference in our environment. For example, many students committed to recycling and preserving energy by turning off their lights whenever they leave the room. All of which are practices we highly encourage at MCES. Students wrote their habits down and these were used to create our school's Pledge for the Planet banners.

At our Career Fair, community members and parents presented different careers that require the use of science and technology. With enthusiasm, each student circulated to learn about the fields of interest to them and was highly engaged and inquisitive. Students learned about the educational requirements, daily expectations of their jobs, and how they use science and/or technology. Twelve fields were represented and varied from Electrical Engineering to Natural Egg Farming.



This exposure sparked students' awareness of future job opportunities.

Mallard Creek offers partial Learning Immersion/Talent Development magnet program for grades K-5.

Japanese NASCAR driver visit by Kevin Yang, 12th grade student



On March, 21st, a Japanese Nascar driver, Mr. Ogata, visited the West Mecklenburg High school. Mr. Ogata showed the students his race car and even let some students sit in the driver seat. This was a truly interesting and fun experience for many of the students

West Meck Japanese students with Mr. Ogata

that came to see Mr. Ogata, but this was not his true reason for visiting West Meck. His real reason for coming to West Meck was so that he could be interviewed by the students in the Japanese class. This was a grand learning experience for the Japanese students, it gave them the chance to use their language and social skills they have acquired so far and actually apply it in a real situation with an authentic Japanese speaker. This gave the students a chance to learn how to interview

someone in Japanese and how to respond to the interviewer. Plus, the students also had the chance to learn about Mr. Ogata. Overall, the students in Japanese class had a great time and they all benefited from this amazing learning experience.



West Mecklenburg HS is a partial World Language magnet school in CMS.

"It was all up to us! The most fun part was celebrating all of our hard work and taking pictures so we could look back and remember."

-Janea Holt, fifth grade

Learning through Baking

The TD students at Tuckaseegee Elementary School wrapped up their Fractions and Decimals unit in math by "baking" pies! Students were given a recipe for a no-bake Raspberry Cloud Pie. They were also supplied with the necessary ingredients and proper utensils. Each group included a parent volunteer and three to four students. The fifth graders were responsible for reading and following the recipe's directions with little to no assistance from the adults. "Baking the pie was really fun and it helped me apply what I learned

during our fractions unit," recalls Janea Holt, a fifth grader. "It was a little hard because we weren't allowed to ask for much help.

The students not only applied fraction concepts, but practiced problem solving as they decided which ingredients would make the best crust and create the tastiest pie. Each group made different decisions, and they saw the difference in the end products. Using mint leaves and raspberries to garnish the pies, students were proud of their accomplishments. The following school day, after chilling



the pies overnight, students were able to taste their pie along with samples of others' pies. The experience was a remarkable way to end a unit. It allowed students to work cooperatively, implement problem solving skills, and create memories!

Tuckaseegee is a partial LI/ITD magnet school for grades K-5 in CMS.

International Flair

Oaklawn Language Academy celebrated their 5th annual Multicultural Fair on Saturday, April 28th. This year, the fair included video elements as well as professional stage lighting and production to make it the best show thus far.

Teachers and students in grades K-7 spent months learning about their chosen countries. They studied culture, people, geography, and traditional dances, which culminated in the spectacular show. Fifteen countries were represented and every student was given an

opportunity to shine on stage. Kindergarteners danced the tango from Argentina, sixth and seventh graders showed off ancient dance traditions from Africa, and third graders brought the house down with their moves from Columbia.

Magnet Lead Teacher, Raquel Marquez, said, "I had the vision of taking our school community on a trip around the world, of turning the cafeteria into a big plane. There were so many people involved in making that dream come true and it was outstanding!"

Through the multicultural fair, students and families got to step out of the classroom and embrace the world through dance, song, and tradition, experiencing global education in action.

"We celebrated all of the wonderful ethnicity, diversity, and culture that our students represent as well as educated our families about other countries," said Oaklawn Principal, Carmen Concepcion.

Oaklawn Language Academy is a full Spanish immersion program for K-8.



Extreme Makeover: School Edition

iRise

Ranson IB Middle School
Raiders on the RISE

"[Kids] don't remember what you try to teach them. They remember what you are." - Jim Henson.

On Saturday, April 14, 2012, Ranson Middle, an IBO World School, hosted an Extreme Makeover: School Edition project! This was a collaboration of our scholars, parents, staff, business, and community organizations that have supported our school.

The goal of the event was to bring the school and community together through service projects. Those who attended were able to engage in service learning projects, parent workshops on supporting your scholar in literacy, yoga/zumba classes to promote healthy living, creating murals

that represent a global theme, and fundraisers for our scholars that will be participating in international field trips over the summer. This event enabled our community to create meaningful connections, establish a common vision, foster positive relationships, and instill a mindset of pride & possibilities for our scholars.

IB Coordinator Shanniska Howard said, "The staff at Ranson IBO World school, just do not teach the MYP Curriculum, they live it! Our amazing staff organized a service learn-



ing day for our scholars so that they are able to see that our community walks the walk and talks the talk!"

Ranson Middle offers a partial IB program for grades 6-8.

How Fibonacci Influenced Apple by Ronak Agarwal, TD student

The following reflection was written by TD student Ronak Agarwal on his experience with math:

I read about 13-year-old Aidan Dwyer who made a solar panel tree based on the Fibonacci sequence, which was more efficient than regular solar panels. I thought this was amazing and I was inspired to learn more. I found that Fibonacci was a medieval mathematician who spread the Hindu Arabic number system throughout Europe. He was most famous for creating the Fibonacci sequence, which is related to the Golden Ratio, the Golden Rectangle and the Golden Spiral. Famous paintings like *Mona Lisa* and buildings like the Parthenon were designed using the Golden Rectangle and Golden Spiral. Companies like Twitter and Toyota use it in designing their websites and logos.

My research on Fibonacci showed that from ancient times to modern world, great designs were based on his

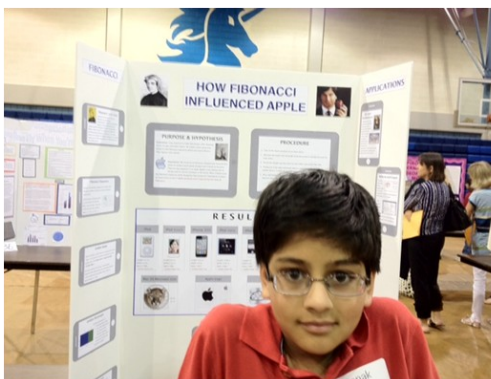
work. Then, an idea popped in my head. Apple is very famous for its design and it's the #1

the Golden Ratio. However, the iPod Nano was not. In addition, Apple used the Golden Ratio in the design of their logos and apps such as the Apple logo, iCloud, Mac OS X Lion etc. The most interesting thing I learned from this project was that Math can be used to make beautiful designs.

I presented my project at both the Regional and State Math Fairs. In turn, I had the

opportunity to see a lot of other good ideas and cool applications of math. Overall, I had a great experience participating in the Math Fairs and sharing my project with kids across North Carolina!

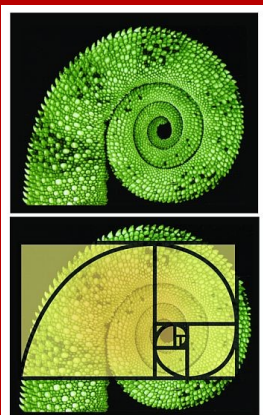
Irwin Academic Center offers a full Learning Immersion/Talent Development magnet program for grades K-5.



Fourth grade scholar Ronak Agarwal represented Irwin Academic Center in both regional and state math fair competitions

company in the world. What if Apple used the Fibonacci sequence while designing their products?

I decided to conduct an experiment to find out. I found that design of Apple products such as iPod, iPod touch, iPhone 3GS, iPhone, and iMac were all based on



Chameleon Tail - Fibonacci Pattern

Culminating a Multi-Cultural Experience

During the week of June 4th-June 8th, Collinswood Language Academy celebrated cultural diversity during its International Week festivities. International Week allowed students, staff, and parents to gain a deeper understanding of the traditions, heritages, and histories of various cultures from around the world.

Embodying multi-cultural pluralism is not only a core belief of our Spanish Immersion program, but also a foundational pillar which is exemplified in both daily instruction and during International Week. Prior to International Week, students participated in a school-wide Paideia Seminar and completed

multi-cultural projects as part of a holistic unit on diversity. Some of the celebratory festivities included: a Cultural Artifacts Exhibit, International Talent Show, and an International Week Parade.

The Cultural Artifacts Exhibit showcased a variety of artifacts representative of the native countries of our students and families. The International Talent Show provided an open venue for volunteer staff members and students to perform a specific, individual or group talent representative of a distinctive culture (song, dance, or artistic renditions).

For the International Week Parade, students, parents, and staff

members dressed up in their native costumes and participated in a parade around our school campus. A live Mariachi Band also performed a variety of traditional songs during the parade. Principal Grant said, "Through the learning of world cultures, the appreciation of diversity, and the authentic use of English and Spanish, the students of Collinswood are prepared to work and compete in our ever-evolving global society."

Collinswood Language Academy offers a full Spanish Language Immersion program for grades K-8.



Collinswood Language Academy students perform in native costumes during International Week

Service Leading in Action!

Students at Huntingtowne Farms lived the school's vision of inspiring curiosity, a love of reading and lifelong learning during the week of April 16th-20th as they collaborated with A Place of Hope to collect and donate school supplies for children in Cameroon, Central Africa. A Place of Hope educated our children about the student of Cameroon's basic educational needs for school supplies. As servant-leaders, our students observed in celebration of Global Youth Service Day by participating along with several other CMS

schools in NO BACK PACK WEEK. During the week students and staff at HFES carried their school supplies in their hands in efforts to make personal connections with the students in Cameroon. In addition, our students and staff donated school supplies that were collected and shipped by the founders of A Place of Hope, Ms. Fankam and her eight years old daughter.

A Place of Hope was founded in 2005 with the focus of providing educational support (tuition, shoes, uniforms, backpacks and school

supplies) to AIDS orphans. In 2005, the organization started with 100 kids in a small village. Since 2010, they have increased their number to 750 children in 6 villages and provided more than 3000 backpacks filled with school supplies to other kids. A Place of Hope has built a school and also pays for teachers salary. Info about A Place of Hope can be found at:

www.Placeofhopescameroon.org.

HFES offers a partial IB program for grades K-5 in CMS.



Honoring an Education Leader

It is the tradition of Park Road Montessori to plant a tree on campus as part of its annual Earth Day celebration. This year, a White Swamp Oak was planted in honor of Sir Ken Robinson, an internationally recognized leader in the development of education, creativity and innovation. Sir Ken wasn't able to attend the Earth Day celebration; however, the staff and students were excited to welcome him and his son, James when they

visited the school on May 22. During the visit, Sir Ken was able to see "his" tree and was honored for his tireless efforts to improve education for all children. Students presented him with a commemorative rock inscribed with one of Sir Ken's quotes as part of the dedication ceremony. Park Road Montessori looks forward to a continued relationship with Sir Ken and to hosting him on campus in the future.

Sir Ken's conviction that education is in need of a revolution is shared by Montessorians everywhere. The Montessori philosophy of "Follow the Child" is closely aligned with his belief that we should hold each child's potential and passion at the heart of what we do in our role as educators.

Park Road Montessori offers a full magnet program for grades PreK-6 in CMS.



**"Imagination is the source of every form of human achievement."
-Sir Ken Robinson**

(commemorative quote)



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REACH FURTHER.

Global competitiveness starts here.

CMS is committed to increasing educational opportunities for students. Magnet programs are theme-based and designed to offer a unique educational environment promoting students' abilities, interests, and talents. Researchers have noted that magnet programs promote innovation in teaching and learning, increase parental involvement, foster greater student engagement, and encourage diverse student bodies that, when added together, can lead to higher student achievement.

Yogi Toes!

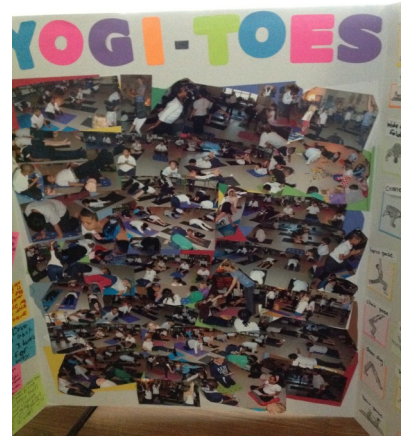
Idlewild prides itself on its diverse courses based on the multiple intelligences offered through their unique electives program. This year they expanded by offering Yoga!

Third grade teacher, Erin Brodd, partnered with parent volunteer, Kristine Reynolds, to introduce students to the history of the exercise along with strength and balance building exercises. Students developed strength and balance as they learned to support their own weight in new ways.

Yoga highlights good posture and body alignment, as many poses fuse stretches with balancing, yet do not allow straining beyond what is comfortable. The poses encourage focus

and concentration, as students must hone their movements to the specific pose or series of poses. Yoga develops flexibility, which can be obtained through repeated stretching. Students also learned that Yoga is a form of exercise which is about 5,000 years old, originating in India. The word "yoga," loosely translated from the Sanskrit language, means "union."

Yoga poses involve a combination of stretching, breathing and mental relaxation which will be used by our students with upcoming CMS testing. Many yoga poses have names that draw on elements of nature (animals, landmarks), which can intrigue children and



Montessori students learn how all life is connected during Earth

stimulate their efforts. This elective entitled "Yogi Toes" served as an excellent opportunity to expose students to a new form of exercise and multicultural experience.

Idlewild Elementary offers a partial LI/ITD program for students in grades K-5.