

A Blueprint for Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Cultural Education Partnership

Vision

Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts, science & history education providers, the Arts & Science Council, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools join hands to help students succeed, reach further, and become responsible citizens of the world through an education in which innovation and creativity are central.

Submitted to ASC by
Diane L. Mataraza Inc.,
In association with
Decisions Support Partners, Inc.
And Catalyst Consulting
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The arts have been an inseparable part of the human journey; indeed, we depend on the arts to carry us toward the fullness of our humanity. We value them for themselves, and because we do, we believe knowing and practicing them is fundamental to the healthy development of children's minds and spirits. That is why, in any civilization--ours included--the arts are inseparable from the very meaning of the term "education." We know from long experience that no one can claim to be truly educated who lacks basic knowledge and skills in the arts. If our civilization is to be both dynamic and nurturing, its success will ultimately depend on how well we develop the capacities of our children, not only to earn a living in our complex world, but to live a life rich in meaning. To achieve this quality of life requires a vital connection to one or more of the arts disciplines, which like any subject, demand discipline and study.

—North Carolina Arts Education Standard Course of Study

Cultural Education Partnership Planning Team

Special appreciation is extended to these individuals for their leadership, guidance, and hard work in the development of this Blueprint for Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Cultural Education Partnership. More than 1,300 individuals—including all 176 CMS principals and the leaders of 33 Cultural Partners—contributed to the Blueprint's vision and direction.

Arts & Science Council Education Committee

Nancy Gutierrez • Education Committee Chair; Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Nancy Carter • District 5 Representative, Charlotte City Council

Ann Clark • Chief Academic Officer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Alice Cutter • Senior Director, Learning & Development, Time Warner Cable

Martin Godwin • Managing Partner, Cameron Carmichael

Mark Heisig • Director, Perficient, Inc.

Kim Henderson • Senior Director Corporate Relations, Novant Health

Kaye McGarry • Member-at-Large, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education

Steve Newmark • Senior Vice President Business Operations, Roush Fenway Racing

My Trung Ngo • Attorney, McGuireWoods

Mark Osborn • Operational Risk Executive, Bank of America

Kathy Ridge • Founder, Edvance Consulting Group

Tyler Ream • Area Superintendent – Central Elementary Zone, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Marcie Shealy • Civic Leader

Arts & Science Council Staff

Scott Provancher • President

Robert Bush • Senior Vice President of Community & Cultural Investment

Katherine Mooring • Associate Vice President of Education & Professional Development

Christine Kahil • Program Director, Education

Nancy Beasley • Regional Director NC Wolf Trap

Ryan Deal • Program Assistant

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Personnel

Ann Clark • Chief Academic Officer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Deb Kaclik • Director of Arts, Health, Physical Education and PreK-12

Barbara Ann Temple • Director, Teacher Professional Development

Cheryl Maney • Visual Arts & Dance Curriculum Specialist

Don Mitchell • Global Studies Specialist

Cindy Moss • Director of Pre K-12 STEM

Mark Propst • Performing Arts Curriculum Specialist

Anyone who has ever seen a student become excited, energized, and confident through artistic exploration has seen first-hand how arts education engages children and contributes to their overall development. The arts – dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, which collectively include the media arts – are recognized as “core academic subjects” in Federal law, as well as in state statutes and core educational documents. While each of the arts disciplines has its own unique set of knowledge, skills, and processes, the arts share common characteristics that make arts education powerful preparation for college, career, and a fulfilling life.

—Partnership for 21st Century Skills Tucson, Arizona

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1. Executive Summary

Call to Action

Charlotte-Mecklenburg has a right to be proud of its commitment to creativity and innovation in education. In every plan ever created by the Arts & Science Council [ASC], support of education and the integral role of the cultural sector in academic achievement are prominent. At a time of national crises in education, coupled with significant budget reductions at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools [CMS], there could be no better time to harness the ingenuity of the civic, education, and creative communities to rethink and refresh our community-based arts, science, and history education delivery system provided by its Cultural Partners. How can the ASC, CMS, and its Cultural Partners join hands to make creativity and innovation central to the education of all CMS students, enabling them to compete and succeed locally, nationally, and internationally?

From 1996-2008 ASC's strategic, generous investment of \$15+ million dollars in the Cultural Education Collaborative/Arts Teach initiative benefited tens of thousands of students in all CMS schools. Yet, despite extensive efforts and financial support, the initiative never achieved the traction its creators envisioned. Though some elements of each program were highly successful, the overall impact was not. Distribution and quality of offerings across the district were uneven, and content was not aligned with learning priorities. But most significantly, the absence of a unified vision and an effective working relationship among CMS, Arts Teach, ASC, and the Cultural Partners were large factors in why the previous initiative did not work.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg can do better.

Taking a New Look

In early 2010, ASC and CMS joined together to hire a national consultant team¹ to determine:

1. What is the current reach of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's in-school, after-school, and community-based arts, science, and history education offerings?
2. What is the perceived value and relevance of these offerings to CMS?
3. Looking to the future, what kinds of offerings will be essential to CMS and how, when, and where should they be delivered?

From October 2010 to January 2011, data from all 176 schools and 33 Cultural Partners were collected. Opinions and ideas were sought from students, teachers, principals, parents, school district administrators and CMS leaders, cultural leaders, and arts education experts. In all, through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and meetings, more than 1,300 individuals

¹ Diane L. Mataraza Inc. Consultant Team

A 2009 study followed 25,000 students from high school in the 1990s to age 26. Results not only connected arts learning with general academic success, but to pro-social outcomes. This study provides important empirical evidence of the significant role the arts play in preparing young people for success, in both academia and life. People who participate in the arts are 2 to 3 times as likely to engage in positive civic activities.

—James Catterall, *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art*

participated and contributed to create this *Blueprint for Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Cultural Education Partnership*.

What We Have Learned

Charlotte-Mecklenburg deeply values and appreciates the contributions to learning by Cultural Partners, but believes that there is room for improvement. Given the extraordinary cultural infrastructure that has been built in Charlotte-Mecklenburg it would be a wasteful underutilization of resources not to leverage these cultural assets to benefit student learning. Many believe with resources for education diminishing, and graduation rates in decline nationally, the consequences of failing to put the full array of community resources to work in support of education could have a far-reaching detrimental impact on the future prosperity of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Unanimous, enthusiastic encouragement in support of this effort came from all across the cultural and education communities, as well as from students and parents. And before this assessment and planning process was even launched, community leaders had pledged more than one-half million dollars to finance forthcoming recommendations.

Assessment results made clear why the community thinks that more can be accomplished:

- Cultural Partner education offerings for Charlotte-Mecklenburg students have been trending down:
 - 58% of Cultural Partners report a decrease in programs delivered, which translates to over 80,000 fewer students reached;
 - 81% attributed this decrease to funding challenges;
 - 71% said scheduling was more difficult because CMS instructional time is strongly protected.
- For the academic year 2010-2011:
 - 63 principals report no outside arts offerings;
 - 88 principals report no outside history offerings;
 - 93 principals report no outside science offerings;
 - 32 principals report *no outside activity of any kind* in their buildings.
- The quality of both in-and after-school offerings by Cultural Partners is uneven and not adequately addressing CMS learning goals.
 - 41% to 56% of outside offerings were rated “from good to excellent quality” by teachers and principals, and 44% to 67% were rated “very to somewhat relevant to curriculum.”

In a proud and culturally rich community like Charlotte-Mecklenburg results like these are unacceptable.

The United States is competing in a dynamic global economy in which two assets—a skilled, versatile and highly adaptable workforce and the capacity for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship—provide a decisive edge. Our economic growth as a nation depends on our ability to generate new ideas and translate those ideas into concrete innovations.

—US Department of Labor:

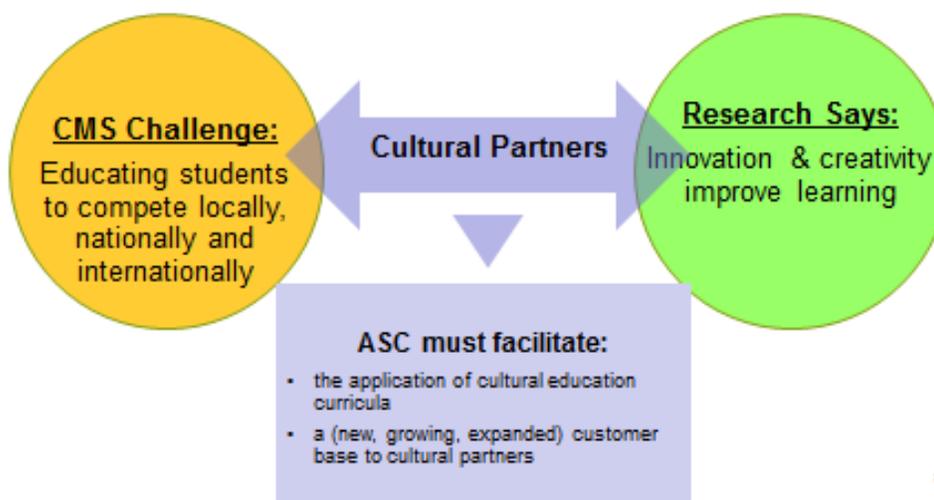
The New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce

The Solution

This Blueprint for Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s Cultural Education Partnership calls for the development of a renewed strategic partnership and a more efficient operating platform that makes creativity and innovation central to education. Its shared vision is built upon the strengths of existing programs by Cultural Partners and applies lessons learned from the past. The Cultural Education Partnership is designed to stand side-by-side with other community initiatives, such as Project LIFT (West Corridor Education Project), to encourage and support the cultural and education communities as they reach further to create exciting 21st century offerings. It will fully connect Cultural Partners’ wealth of arts, science, and history education resources with students’ most critical learning needs; thereby better educating *all Charlotte-Mecklenburg students* to compete locally, nationally, and internationally.

We have called this document a “blueprint,” because it will enable Partnership leaders to be both proactive and responsive to our rapidly changing environment, while guiding and assisting them in creating new, even more effective programs for learning.

A Renewed Strategic Partnership



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We want our students to learn more, experience more, and achieve more. We want them to reach out and take advantage of everything our public schools have to offer. We want them to get the best education possible, anywhere in the world.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Strategic Plan
Executive Summary: Educating Students to Compete Locally, Nationally and Internationally

Overview: A Renewed Strategic Partnership

Student success is at the heart of this effort. This renewed strategic partnership between ASC and CMS will see that Cultural Partners' arts, science, and history education programs contribute to student achievement in measurable ways. And, equally important, Cultural Partner programs will be implemented where they are most needed and can achieve the greatest positive impact on student learning.

The Partnership has three goals:

I. Build an effective administrative platform for a system that will successfully deliver community-based arts, science, and history education.

The sheer scale of our community—with its 35+ cultural organizations and a school district with 176 buildings—calls for centralized coordination to keep the cultural education delivery system fresh, efficient, balanced, and effective. To that end, a new Vice President (VP) of Education (who will be a member of the CMS Curriculum Leadership Team and work closely with both the Senior Staff at ASC and CMS's Chief Academic Officer) will be hired by ASC and CMS to facilitate communication and coordination, and keep relationships between and among Cultural Partners strong. Together, ASC and CMS will house Partnership management personnel and ensure they have appropriate, adequate resources. Responsibilities of the ASC Education Committee will become more strategic and generative and include fiduciary oversight. The Partnership will collect, manage, and maintain information about cultural events, the education opportunities that can be created around them, and the related available standards-based, grade-appropriate offerings—i.e., serve as the capable, welcoming “go-to” source where teachers, principals, students, parents, and organizations can find advice, expertise, research, resources, and tools. A marketing and branding strategy will keep awareness of the Partnership and its value high, and thereby increase and leverage its financial support and resources. Annual priorities and metrics will keep all Partners clearly focused and accountable.

II. Improve the quality of and access to all community-based arts, science, and history education offerings

Effective teachers and principals in every school is the first goal in CMS's 2014 strategic plan. Educators are the first to make the case for how learning rigor is increased when quality community-based offerings are a part of the learning process. To support this goal, the Cultural Education Partnership must be deliberate in helping Cultural Partners align their education offerings with state standards and CMS students' 21st century learning needs; i.e., rigorously match supply with demand when they design their programs.



The Partnership will create regular opportunities for curriculum specialists and education directors of Cultural Partners to work side-by-side to develop more effective content for both in- and out-of-school activities. Doing so will increase Cultural Partners' 58% activity level in CMS, improve the quality and relevance of offerings, and ensure that offerings are an integral part of helping students master challenging academic concepts and subject matter. Furthermore, beyond the value Cultural Partner programs will add to CMS, programs will benefit thousands of students who are homeschooled, privately schooled, and in other schools Partners serve.

Improving distribution of and access to community-based education offerings across CMS is also a critical Partnership priority. While enthusiasm for systemic change, is high, it is important to be mindful that distribution problems, especially to address parity, are complex. Because achieving parity is likely to be one of the greatest challenges the Partners will face, this Blueprint encourages parity by design. Together, CMS, ASC, and all Cultural Partners will build a cohesive framework for in-school offerings, with the longer-term goal to seamlessly connect in-school and out-of-school offerings. The pace of change will be closely guided to strengthen, not destabilize, existing offerings.

The Partnership's first year goals also include significant website enhancements to ensure that all Cultural Partners' education offerings are on one central website; make curriculum, lesson plans, and research available on the web; provide calendars of upcoming events; and develop a standardized nomenclature that lets teachers and principals easily identify the grade level, subject, and learning standards the programs address. To track distribution of community-based education offerings, the website will also map schools reached and not reached. And CMS will expedite accessibility of its closed circuit TV for program delivery and virtual access.

III. Enhance Offerings at CMS

Essential to the success of this endeavor is for all principals and teachers to know about, have access to, and take full advantage of Cultural Partners' resources. One of the most stunning revelations of our assessment showed that educators have only limited awareness of, or experience with, our Cultural Partners and their offerings. More than half the teachers in our focus groups could not recall the last time their students had the opportunity to participate in a community-based cultural education program. Of teachers surveyed, 85.7% said they would use Cultural Partner offerings if they knew more about them. Many educators were not aware of the availability of discounted tickets for them and their students: one CMS music teacher of more than 20 years *had never been* to a performance by the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra.

Mastery of the arts and humanities is closely correlated with high earnings... History, music, drawing and painting, and economics will give our students an edge just as surely as math and science will.

—The New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce

Through CMS, the Partnership will provide teachers hands-on information about professional development opportunities, programs to help teach the curriculum, local grants, online research, and how to access Charlotte-Mecklenburg's wealth of Cultural Partner offerings.

Toward this end, the Blueprint will focus on connecting Cultural Partners and all CMS principals and teachers: initially it will ensure every principal's awareness of Partner offerings: a Day of Discovery as part of principals' summer 2011 Leadership Academy is set; a tailored Innovation Institute for educators is being created; and assistant superintendents will convene meetings with their principals in cultural venues where they can build familiarity and engagement with the content. A CMS team will begin work immediately to design teacher professional development programs that integrate Cultural Partner offerings.

The Long View: The Far-Reaching Benefits of the Cultural Education Partnership

The systemic benefits of the Cultural Education Partnership will reach far beyond the students, educators, and Partners of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. In fact, we envision that our community will grow into a destination community for school districts in North Carolina, the South, and beyond.

The Cultural Education Partnership promises to strengthen not only the cultural education offerings for our local schools, but for all students touched by any of the Cultural Partners. The learning of students in public, private, and home schools will be elevated and improved, as will teachers' skills.

The project will expand the market share of Cultural Partners, making their offerings more attractive to education institutions in the region and helping them build future audiences.

Cultural Education Partnership programs like the Innovation Institute for senior administrators, principals and teachers could draw attention and participation from across the country, i.e., become a destination for professional development on par with other national resources, with school districts wanting to send their faculty or principals here for training.

Given the hard-driving emphasis on increasing student performance, the unique scope and significant commitments of the Cultural Education Partnership could make it a national model to be emulated.

Conditions for Success

Learning from the shortcomings of the previous initiative, the Cultural Education Partnership's success and sustainability are directly tied to the willingness of all Partners to commit to, uphold, and continually fortify the following conditions:

Full Engagement of Project Partners

Ongoing cooperation, mutual respect, trust, and leadership in building a strong and lively *esprit de corps* are required to "cement" together CMS, ASC, Cultural Partners, funders, and the community. Practically speaking, ASC must provide resources to manage a community-based delivery system for Cultural Partner education offerings; CMS must be willing to fully commit district resources, expertise, information, counsel, guidance, and, above all, time. And Cultural Partners must be willing to commit attention, expertise, time, and resources to inform, guide, and participate in effective program delivery.

Relevance & Standards of Excellence

All Cultural Partners must ensure relevance and the highest standards of excellence in their offerings. CMS must convey to the Partners the educational mandates to be honored and adhered to.

Strong Stewardship & Effective Management

The Cultural Education Partnership must strive to be a responsible, fair, and transparent steward and an excellent facilitator and coordinator of this cultural education delivery system, with a capably managed operating platform supported by systems and technology that are able to implement current and projected activities.

Adequate Financial Resources

Though first year funding is in place, the Cultural Education Partnership and community leaders must do everything possible to adequately capitalize plan components for the first five years.

Accountability, Flexibility & Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Because of the interdependence of Partners in all Blueprint components, ASC, CMS, and Cultural Partners must be prepared and willing to adapt and respond to changes, challenges, and opportunities that may arise, using ongoing evaluation for each project component and the delivery system as a whole.

Community Connections & Communication

Effective communication strategies are essential for the success of the Blueprint: the Cultural Education Partnership must collect, manage, 'certify quality' and maintain easily accessible information about cultural education, and marketing and branding must be used to build awareness. Parents, PTOs, booster organizations, students, proponents of education, CMS's Parent University, funders, and the community must be kept apprised of progress and, whenever appropriate, become engaged in activities. ASC and CMS should create a manageable number of stakeholder advisory teams to act as project ombudsmen and advocates to their respective constituents.

Cultural Education Partnership Projected Budget for Development, Launch and Formative Years

Component	Detail	Current Year FY2011	July 2011 – June 2012 FY2012	July 2012 – June 2013 FY2013	July 2013 – June 2014 FY2014	July 2014 – June 2015 FY2015	July 2015 – June 2016 FY2016
1. Operating Platform	Website built & maintained	\$0	\$100,000	\$40,000	\$41,200	\$42,326	\$43,709
	Misc. operating expenses	\$30,000	\$30,900	\$31,827	\$32,782	\$33,765	\$34,778
	Personnel	\$146,000	\$205,000	\$186,000	\$192,000	\$198,000	\$203,000
Branding & Awareness	Educator, parent, student and general public	\$22,500	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
2. Improve Quality & Access to community-based Offerings	School Grants Program	\$362,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
	NC Wolf Trap	\$72,500	\$72,500	\$72,500	\$72,500	\$72,500	\$72,500
	Field Trip Program	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
	Education Innovation Projects (e.g. Community as Campus)	\$0	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
	Project LIFT	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
	Provider Resources - Information, resources & capacity building for Cultural Partners	\$0	\$35,000	\$38,000	\$38,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
3. Enhance Offerings at CMS	Professional Development – Principal & teachers training	\$65,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
ASC Total		\$698,000	\$1,578,400	\$1,558,327	\$1,566,482	\$1,676,591	\$1,683,987

Budget Description

1. Operating Platform – ASC investment in personnel and systems to manage and implement Partnership programs.

a. **Branding & Awareness** – Build broad awareness and support for the Partnership.

2. Improve quality & access to community-based offerings

- a. **School Grants Program** – Professional artists, scientists, historians, and Cultural Partners in grades K-12 (public and independent schools) for curriculum-based performances, workshops, and residencies.
- b. **NC Wolf Trap** – Partnership with CMS and the Wolf Trap Institute enables early childhood experts and teaching artists to accelerate children’s learning.

c. **K-12 Field Trip Program** – Engage students in real-world experiences to investigate and apply curriculum-based basic knowledge.

d. **Education Innovation** – Encourages creation of transformative programs connected to core curriculum. Community-based facilities become extensions of the classroom and provide credit-bearing instruction (e.g., Community as Campus).

e. **Project LIFT** (Leadership and Investment for Transformation) – Joint efforts to provide services and educational enhancements for CMS students in the West Charlotte corridor.

f. **Cultural Partner Resources** – Professional development for Cultural Partners.

3. Enhance Offerings at CMS – Professional development for educators.

2. Year I Goals, Strategies and Tactics: 2011/12

Overview

Since October 2010, the very process of envisioning *what could be* has generated significant excitement in the community, especially in the CMS community—from students and parents to teachers, principals, district leaders, and the Board of Education. But we cannot overemphasize: the future of the Cultural Education Partnership will depend on production of *quality education offerings that measurably impact learning*. First year efforts must set a high bar.

On an unprecedented level of teamwork, CMS and ASC leaders have been working side-by-side to design a lean, effective, efficient administrative infrastructure. The ASC Board of Directors' preliminary approval of this plan in March 2011 has expedited the search for a new VP of Education. The job description was written with inputs from CMS's leaders and ASC's Education Committee and senior staff, with the goal of having someone in place and work beginning in July 2011. The VP of Education will have offices at CMS and ASC, be a member of ASC's curriculum team, convene regular work sessions with Cultural Partners, and keep communications continuous and productive.

Academic leaders have stated that "the most respected and frequently used offerings anticipate academic needs," staying a step ahead of instruction, as opposed to offerings that have grown stale and irrelevant. Toward that end, high impact activities for students—both new and those building on existing Cultural Partner education offerings—are being designed for launch in 2011/12. Measurements of success and key benchmarks are being developed to monitor progress and to assure parity in distribution of offerings across the district.

Heeding advice received from teachers, principals, assistant superintendents, and district leaders, the Cultural Education Partnership will target principals in Year I. Getting all principals aboard first (through orientations, special programs, professional development, information links, and relationship building) will expedite connections with CMS' 176 buildings and all 8,565 teachers. Though a full complement of teacher professional development offerings will not be officially rolled out till Year II, first year resources will be allocated to build and test teacher training and professional development, with planned emphasis on the visual arts.

A data-rich, interactive website—serving as the hub and central repository of all Cultural Education Partnership information, and connecting the education community with the cultural community more effectively than ever before—will be built and launched.

And finally, PR and marketing strategies will herald the start of the program. In CMS's September 2011 opening activities, every district employee in every school building will be

introduced and welcomed to the Cultural Education Partnership with materials and opportunities.

Goal I. Build an effective administrative platform for a system that will successfully deliver community-based arts, science, and history education

1.1 Create the Cultural Education Partnership administrative infrastructure

- A. ASC will reorganize its current education activities in an Education Department.
Start date: July 2011

- B. With CMS, ASC will recruit, hire, and orient ASC's VP of Education.
Start date: July 2011

- C. ASC and CMS will build an operating platform that includes offices at ASC and CMS.
Start date: August 2011

- D. CMS and ASC will enter into a Partner memorandum of understanding, to include an annual "State-of-the-Partnership Report." Annual priorities and metrics will keep ASC, CMS, and all Cultural Partners clearly focused and accountable.
Start date: August 2011

- E. ASC will expand the fiduciary, strategic, and generative roles and responsibilities of ASC's Education Committee. The Committee will more directly interact with teachers and students to monitor perceptions of Partnership reach, value, and impacts. The Committee will oversee the ASC/CMS Partner memorandum of understanding and "State-of-the-Partnership Report," and do whatever is necessary to keep the relationship with CMS productive and strong.
Start date: August 2011

1.2 Build the information infrastructure

- A. ASC will develop an internal communications policy and system with CMS and Cultural Partners.
Start date: September 2011

- B. Learning from the best models in the country, ASC will design and build a robust, interactive, data-rich website linked to CMS's website.
Start date: Summer 2011

ASC and all Cultural Partners will create links to each other's websites to expedite information sharing.

Start date: Fall 2011

ASC will roll out the new website in a highly visible public launch.

Start date: January 2012

- C. ASC in partnership with CMS will build and launch an awareness and branding campaign with particular emphasis on PTO/PTAs, Parent University, and other educational support groups.

Provide an orientation kit for every teacher in the district at the opening in-service of the year; for example, website links, complimentary tickets, and encouragement to come and partake of offerings. Use Cultural Partners as ambassadors for opening day in-services.

Start date: Rollout at start of the 2011/12 school year

- D. ASC in partnership with CMS will build and foster a network of advisory groups in the community to ensure excellent communication, coordination, and access to information and resources.

Start date: as needed

1.3 Support the Partnership with cash and in-kind resources

- A. ASC will establish a development philosophy and strategy to pursue funding, and leverage in-kind resources to support Cultural Education Partnership implementation, including *DonorsChoose* for teachers, and a *power2give.org* strategy; this will allow schools collaborating with Cultural Partners in educational projects to post their projects on websites encouraging contributions.

Start date: January 2012

1.4 Create an evaluation system

- A. With CMS and University of North Carolina at Charlotte, ASC will design, build, implement, and manage an evaluation system and report annual results to the Cultural Partners, CMS, funders and the public.

Start date: January 2012

Goal 2. Improve the quality of and access to all community-based arts, science, and history education offerings

2.1 Provide financial support to Cultural Partners for education programs and activities.

- A. Continue implementation of ASC's comprehensive investment program for education: School Grants Program, Special Opportunity Fund, and Education Innovation Grants.

Ongoing

- B. Streamline the contract process for those Cultural Partners receiving general operating support and school grants.

Start date: Summer 2011

2.2 Improve the capacity of all Cultural Partners to build and deliver excellent, in-and out-of-school, content-rich programs and services that are aligned with state standards and CMS's learning priorities and that increase learning rigor

- A. ASC and CMS will provide technical support, expertise, and encouragement for curriculum development to Cultural Partners to ensure offerings align with CMS standards and mandates.

Start date: September 2011

- C. ASC and CMS will provide Cultural Partners with access to curriculum resources, tools, and education experts to continually improve their offerings.

Start date: July 2011

2.3 Provide opportunities for CMS K-12 students to participate in Cultural Partner education programs, in-and out-of-school

Together, CMS, ASC, and Cultural Partners will build a series of cohesive, curriculum-appropriate field trips relevant to grades K-12 that engage students in real-world experiences, and provide the opportunity to investigate and apply basic knowledge gained in the classroom. Field trip learning tools for teachers will be developed. CMS will manage all school logistics and allocate student time. ASC will fund program costs as well as transportation.

2.4 Provide CMS K-12 students with resources and learning tools

- A. ASC will continue to support the availability of art supplies to classroom teachers through Classroom Central.

- B. ASC will distribute art supplies to every school participating in Project LIFT.

Start date: September 2011

Goal 3. Enhance Offerings at CMS

3.1 Increase principals' access to and use of the Cultural Partnership and its offerings

- A. Conduct CMS Day of Discovery for principals with Partners at their summer Leadership Academy.

Start date: July 2011

- B. Explore with the McColl Center the creation of an Innovation Institute for Educators (principals and teachers).

Start date: January 2012

3.2 Raise teachers' awareness of the Partnership and its offerings

- A. Provide all teachers with a link to the Partnership website where they can access a curriculum library, teaching tools, admission information, and access to dress rehearsals, tickets, tours, program information, a guide on how to secure credit, pacing guides, research, assessment, evaluation, advocacy information, regional resources, funding sources, and more.

Start date: January 2012

- B. Provide direct-line e-alerts about grant opportunities to CMS and all Cultural Partners.

Start date: January 2012

3. Future Strategies and Tactics

A wealth of ideas for the Cultural Education Partnership was gathered from the 1,300 individuals participating in the assessment and planning process that are fully documented in the companion Assessment Report. From among those the most practical, helpful, and innovative ideas, as well as widely shared opinions and themes, are presented in this section.

Because planning in periods of rapid change can be an inexact science, the Blueprint suggests timing, but looks to the wisdom and capacity of ASC, CMS, and the Cultural Partners to fine-tune and implement activities when and where the need is greatest, resources are available, and the probability for success is highest.

Goal I. Build an effective administrative platform for a system that will successfully deliver community-based arts, science, and history education

1.1 Improve information and how it is shared

- A. CMS and ASC will develop a nomenclature enabling Cultural Partners to label offerings consistently so that principals and teachers see quickly and simply what grade-level and skill-sets and standards are being addressed.
- B. Continually improve the website.

Include portals for access to particular materials for teachers, parents, funders, artists, etc.

Enable web solicitation and collection of donations for the Cultural Education Partnership.

Develop a comprehensive database of Cultural Partner offerings. Make it possible and easy for schools to book Cultural Partners online.

Build and maintain a database of individuals (artists, administrators, scholars, scientists, historians, college instructors, and graduate students) available as “no-cost” guest speakers for classes in their topic areas; use the nomenclature that ties cultural offerings to specific educational requirements.

Build a database of specialized service professionals: curriculum specialists, grant writers, and professional development designers.

Consistently promote new research on the positive learning impacts of the arts, creativity, and innovation.

- C. Use technology and social media to increase student access to information about all community-based arts, science, and history education offerings.

1.2 Increase awareness and build the brand

- A. ASC will annually freshen the Cultural Education Partnership's image and product. Consider posters, banners, media, social media, PSAs, CMS closed circuit TV, other web-based outlets and more.
- B. ASC and CMS will consistently promote new research on the positive learning impacts of student participation in Cultural Education Partnership offerings. Provide information that fuels a sense of urgency and supports advocacy in support of cultural education. Broadcast the unintended consequences emerging in places across America where community-based offerings or in-school cultural offerings have been decimated.
- C. ASC and CMS will share success stories of CMS students/teachers/buildings and how community-based providers have helped them increase student performance, impact learning, etc. Provide anecdotal as well as hard evidence.

Goal 2. Improve the quality of and access to all Cultural Partners' arts, science, and history education offerings

2.1 Continually generate support for and improve Cultural Partner offerings

- A. ASC will continue to provide grant monies and leverage new funds for arts, science, and history education offerings through the School Grants Program, Special Opportunity Fund, and Education Innovation Grants. Excellent, dynamic, curriculum-relevant offerings in-school and out-of-school will grow.
- B. ASC and CMS will continually sharpen development strategies to find new funding for Cultural Partnership programs, transportation, resources and services, including sponsorships and co-branding opportunities with Partners focused on youth (such as sports teams), investigation of Title I monies, and state, regional, and national resources.

- C. ASC and CMS will develop easily accessible resources for Cultural Partners, such as “how-to” guides that include best practices and protocols to honor school culture.
- D. CMS will recruit Help Teams of teachers well-versed in curriculum issues, available to Cultural Partners for assistance with program design.

2.2 Maximize the Community’s wealth of new cultural facilities to support student learning

- A. Design and pilot the *Community as Campus for Learning* initiative.

Together CMS, ASC, and Cultural Partners will design, pilot, and, if successful, implement the Community as Campus for Learning initiative. Partners will complement the arts, science, and history curriculum with advanced, specialized offerings beyond the realm of what schools can provide; e.g., Light Factory for photography and media literacy; Latta for history; Discovery Place for science; Blumenthal for lighting and stage tech; NCDT for dance instruction and choreography; Charlotte Children’s Theatre for acting, stagecraft; and more.

The initiative will provide students with semester-long, extraordinary credit-bearing opportunities.

- B. Support existing efforts for CMS internships with Cultural Partners.
- C. Promote Cultural Partners as resources for CMS senior projects.

2.3 Establish annual goals to achieve parity of offerings and programs across the district

The uneven distribution of community-based arts, science, and history offerings has unintentionally fueled a perception of “have” and “have not” schools. It hinders *esprit de corps*. In focus groups, some teachers said that their schools are ineligible for outside offerings because they’re not on “an approved list of schools.” [Note: further checking revealed that no such list exists]. Focus group students whose schools have offerings were apologetic to fellow students from schools without offerings. “Want to know what a school is getting?” asked one. “Look at the demographics of the school and you can tell how many options they receive.” One education leader interviewed for the plan said: “There seems to be lots of duplication and a ‘good old boy system’ where different organizations give out grants or bring programs into the schools and do the same thing year after year.” “This is true for both cultural organizations and schools.”

- A. Build and maintain an accessible district inventory system of community-based arts, science, and history education offerings in each school to guide Cultural Partners to schools, especially to those that have not been reached.

- B. Expedite and encourage parity by developing a mapping system on the Cultural Education Partnership website enabling anyone to quickly see which schools are reached and which are not. Regularly publicize progress toward annual distribution goals.

2.4 Address issues of distribution within school buildings

Focus group teachers asked that parity *within* buildings be addressed. Some lamented that the same teachers continually receive offerings. “One class is always able to do things, but others are not.”

- A. Use CMS technology to bring more programs into schools. Use virtual tours of Charlotte’s offerings and facilities and other virtual programs as tools for learning, thereby increasing teacher and student awareness of arts, science, and history education opportunities.

2.5 Capitalize on the seasonal offerings of Cultural Partners

- A. CMS and Cultural Partners will meet at least twice a year to review long-term seasonal plans and develop ideas for building education programs around them; e.g., master classes for teachers and students, lectures, back stage talks with presenters for students and teachers, guest speakers, teacher professional development, and other activities that could add value to instruction. Additionally, CMS needs may then influence the choice of offerings Cultural Partners bring to Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

2.6 Capitalize on potential synergies with other efforts to benefit CMS

- A. The Cultural Partnership will forge formal communication links with every PTA, PTO, Booster, and performing arts support groups with information as to how they can leverage their resources to do more.
- B. CMS and ASC will remain aware of and informed about all other entities supporting K-12 education, from Universities and businesses to libraries [e.g., ImaginOn] and the zoo. Look for opportunities to collaborate and build synergies that will advance Partnership goals.
- C. CMS will find opportunities to use Parent University as a way to keep parents and students informed and involved in the Cultural Education Partnership.

Goal 3. Enhance Offerings at CMS

3.1 Increase principals’ access to and use of the Cultural Partnership

- A. CMS and ASC will develop annual strategies to keep the Partnership fresh and helpful to principals.

3.2 Continually raise teachers' awareness of the Partnership and its offerings

- A. CMS and ASC will develop annual strategies to keep the Partnership fresh and helpful to teachers.
- B. CMS will Include Cultural Partnership information in the new teacher professional development orientation Teach For America.

3.3 Provide professional development support and opportunities for teachers

Typical of schools across the country, many teachers between the ages of 25 and 40 confessed that limited arts experiences in their own education made them hesitate to use the arts as tools for instruction. They would particularly appreciate and benefit from professional development to help them do so.

- A. CMS and ASC will work with the McColl Center to develop, pilot, and launch an Innovation Institute for Teachers.
- B. ASC and CMS will continue to support the design and implementation of in-service programs for teachers that focus on professional development in the area of cultural education. Year II will include emphasis on the visual arts and include organizations such as the Light Factory, the Harvey B. Gantt Center, the Mint Museum, and the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art.
- C. CMS and ASC will use excellent providers like Discovery Place as mentors (and models) for Cultural Partners and educators.
- D. CMS and ASC will promote other professional development providers in the region and State, such as the Charlotte Teachers Institute [CTI], to explore possibilities for expanded access to offerings to CMS teachers. The Partnership will publish CTI and other excellent instructional tools on its website.

4. Assessment and Plan Inputs

More than 1,300 individuals participated in the Cultural Education Partnership assessment and planning process between September 2010 and April 2011:

- ASC Leaders
 - Four work sessions with ASC's Education Committee, September 2010 – March 2011
 - ASC Board of Directors meetings, March and May 2011
- CMS and Education Leaders
 - Briefings with Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent of Schools
 - Interviews with CMS Board Members, and the leadership of Partners in Out of School Time and MeckEd, November 2010
 - Work session with Assistant Superintendents, January 2011
 - Work sessions with Chief Academic Officer, September 2010 – April 2011
 - Work sessions with CMS Curriculum Specialists, September – October 2010
 - Interviews with head of Teacher Professional Development, Charlotte Teachers Institute, Project LIFT, and the After School Enrichment Program, November 2010 – January 2011
 - Briefing session with the Deans of Education from Davidson College, Johnson C. Smith University, Queens University of Charlotte, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and Winthrop University, November, 2010
- CMS Principals
 - Focus group with principals, January 2011
 - On line survey – 100% response
- CMS Teachers
 - Focus groups with teachers, November 2010
 - On line survey – 51% response
- CMS Students
 - Focus groups and interviews with CMS students, November 2010
- Cultural Partners
 - Work sessions, meetings and phone interviews with Cultural Partner leaders
 - Online survey – 100% response
- Parents
 - On line survey – 66% response