



Center for Research & Evaluation  
Office of Accountability

Opening of Schools

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# SURVEY REPORT

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October 2010



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# OPENING OF SCHOOLS SURVEY REPORT

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October, 2010

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools administered an Opening of Schools survey to principals during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of school. The purpose of this survey was to obtain feedback from principals on select Opening of Schools functions and tasks provided by various Central Administrative Offices. The survey was developed during the summer of 2008 and first administered during the 2008-2009 Opening of Schools time period. The same survey was administered for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Opening of Schools.

The platform used to administer the survey was K12-Insight, a web-based survey platform that offers many surveying features including the ability to anonymously follow-up with non-responders. The survey was launched on September 20, 2010 and included three follow-up reminders to non-responders. A total of 176 email invitations were sent to principals. Of the 176 invited to participate, 141 were returned resulting in an 80.1 % response rate.

Overall, the majority of items received positive responses from participating principals. In 2010-2011, the areas that had the least positive responses among principals were: Alternative and Safe Schools personnel providing information about high risk students in a timely manner, delivery of Assessment materials within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools, efficient processing of new hire paperwork by Human Resources, provision of quality non-instructional and instructional candidates by Human Resources, accuracy of information from the Student Placement Office, and delivery of the correct amount of Rights & Responsibilities Handbooks.

A grading scale was created prior to the deployment of the survey. The scale was based upon a specific number of points corresponding to different letter grades (A – F), where item means must meet a certain threshold to count toward the total points earned. During the presentation of the 2009-2010 results, Executive Staff recommended an increase in the thresholds to ‘raise the bar’, ensuring that Central Offices strive for continuous improvement during the Opening of Schools timeframe. Thus, for the 2010-2011 reporting, each threshold was increased by .1, meaning that average responses to items had to be higher in order for Central Offices to earn points toward the overall grade. In 2010-2011, no Zone gave Central Office a grade of A and one zone gave Central Office a B. Two Zones gave grades of C, one gave a grade of D, and two gave a grade of F. Overall, the district level Central Office grade awarded by principals was a C. This is a decline from 2009-2010, when the district-level Central Office grade by principals was an A. Had the thresholds from 2009-2010 been applied to this year’s data, Central Office would have earned a grade of A.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Center for Research and Evaluation conducted an Opening of Schools survey during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the 2010-2011 school year. The purpose of this survey was to gather feedback from principals regarding how well Central Administrative Offices carried out pertinent functions necessary for a successful Opening of Schools. The survey was created during the summer of 2008, making the 2008-2009 school year the first administration. Because this was the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of administration of the survey, we were able to compare across items and time. Items were constructed based on specific deliverables for Opening of Schools that were pertinent to principals.

The survey covered a variety of areas, including facilities, transportation, school grounds, construction, staffing, delivery of textbooks and assessment materials, Zone offices (learning communities), professional development, CMS Police, the CMS website, coordinated school health, NCWise, budgets and finance, student placement, alternative and safe schools, and alignment of the district goals with the schools and community. These areas were determined based upon set deliverables, expectations, and goals for the Opening of Schools timeframe.

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## METHODS

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The Opening of Schools Survey was constructed by the Center for Research & Evaluation in collaboration with those in charge of overseeing tasks associated with Opening of Schools. Using the K12-Insight web-based survey tool, the survey was deployed initially on Monday, September 20, 2010. This survey platform allows for follow-up surveys to be sent anonymously to those who have not responded—providing an opportunity to generate an acceptable return rate. Reminders were sent out on three occasions to non-responders. The first reminder was sent out on September 22, 2010; the second reminder was sent on September 23, 2010; the last reminder was sent on September 27, 2010.

The survey consisted of three sections. The first section included a 4-point agreement scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) for 37 statements whereby principals were asked to provide their level of agreement with each statement. Section 2 included five satisfaction items using a 3-point scale (Excellent, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement). Section 3 included seven “yes/no” items for the participant to respond about whether the listed function took place. All sections also included a “not applicable” response option. A branching mechanism was included to allow only participants who had construction at their school, mobile classrooms in operation, and/or participants from magnet schools to receive specific items. A variable for Zone was pre-populated into the survey platform for disaggregation of data.

The first analysis performed was the percent in each response category for each item by section. The second analysis performed was a calculation of a mean for each item in each section. In 2008-2009, a grading scale was created to determine how well Central Offices performed as a whole. A similar grading scale was applied to 2010-2011 results and follows an A–F scale with A representing 90% or more of the means of items being above a specific threshold (i.e. on the desirable end of the scale),

B representing 80%, C representing 70%, and so on. A point was awarded to items that had mean scores above pre-specified thresholds. During reporting of the 2009-2010 Opening of Schools data, Executive Staff recommended an increase in the thresholds to ‘raise the bar’, ensuring that Central Offices strives for continuous improvement during the Opening of Schools timeframe. Thus, for the 2010-2011 reporting, each threshold was increased by .1, meaning that average responses to items had to be higher in order for Central Offices to earn points toward the overall grade.

For instance, the first section, which includes 37 statements on 4-point scales (1 = lowest and 4 = highest) was based on whether items had a mean of 3.1 or higher (an increase of .1 from the threshold in 2009-2010); if so, items were awarded a point indicating that overall the participants were responding on the desirable end of the scale. The second section was based on whether items had a 2.1 (an increase of .1) or higher—the scale ranged from 1 (lowest) – 3 (highest). The third section was a “yes/no” section (Yes = 2, No = 1) and was based on whether the item mean was 1.6 (an increase of .1) or higher. The total number of points possible was 49.

All the points were tallied and the following grading scale was applied:

- A = 44 or more points
- B = 39 – 43
- C = 34 – 38
- D = 29– 33
- F = Below 29

## RESULTS

The response rate for the surveys was acceptable and considered to be representative. Of the 176 original surveys sent, 141 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 80.1%. Among the six Zones, the response rate varied, with the Special Zone having the highest returns (100%) and the Central Elementary having the lowest returns (70%). The table below shows the response rate by Zone and by district.

Survey Response Rates By Zone			
Zone	Sent	Returned	Return Rate
Central-Elementary	50	35	70.0
Central-Secondary	18	17	94.4
East	31	23	74.2
Northeast	34	29	85.3
Southwest	39	33	84.6
Special	4	4	100.0
District	176	141	80.1

When the percent of principals responding “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” was analyzed, the results indicated that the majority of principals responded on the desirable end of the scale (“Agree” – “Strongly Agree”). In section 1, there were eight items that had 95% or higher of principals responding “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” while 28 out of the 37 items had 85% of principals responding “Strongly Agree” or “Agree.” The item that assessed understanding about the goals and objectives of the district from the Superintendent received 100% desirable responses from participating principals. Note that three items were only asked of principals that responded “Yes” to “ Did you have construction work conducted at your school prior to the Opening of Schools 2010-2011?” These three items were:

1. Renovations or new buildings were completed within a reasonable time period of the scheduled delivery date.
2. Necessary construction work was accomplished in a timely manner.
3. The learning environment was respected when construction related work was performed.

Based on the percent of principals responding in the “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” category, the top five items in Section 1 were:

1. I understand the goals and objectives of the district, as specified by the Office of the Superintendent.
2. Useful information, relevant to Opening of Schools, was posted on the CMS web sites.
3. Central Office transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.
4. CMS Police were responsive to the opening needs of my school.
5. The goals and objectives of the district are appropriate for the community.

In 2009-2010, no items had less than 75% responding “Strongly Agree” or “Agree.” In 2010-2011, four items had less than 75%. The items receiving the least positive responses (in descending order) among principals were:

1. Afternoon transportation has had minimal issues/problems.
2. Assessment materials were received within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.
3. I was provided a quality candidate pool for non-instructional vacancies.
4. Human Resources efficiently processed the required paperwork on my newly hired employees.
5. I was provided a quality candidate pool for instructional vacancies.

The table below provides item results for section 1 of the survey. Additionally, a column was included that combined the total percent of principals who responded “Strongly Agree” or “Agree.”

Section 1 Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree/Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
School facilities were adequately prepped for the opening timeframe.	1	0.7	19	13.5	74	52.5	47	33.3	121	85.8
The furniture/equipment at my school was in acceptable working condition for Opening of Schools.	2	1.4	7	5.0	75	53.2	57	40.4	132	93.6
My property manager was responsive to the opening needs of my school.	2	1.4	16	11.4	59	42.1	63	45	122	87.1
Afternoon transportation has had minimal issues/problems.	6	4.3	19	13.5	74	52.5	42	29.8	116	82.3
Morning transportation has had minimal issues/problems.	3	2.1	17	12.1	72	51.4	48	34.3	120	85.7
The majority of transportation assignments have been accurate.	2	1.4	4	2.9	89	63.6	45	32.1	134	95.7
Area transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.	.	.	7	5.0	68	48.2	66	46.8	134	95.0
Central Office transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.	.	.	4	3.1	73	57.0	51	39.8	124	96.9
Student Assignment personnel strived to help when issues arose.	2	1.5	11	8.3	84	63.6	35	26.5	119	90.2
Renovations or new buildings were completed within a reasonable time period of the scheduled delivery date.*	.	.	2	14.3	8	57.1	4	28.6	12	85.7
Necessary construction work was accomplished in a timely manner.*	.	.	2	11.8	10	58.8	5	29.4	15	88.2
The learning environment was respected when construction related work was performed.*	1	6.7	.	.	9	60.0	5	33.3	14	93.3
Mobile classrooms were in good working order.	2	3.7	6	11.1	33	61.1	13	24.1	46	85.2
I was provided a quality candidate pool for non-instructional vacancies.	13	12	20	18.5	64	59.3	11	10.2	75	69.4



Section 1 Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree/Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I was provided a quality candidate pool for instructional vacancies.	15	11.1	43	31.9	65	48.1	12	8.9	77	57.0
Human Resources efficiently processed the required paperwork on my newly hired employees.	20	14.4	31	22.3	59	42.4	29	20.9	88	63.3
Appropriate summer school student records were received in a timely manner.	3	3.6	6	7.2	66	79.5	8	9.6	74	89.2
Textbooks were delivered within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	2	1.5	12	8.8	97	70.8	26	19.0	123	89.8
New materials were received in a timely manner.	1	0.7	10	7.4	97	71.3	28	20.6	125	91.9
CMS Police were responsive to the opening needs of my school.	1	0.9	3	2.7	71	64.5	35	31.8	106	96.4
My Zone Office was responsive to my school's needs.	.	.	9	6.4	54	38.6	77	55.0	131	93.6
I received appropriate training and/or communication from my Zone Office around pertinent information related to Opening of Schools.	.	.	7	5.0	69	48.9	65	46.1	134	95.0
I understand the goals and objectives of the district, as specified by the Office of the Superintendent.	.	.	.	.	56	39.7	85	60.3	141	100
The Opening of Schools publications (i.e. Rights and Responsibilities handbook) were received within a reasonable time period prior to opening of schools.	2	1.4	18	12.9	81	57.9	39	27.9	120	85.7
Useful information, relevant to Opening of Schools, was posted on the CMS web sites.	.	.	1	0.7	92	65.2	48	34	140	99.3
Curriculum and Instruction provided adequate training associated with implementing new programs for the upcoming school year.	2	1.6	20	15.5	81	62.8	26	20.2	107	82.9

Section 1 Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree/Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Coordinated School Health provided my school with necessary information related to Opening of Schools issues.	.	.	12	8.8	96	70.6	28	20.6	124	91.2
Coordinated School Health personnel (including nurses) were helpful with communicating Opening of Schools issues, policies, and procedures.	.	.	10	7.1	95	67.9	35	25.0	130	92.9
NCWise training was sufficient.	.	.	20	16.1	88	71.0	16	12.9	104	83.9
NCWise personnel have been responsive to my questions.	1	0.8	6	4.7	97	75.8	24	18.8	121	94.5
Finance personnel provided necessary information relating to opening budgets.	5	3.6	19	13.8	89	64.5	25	18.1	114	82.6
I was able to access funding in Lawson within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	3	2.1	11	7.9	95	67.9	31	22.1	126	90.0
The purchasing process was adequately explained.	2	1.5	18	13.3	90	66.7	25	18.5	115	85.2
Alternative and Safe Schools personnel provided needed information regarding status of high risk students in a timely manner.	3	3.4	12	13.5	63	70.8	11	12.4	74	83.1
Assessment materials were received within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	6	4.4	29	21.5	84	62.2	16	11.9	100	74.1
Accountability personnel were responsive to my questions related to Opening of Schools assessments.	4	3.0	11	8.1	92	68.1	28	20.7	120	88.9

*\*responses provided only by principals stating they had construction work conducted at their school prior to the Opening of Schools 2010-2011.*

In section 2, the principals were asked to respond to items based on what they had heard from others. Their directions were as follows:

*Based on your experiences and feedback from parents and staff during the Opening of Schools timeframe, please select a category that best describes your opinions about the level of quality encountered with the following functions:*

The scale included “Needs Improvement,” “Satisfactory,” and “Excellent.” The item “helpfulness of the Zone Offices” received the most “Excellent” responses from principals. The item with the highest percent responding “Needs Improvement” was “accuracy of information to parents from the Student Placement Office.” However, all items had a majority of responses at the “satisfactory” level or higher.

Section 2 Items	Needs Improvement		Satisfactory		Excellent	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Communication to parents about required vaccinations	19	14.2	86	64.2	29	21.6
Accuracy of information to parents from the Student Placement Office	23	17.6	85	64.9	23	17.6
Helpfulness of Zone Offices	10	7.2	54	39.1	74	53.6
Helpfulness of the Parent Hotline	4	4.2	75	78.1	17	17.7
Alignment of the district goals and objectives to the needs of the community	8	5.9	82	60.7	45	33.3

In section 3, the principals were asked to respond “yes” or “no” as to whether the listed function occurred or not. Again, the majority of responses were on the desirable end of the scale. The highest percent of “yes” responses was for the item “Were the correct textbooks delivered?” This item was followed by, “if yes, were enough textbooks delivered?” The item with the least “yes” responses was “Were enough Handbooks (Rights and Responsibilities) delivered?” with 60.4% participants responding yes. This item was followed by, “Were all obsolete materials removed as requested?” In 2008-2009, the item with the lowest “yes” responses was “if yes, were enough textbooks delivered?”

Section 3 Items	No		Yes	
	n	%	n	%
Were all vital work requests completed?	36	25.9	103	74.1
Were all obsolete materials removed as requested?	37	30.8	83	69.2
Were the correct assessment materials delivered?	20	15.0	113	85.0
<i>If yes, was the correct number of assessment materials delivered?</i>	35	27.8	91	72.2
Were the correct textbooks delivered?	10	7.6	122	92.4
<i>If yes, were enough textbooks delivered?</i>	23	17.7	107	82.3
Were enough Handbooks (Rights and Responsibilities) delivered?	55	39.6	84	60.4

Thus far we have presented the data based on the proportion of principals who have “Strongly Agreed” or “Agreed” with each item. We then chose to calculate mean item scores, taking into account responses across the entire scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” In doing so, the values associated with each response category are mathematically accounted for in the calculations (i.e. 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree), whereas in presenting the proportion of “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” responses, each category was of equal value. The top 5 items with the highest mean scores in Section 1 were:

1. I understand the goals and objectives of the district, as specified by the Office of the Superintendent.
2. My Zone Office was responsive to my school’s needs.
3. The goals and objectives of the district are appropriate for the community.
4. Area transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.
5. I received appropriate training and/or communication from my Zone Office around pertinent information related to Opening of Schools.

The items with the lowest mean scores (in descending order) were:

1. Alternative and Safe Schools personnel provided needed information regarding status of high risk students in a timely manner.
2. Assessment materials were received within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.
3. Human Resources efficiently processed the required paperwork on my newly hired employees.
4. I was provided a quality candidate pool for non-instructional vacancies.
5. I was provided a quality candidate pool for instructional vacancies.

The table below provides mean scores for Section 1 of the survey. The district results are presented first, followed by a table that disaggregates mean scores by Zone. The district results are presented in order from highest mean score to the lowest mean score for 2010-2011. There is also a column that indicates the change in mean score for the item from 2009-2010 to 2010-2011. The Zone results are presented in the order the item appeared on the survey. Positive change indicates better responses. Negative change indicates a decrease in mean score. Improvements from 2009-2010 on items that were below the threshold are also presented.

All items in Section 1 were above the threshold in 2009-10, while eight items were below the increased threshold in 2010-11. “Student Assignment personnel strived to help when issues arose.” and “Textbooks were delivered within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.” had the highest improvement change scores (+.1). Twenty items showed decreases ranging in absolute size from .1 to .6.

Section 1 - Items	2009-10 Mean	2010-11 Mean	Change
I understand the goals and objectives of the district, as specified by the Office of the Superintendent.	3.6	3.6	0.0
My Zone Office was responsive to my school's needs.	3.5	3.5	0.0
The goals and objectives of the district are appropriate for the community.	3.6	3.4	-0.2
I received appropriate training and/or communication from my Zone Office around pertinent information related to Opening of Schools.	3.5	3.4	-0.1
Area transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.	3.4	3.4	0.0
Central Office transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.	3.4	3.4	0.0
Useful information, relevant to Opening of Schools, was posted on the CMS web sites.	3.5	3.3	-0.2
The furniture/equipment at my school was in acceptable working condition for Opening of Schools.	3.4	3.3	-0.1
My property manager was responsive to the opening needs of my school.	3.3	3.3	0.0
The majority of transportation assignments have been accurate.	3.3	3.3	0.0
CMS Police were responsive to the opening needs of my school.	3.3	3.3	0.0
The learning environment was respected when construction related work was performed.	3.5	3.2	-0.3
School facilities were adequately prepped for the opening timeframe.	3.4	3.2	-0.2
Coordinated School Health personnel (including nurses) were helpful with communicating Opening of Schools issues, policies, and procedures.	3.3	3.2	-0.1
Morning transportation has had minimal issues/problems.	3.2	3.2	0.0
Necessary construction work was accomplished in a timely manner.	3.2	3.2	0.0
Student Assignment personnel strived to help when issues arose.	3.1	3.2	0.1
The Opening of Schools publications (i.e. Rights and Responsibilities hand-book) were received within a reasonable time period prior to opening of schools.	3.3	3.1	-0.2
Coordinated School Health provided my school with necessary information related to Opening of Schools issues.	3.2	3.1	-0.1
I was able to access funding in Lawson within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	3.2	3.1	-0.1
NCWise personnel have been responsive to my questions.	3.2	3.1	-0.1
Accountability personnel were responsive to my questions related to Opening of Schools assessments.	3.1	3.1	0.0
Renovations or new buildings were completed within a reasonable time period of the scheduled delivery date.	3.1	3.1	0.0
New materials were received in a timely manner.	3.1	3.1	0.0
Afternoon transportation has had minimal issues/problems.	3.1	3.1	0.0
Mobile classrooms were in good working order.	3.1	3.1	0.0

Section 1 - Items	2009-10 Mean	2010-11 Mean	Change
Textbooks were delivered within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	3.0	3.1	0.1
Finance personnel provided necessary information relating to opening budgets.	3.2	3.0	-0.2
The purchasing process was adequately explained.	3.2	3.0	-0.2
Appropriate summer school student records were received in a timely manner.	3.1	3.0	-0.1
NCWise training was sufficient.	3.1	3.0	-0.1
Curriculum and Instruction provided adequate training associated with implementing new programs for the upcoming school year.	3.0	3.0	0.0
Alternative and Safe Schools personnel provided needed information regarding status of high risk students in a timely manner.	3.0	2.9	-0.1
Assessment materials were received within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	3.1	2.8	-0.3
Human Resources efficiently processed the required paperwork on my newly hired employees.	3.2	2.7	-0.5
I was provided a quality candidate pool for non-instructional vacancies.	3.1	2.7	-0.4
I was provided a quality candidate pool for instructional vacancies.	3.1	2.5	-0.6

Section 1 Items By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
School facilities were adequately prepped for the opening timeframe.	3.4	0.6	2.8	0.8	3.2	0.8	3.2	0.6	3.2	0.6	2.8	1.0
The furniture/equipment at my school was in acceptable working condition for Opening of Schools.	3.5	0.6	2.9	0.7	3.4	0.6	3.4	0.6	3.3	0.7	3.0	0.8
My property manager was responsive to the opening needs of my school.	3.3	0.8	2.9	0.7	3.6	0.5	3.4	0.8	3.4	0.6	2.8	0.5
Afternoon transportation has had minimal issues/problems.	3.4	0.7	2.9	0.8	3.1	0.8	2.9	0.8	2.9	0.8	3.0	0.8

Section 1 Items By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Morning transportation has had minimal issues/problems.	3.3	0.7	3.2	0.8	3.3	0.8	3	0.8	3.1	0.7	3.0	0.8
The majority of transportation assignments have been accurate.	3.3	0.5	3.3	0.8	3.2	0.7	3.3	0.5	3.2	0.6	3.3	0.5
Area transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.	3.5	0.5	3.5	0.6	3.5	0.6	3.2	0.7	3.5	0.6	3.8	0.5
Central Office transportation personnel strived to help when issues arose.	3.4	0.6	3.3	0.6	3.3	0.6	3.3	0.5	3.4	0.5	3.8	0.5
Student Assignment personnel strived to help when issues arose.	3.2	0.5	3.2	0.8	3.0	0.6	3.1	0.7	3.2	0.6	3.0	0.0
Renovations or new buildings were completed within a reasonable time period of the scheduled delivery date.	2.5	0.7	.	.	3.7	0.5	2.8	0.4	3.0	.	.	.
Necessary construction work was accomplished in a timely manner.	2.5	0.7	3.5	0.7	3.7	0.5	3.0	0	2.5	0.7	.	.
The learning environment was respected when construction related work was performed.	3.0	.	3.0	.	3.7	0.5	3.2	0.4	2.0	1.4	.	.
Mobile classrooms were in good working order.	3.0	0.6	2.8	0.5	3.3	0.5	3.0	0.9	3.0	1.0	3.0	.
I was provided a quality candidate pool for non-instructional vacancies.	2.8	0.7	2.3	1.1	2.9	0.8	3.0	0.5	2.4	0.9	2.3	1.0
I was provided a quality candidate pool for instructional vacancies.	2.6	0.8	2.3	0.9	2.6	0.8	2.9	0.7	2.4	0.9	2.0	0.8
Human Resources efficiently processed the required paperwork on my newly hired employees.	3.2	0.7	2.2	0.7	2.7	1.0	3.0	0.8	2.3	1.0	2.0	1.2

Section 1 Items By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Appropriate summer school student records were received in a timely manner.	3.2	0.4	3.0	0.4	2.7	0.8	3.0	0.0	2.8	0.7	2.5	0.7
Textbooks were delivered within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	3.2	0.7	3.0	0.4	3.1	0.6	3.1	0.5	3.0	0.6	3.0	0.0
New materials were received in a timely manner.	3.2	0.7	2.9	0.4	3.3	0.4	3.1	0.4	3.0	0.6	3.0	0.0
CMS Police were responsive to the opening needs of my school.	3.4	0.7	3.2	0.4	3.4	0.6	3.1	0.4	3.3	0.6	3.3	0.6
My Zone Office was responsive to my school's needs.	3.5	0.7	3.5	0.6	3.5	0.5	3.6	0.6	3.4	0.6	3.5	1.0
I received appropriate training and/or communication from my Zone Office around pertinent information related to Opening of Schools.	3.4	0.6	3.5	0.5	3.4	0.6	3.5	0.6	3.3	0.6	3.5	1.0
I understand the goals and objectives of the district, as specified by the Office of the Superintendent.	3.6	0.5	3.6	0.5	3.6	0.5	3.6	0.5	3.5	0.5	4.0	0.0
The goals and objectives of the district are appropriate for the community.	3.5	0.6	3.4	0.7	3.6	0.5	3.4	0.5	3.3	0.6	3.8	0.5
The Opening of Schools publications (i.e. Rights and Responsibilities handbook) were received within a reasonable time period prior to opening of schools.	3.2	0.6	2.9	0.8	3.3	0.8	3.1	0.6	3.0	0.7	3.3	0.5
Useful information, relevant to Opening of Schools, was posted on the CMS web sites.	3.4	0.5	3.2	0.4	3.4	0.5	3.3	0.5	3.3	0.5	3.3	0.5



Section 1 Items By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Curriculum and Instruction provided adequate training associated with implementing new programs for the upcoming school year.	3.2	0.6	2.8	0.6	3.2	0.5	3.1	0.5	2.8	0.7	2.8	1.3
Coordinated School Health provided my school with necessary information related to Opening of Schools issues.	3.0	0.6	2.9	0.5	3.3	0.6	3.3	0.5	3.1	0.5	3.0	0.0
Coordinated School Health personnel (including nurses) were helpful with communicating Opening of Schools issues, policies, and procedures.	3.2	0.5	2.8	0.5	3.3	0.6	3.2	0.5	3.2	0.5	3.3	0.5
NCWise training was sufficient.	3.0	0.6	2.9	0.5	3.1	0.6	3.0	0.4	2.9	0.6	2.5	0.6
NCWise personnel have been responsive to my questions.	3.1	0.7	3.1	0.3	3.2	0.5	3.1	0.4	3.1	0.5	3.0	0.0
Finance personnel provided necessary information relating to opening budgets.	3.0	0.7	2.5	0.7	3.3	0.6	3.1	0.5	3.0	0.7	2.3	1.0
I was able to access funding in Lawson within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	3.1	0.7	2.8	0.4	3.3	0.6	3.1	0.4	3.2	0.6	2.3	1.0
The purchasing process was adequately explained.	3.1	0.7	2.8	0.4	3.2	0.7	3.0	0.4	3.1	0.6	2.5	1.0

Section 1 Items By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Alternative and Safe Schools personnel provided needed information regarding status of high risk students in a timely manner.	3.2	0.5	2.6	0.8	3.1	0.6	2.9	0.4	2.9	0.7	2.8	0.5
Assessment materials were received within a reasonable time period for Opening of Schools.	2.8	0.8	2.9	0.5	2.9	0.7	2.6	0.6	3.0	0.7	2.3	0.6
Accountability personnel were responsive to my questions related to Opening of Schools assessments.	3.0	0.7	3.1	0.4	2.9	0.8	2.9	0.6	3.3	0.6	3.0	0.0

In section 2, the principals were asked to respond to items based on what they had heard from others. Their directions were as follows:

*Based on your experiences and feedback from parents and staff during the Opening of Schools timeframe, please select a category that best describes your opinions about the level of quality encountered with the following functions:*

Means were calculated based on the following values: 1=Needs Improvement, 2=Satisfactory and 3=Excellent. Similar to 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, the item with the highest mean score was “helpfulness of Zone Offices.” The item with the lowest mean was “accuracy of information to parents from the Student Placement office.” No item had a positive change score compared to 2009-2010, while the “Communication to parents about required vaccinations” item yielded the largest decline between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

The table below provides item results for Section 2 of the survey for the district, followed by results disaggregated by Zone. The district results are presented in order from highest mean score to the lowest mean score for 2010-2011. The Zone results are presented in the order the item appeared on the survey.

Section 2 - Items	2009-10 Mean	2010-11 Mean	Change
Helpfulness of Zone Offices	2.5	2.5	0.0
Alignment of the district goals and objectives to the needs of the community	2.4	2.3	-0.1
Communication to parents about required vaccinations	2.3	2.1	-0.2
Helpfulness of the Parent Hotline	2.2	2.1	-0.1
Accuracy of information to parents from the Student Placement Office	2.0	2.0	0.0

Section 2 Item By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Communication to parents about required vaccinations	2.2	0.6	1.7	0.6	2.0	0.7	2.0	0.5	2.2	0.6	1.8	0.5
Accuracy of information to parents from the Student Placement Office	2.1	0.6	1.9	0.6	1.9	0.6	2.2	0.5	1.9	0.7	2.0	.
Helpfulness of Zone Offices	2.4	0.7	2.4	0.7	2.5	0.7	2.7	0.5	2.4	0.6	2.5	1.0
Helpfulness of the Parent Hotline	2.2	0.6	2.0	0.4	2.1	0.5	2.1	0.3	2.2	0.4	2.0	0.0
Alignment of the district goals and objectives to the needs of the community	2.4	0.6	2.2	0.7	2.4	0.5	2.2	0.4	2.2	0.7	2.5	0.6

In section 3, principals were asked to respond “yes” or “no” as to whether each listed function was completed. Means were calculated based on the following values: 1 = No, 2 = Yes. The items with the highest mean score were “Were the correct textbooks delivered?” and “if yes, were enough textbooks delivered?” The item with the lowest mean was “Were enough Handbooks (Rights and Responsibilities) delivered?” No items yielded a positive change score, while the item “Were all vital work requests completed?” yielded the largest decrease (-.3).

The table below provides the results for section 3 of the survey for the district, followed by the results disaggregated by Zone. The district results are presented in order from highest mean score to the lowest mean score for 2010-2011. The Zone results are presented in the order the item appeared on the survey.

Section 3 - Items By Zone	2009-10 Mean	2010-11 Mean	Change
Were the correct textbooks delivered?	1.9	1.9	0.0
<i>If yes, were enough textbooks delivered?</i>	1.8	1.8	0.0
Were the correct assessment materials delivered?	2.0	1.8	-0.2
<i>If yes, was the correct number of assessment materials delivered?</i>	2.0	1.7	-0.3
Were all vital work requests completed?	1.8	1.7	-0.1
Were all obsolete materials removed as requested?	1.7	1.7	0.0
Were enough Handbooks (Rights and Responsibilities) delivered?	1.8	1.6	-0.2

Section 3 Items By Zone	Central-E		Central-S		East		Northeast		Southwest		Special	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Were all vital work requests completed?	1.8	0.4	1.6	0.5	1.7	0.4	1.8	0.4	1.8	0.4	1.3	0.5
Were all obsolete materials removed as requested?	1.7	0.4	1.5	0.5	1.8	0.4	1.7	0.5	1.7	0.5	1.3	0.5
Were the correct assessment materials delivered?	1.8	0.4	1.9	0.4	1.9	0.3	1.8	0.4	1.9	0.2	1.7	0.6
If yes, was the correct number of assessment materials delivered?	1.8	0.4	1.8	0.4	1.7	0.5	1.7	0.5	1.8	0.4	2.0	0.0
Were the correct textbooks delivered?	1.9	0.3	2.0	0.0	1.9	0.3	2	0.2	1.9	0.3	1.7	0.6
If yes, were enough textbooks delivered?	1.8	0.4	2.0	0.0	1.8	0.4	1.9	0.3	1.7	0.5	2.0	0.0
Were enough Handbooks (Rights and Responsibilities) delivered?	1.5	0.5	1.5	0.5	1.6	0.5	1.8	0.4	1.5	0.5	2.0	0.0

Following the pre-specified scale that was originally created in 2008-2009, any item that had a mean score above the thresholds received a point. The points were translated into a grading scale. The grading scale was also disaggregated by Zone:

**A = 44 or more points**

**B = 39 – 43**

**C = 34 – 38**

**D = 29– 33**

**F = Below 29**

In 2009-2010, all 39 items in Section 1 had mean scores above the threshold (2.95) and therefore contributed to the overall district grade score. In 2009-2010, all five items in section 2 contributed to the score for the district grade (threshold of 2.0). In section 3, all item means were at 1.5 or higher in 2009-2010, resulting in 7 points for this section.

In 2010-2011, there were 37 items in Section 1 (two items were dropped), five items in Section 2 and seven items in Section 3 for a total of 49 items. At the time of reporting for the 2009-2010 survey, Executive Staff determined that the bar for the level of service needed to be raised. Thus, threshold values were increased by 0.1 across the three sections. As a result, for item means in Section 1 to

contribute to the overall district grade score, a mean must be greater than or equal to 3.05. Similarly, for item means from Sections 2 and 3 to contribute, the means must be greater than or equal to 2.1 and 1.6, respectively.

A total of 38 items across the three sections met the threshold values, yielding an overall Opening of Schools grade for Central Offices of C. Had the threshold values from the 2009-2010 grading been applied, Central Offices would have earned a grade of A.

There was a greater amount of fluctuation in grades assigned by Zone offices for the 2010-2011 Opening of Schools compared to those assigned in 2009-2010. The Zones that had the most items above the mean thresholds were East and Central-Elementary. The point totals and the grade breakdown by Zone are presented below.

Grade by Zone		
Zone	Points	Grade
Central-Elementary	37	C
Central-Secondary	21	F
East	40	B
Northeast	34	C
Southwest	30	D
Special	18	F
District	38	C

Using the branching feature in K12-Insight, magnet school principals were asked to respond to three additional items. The tables below present the item results—number and percent responding in each category followed by a means table. The majority of principals responded “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” to the items (the desirable end of the scale). The mean scores ranged from 3.0 – 3.1 and remain unchanged from the ratings provided in 2009-2010.

Magnet Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree/ Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The Magnet Office has helped me understand my program theme.	1	3.6	3	10.7	15	53.6	9	32.1	24	85.7
The Magnet Office was helpful with issues that arose with program implementation.	.	.	6	22.2	13	48.1	8	29.6	21	77.8
Magnet program information through orientation or other specific meetings was useful.	2	7.7	4	15.4	11	42.3	9	34.6	20	76.9

Magnet Items	2009-10 Mean	2010-11 Mean	Change
The Magnet Office has helped me understand my program theme.	3.1	3.1	0.0
The Magnet Office was helpful with issues that arose with program implementation.	3.1	3.1	0.0
Magnet program information through orientation or other specific meetings was useful.	3.0	3.0	0.0

## CONCLUSION

The Center for Research and Evaluation conducted an Opening of Schools survey during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the school year for the last three years. The purpose of this survey was to gather feedback from principals on how well Central Administrative Offices carried out pertinent functions necessary for a successful Opening of Schools. The survey covered a variety of areas, including facilities, transportation, grounds, construction, staffing, delivery of textbooks and assessment materials, area offices (learning communities), professional development, law enforcement, the CMS website, coordinated school health, NCWise, budgets and finance, student placement, alternative and safe schools, and alignment of the district goals with the schools and community. These areas were determined based upon set deliverables, expectations, and goals for the Opening of Schools timeframe.

The survey was created during the summer of 2008, making this the 3<sup>rd</sup> administration of this instrument. Items were constructed based on specific deliverables for Opening of Schools that were pertinent to principals. K12-Insight, a web-based survey platform, was used to administer the survey. Out of 176 total surveys delivered, 141 were returned, resulting in an 80.1% response rate. Among the six Zones, the response rate varied, with the Special Zone having the highest returns (100%) and the Central-Elementary having the lowest returns (70%). Basic frequencies and descriptive statistics were performed. Also, a grading scale was applied in an attempt to provide an overall picture of the item results.

In 2008-2009, the results of the Opening of Schools survey indicated that CMS Central Administrative Offices were on the cusp of providing excellent quality service to its principals. In 2009-2010, the results at the district level were overwhelmingly positive and much improved from the previous year. The majority of principals responded on the desirable end of the scales for all the items. When the overall grading scale was applied, the district received an “A” in 2009-2010, an increase from the “C” earned in 2008-2009.

In 2010-2011, the Opening of Schools survey results generated a grade of “C” for Central Offices serving the schools. A number of mean values for items showed decreases in 2010-2011 compared to the results generated in 2009-2010. Conversely, very few items showed any positive change this year compared to last year, and those that did show an increase were minimal, at best. In fact, 20 of the 37 items in Section 1 alone generated a decrease in mean values between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. Further, during the

reporting of the 2009-2010 results, Executive Staff voted to increase the threshold necessary for an item mean to count toward the overall grade awarded to Central Offices. The increased threshold made it more difficult for Central Offices to attain a higher grade, reflected in the decrease from an “A” to a “C”, though the 38 total points was only one point short of earning a “B” for an overall grade.

*An Evaluation Report Prepared by the*  
**CENTER FOR RESEARCH & EVALUATION**  
**OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

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