

## **Charlotte Executive Leadership Council Announces Additional Loaned Executives and Support for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

*More than 30 companies are providing resources to CMS, including new Executives in Residence from Bank of America, Duke Energy, and Atrium Health*

**Charlotte—March 1, 2024** — As a continuation of the Charlotte Executive Leadership Council's (CELC) support for Charlotte-Mecklenburg (CMS) schools, more than 30 companies and organizations have provided loaned executives, financial contributions, and other support to the local school district.

CMS identified and shared their biggest areas of need and CELC and business community members have continued to step forward with significant engagement and resources to address those specific areas, focused on helping CMS address key challenges impacting students.

"The collaborative approach the CELC and the Executives in Residence have taken has been invaluable to our district and to me," said Dr. Crystal Hill, CMS Superintendent. "They bring expertise in finance, human resources, and project management from the corporate world that have benefited us in many areas—including budgeting, partnerships, out-of-school tutoring, and consulting in many other areas. I am thrilled this partnership is continuing and expanding. The eagerness of the business community to help speaks volumes about the value our community puts on public education."

### **Loaned executives, monetary contributions and other support**

Since the beginning of the partnership, eight organizations have provided 15 part-time and full-time Executives in Residence (EnRs) to CMS for six months to two years: Ally Financial, Atrium Health, Bank of America, Central Piedmont Community College, Duke Energy, Novant Health, Rodgers Builders, and Wells Fargo. These leaders bring their expertise in various disciplines to assist CMS leaders and staff.

Significant monetary support has been contributed or committed by CELC companies, including gifts from Albemarle, AvidXchange, Barings, the Carolina Panthers, the Charlotte Hornets, Coca-Cola Consolidated, Crescent Communities, JELD-WEN, Lowe's, Marand Builders, Moore & Van Allen, National Gypsum Company, Nucor, SEE, Trane Technologies, and the Deloitte Foundation.

Additional support such as space, technology, consulting, teacher recruiting, and training has been committed by Honeywell, Laurel Street, Metro Landmarks, Orbital Socket, Queens University, Truist and UNC Charlotte.

“It has been heartening to be part of this effort and witness the generosity of the corporate community in supporting our public school system,” said Mike Lamach, immediate past chair of the CELC and former CEO of Trane Technologies. “The willingness of the business community to contribute human and financial resources to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools affirms the importance of a strong school district to the future of our community.”

### **Accomplishments and current work**

Since the inception of the CELC/CMS partnership in June 2022, EnRs and financial support have contributed to significant achievements, including:

- Budgeting, financial management, and strategy – EnRs worked side by side with CMS leaders to develop strategic priorities, outline financial needs and craft a transparent narrative, resulting in approval of a funded budget from the county (for the 2023-24 school year) for the first time in recent history.
- Meaningful Medicine – Atrium Health and Bank of America resources helped CMS launch the “Meaningful Medicine” program enabling virtual care for students that enhanced return-to-class rates.
- Out of school tutoring – EnRs helped CMS expand learning opportunities through tutoring outside school hours, resulting in significant improvements in reading and math.
- Operational and organizational excellence – EnRs worked collaboratively with the superintendent’s cabinet to review core processes within each department to enhance efficiency and execution.
- Technology enhancements – Resources provided by the CELC, including EnRs, assisted with data analysis, in-depth reporting and creating dashboards to enable quick action and advance the district’s goals.

Ongoing work facilitated by CELC resources includes enhancing operational efficiency, technological enhancements, communications consulting, leadership training, strategic planning, and teacher recruitment.

“One of the most important factors in whether cities will truly thrive, and fuel economic mobility, is the strength of their public school system,” said Gene Woods, chair of the CELC and CEO of Advocate Health. “CELC is proud to partner with CMS to take the district to the next level, combining their education expertise with the business experience our corporate community brings to the table.”

### **New loaned executives added to team**

The newest additions to the Executives in Residence team, who joined in October and January, are:

**Kinsey Evans** is Assistant Vice President, Corporate Patient Access, for the Greater Charlotte Region at Atrium Health. Evans will be supporting the Office of Strategy Management and continuing the strategy management and process improvement work. She will work with CMS full time for a term of one year.

**John Schleck** is a global operations executive for Bank of America who helped lead the operations team in assisting small businesses with over 490,000 loans during the pandemic. He will work with the Office of Strategy Management and support process improvement work. John’s term will be full time for eighteen months.

**Carl Council** is a retired finance executive from Duke Energy and will be supporting the Finance team. His scope will include supporting the review of current staffing allocations, the forecasting and monitoring of spending for specific allotments, enhancing monthly financial close discipline, and developing a long-term financial forecast in support of CMS strategy. Carl’s term will be for one year on a part-time basis.

**Scott Pion** is Director of Business Operations, Central Charlotte Market, at Atrium Health. He will be supporting the Office of Strategy Management and continuing the strategy management and process improvement work. Scott’s term will be for one year on a full-time basis.

These four leaders join those currently serving:

**Raki McGregor** is Senior Vice President with Novant Health. He reports to the Superintendent and serves as co-lead for the Executives in Residence.

**LaShauna Lowry** is Executive Director with Ally Financial. She serves as co-lead for the Executives in Residence.

Additionally, Raki McGregor and LaShauna Lowry are taking a leadership role in forging groundbreaking partnerships to create sustainable housing for CMS teachers and staff. They are also leading initiatives to advance the district's goal for every graduating senior to be enrolled, enlisted or employed.

**Matt Agner** is Vice President, Business Operations, at Rodgers Builders. He supports process management efforts with CMS on a part-time basis for a 14-month term.

**Mary Eshet** is a communications leader retired from Wells Fargo. She is serving part-time as a consultant for the CMS communications team for a one-year term.

**Peter Toomey** is a corporate strategy leader retired from Duke Energy. He provides support and counsel to the Strategy Office on a part-time basis with a one-year term.

The following executives have completed tenures as executives in residence and made significant contributions to financial budgeting, operational improvements, and partnership strategy:

**Moses Fox, PhD**, Executive Director of Campus Affairs, Central Piedmont Community College

**Katie Morgan**, Retired Human Resources Executive, Bank of America

**Jackie Salinas**, Retired Human Resources Executive, Duke Energy

**Elizabeth (Liz) Sterling**, Chief of Staff, Consumer and Commercial Bank, Ally Financial

**Rich Miller**, Lean Business Leader with Atrium Health's Performance Excellence Center

**Vanessa Sencherey**, Lean Business Leader with Atrium Health's Performance Excellence Center

Bright Hope Capital has also committed to providing an Executive in Residence, and discussions are under way.

The CMS Foundation manages this engagement with the CELC, including the Executives in Residence program, and serves as the central coordinator and facilitator for the partnership. Organizations and individuals seeking further information about the program and how to get involved can contact Ashelyn James ([ajames@cms-foundation.org](mailto:ajames@cms-foundation.org)) or Sonja Gantt ([sgantt@cms-foundation.org](mailto:sgantt@cms-foundation.org)).

Mary Mack, Wells Fargo Senior Executive Vice President, co-leads the CELC Education Working Team with Francisco Alvarado, CEO of Marand Builders.

“Through our involvement we have a front row seat to the progress at CMS and the commitment of Dr. Hill and her leadership team,” said Mack. “We are confident our public school system is on the path to great things, and we are thrilled to support their work. We look forward to even more widespread involvement from the business community as we work together for the success of students and our future.”

### **About CMS:**

*Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is the 16th largest school district in the nation and the second largest in North Carolina. Under the leadership of Superintendent Crystal Hill, Ed.D., the district provides academic instruction and support to more than 141,000 students across Mecklenburg County.*

*Our vision is to create an innovative, inclusive, student-centered environment that supports the development of independent learners. With a focus on ensuring all students reach their full potential, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools leads the community in educational excellence, inspiring intellectual curiosity, creativity and achievement.*

### **About CMS Foundation:**

*The CMS Foundation invests in innovation to help Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools address big challenges and expand opportunities for our students and educators. As the nonprofit fundraising partner for Charlotte-*

*Mecklenburg Schools, we harness the power of philanthropy to seed innovative ideas and accelerate system-wide transformation. [www.cms-foundation.org](http://www.cms-foundation.org)*

**About CELC:**

*The Charlotte Executive Leadership Council unites CEOs and business leaders from the Charlotte area's leading businesses, healthcare systems, and colleges/universities to advocate for impactful solutions that improve Charlotte's economic vitality, equitable opportunity and quality of life for all. [www.charlotteelc.com](http://www.charlotteelc.com)*