

## Greetings from the MCNC Director!

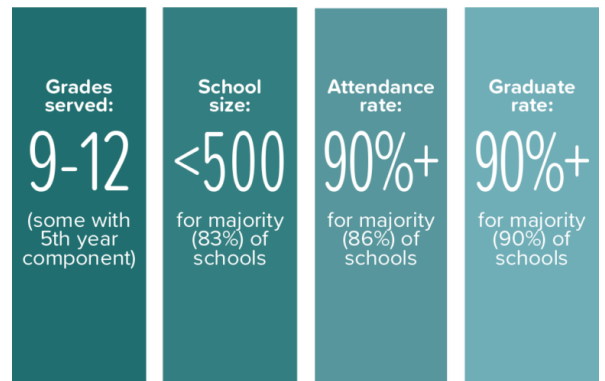
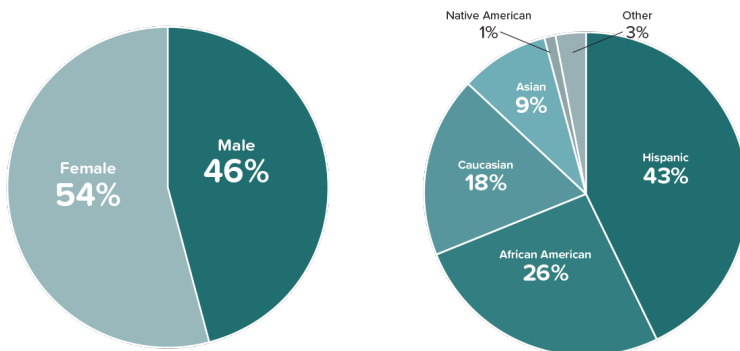
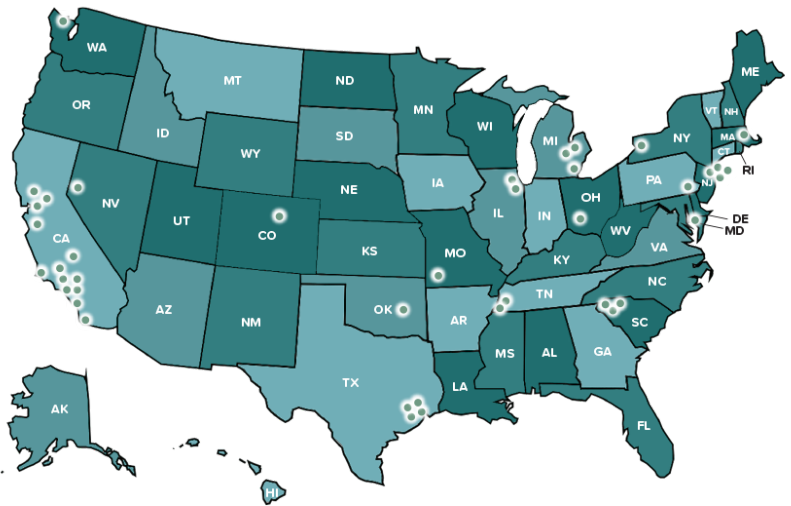
We have brought back the MCNC Newsletter! To keep us all connected in this remote era, MCNC is aiming to capture voices across our schools by using Zoom interview-transcription technology. Our goal is to feature the thoughtful, strategic, and innovative ways you are keeping your school and students successful during these very difficult times of remote learning.

We are also intent on continuing to strengthen our MCNC community by being in regular touch with you by phone and quarterly meetings. Sharing our stories is a powerful way to feel connected to each other.

We also redesigned the MCNC website! On this page, we showcase a few data graphics from our website, based on information as of summer 2020, provided by all our schools. It's exciting to see our schools continue to serve students traditionally underrepresented in higher education. And the voices on the next page illustrate why our schools are so successful, and hopefully provide useful strategies and ideas to other schools. Thank you to our first set of principals who generously gave their time to help us produce this first edition. Enjoy reading our redesigned newsletter!

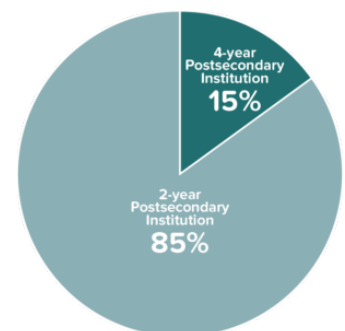
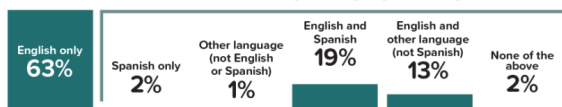
*Cace Cunningham*

## Profile of Our Schools and Students Served



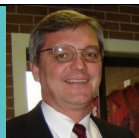
**Free/Reduced Lunch** 67%

37% of students speak a non-English language only or a combination of a non-English language and English at home.



# Voices from Our MCNC Community

For this *Voices* corner of the newsletter, the MCNC Executive Team engaged in Zoom conversations with principals to learn and hear about how they were engaging teachers and/or students in this era of remote, virtual learning. Select segments are highlighted below.

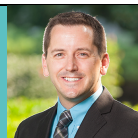


**Greer Middle College  
Greenville Technical College  
Greenville, South Carolina  
Fred Crawford, Principal**

"We opened the school year with an overview of mental health with our staff. Our in-house mental health counselor has been good, not just for the kids but also for the faculty. We've been working with Greer Mental Health but we've also brought in mental health interns for extra support; the interns have to complete practicums and are supervised by a licensed health specialist. Our mental health counselor did another recent in-service and we're trying to say: if you want to talk to someone or need therapy, there's no cost to the adult and no cost to the student. We've incorporated this into our freshman success classes and Blazer Blocks (Family/House) and with our parents. We've had Zoom sessions after school with 85-100 parents – it's a good way to connect them to support and resources available through the school and community."

"In the summer, teachers were paid a stipend if they completed a course on best practices for distance learning and all but one was able to participate. And a lot of our PD, in addition to mental, social and emotional support, as far as instruction, has focused on effective use of technology and best teaching practices in a virtual environment. Our PDs and faculty meetings – we not only stream it for the other teachers, but we're also recording it so if you miss it, you can go back to it later. It's the same for our classes for the kids – we're capturing everything and if you miss it or need to come back to it, there's a way to get at it."

"All of this is not that different in terms of old-school middle college wraparound services; you just have to be able to adapt to the time, need and moment such as now and everyone's trying to do their best."



**The Charles School  
Ohio Dominican University  
Columbus, Ohio  
Ed Ingram, Principal**

"I think of engagement in a couple of realms. We've tried to focus on real, purposeful communication. Everything from Google Docs to frequent phone calls, texts, G-chats, etc. And keeping teachers and staff very engaged. Now that we're remote, we've invited everybody into meetings so that everyone knows what's going on. We've also been very purposeful with teacher engagement in the teacher-level meetings. For instance, we do our weekly data teams on a rotation and with a focus to what we're looking for. We also have collaboration time which is a free form time for teachers to work across disciplines and prepare co-taught lessons. Once a week, we do rotational meetings around our standing committee work which involves culture, freshmen success, and the school leadership team, each of which is mostly comprised of teachers."

"I'm really excited about how we've engaged our kids through virtual assemblies the first Friday of every month. We work with an outside contractor to help us engage the community and she helps us organize a variety of speakers and intentionally design these assemblies. She has really helped us to revamp our Instagram account and really think about how we're trying to meet kids and families where they're at. We just had our third virtual assembly. Our first one laid the groundwork; the next one was around Hispanic Heritage Month. Then, the most recent one was called 'Lift Every Voice' because it's election time and we wanted to make sure every voice is heard, honored, and respected – we're in the Zoom chat and the kids are the ones speaking."



**Middle College High School  
Seattle University, U of  
Washington  
Seattle, Washington**

"We worked on a positive behavior intervention support system framework – developing just a cohesive language that we use at all three of our sites to talk about behavior and expectations. And talking about social emotional learning with our students. We worked on that as a group and each site had some input, which allowed them to each work on things that they believe are important for their site because every site is a little different. We said we were going to look at things through the lens of the 10 essential elements of dignity, based on Donna Hicks' book, *Leading with Dignity*. And then also break those elements down into specific behaviors like – What does it look like to show respect? What does it look like to be responsible in your homework or to keep up with your work?"

"I think it's been helpful because the kids do know their voices are being heard, and so, as we're doing all this new stuff with remote learning, they feel comfortable to have these conversations with our teachers. And students are saying: Ok I'm going to do my best but I'm also going to let you know when I'm struggling. So, it's been this real great balance of students being able to communicate with our teachers, and teachers taking that feedback and adjusting course on their end. And it's been amazing. The kids are doing really well, surprisingly in this remote environment – they are so resilient!"



**Mott Middle College  
Mott Community College  
Flint, Michigan  
Margaret Green, Principal**

"You need to take care of the adults who take care of the kids. That's important to maintaining a positive school culture. I try to listen to what teachers are saying, hear them, and allow them space to share as they need. In a recent staff meeting, we just opened things up to have an honest dialog about what we're going through. People need voice."

"Our teachers are reaching out through Google classrooms, making calls home, and doing one-on-ones, but we also have a system to address concerns about students: 'student concerns form' process. A teacher fills out the Google form if s/he recognizes an academic or social emotional need, or a behavior, attendance, technology issue. It goes to our Student Services team which includes our counselors, the assistant principal and me. Then we'll dig deeper, make phone calls and act on addressing the concern. Once a week, our assistant principal goes door-to-door to student homes to connect and check in on kids."

"I'm a happiness advantage trainer for our district. Based on Shawn Achor's science of positivity book, *The Happiness Advantage: Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work*, I try to incorporate this into our school community. My teachers have all been trained; some are fired up about it, some may be a bit more cynical which I get. We have a quiet team that will do small things to pump up our school folks when they're feeling a bit down."