#### State of Our Schools Speech by Superintendent Ann Clark

Thank you, Steven. Good morning, everyone. It's a pleasure to welcome all of you to our annual State of Our Schools event. Thank you for making time to join us.

As Steven told you, we first met when he was in middle school at Alexander Graham and I was the principal there. It has been my privilege to follow his journey from student to successful adult. We want every student in CMS to make that journey successfully. Ensuring that every child completes the journey is the mission of CMS. All of us in this room today care about our children and their education.

Educating a child is a process that begins at home and continues all the way through school and into the workplace and the wider world. Education cannot be accomplished or measured in a single day, a single test or a single year. It's a lifelong journey that builds on success in the early grades to create a foundation for learning later on. It's a continuum of learning and support that begins when a child enters school and continues all the way through high school and beyond. So many people are needed along the way. Parents, teachers, school staff, administrators all have a role to play. So do many others – volunteers, working professionals, citizens, elected officials.

We are fortunate to have the support of our district employees and the wider community. I've asked seven people who are involved with CMS to tell their stories during today's program and they are here on stage. Let me introduce them now and then you'll hear from them as we go along. I will introduce them starting from your left. Psalms Olivia Phifer White is a senior at Harding University High School. Next to her is Katie B. Morris, who chairs the Belk Foundation. Mark Rohlinger is the plant technical director for Bosch Rexroth in Charlotte. Lecia Shockley is the 2014 CMS Teacher of the Year and teaches second grade at Selwyn Elementary. Michael DeVaul is senior vice president of organizational advancement for the YMCA and the proud parent of two CMS graduates. Carmen Concepcion is the principal at Oaklawn Language Academy. Justin Ashley is a social studies teacher at Community House Middle School. We are very glad to have all of you with us today — thank you for taking part in our State of Our Schools event.

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#### **Table of Contents Sample Speeches For Principals**

- 1. Understanding the eBook Sample Speeches For Principals
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
- 2. Identifying Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
- 3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - $\circ\,$  Features to Look for in an Sample Speeches For Principals
  - User-Friendly Interface
- 4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Sample Speeches For Principals User Reviews and Ratings
  - $\circ\,$  Sample Speeches For Principals and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Sample Speeches For Principals Free and Paid eBooks
  - Sample Speeches For Principals Public Domain eBooks
  - Sample Speeches For Principals eBook Subscription Services

- Sample Speeches For Principals Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Sample Speeches For Principals eBook Formats
  - o ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Sample Speeches For Principals Compatibility with Devices
  - Sample Speeches For Principals Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Interactive Elements Sample Speeches For Principals
- 8. Staying Engaged with Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Sample Speeches For Principals
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Sample Speeches For Principals
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Setting Reading Goals Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Sample Speeches For Principals
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
  - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
  - Exploring Educational eBooks
- 14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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