

COUNTYWIDE GROUP TO FOCUS ON ACADEMICS - SUPPORTERS SAY THEY WANT IMPROVEMENTS IN CLASSROOM EDUCATION

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Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools parents and supporters are launching a new organization devoted to improving classroom education.

Another CMS improvement group? In addition to the committee studying school construction, the task force lobbying for changes in management, the North Mecklenburg parents, the middle-ring parents and a slew of CMS advisory boards?

That's the point, says organizer Pamela Grundy, a parent from Charlotte's Plaza-Midwood neighborhood who's working to strengthen the eastside Shamrock Gardens Elementary.

The new coalition, known as **Mecklenburg ACTS** (short for Mecklenburg Area Coming Together for Schools), will be independent, countywide and focused on academics.

"A tremendous amount of attention has gone to all these things that aren't about teaching kids," Grundy said, referring to school construction, politics and debate about restructuring the district's central administration.

Organizers include former school board member Louise Woods and parent leaders from East Mecklenburg and Garinger high schools; Randolph, Piedmont and Cochrane middle schools; and Barringer and Shamrock Gardens elementaries.

Anyone who wants to get the group's electronic newsletter and read its principles and goals can e-mail mecklenburgacts@earthlink.net.