

# NC ACCESS BEST PRACTICES



Office of Charter Schools  
**NC ACCESS PROGRAM**  
NC Department of Public Instruction

Marketing and Recruitment

Community Engagement

## A Hidden Gem

### Implementation Description

Monroe Charter Academy (MCA) is a small K-5 school located in Monroe, NC that serves students in Union County and the surrounding areas. The school leaders set a goal to increase the community's awareness of their school's offerings and increase enrollment. Using NC ACCESS funds, MCA was able to hire a marketing team to develop and implement a targeted marketing strategy that included print and digital marketing as well as the development of community partnerships.

The marketing team collaborated with MCA to develop a plan, which focused on families within a 25-mile radius of the school. They designed visually appealing signs and brochures for community distribution. Additionally, the team prioritized MCA's social media presence. The marketing team redesigned the school website to provide a much clearer picture of what the school has to offer. Having more relevant content, keywords, and links also improved the website's search engine optimization, which is a key factor in ensuring higher visibility on Google search results (Michigan Tech, N.d.). The [school's website](#) and Facebook page is now used to communicate engaging and important information for both currently enrolled and prospective families, such as spotlights on teachers and classrooms and upcoming community events. Small schools like MCA are most likely to benefit from outsourcing services, such as marketing, which results in school staff who are more able to attend to the day to day needs of running the school and delivering effective instruction (Bretz, 2002).

The final component of the marketing plan relied on establishing relationships with local organizations that serve families within the community. MCA conducted a food drive for the Union County Community Shelter and Serve Unity. They initiated a partnership with Winchester Child Development Center, a local day care provider. The school also hosted in-person community events, such as an ice cream social in a local park and a Community Interest Meeting at an area church. Establishing community

### About This School

#### Monroe Charter Academy

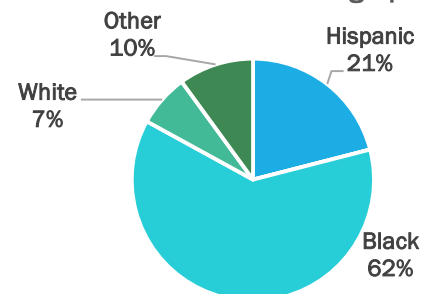
Our mission is to develop each child into an academically thriving citizen, by partnering with parents and the community, utilizing high expectations and a rigorous classical education, delivered with purposeful and spirited devotion.

**Year School Opened:** 2019-20

**Grant Awarded:** 2019-20

**Initial Grade Levels Served:** K-4

#### 2020-21 Student Demographics



**% ED Student Population:** 82%

**Urbanicity:** Rural / Monroe, NC

**Persons in Poverty (Union County)<sup>5</sup>:** 7.3%

partnerships like these have been shown to benefit both educational institutions and community organizations (Little, N.d.).



## Results

As a result of their targeted recruitment, MCA's enrollment numbers have increased from 112 in 2020-21 to 134 for 2021-22, a significant 20% increase within one school year. Additionally, the school sees an average of five families apply each week. Their social media interactions have also increased with posts receiving anywhere from 500-1700 hits.

## Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic made it more difficult for school leadership to connect in-person with prospective families within the community. MCA addressed this challenge by hiring a marketing team to improve the school's virtual reach through cohesive website content and engaging Facebook posts.

## Future Modifications

School leadership was extremely pleased with the work of the marketing firm they contracted, and as a result they plan to continue this partnership in the 2021-22 academic year.

## Critical Components

### Getting Started

MCA found that it was essential to hire a marketing firm to help them develop a targeted outreach plan and update the school website so that it more accurately reflected the school culture and educational offerings.

### Ongoing Supports

The administration plans to continue their partnership with the marketing firm to ensure an intentional outreach focus and a web presence with the latest school information.

Open House Virtually:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G0ucp13iTxiReP91heeuLZVLUCyuZQIU/view?ts=60e49922>

## Equity Connections

Research has shown that virtual marketing and community outreach events are accessible ways for families with complicated work schedules or a lack of reliable access to transportation to be able to connect with educational institutions (CDC, 2013). MCA addressed this need by focusing on their social media presence and establishing partnerships with organizations such as the Union County Community Shelter.

## Research

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5. United States Census Bureau, Quick Facts North Carolina, Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NC/PST045219>