



**"CHALLENGE - CREATE - COMMUNICATE!"**

## **Annual Report to the Community 2014**

### **2013-2014 School Profile**

*Through the years at League Academy, we have worked together as a collaborative group of students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents and community members, combining our talents, passions and expertise to create and maintain an environment for learning that has produced exceptional results. Being named as a National School to Watch in February of 2011 reaffirms our belief that we are doing many things right for middle level students. It did not happen accidentally, however – our staff worked hard studying best practices, analyzing data, and asking and answering hard questions. We believe that integrating the arts throughout our curriculum helps all kids learn. After 13 years as Principal, Merry Cox is retiring and the new principal is Mary Leslie Anderson. They are both excited about the next phase of their lives!*

*Merry L. Cox, Principal, League Academy*

**Schools to Watch®**



League Academy of Communication Arts has been recognized by the "National Schools to Watch" program, which honors the work of middle schools whose programs show high academic achievement and organizational supports that put them on the road toward excellence. The honor is presented by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform following an extensive self-assessment and site visit to review the school's programs. "Our mission, 'Challenge-Crete-Communicate!' is evident not only on the walls, but in the walls of League Academy," said Principal Merry Cox. "If the walls could talk, they would tell you how the students are challenged academically, artistically, and socially. They would tell you how the staff is challenged by high expectations and great students."

### **League Academy of Arts and Communications Magnet Information**

League Academy's magnet program began in 1995 as part of the District's "Select Schools" initiative to increase enrollment in several city schools and to provide "school choice" options for parents seeking specialized programs for their children. League Academy's arts-focused magnet program is based on the beliefs that 1) the arts are an essential component of every child's education and 2) the arts and technology are valuable tools that connect and enrich all areas of learning. In addition to a rigorous academic curriculum and athletic program, League offers Greenville County's most comprehensive middle school arts program. Students may explore many art forms in beginning, intermediate, and advanced level courses. Communication arts electives include Band, Choral Music, Computer Graphics, Dance, Debate/Public Speaking, Drama, Exploratory, Spanish, General Music, Journalism, Keyboarding, Strings, Video Production, and the Visual Arts.

Approximately one-third of League's students are typically admitted through the magnet application process and two-thirds are home base students who live in League's attendance zone and do not need to apply for admission. For over fourteen years, League has maintained lengthy waiting lists of applicants who met admission criteria but were not admitted because the school's enrollment had reached capacity. In 2013, enrollment was 784 students.

For more information about the magnet program or the magnet application process, contact Elaine Donnan, Magnet Coordinator, at 864-355-8112 or edonnan@greenville.k12.sc.us.

## **League Academy Features and Programs**

Advanced studies in Art, Dance, Drama and Chorus	Advanced studies in Journalism	Geography Bee	Honors Algebra I, Geometry, Spanish and English
Arts focused curriculum	Awards Program	(High School Credit/Carnegie Unit)	IGP Conferences for 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Band, Chorus, Creative Writing, Dance, Drama, Journalism and Strings	Beta Club	Keyboarding Lab	Mocha with Merry
Book Bowl	Book Fair	Multi-Media Capabilities	SC Junior Book Award Program
Challenge Program (Gifted and Talented in Language Arts)	Classroom Computer Lab	SIC/PTA Parent Information Nights	Self Selected Reading Initiative
Computer Graphics lab	Duke TIP Scholars	South Carolina Junior Scholars	Student Newspaper/Yearbook/Literary Magazine
Early Bird Learning Opportunities	EEDA Career Development Program	Student Led Conferences	Video Production Classes
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Job Shadowing		Weekly School Messenger	Year-Round Artist-in-Residence Program

### **Student Led Conferences 2013-2014**

For the fifth year, League students have taken the responsibility of sharing samples of their course work, discussing interests and goals, and working together with their parents on a preliminary plan for middle school and beyond. Student-led conferences are designed to achieve one or more of the following goals:

- students accept personal responsibility for their academic performance
- students reflect and use a process of self-evaluation on their achievement and goals
- students use presentation and communication skills to conduct the conferences
- students, parents, and teachers engage in open and honest dialogue
- parent involvement increased

### **Personal Pathways to Success**



Personal Pathways to Success is a state-wide legislative initiative designed to promote career exploration in the middle grades. This initiative helps students explore and even choose future occupations based on their strengths, their interests, and labor market information. Information about Pathways to Success is available at <http://recs.sc.gov>.

At League, the career exploration program consists of advisory and classroom lessons, presentations by guest speakers, interest assessments, virtual and on-site job shadowing, and the integration of career information into all classes and subjects. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents meet individually with one of our school counselors to develop an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) before entering high school. During the 2013-2014 school year, all students completed an interest assessment using either the Career Interest Survey (6<sup>th</sup> grade), SCOIS (7<sup>th</sup> grade), or EXPLORE (8<sup>th</sup> grade). More information and activities for SCOIS can be found at [www.SCOIS.net](http://www.SCOIS.net). Our school user name is "league" and password is "middleschool" (one word, all lower caps).

In addition, all of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students have the opportunity to research and job shadow in an occupation of their choice. Over 96% of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students completed an on-site shadowing experience while an additional 4% participated in virtual shadowing. All students benefit from a school-wide emphasis on the school to work connection. Parents were very hands-on in our career exploration program. Many parents participated as classroom speakers or by providing career information. Also, they served as workplace mentors to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade job shadowing students. For more information on career exploration, please contact Stevie Greene, School Counselor and Career Development Facilitator, at 355-8113 or [scgreene@greenville.k12.sc.us](mailto:scgreene@greenville.k12.sc.us).

## School Goals 2013-2014

### SCHOOL GOAL AREA 1: Raise the Academic Challenge and Performance of Each Student

#### **MATHEMATICS**

**FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL:** Increase the percentage of students meeting standard in mathematics as measured by the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) from 86.85% in 2012 to 91.8% in 2018.

#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

**FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL:** Increase the percentage of students meeting standard in English Language Arts (reading and research) as measured by the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) from 86.7% in 2012 to 91.7% in 2018.

### League Academy Awards, Achievements and Scores

Public Education Partners-"Professional Learning Communities" Grant  
National School to Watch Award  
National *Invent America!* Winners  
Red Carpet Award Winner  
S.C. Arts Commission Grant Winner

Exemplary Writing Award-Hall of Fame  
State and National PTA Reflections Winner  
2003 TIAA-CREF Principal of the Year  
2004 TIAA-CREF Support Staff Member  
2007 Assistant Principal of the Year  
2007 Emerging Teacher of the Year

#### **PASS Test Results**

Subject	Exemplary	Met	Not Met
English Language Arts (6)	58.4	32.0	9.7
English Language Arts (7)	58.6	29.7	11.7
English Language Arts (8)	60.4	20.3	19.4
Writing (6)	55.6	33.6	10.8
Writing (7)	65.8	24.6	9.6
Writing (8)	61.7	29.7	8.6
Mathematics (6)	50.9	37.5	11.5
Mathematics (7)	52.3	31.4	16.3
Mathematics (8)	47.7	40.5	11.7
Science (6)	30.6	58.2	11.2
Science (7)	30.1	54.0	15.9
Science (8)	53.2	36.9	9.9
Social Studies (6)	44.4	40.7	14.8
Social Studies (7)	63.6	23.0	13.4
Social Studies (8)	61.32	26.1	12.6

**Annual School Report Card Rating:**  
**2013 Absolute Rating: Excellent**  
**2011 Growth Rating: Good**

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):**  
**AYP Met in 2013**

**Palmetto Gold Award:**  
**January 2013, 2014**

## **Special Awards to Students and Faculty for 2013-2014**

### **National Art21 Educator Award:**

Joanna McCauley

### **Ace Award Nominees**

Trayvane Wilson and Katherine Satterfield

### **League Teacher of the Year**

Patti Cochran, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math (2013-2014)

Laurie Schmotzer, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA (2014-2015)

**Duke Tip Winners:** 13 state recognition and 1 Grand Recognition

**Junior Scholars:** 39 students

### **State Reflection Winners:**

Natalie Geiger 3<sup>rd</sup> in film

Sophie Pavia 2<sup>nd</sup> in photography and honorable mention visual arts

## **League Academy and Metropolitan Arts Council's SmartARTS Program**

### **What is SmartARTS?**

"SmartARTS is a partnership between Greenville County Schools and the Metropolitan Arts Council that connects students, artists and teachers to deeper learning and self-awareness through integrating the arts with all areas of education. SmartARTS provides training and support for teachers and artists in the use of successful arts integration methods. The partnership is built on the collaboration between teacher and artist and is focused on becoming a model and resource for this innovative work that has brought academic and behavioral success for many undeserved students. SmartARTS programs focus on standards-based arts integration and are designed to meet the objectives of the No Child Left Behind Act and the school district's Arts Education Plan." <http://www.greenvillearts.com/education/smartarts.aspx>

### **League Academy SmartARTS Teachers**

**League has more than 24 SmartArts teachers that have participated from 2008-2014.**

### **Outreach Beyond and Around our Campus**

#### **Faculty**

This year League Academy faculty and staff donated money and supplies to the Cancer Society, Project Host, Santa Fund, Sheppard's Gate, March of Dimes and Safe Harbor. League faculty members also worked with several of the local community centers that serve our students.

#### **Students**

During the 2013-2014 school year League Academy students raised money for the Heart Association (Dodge Ball for Heart). When League's Media Specialist was diagnosed with ALS, students focused their efforts on a Pennies for ALS fundraiser as well as a walk for ALS. Together these efforts raised nearly \$10,000.

### **Parent Teacher Association (PTA) 2013-2014**

League Academy's School Dances, Spirit Week Events, Chocolate Sales, Mixed Bags and Student Store raised funds to support League Academy teacher grants and purchase school supplies that were cut from the budget. We are also working to replace our school marquee with an electronic one for better communication.

### **School Improvement Council (SIC) 2013-2014**

League Academy's 2013-2014 members were: Chair: John Kaup, Secretary: Nell Stewart. Community Members: Nell Stewart, Megan Mitchell-Hoefer, Jennifer Jerina; Elected Parents: John Kaup, Elizabeth Gordon, Alison Wasse, Lee Yarborough and Mary Mack; Elected Teachers: Patti Cochran (Teacher of the Year) and Loraine Holeman; Ex-officio Members: Merry Cox (principal), Carolyn Henry (past-chair), Elaine Donnan, Faith McDonald, Wendy Pavia (PTA President).

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