

Bluffton Elementary School and Early Childhood Center

April 29, 2014

Report to Parents

For the 2012/13 school year, BLES came very close to meeting its goal of being rated an A school with an absolute rating of “Excellent.” We raised our score from a 86.4 to 89.9. We are *one tenth* of a point away from an A. BLES also receives an “absolute” rating from the S.C. Education Oversight Committee. This rating is based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state’s standards based assessment. BLES is rated as Good and we are *two-hundredths* of a point off of Excellent. A “B” is considered exceeding the state’s expectation but isn’t acceptable to BLES. We continue to analyze our data from all angles: MAP, state test—PASS and classroom instruction/curriculum. We made adjustments in the areas where we identified weaknesses. We have the expectation of being an A school for the 2014 testing.

The analysis so far from the Winter MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) shows that 77% of our students are on grade level for math. 76% of the students are on grade level for ELA. We have added reading tutors to help raise the levels for ELA. We have added more small groups for math. Historically, 2nd grade is always the lowest scoring due to shifts in how the testing is done. For K/1 students, the MAP test is read to them via headphones. Once the students get to 2nd grade, they must read the test on their own. Even though we prepare the students for this change, it is still hard for them to adjust. Their scores usually change (for the better) in the Spring testing window.

Palmetto Gold Award, 2002, 2003, 2010

Palmetto Silver Award, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013

“Closing the Achievement Gap” award—Gold—2012

“Closing the Achievement Gap” award—Silver—2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

South Carolina Writing Network Award, 2003-2006

Innovative Technology Award—SC EdTech—Animation 2010

Arts Innovation Award -Arts Schools Network—2011

In View with Larry King showcase for animation—2012



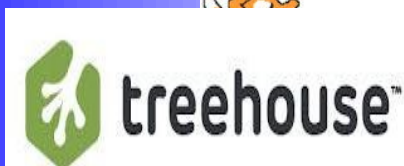


New Special/Elective for students

BLES will be adding a new special to our rotation. It will be called Serious Gaming and available for 4th, 5th, and 6th grades next year. The students will be creating apps, designing games and simulations, learning coding and using logical thinking. The students will be “test driving” some of the technology we want to use for our school choice. Once they have checked out the apps, websites and games, the students will write reviews and assign ratings to each program. Students will be writing essays to suggest changes or different programs that would work better too.



HOPSCOTCH



In anticipation of the new K-8 opening in 15/16, BLES will be holding the rising 6th grade class for another year. The 6th grade program will have all the same classes, including honors. Several electives are being offered for the students. Currently students are writing persuasive essays for a change in uniform colors for next year.

Ticker as of 4/17/14: Enrollment – 727

Want more information? Want to see pictures of our events?

Follow us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BLESECCWildcats

Ways we communicate:

Email

Phone calls

Facebook

Agenda books

Text messaging through Remind101-
ask us how you can sign up

School Choice



Vision:

At Bluffton Elementary School and Early Childhood Center, our community of professionals is committed to developing and educating the whole child. Through innovative approaches to learning, we address the needs of each child by encouraging creativity, confidence, and individuality. We prepare students for the world by exposing them to cutting-edge technology, arts, specialized and challenging academic programs, community-wide mutual partnerships with authentic situations and consistent, high expectations. Diversity is fostered by encouraging respect for and understanding of differing backgrounds and points of view.

ADOPTED 2012

Based on this vision, BLES has submitted a request to district to be a school of choice for the 2015/16 school year. The choice is:

Animation, Creation and Design places an emphasis on curriculum that encourages hands-on engagement, problem solving and the use of technology for research, collaboration and project presentation. Students will learn coding through WeDO robotics, LEGO robotics, app creation and web page design. The program includes a gaming component, which will allow students to create, design and utilize games to explore content. The Animation Arts component will include 2D, 3D and stop motion animation and continue to teach curriculum through the use of animation. Examples of student work creation will include the use of mobile computing devices to create an onsite studio for movies and other media creations.

What does this mean for your child? School choice will be open for grades Kindergarten through 5th. You can choose to have your child participate in the choice program. If you don't want to participate in choice then you can choose to have your child stay in our "regular" school program. A special form will be sent out during the early part of 2015 for you to choose.

PTO News: This year, Bluffton Elementary PTO impacted the students in many ways. We started the school year off by donating \$500 per grade level to help offset the cost of classroom subscriptions to magazines and computer programs, such as, Time for Kids and Social Studies Weekly. PTO also contributed to a school wide subscription to Brain Pop. The annual cost for the program is \$1500 and is used in most 2nd–5th grade classes. Brain Pop Jr. is used on the k/1 level and is provided by the state.

PTO raised money this year through the Yankee Candle Fundraiser and it was a huge success. Chick-Fil-A nights were organized by the PTO and given to each grade level as a way to raise money. 5 Guys Nights was new this year and also organized by PTO. Jean Day (1 per quarter) was a way for PTO to raise funds on a smaller scale. Publix Partners, Target and Box Tops help with profits for PTO as well.

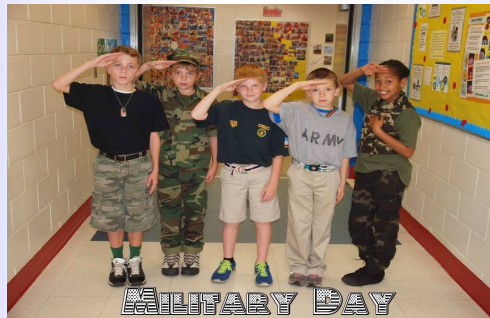
PTO Spirit Wear is sold throughout the year. PTO developed a new design this year and included a hoodie as an option. Perfect attendance bikes were purchased in part by PTO, and the remaining cost was offset by a donation. Donuts for Dads and Muffins for Moms are events put on by the PTO yearly. PTO made donations for PASS testing snacks, programs for the literacy team, Garden boxes, and supplies for the K/1 program, and a Microsoft Tablet for the Wildcat Workout Program. More donations are in the process for this year including water slides for field day and pre-k graduation as well as donations for the 5th grade overnight trip.

PTO is currently working on a memorial garden around the flagpole in the courtyard of the main building. This garden will feature the names of the Bluffton Elementary students that we have lost in the last two years.

PBIS

School wide positive behavior and intervention is a model that BLES integrates into the school daily. It's premise is that each and everyday our students show their PRIDE by being Positive, Respectful, Independent, Dependable and put forth their best Effort.

Our PRIDE model here at BLES has 3 main components. The first component is individual student recognition. Students are given PRIDE bucks each time they are caught showing their PRIDE. All members of the school staff can give PRIDE bucks. These PRIDE bucks can then be traded in by the students for a variety of rewards. The rewards range from dress down days to items at the PRIDE store. Component 2 is our monthly school wide celebrations. Each month we choose a theme for the last Friday of the month, these range from crazy sock day to dressing as you favorite book character. The purpose of this is to rewards all students for showing their PRIDE. The final component is our monthly community service projects. BLES not only supports our school but also the Bluffton community. Using the monthly theme as a basis, we select a school wide community service project. We have donated over 500 canned goods to Bluffton Self Help, given donations to Palmetto Animal League as well as sent cards to service-men over the holiday season.



What is PBIS?

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive systems approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

Have you attended School Improvement Council (SIC) meetings? Second Tuesday of each month at 4:00pm. Our President is Kathy Cuppia. Any parent, staff member or community member may attend. This report to parents was written and approved by the SIC.