

Bluffton Elementary School and Early Childhood Center

April 28, 2015

Report to Parents

For the 2014/15 school year, BLES MET the goal of being rated an A school with an absolute rating of “Excellent.” We raised our score from a 89.9 to 94.4. 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 Excellent. An “A” is considered substantially exceeding the state’s expectation. The staff, students and parents worked hard to achieve this goal and it was a wonderful celebration to see it fulfilled. While the goal was met, we still continue to analyze our data from all angles: MAP, state test—upcoming ACT, PASS and classroom instruction/curriculum. We had made adjustments in the areas where we identified weaknesses.

The analysis so far from the Winter MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) shows that 76% of our students are on grade level for math. 72% of the students are on grade level for ELA. We kept 6th grade for one year while waiting for River Ridge to open. BLES 6th graders’ outscored all other Beaufort County middle schools on the math and ELA MAP tests. The students were 81% on grade level for math and 87% on grade level for ELA. 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



Technology at BLES

This year, BLES became a school of choice for Animation, Creation and Design. Starting next year, Students will be focusing on Computer Science standards imbedded into the regular subjects. Students will be making cartoons about various standards and designing simulations about habitats. Students in 5th grade will design a roller coaster for science.

The students in grades 3-6, also, gained one to one devices. Grades 6th and 4th were allowed to take the devices home. These devices have allowed students to research content, utilize Edmodo to email assignments, and use apps to enhance instructional content, just to name a few. Students are still working on their technology checklists for learning Word, PowerPoint, blogging etiquette, Cyber safety, emailing, research skills, computer troubleshooting, and web design.

This fits our 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

Tail Waggin' Tutors

Through Therapy Dogs International (TDI), we have four wonderful dog owners and their loyal companions visit weekly to read with children at Bluffton Elementary School. The main objective of the Tail Waggin' Tutor program is to improve reading skills by providing a relaxed and "dog-friendly" atmosphere with knowledgeable volunteers to assist in reading. Most children seem to naturally love animals, especially dogs! Our Tail Waggin' Tutors build excitement and motivation for reading in a very relaxed setting.

Ticker as of 4/21/15: Enrollment – 829

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

Follow us on Facebook:

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Ways we communicate:

Email

Phone calls

Facebook

Agenda books

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

PBIS

PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) has once again this year been a great success. Students throughout the school have continued to show their PRIDE each and every day by being Positive, Respectful, Independent, Dependable and putting forth their best Effort. Students in both the ECC and Elementary school are continuing to earn PRIDE bucks that can be cashed in at the PRIDE stores for a variety of items from crazy pens and erasers to dress down days at school. As well as participating in quarterly community service projects that gave over 500 cans of food to Bluffton Self Help and a variety of items to help our four legged friends at Palmetto Animal League.

ECC has continued with its practice of the last Friday of each month celebrating a PBIS PRIDE day where students and staff have participated in Hippie days to dressing like you are 100 years old for the 100th day of school. The ECC continues to acknowledge each student individually at the quarterly PRIDE ceremonies where students earn colored beads strung on a necklace based on showing their PRIDE expectations consistently throughout that quarter.

The Elementary school students are thrilled with the introduction this year of our grand quarterly PRIDE Day celebrations. These have consisted of such things as a dance party and mini field day. We continue to celebrate our students meeting the PRIDE expectations each quarter with our PRIDE assembly where students earn a PRIDE button, which they predominately display on their backpacks.

What is PBIS?

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

This year, BLES implemented a Young Men of Bluffton and a Young Ladies of Bluffton Club for 5th and 6th grade students.

The Young Ladies of Bluffton is an extra-curricular group that focuses on fostering independence, leadership and character in girls. Club membership is determined by teacher recommendation and student application. Young ladies have the opportunity in the group to meet with community leaders and role models as well as participate in team building and service activities.

The Young Men of Bluffton have made their mark this year. A modest group of 10 students evolved into a current membership of 46 young men from the 5th and 6th grades. These young men have volunteered to help with Pride Day, spent a morning wishing everyone a good day at the car rider drop and work weekly with younger boys at the ECC in a program the we call The Big Brother Project. Our goal has been to contribute to the Bluffton Elementary community by bettering ourselves as gentlemen. We have had a wonderful year and will continue to strive toward excellence.

PTO News



This year, Bluffton Elementary PTO has contributed to our students in many ways. To begin the school year each grade level was given \$500.00 to help offset the cost of classrooms subscriptions to magazines, such as Time for Kids and Social Studies Weekly. This year \$1000.00 was also given to the Specials (Art, P.E., Music, Technology). PTO also donated to the school wide subscription to Brain Pop. The annual cost of this program is \$1500.00 and is used in

2nd – 5th grade. Brain Pop Jr. is used in the K/1 level and is provided by the state. PTO aided the literacy program by purchasing the Reading A to Z subscriptions. PTO also purchased the Green House and refrigerator for the Science Specials class.

PTO raised money this year with the sale of, Enjoy the City Lowcountry coupon books and Yankee Candle online sales. Our Spring fundraiser was Tritan Tumblers. We also raised money with our Spirit Nights at Chick-Fil-A and 5 Guys Burgers, as well as Jean Day (1 per quarter).

Money was also received from Target, Publix Partners and Box Tops.

PTO was able to bring the Scholastic Book Fair back this year. The book fair was a great success, and over \$4000.00 in books will be purchased for the school.

PTO Spirit Wear is sold throughout the year. This year we added Front Zipper fleece jackets and sweatshirt jackets. Also new this year for our 6th grade we added Black t-shirts and sweatshirts.

PTO also completed the filings to become a 501c nonprofit. This is something that has been talked about for several years.

Purpose of the Report: "This Report is issued by Bluffton Elementary School's Improvement Council in accordance with South Carolina law to share information on the school's progress in meeting various goals and objectives, the work of the SIC, and other accomplishments during the school year."

Have you attended SIC meetings? Third Tuesday of each month at 4:00pm. Our President is Kathy Cuppia. Any parent, staff member or community member may attend.