

# *Bluffton Elementary School and Early Childhood Center*

April 29, 2013

## *Report to Parents*

In July 2012, the South Carolina Department of Education was granted a waiver from several accountability requirements of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This waiver allowed SC to replace the former pass/fail system with one that utilizes more of the statewide assessments already in place. This analysis results in a letter grade for the school rather than the pass/fail system of previous years. With this change, BLES received a B with an overall grade weight of 86.4. A “B” is considered exceeding the state’s expectation but isn’t acceptable to BLES. We analyzed 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 2013 testing.

Also, for the past 4 years, BLES has had an absolute state rating of GOOD. While good is a strong showing for our school, it isn’t where we want to be. We are only a few tenths of a point off of being rated Excellent. The adjustments we made based on the B rating should help us over the hurdle to become Excellent.

Does this mean our students aren’t doing well? Not exactly. Our students are growing and performing well. So much so that we added an Advanced Academics(A2) class for 1st graders this year. BLES/ECC students do well in Language Arts and Math. The students do not grow as quickly in Science and Social Studies. We added a Science Lab setting and a research project room to help the growth in those areas. We are continuing to analyze our data and make changes as necessary to ensure our students are receiving the best instruction for all subjects.

*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*



**In order to help our military students adjust to every day life, we partnered with MCAS-Beaufort to offer LINKS 4 Kids.**

**L.I.N.K.S. 4 Kids is a fun-filled workshop for Marine kids ages 6-12. L.I.N.K.S. is delivered by MCFTB staff and mentor volunteers. The program offers an orientation to the Marine Corps lifestyle, helping youth adapt to the unique challenges military life often presents. The curriculum targets school age youth 6-12 years old.**

**The climate is informal, with a fun nurturing structure and format. Youth receive real life tips, information on Marine Corps culture, and available resources to enable them to help themselves.**

BLES was awarded one of three Active Schools Acceleration Project (ASAP) grants in the amount of \$2,083! The funds were be used to buy exercise equipment to start a morning fitness program, Wildcat Workout, available to all 2nd – 5th graders from 7:45 – 8:30 except on Thursday mornings. Some of the items purchased included stability balls, resistance bands, body bars, medicine balls, strength ropes and various incentive items. Wildcat Workout is a great addition to our growing student health/fitness program!

**Ticker as of 4/17/13: Enrollment –636**

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

Follow us on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/BLESECCWildcats](http://www.facebook.com/BLESECCWildcats)

**Bluffton Elementary**



**& Early Childhood Center**

# School Safety

School Safety is still on the forefront of our daily activities at BLES/ECC. The staff is very diligent in their efforts to ensure the safety of our students. We have been working in a partnership with the Bluffton Police department and the Beaufort County Sheriff's office as well. The Bluffton PD and Chris Barrow, our district safety officer, conducted a mock lockdown with our staff to analyze our weaknesses and help us adjust as necessary. Beaufort County Sheriff's office has Officer Michalski stopping by to walk through our building several times a week. He spends time talking to our students and has even set-up routine reading buddy times with different classrooms.

Here are a few of other safety measures in place:

Overall Building level:

- We have "Secure Lobbies" where all visitors are required, by design, to check in and show a Photo ID at the Front Office. The visitors check in through a Lobbyguard system.
- We have a Mandatory Photo ID Policy for Staff.
- Lighting and Surveillance Cameras have been updated. Cameras are displayed via a television monitor in the front office.
- All exterior doors are secured with a badge system. Entry can only be obtained with the badge or by buzzing the front office. The front office manager verifies the identity of the person through a camera before allowing access.
- We have a School Resource Officer available at McCracken Middle School and another one at Bluffton High School to assist in maintaining the safety of our students and staff.

Student Level:

- Anti-bullying expectations with guidance classrooms discussions of "See something, Say something"
- Monthly Positive Behavior Intervention (PBIS) incentive days– Western day, favorite shirt day, etc
- Cyber-bullying and internet safety training/awareness

**What can you do as a parent to help us with safety:**

**Parents are an important part of making our environment safe. Please be an active member of our PTO, volunteer in classrooms, or help with the School Improvement Council. We ask that you visit our school regularly. As you do, if you see something, say something as well.**