

The purpose of the SIC Report to Parents is to highlight Drayton Mills Elementary School's (DMES) progress in achieving the goals and objectives of our Five-Year School Improvement Plan and our SIC's annual goals. As it happens, being a relatively new school, this year was the first during which DMES authored a School Improvement Plan. We will use this plan to guide SIC's future efforts.

After a year in which about one third of our students participated in virtual learning due to COVID-19, this school year saw the return of almost all students for in-person learning. This expected return to normalcy was met with a great deal of joy. Unfortunately, we soon learned that normalcy would be delayed, and we experienced many classroom closures and forced faculty absences due to continued cases of COVID-19. Though it is unconventional to include it here, a description of this year would not be complete without mentioning the loss of our much-beloved School Resource Office, Deputy Petey Berry. Deputy Petey was our school's "founding" SRO, and his death was exceptionally difficult on our school community. He is memorialized in our lobby in a permanent display.

We are proud to say that, despite a very difficult start, our community displayed ingenuity, resiliency, and a great deal of bravery. As a result, our students were able to grow, both socially and academically, making up for much of the "learning loss" associated with the pandemic. In fact, out of all Spartanburg School District 7 schools, DMES was tied for first place in moving the most students to Tier I in iReady Reading during winter testing! On that same test administration, our school was in second place for most Tier III decrease in the district in reading, and DMES had the most students moving out of Tier III in math in our district! To celebrate both individual and class achievement, we established a trophy case acknowledging academic accomplishments.

Some of our programs remained virtual. For instance, our annual PTO meetings were virtual, and our Title I meetings were live, online events during which parents could participate via a link. Our Veterans Day celebration and Black History Month celebration also continued virtually. As COVID numbers declined, however, we happily returned to in-person events such as a face-to-face Read and Dine event (a partnership with our local Junior League), fine arts programs such as the DMES Art Show and music performances, and community favorites such as PTO Family Skate Night. March saw the return of field trips. Events such as Girls on the Run, Chorus, Ukelele Club, and Terrific Kid also ended the year in-person and on a high note. At the time of this writing, grade levels are excitedly planning for in-person awards days and graduation ceremonies. Along with the return to in-person programming, we saw the return of "Principal Challenges." This year, based on iReady and SC Ready achievement, students have the opportunity to have the principal sleep on the roof, ride a unicycle, or have a tarantula crawl on him!

Consistent with the theme of addressing learning loss, the DMES SIC project focused on having tutors come to the building to work with students who needed extra help. To maximize our impact, we approached this in several ways. First, the DMES SIC put out an all-call to our community, explaining the project and requesting volunteers. Though

this was not as successful as we had hoped, we were able to pair some community tutors with DMES students. Second, the DMES SIC reached out to the DMES PTO, asking for partnership on this initiative. This turned out to be a productive pairing, and, as part of this, the DMES PTO garnered numerous volunteers to read with students as part of a new (and hopefully ongoing) initiative called "Rise to Read." Finally, the school followed SIC's lead and re-apportioned part of the school's Title I budget to pay retired teachers to tutor students. Not only was this initiative particularly fruitful, resulting in many hours of tutoring, but it also inspired some DMES faculty to pull small groups, too. Though this initiative got off to a slow start due to COVID restrictions, it will continue into next year. In fact, SIC is considering this a two-year launch and has plans to again make this its focus in the 2022-2023 school year.

We are proud of this year's efforts and greatly anticipate the positive outcomes we believe will result.

Respectfully submitted,

Drayton Mills Elementary School's School Improvement Council

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