

SULLIVAN'S ISLAND ELEMENTARY REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL (SIC)

2020-2021



Sullivan's Island Elementary School's vision is to grow inquiring learners equipped with the skills to explore and contribute as stewards of the environment and world.

From our School Improvement Council Chairperson

To say that this has been a unique school year would be an understatement. It tested our strength as a family, community, and school, and I am happy to say that we have ALL prevailed. I would like to thank you for trusting the faculty and staff at Sullivan's Island Elementary School to help grow your child. It was a challenging year, and you trusted us to teach, love, laugh, play, study, and grow with your child while supporting us from afar. Our students and school community have achieved great things this year. This report will highlight our achievements and progress.

-Heather Galloway, SIC Chairperson

From our Principal

The past year was a time of both significant challenge AND growth at SIES. Our collective school community adapted to one change after another: delayed start, virtual and in-person learning, no volunteers in the building, masks, plexiglass, and record amounts of staff and student absences. We worried about COVID symptoms, loss of loved ones, loss of income, and increased anxiety levels, even in our youngest students.

Each change, shift, and tweak demanded adjusting logistics once again while striving to ensure that everyone felt as safe and included as possible even amid sometimes starkly differing viewpoints and needs within our school family. Each change, shift and tweak also revealed new ways of improving instruction. We gained traction in recognizing the importance of social-emotional learning, slowing down a little, and reshaping practices to make them more student-centered.

In the following report, we will share some nationally-normed student data and the results of our own School Improvement Council annual survey. The findings are exciting and, in some instances, surprising.

SIES appears to be at a significant turning point to leverage both the challenge and the growth of this past year for increased student learning in the years to come. And, THAT is exciting. Thank you for your continued support and “shining on” during the 2020-2021 school year!

-Susan R. King, Principal

Academic Growth. During an Unusual Time

Comparison of Historical Percentages of SIES Students in 2nd - 5th Grade Meeting Individual Projected Goals on Map Testing (Math & Reading)

	16/17 fall to winter	16/17 fall to spring	17/18 fall to winter	17/18 fall to spring	18/19 fall to winter	18/19 fall to spring	19/20* fall to winter	20/21 fall to winter	20/21 fall to spring
Math	50%	58%	49%	61%	45%	54%	63%	45%	68%
Reading	52%	61%	45%	61%	48%	65%	49%	50%	67%

*Only fall to winter data is available for the 2019/2020 school year due to school closings in March.

The chart above provides the history of the percentage of students in 2nd - 5th grade who met their individual goals on NWEA MAP math.. Each student’s fall raw score determined the individualized goals for fall to winter and fall to spring. While 50% or more students meeting their growth goals is robust, our schoolwide goal is to continue maintaining the percentage of students meeting their goals at 65% or higher.

A comparison of a “normal year” and the current year under COVID-19 restrictions revealed that the percentage of students meeting their goals increased in math and reading.

- Reading percentages increased from 65% - 67% of students meeting their goals.. Nationally, less ground was lost with non-primary students in reading, as a strong foundation was already established and easier to recoup. The fact that our students increased is encouraging. There may be a correlation between the high percentage of students who returned to in-person early on at SIES and our change to remote regional learning.
- The percentage of students meeting their growth goals in math increased from 54% during the 2018-2019 school year to 68% during the 2020-2021 school year. This current fall to spring increase followed an equally significant increase in fall to winter 2019-2020 school year. If that year had not been interrupted in March 2020, our spring trajectory was approximately 72%. There may be a correlation between the adoption of the Bridges Math Program during the fall of 2019. This past year we used a combination of Zearn and Bridges. While these programs differ in instructional delivery, they focus on critical thinking, conceptual learning, and problem-solving rather than rote memorization of algorithms.

School Improvement Survey Results

In 2012, our School Improvement Council created a family survey to gauge perceptions of the various programs funded by donations to the Friends of Sullivan's School 501c3. Since that time, we conduct the survey annually and use the results to guide future school plans. Due to school closings, last year was the first time that we didn't give the survey. This year, parents and guardians submitted 159 complete responses.

Overall Learning Environment 93% Agree Excellent or Good

Strengths

Areas of strengths centered around a sense of wellness and organization of school processes.

- My child is safe at school (99% Agree)
- Transportation works smoothly (96% Agree)
- My child is recognized for a job well done (96% Agree)
- My child is treated fairly (95% Agree)

Areas for Growth

The most significant area for growth noted was a decreased satisfaction in the opportunities for play and movement. COVID guidelines negatively impacted recess, lunch, special area, and classroom centers.

- Active Play/Movement (Very Satisfied or Satisfied 43%)

- Foreign Language and Global Awareness (Very Satisfied or Satisfied 70%)
- Math Instruction (Very Satisfied or Satisfied 73%)

Key Takeaways from Survey Comments

- Families are very appreciative of teachers and instructional programs.
- They also appreciate the high level of communication and handling of COVID.
- Several comments expressed concerns about screen time.
- Several families would like to understand the Coastal Environment Program better and increase science and outdoor learning.
- In general, families would like to understand the curricula better, especially in math.
- Folks would like communication sent in the body of the email rather than as an attachment for easier reading on phones.
- There were also several comments about masks, especially with concerns about hot weather and recess.

Next Year

Our staff, PTA, SIC, and Friends groups are working together to plan for the year ahead. Here is a brief overview of some of the initiatives already underway.

- Special Area Schedule (SEL, PE, Coastal Environment)
 - All classes will participate in Physical Education classes with Ms. Rethemeyer, weekly for an hour throughout the entire school year.
 - Student science lab time and science instruction in the classroom will increase significantly.
- Schoolwide Theme
 - Solve On Skimmers
 - Focus on Science & Engineering Practices
- Coastal Environment
 - Both science labs will be wet labs and will house touch tanks. The current Discovery Lab will become the CD- 2nd Grade Science Lab and the current Wet Lab will serve 3rd - 5th grade.
 - There will be a different schoolwide coastal environment theme each quarter. In August we will kick off the year with "Hello, My Name is OCEAN."
- Programs Funded by Friends 501c3

- Spanish
- Technology
- GreenHeart Gardening
- Touch Tank Maintenance and Animal Care
- Basketball Court (July)

- **COVID Emergency Relief Funding**
 - Math Interventionist
 - Reading Interventionist

- **COVID Guidelines for Next Year**
 - The district and school will continue to update you over the summer regarding the loosening of COVID guidelines. As information specific to SIES becomes available, we will share expeditiously.

In Closing

Many thanks for your interest in and support of the learning environment at Sullivan's Island Elementary School. Community engagement is an integral part of student and school success. If you have questions about this report or would like to volunteer your time and talents during the 2021-2022 school year, please contact us. Working together we will *Shine On AND Solve On Skimmers!*

2020-2021 SIC Members

- Heather Galloway (Chairperson) ***heather_galloway@charleston.k12.sc.us***
- Susan R. King (Principal, Ex-Officio Member) ***susanr_king@charleston.k12.sc.us***
- Carol Ann Mclester
- Chauncey Clark
- Cynthia Beall
- Jacqueline Meade
- Josh Poole
- Kathy Kent
- Kim Deaton
- Lee Weatherly
- Linda-Marie Hamill
- Gina Yeager

