



Gateway Gators

"Success Begins Here!"

Gateway Elementary School
GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS

Annual Report to the Community April, 2015

Dear Parents and Community Members,

It is with great pride that I again share with you our annual Report to the Community for the 2014-15 school year. The 2014-2015 school year has provided exceptional learning experiences for our teachers, support staff and students. Our teachers and staff were able to embark on a curriculum journey that has already reaped huge benefits in terms of student achievement for "Our Gateway". Our Gators kicked off the school year with the announcement that we would again receive the prestigious "Palmetto Gold Award" for academic excellence! This marked our third consecutive year to receive this honor, and the award signifies the highest award given for academic excellence in our state. In addition to our award, Gateway Elementary School received a federal ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Accountability Act) rating of "B" and an absolute rating on our state report card of "Excellent". Clearly, our students are meeting the challenges of increasingly difficult academic standards with great success, in large part due to the enormous support that we are showered with from our Travelers Rest community, teachers and support staff.

Beginning in August of 2014 our teachers and staff began intensive training in the Lucy Calkins Units of Study delivery method in the area of writing. This school-wide training allowed us to put ownership for the real world application of writing quite literally into the student's hands! Within weeks we began to see the quality of their writing improve as it now conveyed purpose, a greater degree of content development, and was reflective of each writer and his or her unique experiences and opinions. As we continued our training throughout the school year I personally began to receive writing samples from grade levels that included persuasive pieces focused on the need for new, safer playground equipment, the creation of a school flag and the need for "music that was more fun" in our cafeteria. I am pleased to say that all of the requests were granted! In addition to continued growth in the area of academics, our Travelers Rest community has grown as well and with this growth came additional community support for our Gators! We have been thrilled to be able to increase the volume and quality of food items that we provide for our needy students each weekend as they would be forced to go without meals otherwise. Our partnership with the Cliffs Communities provided this gift to our Gators. Our friends at George Coleman Ford and Shortfield's restaurant have graciously provided a free oil change and a free dinner for two each month for our "Staff Member of the Month" program at Gateway. So far, teachers, custodians and office staff have been selected to receive this very special honor. I would also like to share the news of our efforts with the Furman University college athletes and our Travelers Rest YMCA. The athletic department at Furman University has graciously agreed to film their student athletes explaining how they use the "7 Habits of Happy Kids" on and off of the playing field. These messages are shown on our morning news program, and have proven to be both exciting and motivating for our students. We look forward to adding more video clips to our news program in the future. This fall I was invited to serve on the board of our Travelers Rest YMCA. This position is such a privilege, as it gives me an avenue to share our good news on a regular basis with a number of community leaders as well as to bring information to our parents regarding available scholarships for summer care that may prevent the possibility of "latch-key kids".



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As you know, this year also brought with it a few uncertainties, as our state decided upon a new testing tool and revamped our learning standards. As a result of this new assessment choice, our goals listed below do not contain the usual data, as our students will be taking the ACT Aspire assessment for the very first time after our annual report is published. We look forward to sharing the results of this assessment with our school community this fall when our scores are published.

It often feels as though our school year has just begun, however spring is definitely in the air and it is at this time that we begin to look forward to the coming school year, and plan alongside our major stakeholders for another year of excellence for our Gators. The formal title of our combined efforts is our "School Renewal Plan". This plan is now included on our school web site. Please take a few minutes to look over our plan and the goals and professional development opportunities that will give purpose and continued growth to our new school year. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss any or all of the contents with you in further detail. The school renewal plan includes elements required by the Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act of 1993 (Act 135) and the Education Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA). We revise, monitor progress and adjust our goals within the plan annually in collaboration with our school faculty and staff, and our SIC (School Improvement Council).

Lastly, I feel that it is only fitting to close with our values and beliefs. Our values and beliefs are the core of who we are, what we do, and how we think and feel. Values and beliefs reflect what is important to us; they describe what we think about educating our children, while continuing the focus of remembering that the hearts and minds of our children are of equal importance. Each year, our staff revisits our core beliefs examining how our instruction, curriculum, and assessment will increase student achievement. We think that it is important to include our values and beliefs in our annual report as they set the tone for all that we do, and remind us of our purpose as educators.

- ❖ *We believe that all students should be valued and treated with respect and dignity.*
- ❖ *We believe a safe environment is essential to the learning process.*
- ❖ *We believe all children should be challenged to view life from different perspectives.*
- ❖ *We believe self-respect, discipline, and social skills should be reinforced at school.*
- ❖ *We believe family engagement in the learning process is an essential component for student success.*
- ❖ *We believe differentiated curriculum and instruction should accommodate individual learning styles to meet the needs of all students.*
- ❖ *We believe educational experiences should enable students to communicate ideas, solve problems, think critically and creatively and consistently reflect on their own thinking.*



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- ❖ *We believe a community partnership is essential for school success.*
- ❖ *We believe a PLC (Professional Learning Community) empowers all stakeholders to make informed decisions and provides experiences through data driven planning to ensure the success of each student.*
- ❖ *We believe each member of our school community can be a successful life-long learner.*

Sincerely,
Susan Stuble, Principal
Heather Bolt, SIC Chair



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- ❖ We believe a community partnership is essential for school success.
- ❖ We believe a PLC (Professional Learning Community) empowers all stakeholders to make informed decisions and provides experiences through data driven planning to ensure the success of each student.
- ❖ We believe each member of our school community can be a successful life-long learner.

Gateway Elementary School School-wide Goals 2013 – 2018

Student Achievement:

GOAL AREA 1: Raise the academic challenge and performance of each student.

FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL: Meet or exceed the standard in *writing* as measured by ACT Aspire.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVE: Annually meet or exceed the standard in *writing* as measured by ACT Aspire.

FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL: Meet or exceed the standard in *English* as measured by ACT Aspire.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVE: Annually meet or exceed the standard in *English* as measured by ACT Aspire.

FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL: Meet or exceed the standard in *reading* as measured by ACT Aspire.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVE: Annually meet or exceed the standard in *reading* as measured by ACT Aspire.



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FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL: Meet or exceed the standard in *mathematics* as measured by ACT Aspire.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVE: Meet or exceed the standard in *mathematics* as measured by ACT Aspire.

Teacher and Administrator Quality:

GOAL AREA 2: Ensure quality personnel in all positions.

FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL: Maintain highly qualified status for 100% of our teachers.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVE: Continue to achieve criteria of having 100% of our teachers highly qualified in each respective grade level and core content area.

School Climate:

FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE GOAL: Achieve an annual student attendance rate of 95%.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVE: Maintain an annual student attendance rate of 95% or higher.