

# STERLING



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

Each year, the School Improvement Council (SIC) prepares the School Report to the Community. This document highlights the accomplishments of our school in implementing our 5-year Strategic Plan for School Improvement and our plans for the future.

Sterling's School Improvement Council (SIC) has been working hard this year to help shape the direction of Sterling. The following report outlines much of what has been done this year and summarizes much of what has been accomplished by the students and faculty of Sterling as well.

The year started with the installation of a playground shade structure and dozens of new iPads bought by PTA. The fall brought in a record amount of needed funds through a great PTA Boosterthon fundraiser, Bids for Kids and a \$39,474 grant from State Farm to support safer walking and biking to school.

We have had excellent parent participation and inclusiveness in the school through a variety of PTA meeting formats, Lunch and Learn parent workshops, from our counseling department, and spring parent previews of the upcoming grade levels.

We have been improving our assessment of student growth through the new continua, which highlight specific academic skills students demonstrate, shared with parents. We have combined over \$20,000 in new reading materials for classrooms and the media center with district training to support better reading instruction

### Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Inclusiveness & Experiential Learning	2
Test Scores 2012-2013	3
Looking Forward 2013-2014	3
Strategic Plan Summary	4
Accomplishments	5
School Improvement	
Members	5

*"Where the Uncommon is Common."*

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



### Experiential Learning

Throughout the school year, students in all grade levels worked to apply what they learned. Students analyzed historical artifacts, competed academically, presented projects and conducted field studies in the community.

through balanced literacy. We also added an additional counselor to further support student social and emotional development.

Finally, Sterling is making significant security upgrades including student ID's, door locks, perimeter fences and gate improvements, camera upgrades and new entry systems.

As you look through our accomplishments, please review the two key areas from which the School Improvement Council evaluates our initiatives: **inclusiveness** and **experiential learning**.

### Inclusiveness

**Inclusiveness:** Through this objective, the school seeks to create an environment in which students, teachers, parents and community members feel accepted and a part of the school. Inclusiveness values these roles and appreciates and values the differences that each individual brings in fulfilling his or her respective role. Characteristics of inclusiveness identified through our brainstorming include:

- Tolerance
- Acceptance
- Engagement
- Collaboration
- School pride

### Experiential Learning

**Experiential Learning:** Through this objective, the school seeks to encourage students and teachers to engage in the learning process in a manner that allows for learning from and through failure, risk taking and trial and error.

Experiential Learning is consistent with the currently used approach of inquiry-based learning, whose characteristics are seen in our teaching. However, there is a desire to see this approach expanded, encouraged, and emphasized.

Characteristics of experiential learning identified include:

- Value failure
- Trial and error
- Continuous improvement
- Create relationships of trust
- Safe and nurturing environment
- Support from peers
- Administrative leadership

### Playground Shade Structure bought by PTA



# PASS Scores: Charles Townes Center *Percent Exemplary 2009-2013*

CTC	Writing 2009	Writing 2010	Writing 2011	Writing 2012	Writing 2013	ELA 2009	ELA 2010	ELA 2011	ELA 2012	ELA 2013	Math 2009	Math 2010	Math 2011	Math 2012	Math 2013	Sci 2009	Sci 2010	Sci 2011	Sci 2012	Sci 2013	SS 2009	SS 2010	SS 2011	SS 2012	SS 2013
3rd	99%	100%			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%	97%	100%	100%	99%	95%	92%	97%	95%	91%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
4th	93%	100%			97%	100%	97%	96%	100%	99%	99%	99%	100%	100%	100%	88%	88%	88%	81%	89%	99%	100%	96%	100%	99%
5th	96%	100%	99%	96%	97%	96%	97%	96%	99%	97%	92%	95%	99%	97%	100%	84%	76%	100%	100%	93%	100%	89%	100%	97%	100%
6th	84%	96%			96%	100%	97%	97%	100%	99%	96%	87%	93%	100%	99%	86%	97%	89%	92%	92%	89%	97%	89%	92%	92%
7th	97%	93%			99%	90%	99%	99%	97%	99%	99%	97%	97%	100%	90%	99%	97%	93%	93%	93%	97%	100%	95%	97%	97%
8th	94%	95%	92%	93%	100%	93%	95%	99%	100%	94%	95%	95%	94%	92%	90%	96%	100%	100%	100%	97%	96%	90%	94%	97%	100%

## Sterling Program Test Scores

3rd Grade Level PASS Scores 2010-2013																	
	Writing 2013	ELA 2010	ELA 2011	ELA 2012	ELA 2013	Math 2010	Math 2011	Math 2012	Math 2013	Sci 2010	Sci 2011	Sci 2012	Sci 2013	SS 2010	SS 2011	SS 2012	SS 2013
Exemplary	27%	46%	62%	58%	48%	20%	59%	42%	30%	27%	36%	12%	8%	40%	50%	55%	20%
Met	29%	21%	10%	17%	27%	33%	14%	28%	30%	40%	36%	50%	42%	47%	22%	30%	50%
Not Met	44%	33%	28%	25%	25%	47%	28%	31%	41%	33%	27%	38%	50%	13%	28%	15%	30%

4th Graders PASS Scores 2011-2013													
	Writing 2013	ELA 2011	ELA 2012	ELA 2013	Math 2011	Math 2012	Math 2013	Sci 2011	Sci 2012	Sci 2013	SS 2011	SS 2012	SS 2013
Exemplary	38%	48%	43%	43%	67%	45%	43%	22%	15%	18%	44%	36%	45%
Met	48%	37%	28%	38%	26%	32%	48%	48%	60%	58%	41%	40%	43%
Not Met	15%	15%	30%	20%	7%	23%	10%	30%	25%	25%	15%	23%	13%

5th Graders PASS Scores 2012-2013										
	5th		5th		5th		5th		5th	
	Writing 2012	Writing 2013	ELA 2012	ELA 2013	Math 2012	Math 2013	Sci 2012	Sci 2013	SS 2012	SS 2013
Exemplary	40%	47%	37%	38%	34%	34%	38%	29%	32%	42%
Met	31%	30%	32%	45%	49%	36%	38%	38%	47%	35%
Not Met	29%	23%	31%	17%	17%	30%	25%	33%	21%	23%

## Test Scores:

The PASS scores reported on the South Carolina Department of Education Report Card show combined scores of both programs.

As a School Improvement Council, we look at the scores by program to ensure quality achievement for both programs in the school.

We continue to watch for trends and strive to build consistency across all areas tested. We also want to see the Sterling program continue student improvement in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. Sterling elementary students made some positive gains as well as showed some areas that still need improvement. Charles Townes students have continued to post a high percentage of Exemplary scores. This year showed many historical highs. These levels of achievement are the highest in South Carolina. *The targets for the Strategic Plan are updated on page 4 of this report.*

## Looking Forward: What's Next 2014-2015

- **Assessment:** Continue to develop curriculum continua, digital portfolios and other assessment strategies to better evaluate and communicate student growth and progress.
- **Balanced Literacy:** Continue to explore better ways to meaningfully instruct and engage students in reading. (Year Two)
- **Curriculum Development:** Continue to explore standards alignment and integration into our instructional units.
- **CATCH:** Continue to integrate health and wellness.
- **Differentiation & Enrichment:** Continue to expand opportunities for remediation, enrichment, extension and acceleration of curricula to meet student needs.

Site upgrades to encourage walking to school, visiting professional artists and adding new seating options for students





# School Strategic Plan 2013-2014

The School Improvement Council (SIC) has worked this year to identify key areas in which Sterling School should spend time and energy advancing itself over the next five years. Over several sessions the SIC developed a list of items indicative of the current culture, as well as the culture that we want to see develop and flourish at Sterling School. This list of items fit into two key focuses: inclusiveness and experiential learning.

The SIC agreed that the best approach to encourage this vision of school culture is to update and improve the instructional program at the Charles Townes Center and the Sterling elementary program by adding depth, rigor and choice to current offerings. This approach combines the two areas of focus. We are working more closely with students to include them in the designation of the types of experiential learning from which they can choose. There is still a path for course acceleration when needed; however, the vast majority of student needs can be better met with a program that adds attention to student strengths through extended lessons, in-depth studies in a field of interest and ongoing enrichment. We plan to further expand the idea of inclusiveness by having teachers, parents and students work together to develop comprehensive student portfolios which will guide large-group extensions, individualized enrichment and student course and project selections. The strategic plan has specific goals and strategies set forth with the purpose of attaining a school culture built around inclusiveness and experiential learning. This plan consists of three goal areas: academic performance, professional development, and school climate. The goals have measurable performance goals aligned to national and state guidelines for performance. The targets listed below are for Goal 1: Academic Performance.



## TARGETS

The symbols note whether we met the target (+) = Yes (-) = No.

Writing		2012-2013 Targets	2012-2013 Results
School	Maintain	92.5% Met/Exemplary	90.7% Met/Exemplary (-)
Sterling	+3%	75% Met/Exemplary	72% Met/Exemplary (-)
English Language Arts			
School	Maintain	90.9% Met/Exemplary	93.3% Met/Exemplary (+)
Sterling	+3%	74% Met/Exemplary	79% Met/Exemplary (+)
PASS Score	+5	640 Elementary(Sterling)	641 (+)
	Meet	635 State Target	African-American Sub Group 625
	+4	632 Middle(CTC)	733.9 (+)
Mathematics			
School	Maintain	92.4% Met/Exemplary	90.4% Met/Exemplary (-)
Sterling	+2%	78% Met/Exemplary	73% Met/Exemplary (-)
PASS Score	+5	640 Elementary(Sterling)	633(-) African-American 614 (-)
	+4	632 Middle	738.7 (+)
Algebra EOC	Maintain	100% Met Standard	99% (-)
Science			
School	Maintain	91.6% Met/Exemplary	88.2% Met/Exemplary (-)
Sterling	+2%	75% Met/Exemplary	66% Met/Exemplary (-)
PASS Score	+5	640 Elementary (Sterling)	633(-) African-American 602.4 (-)
	+4	632 Middle	715.3 (+)
Social Studies			
School	Maintain	93.4% Met/Exemplary	93.5% Met/Exemplary (+)
Sterling	+2%	81% Met/Exemplary	80% Met/Exemplary (-)
PASS Score	+5	640 Elementary(Sterling)	646.3 (+) African-American 629.5(-)
	+4	632 Middle	711.5 (+)

### Inclusiveness

The school seeks to create an environment in which students, teachers, parents and community members feel accepted and part of the school. This focus seeks to value these roles and also to appreciate and value the differences that each individual brings in fulfilling their respective roles.

### Experiential Learning

The school seeks to encourage students and teachers to engage in the learning process in a manner that allows for learning from and through failure, risk taking and trial and error.

This may be synonymous with the current approach of inquiry based learning, as many of the characteristics are seen in current teaching. However, there is a desire to see this encouraged and emphasized.

## Accomplishments

- 🏆 MathCounts State Champions
- 🏆 Battle of the Brains Champions
- 🏆 Awarded Palmetto Gold for Student Achievement
- 🏆 State Farm Grant \$39,474
- 🏆 Record PTA Fundraising
- 🏆 Jennifer McKinney-Sterling Teacher of the Year
- 🏆 \$5,000 Soil and Water Conservation Grant Awarded-Ms. Tracy Carney
- 🏆 Extensive student and team awards across the school
- 🏆 Partnered with the Nicholtown Community
- 🏆 David Johnstone - Principal of the Year, South Carolina Arts Education Association
- 🏆 Six students chosen to the South Carolina Honors Choir
- 🏆 Strings-Superior rating SCMEA



SIC MEMBERS 2012-2013	PARENTS	COMMUNITY	TEACHERS
Ex-Officio	Matt Smith Chair	Pastor Darin Blue Nicholtown Missionary Baptist Church	John Burdick
David Johnstone Principal	Phil Buck	Jane Snyder Dir. Gifted & Talented	Lydia Cooper
Janet Schultz PTA President	Rolanda James	Dr. Karen Sparkman Dir. of Early Childhood Services	Jennifer McKinney
Casey Noble Guidance	Terrell Mills	Yvonne Reeder President Nicholtown Neighborhood Association	
Jeff Dishner Past SIC Chair	Carolina Van DeVoorde		

## TEACHER TRAINING



## Professional Development

Teachers have worked throughout the school year improving themselves as teachers. Teachers shared best practices, and took additional leadership roles in meeting planning and development.