

April 2016

# Saint James High School School Summary Report



## **OUR MISSION:**

***Every student will graduate from Saint James High School with the skills to start work or attend college with no remediation.***

Dear Shark Family Members,

St. James remains dedicated to the mission of preparing all students for the evolving realities of an ever-changing world through a rigorous, relevant, and engaging high school experience. We hope that you will celebrate with us as you review the many successes covered in this annual report. Most importantly, we understand that the rising test scores, academic accomplishments, and athletic achievements of this school year would not have been possible without the backing of dedicated parents, guardians, and community partners. Remember, as a valued stakeholder in our school, your opinions are critical to our ongoing improvement, and we encourage you to get involved in our Shark Family. Working together, we can ensure that, like true Sharks, our school continues to move in only one direction - FORWARD!

Vann Pennell, Principal  
Teresa Larkin, SIC President

## **School Improvement Council**

Teresa Larkin, *President*  
Sally Young, *Past President*  
Kathy Heath, *Secretary, Parent*  
Rodney Brown, *Advisory Board., Parent*  
Janice Moreale, *HCS Board Member*  
Vann Pennell, *Principal*  
Caroline Ross, *Guidance Chair*

NaTasha Best, *Assistant Principal*  
Brett Mahaffey, *Assistant Principal*  
Shauna Schubiger, *Instructional Coach*  
Laura Burdick, *Teacher*  
Savannah Fuller, *Student Body Pres.*  
Michelle Collins, *Parent*  
Theresa Cacace, *Parent*

Jennifer Bayliff, *Parent*  
Kathy Johnson, *Parent*  
Robyn Hays, *Parent*  
Nancy Ward, *Parent*  
Kelly Papotto, *Parent*  
Jean Young, *Parent*  
Rhonda Blackmon, *Parent*



Saint James High School  
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## ***Achievements in 2015-2016***

***Moving FORWARD in the Classroom, on the Field, and in the Community***

***This list includes just a small sample of the many accomplishments we have enjoyed at SJHS over the past year -***

- St. James High School was recognized as *Palmetto's Finest* by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators!
- South Carolina recognized our school with the *Palmetto Gold Award* for general performance. This was the fifth consecutive year that our school has been recognized with this award!
- The four-year graduation rate for the St. James Class of 2015 was 83.2%. This is the second highest on-time graduation rate in the school's history.
- The graduating class of 2015 was offered over \$8.3 million in scholarships. More than 60% of these graduates were eligible for the South Carolina LIFE Scholarship.
- Overall student pass rates on Advanced Placements exams continued to outpace other schools. Advanced Placement students at St. James High School earned a mean AP exam score of 3.26, higher than county, state, national, and global averages!
- Our students' average score on the SAT remained higher than district and state averages. Composite ACT scores for college-bound seniors also met the national average. The school is currently developing plans to launch an Advanced Placement Institute in 2016-2017, which will dramatically increase course offerings and draw more students to these rigorous classes.
- Students earned an overall pass rate of 90.2% on state-mandated End of Course assessments in 2014-2015. This is over 11% higher than the average for schools with similar student populations.
- Our 2014 St. James High School Teacher of the Year, Mr. Paul Hudacko, was named as a top-five finalist for the Horry County Schools Teacher of the Year. Since 2007, St. James has had four teachers named as top-five finalists, more than any other school in the Horry County!
- The SJHS School Improvement Council was named a finalist for the Dick and Tunky Riley Award as one of the SICs in the state of South Carolina.
- In addition to producing the monthly *Shark Attack* magazine, journalism students also produced a number of special editions, including *Forward* and *Portraits*. Students in the Media department also produced a daily television show, maintained an online presence through *Shark Attack Online*, and managed a short-range radio station, *WSJH*.
- Students from the Fine Arts, English, and Media departments collaborated to hold the school's first annual *Creative Arts Night*, showcasing drama, music, literature, and film.
- The *Future Business Leaders of America*, *Virtual Enterprise*, and *DECA* programs continue to excel at the local, state, and national levels. The school's chapter of FCCLA also won Gold for its Ampu-Teddies project at the state convention.
- AP English Language student Meghan Smith was awarded first place in the annual South Strand Optimist club essay contest.
- The St. James High School Academic Team once again qualified for the NAQT National Academic Team Championship Tournament by winning the 2015 Horry County Schools Academic Olympics. This is the team's 3rd title in five years.
- The Pride of St. James High School Marching band once again qualified to participate in the state championship tournament. During the season, the band received numerous superior ratings and top rankings in a number of categories.
- The St. James High School Drama Department competed in both the Horry County and South Carolina Theatre Festivals. Zach Olds was named an All-Star Cast Member at the annual SC Theatre Festival. The spring musical production of *Legally Blonde* received stellar reviews and was seen by over 1,600 people during its four day run.
- The school's Choral department started three new ensemble groups, including the Forward Motion show choir. Choral director, Mr. Kenneth Bedwell, was named a quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator of the Year.
- The Saint James Army Junior ROTC unit continued to amass numerous awards and distinctions, including winning its 4th title of *Grand Champion* at the regional drill competition. Colonel Steve Cellucci was recognized as Senior Army Instructor of the Year.
- St. James Visual Arts students continue to excel in local and regional art shows and competitions, including the title of Best in Show at the 14th annual Horry County Schools Juried Art Show.
- Four St. James athletic coaches were named Region Coach of the Year. Two coaches were also recognized as Toast of the Coast Coach of the Year by *The Sun News*.
- The girls' golf team capped off an amazing season by winning the state tournament. Smith Knaffle was named to the All-State and Toast of the Coast teams. Coach Denise Noll was recognized as region Coach of the Year.
- The St. James Sharks varsity softball team had the 9th highest team GPA in the nation. 11 of 13 players earned Academic All-American status.
- The varsity cheerleading squad earned the title of Lower State Champions and finished 5th overall at the state competition.
- Student trainer Brooklyn Linton was the first SJHS student to earn a spot at the annual North/South All-Star football game.
- To date, five Shark student-athletes have signed national letters of intent to continue their playing career at the next level.



## ***Our Performance Goals***

### ***Measuring our Achievements***

While there is no definitive way to identify a high-performing high school, accountability guidelines developed by the state of South Carolina and the federal government do give us a useful way to measure our achievements. At Saint James we have adopted the following performance goals to help us reach our school's full potential.

<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>Status 2014-2015</b>	<b>Goal 2015-2016</b>
1) 95% of Algebra I and Math Tech 2 students will pass state's end-of-course Algebra I test by 2016.	91%	95%
2) 95% of students will pass the state's English I end-of-course test by 2016.	87.5%	95%
3) 95% of students will pass the state's Biology end-of-course test by 2016.	91.7%	95%
4) 90% of the students will pass the state's U.S. History end-of-course test by 2016.	90.1%	90%
5) At least 30% of graduates will successfully complete at least one Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or college credit course.	16.5%	30%
6) The average SAT score (combined math and verbal) for high school students will be equal to or greater than the national average.	1098	1030
7) The average ACT score (combined) for high school seniors will be equal to or greater than the national average.	19.4	22.0
12) 90% of high school students will earn state high school diplomas within four years or less (on time) after entering the ninth grade by 2016.	83.2%	90%
13) The average daily attendance rate for students will be 96% or higher every year.	94.7%	96%
14) At least 70% of our graduates will be eligible for the SC LIFE Scholarship by the end of the 2016 school year.	67.6%	70%
14) The average daily attendance rate for teachers will be 96% or higher every year.	94.6%	96%
15) The percentage of teachers with advanced degrees will increase to 66% by 2016.	64.7%	66%

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***Moving Forward***  
***Looking toward the Future at SJHS***

As always, it's a very exciting time to be a Shark!

The 2015-2016 school year saw major developments in the classrooms of St. James High School! The implementation of Horry County's *Personalized Digital Learning Initiative* (PDL) provided students with unprecedented access to new ways of thinking and learning through the power of connective technology. As teachers and students become more comfortable with this "new normal" in the classroom, you can expect even greater changes in the coming months.

What does this mean? Imagine a classroom in which instruction is tailored to the learning needs of individual students. This is a classroom in which the teacher works face-to-face with a small group of students to ensure that learning is meaningful. In another corner, students work collaboratively on an extended project with peers in another state. Elsewhere students are taking notes on new material they are receiving through one of a number of online content providers. This is not a futuristic vision of education; this is the here-and-now that the PDL initiative allow allows for.

This *is* and *should be* a very exciting time for the students, parents, and educators of St. James High School. Working together, we can ensure that we continue to move FORWARD - like true Sharks!