

School Improvement Council Letter to Parents for 2011—2012

Recent Graduates

The Pelion High School learning community began the 2011—2012 school year full of anticipation of transformational opportunities promised by the district's **one-to-one computing initiative** and the opening of a new **Center for Agribusiness Research** here on our campus. Our staff and students were buoyed by the success of the Pelion High School **class of 2011**, the **largest class ever** to graduate from PHS. This class contained a National Merit Scholarship Commended student, five Palmetto Fellows Scholarship recipients, eighty-one students who qualified for State Merit Scholarships, seventeen students with 4.0 or higher GPA, and recipients of **3.7 million dollars in scholarships** for college. The average composite SAT score for PHS students was 1524, which ranks them well above the state and national averages for the **SAT**, behind only Lexington High School in our district, and in the **top twenty-five** high schools in the state.

Awards and Achievements

Our students have filled the 2011-2012 academic year with accomplishments in and out of the classroom. Pelion High School received the **Palmetto Gold** General Performance Award for Academic Achievement. Four Pelion High students have been awarded **athletic scholarships** to college, two in softball, one in track and cross country, and one in golf. The Girls' Cross Country Team won the region meet for the fifteenth time in sixteen years while the Boys' Team won region for the tenth time and for the third year in a row. The Boys' Track Team placed first in the region for the sixteenth time in twenty-two years, while the Girls' Track Team placed second. Two students qualified for the state wrestling tournament.

The FBLA Digital Video Production team placed first at the **FBLA** State Leadership Conference. A tenth grader from PHS had a poem published in *Teen Ink*. Students in our **Occupational Credential Program** opened and ran the Common Grounds Café this year. A Pelion High School senior was elected South Carolina Association of **Student Councils** District 3 Chair. Our **JROTC** Rifle Team won the 4th Brigade "Best of the Best" Air Rifle Invitational Match in Lexington North Carolina. A PHS senior won a \$1000.00 scholarship in the Annual Top Chef Competition, and another PHS **culinary arts** student won the Best Youth Baked Goods Sweepstakes Ribbon. The **FFA** Wildlife Management Team placed second in the state, the Soils Team place third in the state, and the Tool Team placed first in the state.

Pelion High School students excelled in other endeavors as well. Our **HOSA** students had another banner year, placing first in the state in the following divisions: Sports Medicine, Medical Reading, and Interview Skills. Nearly thirty **PHS band students** were selected for either All-State or Region AA honor bands. For the third time in four years our band received a

superior rating at the State Concert Band Festival, and our band is in the running to repeat as winners of the Outstanding Performance Award for Musical Excellence, the highest and most prestigious award given to high school music programs in South Carolina. PHS also hosted the 2012 Senior Division Concert Band Festival in March.

New Initiatives for Faculty, Staff, and Students

Pelion High School maintains a highly qualified faculty and staff to serve our students, with forty-one of our fifty-nine teachers **(69.5%) holding a master's degree** or above and seven of our faculty holding National Board Certification. The entire staff remains focused on providing the best possible educational environment for our students as we continue to develop common assessment instruments and project-based teaching units to use the student **iPads** to their maximum educational potential.

With the new **iPads** the students have around-the-clock access to LexConnect and internet sites where they can mine the latest information to use in their research projects. Students are using this technological advantage to improve the quality of the assignments that they submit to their teachers. The benefit of the new iPads is especially evident in the **senior projects**, where students are clearly better organized and better able than before to produce high quality, twenty-first century presentations.

In addition to the leap in the availability of technology, Pelion High School students have benefitted from an expansion of **world language** classes offered here on campus to include French. Additionally, several of our Spanish students, along with students from other high schools within our district, traveled to Spain during spring break.

With the opening of our new **Center for Advanced Agribusiness Research**, we have expanded the opportunities of students to prepare for college majors and careers in the ever-expanding field of agribusiness. This center is open to all juniors and seniors in Lexington One. The Center's curriculum allows students to pursue studies beyond the normal high school agriculture curriculum to include internships, externships, and extensive research opportunities. The center has been developed with partnerships with colleges and universities as well as with many local agribusinesses. Students from this center are able to move to the head of the line for scholarships, college recruitment, and agribusiness leadership development programs around the country.

Conclusion

We at Pelion High School are pleased with the accomplishments of our students and staff thus far this year as we build on our tradition of excellence, embrace the technological innovations now available to us, and reach out to a future filled with promise.

Pelion High School Mission

Pelion High School, in partnership with our community stakeholders, will develop thinking, responsible, and productive citizens, who are able to adapt and thrive in an increasingly complex global community; this is accomplished by providing challenging programs in academics, arts, career technology, and athletics through effective teaching supported by active learning experiences and the integrated use of technology.

2011-2012 Pelion High School Improvement Council Members

Pam King, Chairman; Shirley Sprenne, Vice Chairman; Matt Miller, Secretary;
Tina Allemond, Effie Bailey, Misty Brown, Isabel Carrillo, Clark Cooper, Michele Cooper, Jan Creech, Susan Crider, Deidre Culbreth, Carrie Dawkins, Jean N Haggard, David Holcomb, Randy King, Josh Lang, Cameron Padgett, Matt Pfister, Darla Rutkoskie, Chip Senn, Jerri Senn, Brent Shumpert, Barbara Smith, AJ Summer, Matt Treaster, Ruth Ann Treaster, Tim Treaster, Elizabeth Trevino, and Deidre Yonce