



Irmo Middle School International Academic Magnet Annual School Report 2016—2017

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Irmo Middle School Improvement Council Members

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Ashley Hartzog—Vice Chair
Vanessa Mota—Secretary

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Bunnie Ward
Beth White
L. Thomas Solet

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Kim Benson
Cheryl Duffie
Todd Nelson
Jordan O'Keefe
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Faculty Members

Allison Redick
Jen Cook
Kim Waters
Will Green

Students

Jamia East
Janhvi Kartik
Lauren Verner
Pooja Saji
Prosperity Davis
Meghna Subramaniam

Ex-Officio Members

Robert Jackson
Vernon Sava
Glenn Hutto
Danielle Major-Murphy
Tina Stevens



School Motto

*Creating successful
students for the
challenges of tomorrow*

Annual Message from Robert S. Jackson, Ed.S., Principal and Faith Hunter, School Improvement Council Chair

As one of the highest performing middle schools in South Carolina, Irmo Middle is a sixteen time recipient of the Palmetto Gold Award for exemplary performance and improvement. Irmo Middle consistently proves that a school with excellent teachers and outstanding parental support can produce outstanding results. In recognition of our excellence, we have again earned a spot in the top ten middle schools in SC by Niche.com. These results demonstrate that Irmo Middle remains a great choice as one of the top performing schools in the state of South Carolina.

Irmo Middle School serves 889+ students in grades sixth through eighth. As an International Academic Magnet, we are able to offer a wide range of high school credit courses in English, mathematics, world languages and STEM Systems. As a result, our students are able to excel on high school readiness assessments. On the PSAT assessments, a consistent number of students meet or exceed performance benchmarks with several achieving perfect scores. This number has risen substantially over the past five years. Additionally, a significant percentage of our students excel in visual and performing arts, through course offerings such as art, band, chorus, dance, and orchestra. This well-rounded approach provides the foundation needed for students to enter the top tier academic programs in high school and beyond.

Our school is committed to helping all students develop the world-class skills and ca-

reer characteristics of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate by ensuring that all students demonstrate high levels of proficiency through our implementations of the International Academic Magnet. Our school-wide magnet (and partnerships with EL Education, PITSCO Education, and TransformSC) provides opportunities for students to excel through thematic, project-based learning that capstones in experiences called learning expeditions. In small peer groups, students conduct field work and action research (with local field experts) in order to solve real-world problems, where inquiry based learning is facilitated by teachers and aligned with newly adopted South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards.

As we embrace a climate of continuous school improvement, our guiding principles for instruction will remain grounded in research-based practices and data teams. We constantly seek ways to improve instruction and to increase learning opportunities for our students. Our core practices center around five key dimensions. They include: curriculum, instruction, assessment, culture and character, and leadership. A special emphasis is also placed on advanced technology integration and magnetized thematic instruction, which guarantees each child, in every course, is given multiple opportunities to demonstrate his/her academic proficiency through project and problem based learning. Because of these instructional practices, we are seeing increased numbers of students

embracing the challenge of taking rigorous high school credit courses while in middle school.

Our dedicated faculty and staff continues to spend many hours participating in school, district and "theme" focused professional development. Teachers share instructional strategies and work in data teams to ensure quality instruction and assessment in all courses. Faculty collaboration and sustained professional learning are key components of our plan for continuous improvement.

One of our hallmarks of success is our high level of parental and community involvement. Our School Improvement Council and our PTSO provide outstanding leadership and support, as well as help to illuminate the future direction of our school. As we continue to reflect on our desired outcomes and increase conversations about how to improve student learning, we will continue our tradition of excellence at Irmo Middle, home of the International Academic Magnet.

Robert S. Jackson
Principal

Faith Hunter
SIC Chairperson

Irmo Middle School Mission Statement

The Mission of Irmo Middle School, as a recognized leader in educational excellence, is to ensure the development of the unique potential of each student as a lifelong learner through a comprehensive and challenging educational program that embraces the best of traditional, technological, and innovative practices within a caring, supportive, diverse, and safe community to prepare our students for a global society.

Initiatives and Strategies for School Improvement



The Irmo Middle School Improvement Council meets monthly to plan, monitor, and evaluate improvements at the school level. Their work includes school planning as well as communication between students, teachers, parents, and the school administration.

The Irmo Middle School Family would like to salute our SIC, PTSO, Booster Clubs, parent volunteers, and community supporters for their continuing support. We would also like to thank the School District Five Board of Trustees, and the District Office Staff.

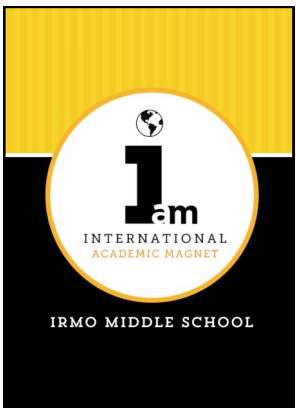
Our PTSO serves as our primary fundraising group for school-wide projects and is the group that organizes and assigns volunteers, works on beautification, supports school celebrations and recognitions, and provides activities for faculty and staff appreciation and support. Our PTSO is a 501.c(3) charitable organization.

- EL Education is our primary partner for school improvement and its five core practices and ten design principles inform school structure. Our school structures and future traditions such as CREW, community meetings, exhibitions of student work, and service learning will ensure that every student is known and cared for, that student leadership is nurtured, and that contributions to the school and world are celebrated.
- A school-wide magnet initiative has been developed. The theme of our magnet school is international studies. It provides a seamless pathway for our students to gain admittance into the elite International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme at Irmo High School. In this magnet, students enjoy a global teaching and learning experience that is framed around the research based platform of Expeditionary Learning.
- A robust tool for diagnostic assessment through NWEA's (MAP) Measures of Academic Performance. The computer-based MAP program is used three times a year to determine students' skill levels in reading, language, and math.
- Continued implementation of the data teams process as a core belief for improved teacher performance and student learning. Collaboration with other middle school teachers is also a part of our "data teams" curriculum initiative. Articulation and communication with high schools and the Center for Advanced Technical Studies ensures that our students are well-prepared to meet their goals.
- Through common formative assessments, cross curricular teachers adopt minute-to-minute and day-by-day assessment-for-learning strategies that have been shown by research to powerfully increase student achievement
- Individual performance conferences are held with teachers and students regarding MAP performance growth targets and desired outcomes.
- Teachers incorporate 1:1 chromebook technology into all classes with Google Apps for Education during instruction.
- Literacy libraries (with internationally themed titles) are maintained in all classes to support reading and writing initiatives.
- Students receive prescriptive interventions through Literacy Lab, Targeted ELA sections, PITSCO Algebra Readiness, Math Matters, and USA Test Prep.
- Continued facilitation of the SOAR Program provides after-school interventions and assistance to a targeted group of students.
- The individual learning needs of all students, including high achievers and population subgroups are met through EL Education differentiated instruction and other school structures and processes (Crew).
- Academic Assistance is available for all students during posted times and when otherwise planned.
- School-wide adoption of the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports model.
- Advancing EL Education's relational character and performance character (habits of scholarship) ensures that students meet the profile of the SC Graduate.
- Expansion of our high school credit offerings to include Chinese 1, Computer Applications, and Introduction to STEM Systems. Currently we offer English 1, Algebra 1, Geometry, French 1, Spanish 1, German 1, and Keyboarding. Our End-of-Course Exam results in English 1 and Algebra 1 continue to be in the 99th percentile. We have plans to offer World Geography in the future.
- Students are afforded the opportunity to take one of four world language offerings, or decide to immerse themselves in a visual or performing arts sequence that produces authentic products.
- Counselors meet annually with students to develop career goals, course selections, and a plan to meet each student's desired outcomes. Students and parents work with their counselor and/or the Career Development Facilitator to develop an individual graduation plan (IGP) which will prepare them to graduate high school "college and career ready."
- G-20-SLT "Shared Leadership Team" works all year long to implement goals to increase student achievement.
- Teachers and students have been exposed to Digital Citizenship training to prevent cyber bullying and teach students how to establish a healthy digital footprint and conduct appropriate online discussions.
- Our vision is continuously championed through the use of pervasive norms and communication protocols, interpersonal relationships, and artifacts within classrooms and public spaces.

Education



EL Education Schools core practices create school environments that promote deep engagement in learning while supporting students to achieve at high levels.



School **CHOICE**
School District Five of Lexington & Richland Counties

- Each school must be uncommonly good at those things offered by most schools
- Each school must be GREAT at something not commonly offered in other schools.

Stephen Hefner, Ed.D

The mission of Irmo Middle School is to shape a diverse community where students create high quality work, care for the well-being of themselves and others, and engage in meaningful service which impacts local and global communities. As a magnet and EL Education school, there are a myriad of opportunities offered to students - from rigorous core courses that infuse global themes into the South Carolina curriculum, giving students a chance to make authentic connections to real-world scenarios, to unique exploratory courses that allow learners to develop and refine talents and think in new ways. Specifically, because of our designation as an EL school (earned in the spring of 2014), all students participate in Crew - a structure designed to ensure that all students are known well by an adult and small peer group - and participate in collaborative work designed to yield high quality products and evoke deep thinking around authentic, complex problems.

Our beliefs about how schools look, feel, and function are hinged to the EL Education design principles. Students and staff are encouraged daily to embody the tenets of these principles as they participate in the wonderful process of learning:

The Primacy of Self-Discovery: Learning happens best with emotion, challenge and the requisite support. People discover their abilities, values, passions, and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. Students undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A teacher's primary task is to help students overcome their fears and discover they can do more than they think they can.

The Having of Wonderful Ideas: Teaching fosters curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.

The Responsibility for Learning: Learning is both a personal process of discovery and a social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. Every aspect of our

school encourages both children and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.

Empathy and Caring: Learning is fostered best in communities where students' and teachers' ideas are respected and where there is mutual trust. Learning groups are small with a caring adult looking after the progress and acting as an advocate for each child. Older students mentor younger ones; therefore, students feel physically and emotionally safe.

Success and Failure: All students need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important for students to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are hard, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.

Collaboration and Competition: Individual development and group development are integrated so that the value of friendship, trust, and group action is clear. Students are encouraged to compete not against each other, but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.

Diversity and Inclusion: Both diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. Students investigate and value their different histories and talents as well as those of other communities and cultures. Schools and learning groups are heterogeneous.

The Natural World: A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the Earth and of future generations.

Solitude and Reflection: Students and teachers need time alone to explore their own thoughts, make their own connections, and create their own ideas. They also need time to exchange their reflections with other students and with adults.

Service and Compassion: We are crew, not passengers. Students and teachers are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others, and our primary function is to prepare students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service.

School culture is created and sustained through practices that bring the community together, promote shared understandings, and encourage all community members to become crew, not passengers. This guiding principle rests on the fundamental belief that students are in control of their own learning, not passive receivers of knowledge. In order to foster this belief and establish and uphold a strong school community, all IMS students participate in Crew, a course that meets weekly on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. During Crew, students develop relationships, dedicate time to service, and engage in conversations and check-ins related to academic progress and other school-related issues. Students have had the opportunity to reflect on grades and the Habits of Scholarship (Integrity, Respect, Motivation & Ownership), which they include in their spring student-led conference. This reflection process has helped students to take ownership of their successes and failures, and make plans to achieve their personal best.

Grade level Crews meet together at our monthly Community Meetings, a common structure in EL Education Schools that help to build a culture of pride, success and celebration in both academics and character.

We are committed to thinking deeply about issues that matter. We are committed to inspiring students to care about themselves and those around them. We are committed to changing the world.

Jen Cook
Leadership Teacher

Performing Arts Highlights

- Nine IMS Band Students earned spots in the SCBDA Region 2 Honorband:
 M. Blankenship-Brown
 H.Chapman,
 H. Gordon
 E. Gutshall
 A. Johnson
 M. Matheny
 N. Rayala
 L. Vane
 M. Waddell



- 31 of our IMS Band, Dance, and Orchestra students participated as members of the Irmo High School of the Arts Marching Band. The band earned 2nd place and were silver medalist at the State 3A Championship.
- Congratulations to M. Blankenship-Brown who earned a spot in the SCDBA All-State Band.

- The IMS chorus earned one Excellent Rating at the SCMEA
- The IMS Band, Orchestra, Chorus and Dance students did a joint performance in November to showcase their work for the school.



- IMS Orchestras earned one Superior and one Excellent Rating at the SCMEA Performance Assessment 2016.
- IMS Orchestra earned one Superior Rating and 1st Place in two categories, as well as, Best Overall Orchestra, at Music in the Parks Festival at Carowinds, 2016.



- 7 Students auditioned and were accepted into SC Midlands Region Orchestra.
- 2 students auditioned and were accepted into SC All-State Orchestra.



- Irmo Middle Dancers performed Disney inspired pieces with the Irmo Middle Band at the Winter Concert.
- Selected advanced dancers performed some ballet barre movements and spoke with parents about our amazing dance program during the IMS Magnet Fair Night.



- Selected advanced dancers did a recruitment tour to all the D5 elementary schools and showcased the arts offered at Irmo Middle. The dancers performed excerpts from their winter concert.



iAM...Global Leaders



Robert S. Jackson
Principal



Vernon Sava
A.P. for Instruction



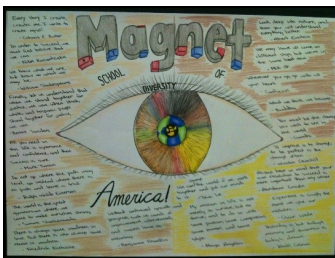
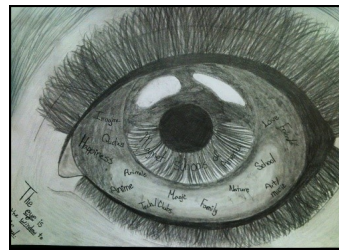
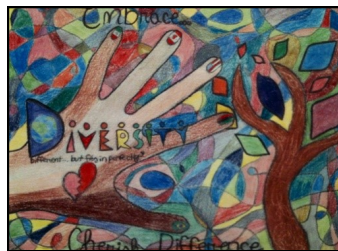
Glenn Hutto
Assistant Principal



Danielle Major-Murphy
Assistant Principal

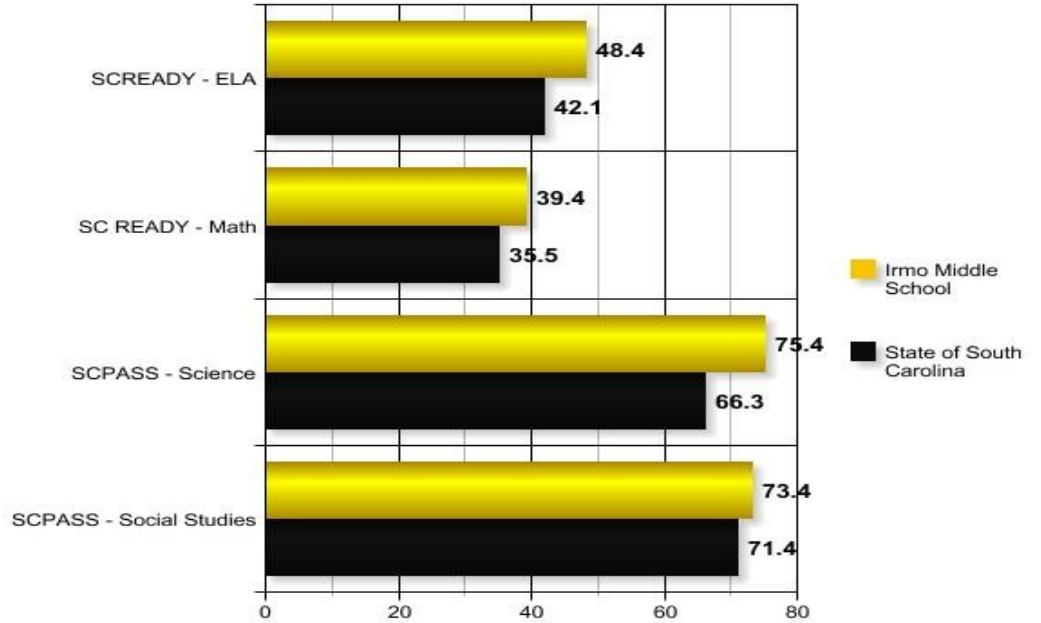
Visual Arts

The pictures represented are students interruptions of diversity and what it means to them. These pictures were drawn using various instruments at their disposal. We are so proud of not only the creativity the students displayed in their work ,but also the amount of effort they put into making these pieces of art something special.



School Testing Highlights

Tested Subject	Irmo Middle School	State of South Carolina
SCPASS - Science	48.40%	42.10%
SCPASS - Social Studies	39.40%	35.50%
SCREADY - ELA	75.40%	66.30%
SCREADY - Math	73.40%	71.40%



IMS Garden Club



IMS Student Government



IMS Dance



IMS Beta Club



IMS Science Team



Athletic Teams

• C-Team Football



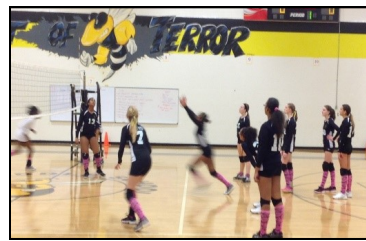
• C-Team Boys basketball



• C-Team Cheerleading



• C-Team Girls Basketball



• C-Team Girls Volleyball



• C-Team Track

We have several of our students participating in JV sports at Irmo High School:

- JV Soccer
- JV Cross Country
- JV Softball/Baseball
- JV Wrestling
- JV Swim Team
- JV Tennis
- JV Golf
- JV Lacrosse

School Highlights

IMS STEM Lab



- All of our social studies classes participated in the National Geographic Geography Bee. Student L. Ward won our school Geography Bee! He participated in the State Geography Bee on March 31st.



- IMS had 6 students score a PERFECT scores on SC READY or SC PASS test! This is an amazing accomplishment for these students. Congratulations to:

- E. Anderson
- J. Dean
- J. Holliday
- C. Lewis
- Z. Prime
- M. Subramaniam

learning job skills with our Coffee With Care Expedition.

IMS Unity Task Force



- IMS student, C. Corley was named the top 8th grade reader in the state of South Carolina. He read 1,040 pages in two weeks.



- Beta Club students at IMS partnered with the Make-A-Wish foundation that helps make wishes come true for local children with life threatening illnesses. This year, our students raised \$526 to present to the Make-A-Wish foundation. We are so proud of the giving spirit that can be found here at IMS.

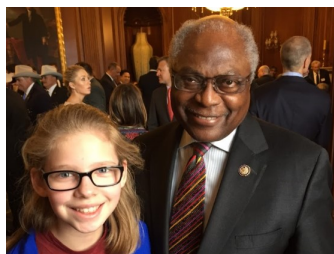
- Irmo Middle School raised \$1,300 for the Pulsera Project, a nonprofit campaign that gives Nicaraguan youth weavers a market to sell their intricate bracelets and raise funds for educational programs.



IMS Hoop Troop



- 7th grader V. Davis had the experience of a lifetime on a recent field study to Washington DC. She had the opportunity to meet with congressmen and senators from South Carolina while in the nations capital in March.



- 16 Teachers were awarded Donors Choose Projects totaling over \$5,000.
- Teacher B. McCloy won the Blue Cross Blue Shield Fearless Teacher Grant. Mr. McCloy used the grant money to buy drums for his classroom to help students writing poetry find the rhyme, rhythm and beat.



Will Green
16-17 Teacher of the Year

IMS Chess Club



- K. Hicks, 6th grade student, won The President's Volunteer Service Award for her work with project Au-Some.



- 4 Teachers were awarded Mid Carolina Electric "Bright Ideas Grants" to help fund various Learning Expeditions around the school. The total amount that these teachers received for their projects was \$2,884.



Kimberly Waters
16-17 Support Staff of the Year

IMS FCA



- This year we have offered 5 Learning Expeditions to deepen student learning and improve their performance, ranging from creating a sustainable garden and learning about homelessness to students

iAM #NextLevel

Next Level - Growing Global

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." ~Nelson Mandela



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