



Irmo Middle School International Academic Magnet Annual School Report 2013—2014

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Irmo Middle School Improvement Council Members

Members

Tabitha Keeler—Chair
Hayley Gossett—Vice Chair
Vasanthi Jayaram—Secretary
Michael Cates
Danny Koon
L. Thomas Solet

Appointed Members

John Cantey
Sherri Hazel
Bradley Smith
Robbie Sofaly
Rachel Ray
Michael McNeil

Faculty Members

Cheryl Harrison
April Garrett
Sandy Ranly
Cheryl Cooley

Students

Payton Lang—8th grade

Ex-Officio Members

Jan Faber
Kim Stutts
Robert Jackson
Glenn Hutto



Annual Message from Robert Jackson, Principal and Tabitha Keeler, School Improvement Council Chair

As one of the highest performing middle schools in South Carolina, Irmo Middle is a thirteen time recipient of the Palmetto Gold Award for exemplary performance and improvement. Irmo Middle consistently proves that a school with excellent teachers who regularly use research-based instructional strategies coupled with outstanding parental support can produce outstanding results. In recognition of our excellence, we have “again” earned an “A” Rating on our Federal Report Card and Excellent Absolute and Improvement Ratings on our SC School Report Card. These results continue to 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 900 students in grades seven and eight. We offer a wide range of high school credit courses in English, mathematics, world languages and STEM Systems. Our students also continue to excel on high school readiness assessments. On the EXPLORE and PSAT assessments, record numbers of students met or exceeded performance benchmarks with several who achieved 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 band, chorus, dance, and orchestra.

We are offering Mandarin Chinese as a fourth world language course. No other middle school in District Five offers as many world language oppor-

tunities as Irmo Middle. Moreover, we are also adding Advanced Dance to increase opportunities via the performing arts. Along with course opportunities, fine arts students regularly demonstrate their skill attainment through concerts and other school events that are designed to showcase their talents.

We consider high school, college, and career readiness to be critical next steps for our students. Our implementation of the International Academic Magnet (and partnerships with Expeditionary Learning “EL” and PITSCO Education) provides opportunities for students to excel through project-based learning that capstones in experiences called learning expeditions. Each student will belong to a smaller subgroup of students who are conducting field studies and action research in order to solve real-world problems where inquiry based learning is facilitated by teachers through the State Adopted Standards in South Carolina.

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 still in middle school.

Our dedicated faculty and staff continues to spend many hours participating in (school, district and “EL” 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 map out 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.

Robert S. Jackson
Principal

Tabitha Keeler
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.

School Motto

*Creating successful
students for the
challenges of tomorrow*

Initiatives and Strategies for School Improvement

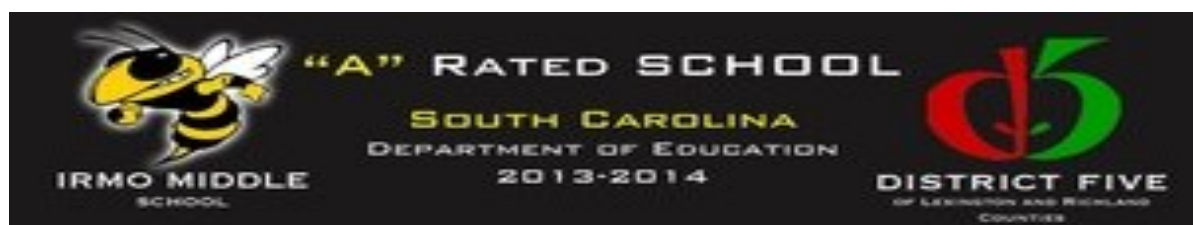


The Irmo Middle School Improvement Council meets monthly to plan, monitor, and evaluate improvements at the school level. Their work includes school planning as well as communication between students, teachers, parents, and the school administration.

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.

- Expeditionary Learning 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.
- 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.
- Technology integration into all classes where teachers are migrating towards tablet computing with accompanying "app" utilization during instruction.
- Literacy libraries (with internationally themed titles) are maintained in all classes to support reading and writing initiatives.
- "READ 365" facilitates a daily literacy focus embedded into all classes. There is a designated time allocated for students to self-select reading materials that are challenging, stimulating, and capable of fostering a life-long pursuit of enriching literacy texts. In addition, all students are expected to read 25 books each year and write weekly in all classes.
- Targeted students receive prescriptive interventions through SOAR to SUCCESS, Literary Workshop, USA Test Prep, Math Matters and Aleks.
- Continue facilitation of the Challenging Horizons Program which provides after-school interventions and assistance to a targeted group of students.
- 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.
- 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."
- IMS has a staff member trained in the OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program. This program is designed to achieve stronger peer relations, reduce existing bullying incidents, and prevent any new ones from forming.
- Teacher and students have been exposed to the Pause Before You Post Program designed to prevent cyber bullying and teach students how to establish healthy digital footprint.
- Six carts of iPads and Chromebooks are available for classroom use, research, and assessment to enhance instruction delivery, provide the opportunity for students to create authentic content, and collaborate with their peers in completing real-world products.





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

IRMO MIDDLE

An International Perspective



The Asia Society (2014), a leader in promoting global competence in school curricula, reports the following:

In matters of national security, environmental sustainability, and economic development, what we do as a nation and in our everyday lives is inextricably intertwined with what governments, businesses, and individuals do beyond our borders . . . This new reality helps us more clearly define the role that education must play in preparing all students for success in an interconnected world. (Jackson, 2014)

The necessity to prepare students for a future in which they must interact and problem solve with colleagues from diverse cultures and backgrounds, drives our mission and purpose in daily classroom instruction. Moreover, we acknowledge that iAM students must have opportunities in all core and elective courses to: investigate the world, weigh perspectives, communicate ideas, take action, and apply disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise. Tony Wagner (2013), an educational researcher from Harvard, explains that because of technology integration, knowledge is no longer a commodity in classrooms. Thus, the focus of 21st century classrooms can no longer remain on the acquisition of isolated, esoteric facts – but rather on skills of collaboration, presentation, and critical thinking.

Through the integration of our magnet theme, coupled with the adoption of Expeditionary Learning (EL) as our framework for curriculum, instruction, and leadership, we challenge our students every day using "I Can" statements and project/problem-based outcomes. These outcomes result in finished products that are goal oriented, measurable, reflective of high-quality student

work, and connected to issues with local and global significance. Examples of this type of work were wide-spread across our campus in 2013-2014. One of these examples yielded from the 8th grade science and math classes, where students were challenged to fashion lighting apparatuses from liter bottles, tin, silicone, and other minimal materials – all while applying scientific inquiry and analysis skills during the design phase, and algebraic and geometric concepts during construction. After creation of these functioning "lamps," students donated them to homes in the Philippines and other developing countries through the global open-source network, Liter of Light. In addition to mastering the required South Carolina state standards, students also became compassionate, active members of the global community – who were dedicated to serving others. In 2014-2015, our first year of full implementation with our magnet theme and Expeditionary Learning, teachers and students will be challenged more rigorously to connect state standards to "real world" problems and scenarios – providing all students with an opportunity to serve others in the community and around the globe.

In addition to the creation of high-quality student work, iAM students also have participated in a vast range of courses – unduplicated by any other middle school in the area. These new courses, offered for the first time in 2013-2014, the official planning/exploration year of our magnet school, include: Mandarin Chinese, Introduction to Media Arts, and Dance. Next year, our course catalog is expanding even more to include: Crew (an Expeditionary Learning course focused on habits of character and scholarship, required for all students), Mandarin Chinese I, Media Arts II, Advanced Dance, and PITSCO: Algebra Readiness and Introduction to Stem Systems.

Each student comes to middle school with an array of different talents. Refining these talents and discovering new ones is the centerpiece of our magnet experience. Through a laser focus on global studies in all core and encore classes through unified school-wide instructional themes like Global Education and World Leadership, iAM students are learning the value of competition and collaboration with peers throughout local and global communities. Additionally, our first year as an International Academic Magnet has generated a plethora of opportunities for students to explore diversity; some of these experiences include: a school-wide celebration of Malala Yousafzai and her work for educational equity, "Lunch-and-Learn" workshops focused on African Dance and Japanese Aikido, mini-workshops hosted by students from Thinking Globally at the University of South Carolina, and a Skype session with American and Chinese university students in Hong Kong. However, our teachers are already refining, reimagining, and redesigning lessons for next year to increase the relevance, rigor, and quality of student work. Using Expeditionary Learning professional development protocols and practices, which promote active student engagement, deep thinking and grappling, and a focus on 21st century skills like performance and teamwork, the unique opportunities afforded to iAM students will grow exponentially each year.

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.

Caitlin McKenzie
Lead Teacher



Performing Arts Highlights

- The IMS Honor Band performed in honor of local Armed Forces personnel and veterans during the CrossRoads Middle School Veteran's Day celebration.
- 12 IMS Band students auditioned and earned spots in the SCBDA Region Band:

Claudia Byun
 Maria Bykalo
 Donna Birdsong
 Ben Boisture
 Candace Evans
 Nick Dussault
 Rick Howell
 Lawson Lacomba
 Anthony Ruocco
 Christopher Faber
 Victoria Harris
 Calvin Guyette



- On March 20, the IMS Bands presented their Spring Concert. The concert began with a performance by the new Percussion Ensemble, which formed in January. It is an extracurricular group of percussion, woodwind, and brass students.

- The 7th Grade, 8th Grade, and Honor Bands received Excellent ratings at the SCBDA Concert Festival.
- 8th grade Honors chorus: Excellent Rating at 2013 SC Middle School Choral Festival.
- 7th grade Honors chorus: Superior rating at 2013 SC Middle School Choral Festival, the 4th highest score in the state.



- The IMS Arts Department created and performed an original arrangement of Journey's "Don't Stop Believing" in honor of the District Five School Board. Music was arranged for Band, Orchestra, and Chorus by Mr. Simmons (IMS Band Director). Choreography was created by Ms. Evans (IMS Dance Director). The performance took place during the Board meeting hosted at IMS.

- Students from Intermediate, Beginner, and After School Dance participated in District Five Dance Day.



- SC Region Orchestra:
 Sunjay Jayaram, 8th gr., violin
 Sophia Zhou, 7th gr., violin
 Katie Shealy, 8th gr., violin
 Will Galan, 8th gr., violin
 Becan Floyd, 7th gr., viola
 Hannah Nates, 7th gr., viola
 Austin Thomas, 8th gr., cello
 Melat Tarekegne, 8th gr., cello
 Lauren Henderson, 8th gr., cello
- SC All-State Orchestra:
 Becan Floyd, Viola, 7th gr.
 Sunjay Jayaram, Violin, 8th gr.
 Austin Thomas, Cello, 8th gr.
 Sophia Zhou, Violin, 7th gr.
- SCMEA Concert Festival:
 7th Orchestra: EXCELLENT
 8th Orchestra: SUPERIOR
 Honors Orchestra: SUPERIOR

- Dance students performed dances inspired by countries from around the world at the Irmo Course Fair.



iAM...Global Leaders



Robert S. Jackson
Principal



Glenn Hutto
A.P. for Instruction



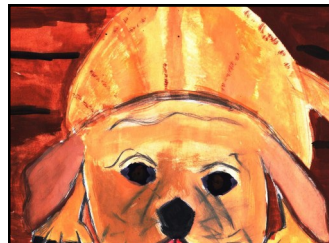
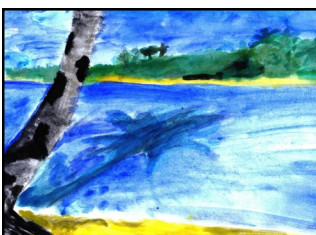
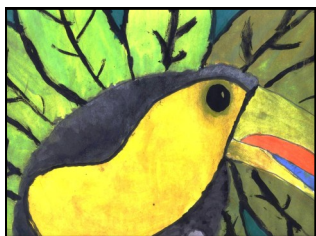
Michael Ames
Assistant Principal



Judith McCray
Assistant Principal

Visual Arts

The pictures represented are a unique gathering of many different mediums like color pencil, tempera paint and watercolor washes. The paintings areas can range from lightly applied layers of effervescent color to dark bold thick application. The use of broad and thin line marker in many of the art works here is applied for impressive attitude and eye popping appeal.



General School Highlights

IMS Greenhouse



IMS Student Government



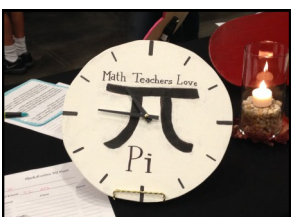
IMS Dance



IMS Beta Club



IMS MathMatters



- Mrs. Haley Calore, IMS Orchestra Teacher, has been asked to act as the Guest Clinician for the Richland One District Honor Orchestra. An invitation to teach and conduct in such a capacity is only extended to those teachers who are considered by colleagues to be the best in the craft



- The IMS Student Government received 3 awards at state. They were awarded the Silver Award Council, the Gavel Award for the top middle school scrapbook entry, Payton Lang was one of only 2 middle school students in the state recognized with a leadership award.



Shannon Avery
14-15 Teacher of the Year

- Johnny Cooley, 7th grade science teacher at IMS, was nominated by his student Connor Kroll for Pitner Orthodontics Outstanding Teacher of the Month Award.



- In recognition of our excellence, we have "again" earned an "A" Rating on our Federal Report Card.

- Our strong school wide climate and classroom procedures helped us achieve Ribbon Status for our PBIS program from the SCDE.

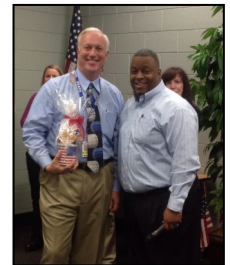
- We are excited to take one step closer towards enhanced and efficient school, parent, and community relations by releasing our very first "App" here at Irmo Middle. Our goal is to utilize a variety of communication platforms in order to increase the modalities through which we transmit relevant news and information and interact with our stakeholders.



- Our very own Cheryl Cooley was awarded the 2013 School Social Worker of the Year by SC School Social Work Association.



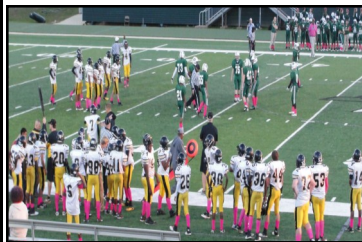
- Irmo Middle School has again earned an Excellent Absolute and Improvement Rating on the 2013 School Report Card. Congratulations are extended to all students, parents, faculty, and staff members who were instrumental in our reception of this recognition.



Arnie Wodtke
14-15 Support Staff of the Year

Athletic Teams

- C-Team Football



- The C-Team Boys basketball



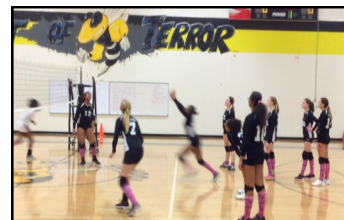
- C-Team Cheerleading



- C-Team Girls Basketball



- C-Team Volleyball



- C-Team Track and Field



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

Student Highlights

IMS Math Counts



- The IMS MathCounts team placed 2nd in the Columbia Regional competition. Congratulations to Calvin Guyett for placing 3rd in the Individual Competition! Congratulations to team members:

Santana Reddy
Jonathon Floyd-Evans
Sophia Zhou
Noah Overcash

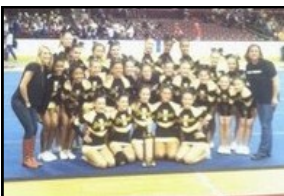


- Irmo Middle School is participating in the Pulsera Project, a nonprofit campaign that gives Nicaraguan youth weavers a market to sell their intricate bracelets and raise funds for educational programs. Students at the school have sold 593 bracelets and 10 bolsillas in Spanish.



- Congratulations to our C-Team Cheerleaders for winning first place in the Debbie Rogers Cheerleading Invitational at the Colonial Center.

IMS Cheerleading



- IMS student, Chase McCarty is one of four SC gymnasts competing in the 2014 Special Olympics USA games this summer.
- Congratulations to the top three winners in the Science Fair competing with Expeditionary Learning projects.

1st: "Liter of Light"
Ms. Harrison's Earth Science
2nd: "Getting Gressed Out"
Mr. Cooley's Life Science
3rd: "The TerraCycle Project"
Mrs. Moore's Life Science

District Office of Lexington 5 Art Show 2014

Join the "IAM" Visual Arts in Congratulating the Following Students who have art work on display at the District Office from February 27-29, 2014

Halle Henderson
Charisse Housell
Callie Hines
Genaro Santos
Suzey Carter
Wendy Bryant
Mia Collins
Emily Watts
Emily Spry
Esha Hedge
Savannah Williams
Hannah Niles
Savanna Torres
Gianna Rockwood
Lila Holland

- Congratulations to our Irmo Swim Team for their Region IV AAAA championship. Students earning All Region and qualifying for State:

Reanna Wrecsics-400 Freestyle Relay and State
Erin Medlock— 200 Medley Relay & 200 Freestyle Relay and State
Thomas Keane—State Team
Spencer Myrick—State Team

IMS Science Olympiad



- Congratulations to the 46 students who were selected as a South Carolina Junior Scholar by their qualifying PSAT score.



- Congratulations to our 15 students who received a perfect score on PASS 2013.



- C-Team Girls Basketball PAC Champions. Undefeated season 17-0.

Palmetto PARENT APRIL 2014

5 STUDENTS who will CHANGE the world

the It factor

in defense of NAP YEAR

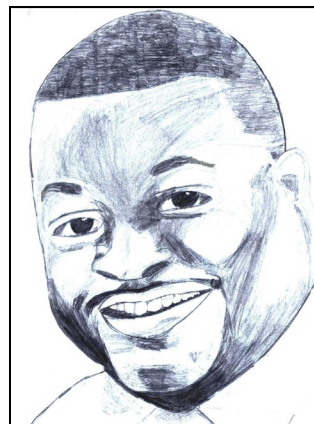
- One of our students, Payton Lang, is featured on the cover of Palmetto Parent magazine. She is listed as one of five students that will change the world. Payton's future plans are to study medicine and become an anesthesiologist. According to Guidance Counselor Mrs. Tina Stevens, "Payton shines bright not only at Irmo Middle School but at the state level by earning the title Junior Scholar and being selected as a Duke TIPS scholar. Payton was elected by the student body to be Lieutenant Governor her seventh grade year and as the School Improvement Committee Representative her eighth grade year. Payton is also the BETA club president and captain of the Irmo Middle School cheerleaders. She is determined to be a shining light to the world. She has her own charity organization called Passion for Paws to help animals live by supporting no-kill shelters."

Payton is a tremendous young lady and most deserving of this recognition. Please join me in congratulating Payton for an outstanding job representing Irmo Middle School and School District Five in a distinctive fashion.

IMS Orchestra

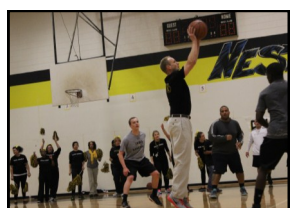


- Boys C-Team Basketball PAC Champions.



- Portrait of Robert Jackson by William Dudley, 8th grade Honors.

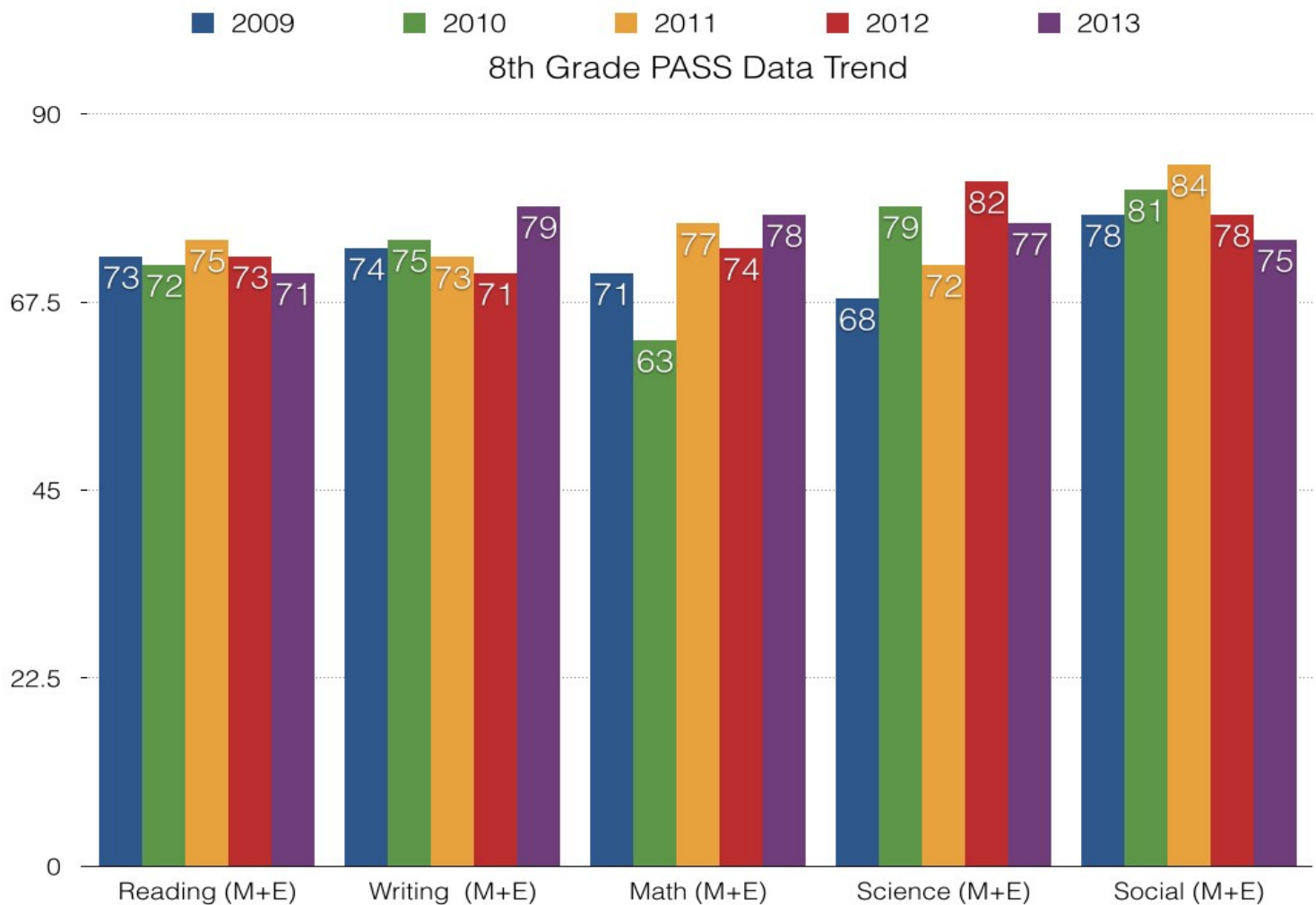
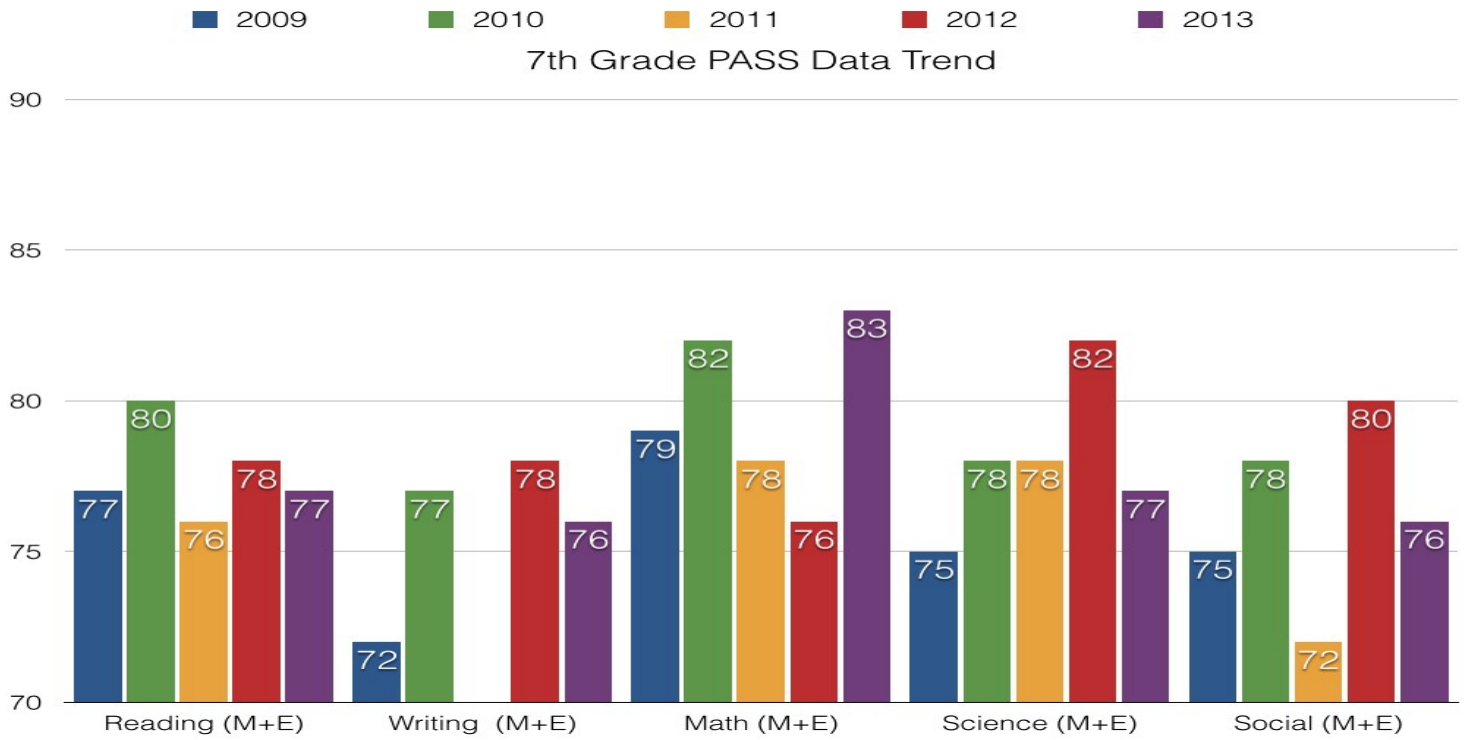
IMS Pep Rally



- Congratulations to the winners of the IMS Science Team competed in the South Carolina Regional Science Olympiad competition. This meet included 20 smaller events in which students had to create robots, analyze data, build instruments, and test unknown substances. IMS students won six medals and six ribbons in various events. Team Members:

Adam DiMaggio
Adriann Halbisen
Alex Washington
Gabby Gadson
Jake Vickio
Jasmine Jefferson
Jordan Nelson
Keshia Patel
Michelle Lane
Noah Overcash
Robert MacDonald
Serene Alverez
Teneille Bradford-Singleton
Victoria Williams
Will Turner

School Testing Highlights

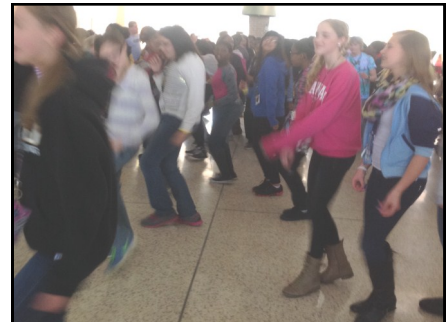


iAM #IrmoSTRONG Celebration

We are striving to make sure each child s healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.

Students come together every semester to celebrate their achievement in reaching our school-wide expectations at the iAM #IrmoSTRONG Celebration. There are five specific goals that we ask students to reach: all As and Bs, making right choices, no tardies or unexcused absences, no dress code violations, and no ID violations. Students who achieve three out of the five goals are invited to attend the celebration at the end of the semester where they dance to a live DJ, enjoy snacks, and hang out with friends.

Students at Irmo Middle School have shown that these desired goals are attainable and achievable. On average at least four hundred students are invited at the end of the semester. Students who do not achieve three out of the five goals remain in class, and they complete a reflective assignment on how they can change behaviors that will help them meet the goals for the following semester. Our goal is to continue encouraging students to make the right choice and set an example of why we are #IrmoSTRONG!



Irmo Middle School Let's Connect Friend and Follow Us On The Web!

Facebook: facebook.com/irmomiddle

Blog: www.irmomiddle.blogspot.com

Twitter: Principal Jackson—@IMS_Principal

Twitter: Asst. Principal Hutto—@glennhutto1

Twitter: Asst. Principal Ames—@IrmoAmes

Twitter: Asst. Principal McCray—@jemccray