



Report to the People

Spring 2017

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SDOC School Board Members, L to R: Jerry Lee, Chairman Andrew Inabinet, Denise McCormick, Joe Rukat, and Buddy Herring

The School District of Oconee County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the no discrimination Policies, employment or gender related issues – Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; 504 or disability related issues – Assistant Superintendent for Instruction; equal access issues – Assistant Superintendent for Operations.

All may be contacted by mail at 414 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691 or by phone at 864-886-4400.



CONGRATULATIONS SENECA HIGH SCHOOL

"This award is not just about Seneca High, it is a reflection of the entire One Seneca family," said principal Cliff Roberts.

Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of The School District of Oconee County's "Report to the People."

On behalf of the dedicated employees of the SDOC, we want you to know what a privilege it is to serve our wonderful students, their families and our supportive community. We recognize the value of communication and are excited to provide information about our district, along with explanations of new initiatives and updates on changes that will occur in the 2017-18 school year.

This is more than just providing information. We also enjoy another opportunity to highlight dedicated employees and hard-working students. We want to give parents and the community an inside look at our district and what has been going on all year.

Below is a list of what can be found on the different pages. We hope you enjoy seeing all the great things going on in the district!

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District Progress Overview

Each year, the School District of Oconee County's Board of Trustees establishes goals and objectives that reflect a strong commitment to the growth of our students and our community. We know that community support is essential in turning a vision of student achievement into reality. In fact, the research is clear that when schools, families, and communities support each other, students of all backgrounds and ability levels achieve at higher levels. Toward that end, we want to take this opportunity to update you on progress made this school year while also looking forward to the next year.

The first goal is to consistently rank as a top ten South Carolina school district on student achievement measures. By reaching this

goal, the School District of Oconee County will know it is providing world-class instruction and opportunities that will truly prepare students for brighter futures in the 21st century.

In our effort to be a top ten SC school district, we often implement new initiatives because we recognize that continuous improvement efforts are critical to ensure district progress. We work hard to provide our students with the knowledge and skills they will need for future success; success that will benefit the community as well as the students themselves.

In early 2015, in conjunction with the SC Chamber of Commerce and the SC Association of School Administrators, the SC Board of Education approved the "Profile of an SC Graduate" as a shared vision of the knowledge, skills and characteristics needed for students to be successful in higher learning and careers. We want to keep this information available and have once again included that graphic in the middle section of this publication.

In keeping with this statewide focus and with the board's goal of ranking in the top 10 districts in the state, the School District of Oconee County continues to identify and implement instructional best practices that assist us in providing exemplary instruction for all students in a safe learning environment. Some of these best practices are outlined in this publication.

The second major goal of the school board is to balance an operating budget that was \$3.5 million in the red just three years ago. The SDOC is facing some challenges to this goal due to the state financial situation. The district strives to be good stewards of taxpayer money and is currently working through the annual budget process. While balancing the budget for the 2017-18 school year will be a challenge, our district remains in a strong financial position relative to most other school districts in the state.

It is our hope that you enjoy this publication. We thank you for your support of the School District of Oconee County.

Michael Thorsland
Superintendent

Andy Inabinet, Chairman
Board of Trustees

BLUE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

The Community Outreach Program

Mrs. Hunt, a third grade teacher at Blue Ridge Elementary School, has a huge heart for service and voluntarily applied for a grant through generationOn. The focus of this grant was to create a service project that met the criteria for the organization's Joy Maker Challenge. After receiving the grant she created an after-school Community Outreach Program to help carry out the project. Seneca Baptist Church and community businesses supplied additional donations and mentors to work alongside the students who were selected to participate in this program. The students volunteered at the school's "Pancake Breakfast with Santa" event. At this event the students worked as greeters, servers, and assisted with crafts. Along with the 100 Hasbro toys that were provided through the grant, a donation table was set-up for personal care items as well. Over 650 items were collected. The students and their mentors worked together to organize, pack, and wrap 52 personal care item kits for Blue Ridge Elementary families. Each family received two of the Hasbro toys as well. The students also created a card for each kit to wish these families a happy holiday. The project was a huge success.



Gifted and Talented (GT) Community Projects

Students in the fifth grade GT ELA class wrote letters to local businesses requesting charitable donations for community service projects. In response, the program received donations of \$400 each from three local businesses: Borg Warner Automotive, Ulbrich Specialty Wire Products, and Sandvik.

The \$1,200 will be used for two building projects. The GT Math classes will plan and build two doghouses to be raffled off in the spring, with proceeds going to Oconee County Humane Society and the Animal Rescue Fund, ARF. The additional money will be used to build three Blessing Boxes to be placed in the downtown Seneca area. Blessing Boxes hold non-perishable food and hygiene items that are free to anyone who may be in need of the items. Blue Ridge Elementary is extremely thankful for the partnerships with local businesses. The BRE GT team is excited to get started on these projects that serve our Seneca community!

Raising Readers

Blue Ridge Elementary is proud to announce that Pre-K Teacher, Jessica McGaha, was chosen as one of three nationwide winners of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Literacy Innovation Challenge. Ms. McGaha's project Literacy Comes Home! was selected out of over 600 submissions as being particularly innovative and effective in increasing family involvement. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, each child in our Pre-K classes will be given a colorful five shelf bookcase at a kickoff event. Parents and families will also receive details of the program and the opportunity to sign up for the program. Each month a teacher and/or assistant will visit participants' homes and engage families in a literacy skill lesson as well as to deliver a new book to add to their bookshelf. By the end of the school year, each family will have nine new books, and eight individual reading sessions with their teacher. A modified version of this program will also be implemented with our Kindergarten classrooms. Pre-K and Kindergarten students will have the opportunity to grow their home library through this program.



NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY

Accomplishments

- Monthly Student Recognition Program celebrates student success
- NES welcomed Officer Thompson as school resource officer (SRO)
- Students participated in field trips to the Upstate History Museum and Children's Museum as well as cultural experiences at the Brooks Center and Walhalla Civic Auditorium
- Fifth grade students participated in an overnight science experience at Earthshine Discovery Center
- School music program held a fundraiser night at Pizza Buffet
- Third, fourth, and fifth grade students participated in a school wide science fair
- Six students placed at the Regional Science Fair held at Southern Wesleyan University
- Northside's Team placed first at Regional Jet Toy competition after successes at the school and county level
- Students participated in third and fourth grade book clubs during lunch
- First, second, and third grade students learned about the effects of littering on the environment from Keep Oconee Beautiful Association.
- NES hosted six student teachers from local universities
- 45 students in third, fourth, and fifth grades participated in Math Madness, a districtwide elementary school math competition
- Students collected hundreds of items for Safe Harbor in honor of Chrissy Adams, former solicitor
- School collected over 2,000 Box Tops for Education
- NES students enjoyed entertainment from Seneca High School's Madrigals
- Student team participated in district Battle of the Books
- Fifth grade students prepared for middle school with a visit to Seneca Middle and discussions with middle school counselors
- NES Field Day provided fun and activity
- 25 athletes and 10 volunteers participated in Special Olympics
- Classes collected \$1000 for March of Dimes
- Welcomed prospective Kindergarten parents and teachers with two Jump into Kindergarten open houses
- End of the year events include Mayfest Chorus Program, a book fair, and several awards days.



Parker Karwacki and Mrs. Wilson celebrate the Clemson Football National Championship



Northside's Jet Toy team came in first at the Regional competition. L to R: Mrs. Hightower, Ben Nix and Jalen Craig



Northside had numerous winners at the Regional Science Fair held at Southern Wesleyan University. L to R: Jillian Johnson, Rylee Hamby, Emma Elliott, Brecken Alexander, Ally Moore, Brenden Smith

RAVENEL ELEMENTARY



Animal Ambassadors presented an exciting assembly for all RES students to learn about animals from around the world: a kangaroo, a ball python, and a hedgehog. Students learned about each animal's habitats, life cycles, characteristics and so much more. After the presentation, students had the opportunity to hold the animals while having photos made.



Kindergarten teacher Mrs. Courtney Williams was honored with a WYFF Golden Apple Award in March.



Ravenel students raised \$4,459.20 in their annual Jump Rope for Heart event.



RES Chorus students performed a Christmas musical in December. Another production and dinner theater is underway for spring.

SENECA MIDDLE



All-County Orchestra participants



All-State Chorus students



Orchestra students and Artist in Residence Sharon Gerber perform a selection of contemporary "looped" music for their peers during lunch periods at the school



Gunnison Alexander and Zach Shaw placed among the top ten in the state in the Atlantic Institute Essay Contest



Sterling Hamilton was the first SMS student ever to be named to the ACDA National Honor Choir.



Seneca Middle School boys' basketball team were 2016-2017 winners of the AOP District 1 Conference

- Four students were accepted to the Governor's School of the Arts Summer Discovery Program
- Two SMS students placed among the top 10 in the state in the Atlantic Institute's Essay Contest, "Compassion in Action ... Caring Matters." One placed seventh and the other ninth.
- Twenty-six eighth grade students qualified to be South Carolina Junior Scholars.
- Ninety-seven students participated in the 2016-2017 South Carolina Junior Book Award Contest sponsored by the South Carolina Association of School Librarians.
- SMS students embrace the value of community service and participated in a number of projects throughout the school year. The local March of Dimes chapter was presented with a check for \$2,975.10 on behalf of the school.
- Each year all sixth grade students conceive of and create an invention through their science class. The best 40 inventions were presented to a panel of judges at the school's Family Focus Night. Twenty-five inventors and their inventions then travelled to Greenville to compete against other budding inventors across the Upstate at the Duke Energy Invention Convention. Three SMS students advanced to second round with one winning third place in the sixth grade division.
- The winner of the Seneca Middle School Geography Bee and the Seneca Middle Spelling Bee both went on to compete at the state level in their respective events.
- Seneca Middle School has a strong tradition of quality music programs. This year our three music programs once again earned a multitude of awards and recognition for their talent and hard work.
 - SMS Band Program won the Outstanding Performance Award for the third year in a row.
 - The SMS Chorus earned a Superior with Distinction rating at the state Concert Performance Assessment, won first place in their class with a Gold Rating as well as the Adjudicator Award at the Nashville Heritage Festival, had 10 students earn a place in the SCMEA All-State Chorus, and (for the first time ever) had a student audition and win a place in the National ACDA Middle School Honor Choir.
 - SMS Band had 29 students earn a place in All-County Band, six in All-Region Band and two in All-State Band. Symphonic Band earned a Superior with Distinction rating at their State Concert Performance Assessment and performed at the Nashville Heritage Festival where they won their class with a Gold rating. They also scored higher than any other band, middle OR high school, and earned the Adjudicator Award.
 - SMS Orchestra had 27 students named to All-County Orchestra, two to All-Region Orchestra and two to All-State Orchestra. One student was named Concertmaster for the Carolina Youth Symphony Orchestra. The group also hosted Cellist Sharon Gerber as an Artist in Residence.
- A number of Seneca Middle School students participated in athletics either at the C-Team, JV or Varsity levels in a variety of sports including volleyball, football, cross country, basketball, wrestling, baseball, softball, track and soccer. We were especially proud of our C-Team basketball team for winning their conference this year.



Shelby Cribb earned third place among all participating sixth graders at the Duke Energy Invention Convention.



Seneca Middle School Honors Chorus performed at the Nashville Heritage Festival.



The SMS Symphonic Band poses with the trophies they earned at the Nashville Heritage Festival.



Seneca Middle School's Junior Scholars



Sixth grader Delane Rosemond and his mother Tonya present a check to a March of Dimes representative.



SENECA HIGH SCHOOL

SHS Happenings

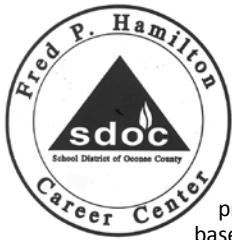
- Named Palmetto's Finest for 2017!
- AP Capstone School—one of five high schools in the state of SC
- Bobcat Band earned a Superior Rating at Concert Festival
- Honors Chorale and Honors Women's Choir earned Superior with Distinction at state competition
- Five students named to All-Region Orchestra; two students named All-State Orchestra
- Chamber Orchestra Ensemble earned a Superior Rating at Concert Performance Assessment
- Western AAA Conference Champions in Football, Girls Tennis, Girls Cross Country, Boys Basketball, and Girls Basketball.
- FFA participated in SC FFA Legislative Day in Columbia
- Consistently winning programs in 27 Varsity and Junior Varsity athletic teams for boys and girls



Dates to Remember

- May 1 AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, AP Psychology Exams
- May 2 AP Physics (A and M) Exams
- May 3 AP Literature Exam
- May 4 AP US Government Exam
- May 5 AP US History and AP Art Exams
- May 6 Upper-State Track Meet at SHS
- May 7 SHS Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble Concert
- May 8 AP Biology and AP Music Theory Exams
- May 9 AP Calculus AB and BC Exams
- May 10 AP Language Exam
- May 11 AP Comparative Government and AP Statistics Exam
- May 12 AP Human Geography and AP European History Exams
- May 19 SHS Honor's Day, 9:30AM
- May 21 SHS Band Concert
- May 23 Senior Exams begin
- May 23 Awards Night for Underclassmen, 6:30PM—Hamilton Auditorium
- May 26 Underclassmen exams begin
- May 29 Memorial Day—School Holiday
- May 31 1/2 Day; Dismissal at 11:15
- June 1 1/2 Day; Dismissal at 11:15
- June 3 Graduation at Littlejohn Coliseum, 11:30 AM



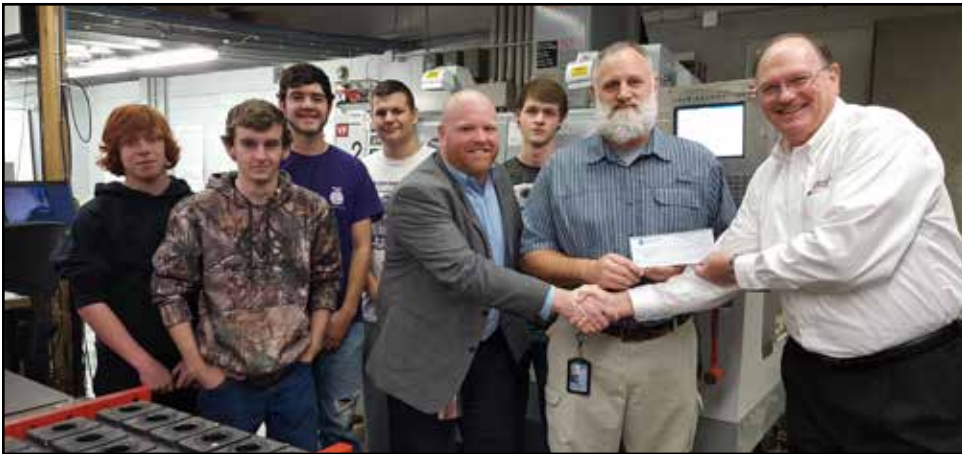


HAMILTON CAREER CENTER

The Fred P. Hamilton Career Center (HCC) provides outstanding career preparation and post-secondary services through rigorous, competency-based curricula enhanced with relevant skills and experiences. HCC serves high school students from the School District of Oconee County. Whether the goal is a two-year college, four-year college or the workforce, HCC provides a high quality education partnered with work-based learning experiences that will help in reaching that goal.

Carl Perkins Report

HCC students scored 94% on Technical Skill Attainment
 HCC has a 99% Graduation Rate
 HCC has a 100% Secondary Placement Rate
 Grants Awarded



The Machine Technology program received the Gene Haas Foundation Grant for \$4,000.

The Transition to the Real World, STARS, and Vocational Transition programs were awarded the SC Developmental Council Continuation Grant for the amount of \$15,985.

Career & Technical Student Organizations

Part of the HCC experience is being involved in Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO's). These organizations are not clubs. They are an intricate part of the curriculum of Hamilton Career Center and allow students to demonstrate expertise in their area of interest.

DECA: Seven students from HCC DECA attended the South Carolina DECA Career Development Conference in North Charleston. One student placed first in Business Finance. Our state winner, along with three other students who will be attending the Inspire Management Academy, traveled to the National DECA conference in Anaheim, California.

SkillsUSA: Seven Hamilton Career Center students competed in April in Greenville, SC at the state SkillsUSA competition. HCC took home a first and second place finish. The first place winner will compete at the national competition in baking and pastries held in June in Louisville, Kentucky.

Robotics TEAM 343: The team competed in two regional qualifiers this season - one in Myrtle Beach, SC and one in Hunstville, Alabama.



HOSA: Eleven Hamilton Career Center HOSA students traveled to Charleston in March. They competed among 1,500 SC HOSA students in biomedical technology, nursing assistant, MRC, Health Lifestyles, Medical Math, Transcultural Health, Extemporaneous Writing, Chapter Reflections, Job Seeking Skills, etc. Four of these students qualified for the National HOSA competition in Orlando, Florida.

ADULT EDUCATION



Mrs. Alexander instructing the class in Reading Language Arts

- At this point in the 2016-2017 school year, Oconee Adult Education has had 572 registrations with 398 students actively enrolled.
- Oconee Adult Education students have earned 195 Career Readiness Certificates (WorkKeys)
- Thus far, 38 High School Equivalency Diplomas, and five High School Diplomas have been achieved.
- Oconee Adult Education received the following awards from the Department of Education at the Spring Institute:
 - The WorkKeys NCRC (National Career Readiness Certificate) Award for Small Programs
 - The Post-Testing Percentage Award
 - Performance Measures Met-ESL Award
- Oconee Adult Education has partnered with Tri-County Technical College iBest Manufacturing Pathway Program. One student is currently enrolled in the program in Dual Enrollment; others will start this summer and fall.
- The Golden Corner Rotary Club of Seneca recently presented a check for \$3,000 to support Adult Education scholarships that pay the \$150 GED® Exam fee. (21 students received these scholarships)



Mr. Williams, Adult Education Director, Dr. Thorsland, Superintendent, and Mr. Inabinet, Board Chair, accept the Seneca Golden Corner Rotary donation for \$3,000.00 to cover GED® Scholarships



Veronica Main, ESL Coordinator & Instructor, and Gene Williams, Program Director with State and Teacher awards and recognitions



Rotary Scholarship recipients – Terrance Earle and Dennis Thompkins with Mr. Williams



Family Literacy Activity

STEM: What's the big deal?

Since the early 2000's, school districts have incorporated more and more STEM trainings and initiatives into public school. However, it may not always be clear what STEM is and why it is so important.

STEM is an acronym that stands for science, technology, engineering and math. The acronym indicates the transdisciplinary learning involved, meaning that the concepts in these disciplines can often be taught together to better provide students with in-depth learning experiences. These are the problem-solving disciplines and learning in one which can be used to support learning in another. For example, students learn about measurement in math classes but that skill is used extensively in science and engineering as well.

Why is STEM so important in schools? In this technological age, STEM is the future of our country and provides the best career options for our students. On a recent top ten most growing occupations, eight of those are STEM occupations. Preparing SDOC students for the future means STEM is not only important, it is critical.

Preparing Teachers for STEM Instruction

Schools work hard to provide STEM trainings and experiences to teachers so that they can better provide hands-on learning activities for students.



Dr. Putman, left, works with teachers and Angie Henderson, right, principal of Ravenel

For example, Ravenel Elementary staff participated in a training for STEM Education led by Dr. Brad Putman, the director of outreach and EMAGINE initiatives for Clemson's College of Engineering. One of his interests is focusing on impacting K-12 students in South Carolina to consider engineering and technical careers.



Dr. Putman has worked with SDOC over several years to develop teacher knowledge and capacity in the STEM area. He has also involved Clemson students with SDOC school STEM nights to educate families.

The district also received a Duke Energy Foundation grant that is providing Discovery Ed STEM training to teachers in several elementary and middle schools. This training focuses on providing foundational STEM instruction to get teachers and administrators

aligned on what STEM education could look like at their schools.

The upcoming district summer institute also includes several STEM-focused sessions. This institute is held a week after school is over and provides teachers with in-depth training sessions on various topics.

SDOC is committed to providing teachers with the tools they need to deliver excellent instruction.

Identifying Resources to Provide Learning Experiences for Students

Sometimes, STEM concepts are abstract and non-intuitive and difficult to teach. To help teachers provide better instruction for these concepts, SDOC identified Z-Space technology as one resource. Z-space is 3-D technology which provides virtual reality learning explorations. Through the lessons, students work in small groups to manipulate abstract variables, and then physically view the results via 3-D.



Students work on Z-space at Seneca Middle School



Z-Space technology allows students to manipulate difficult topics in 3D. However, this technology is expensive and the yearly licenses for a mobile lab of 10 units (which can accommodate 20-30 students) costs \$22,000 per year. SDOC grant writer Jennifer Dodd was familiar with the Pete and Sally Smith Foundation, which supports educational programming, and submitted a grant to fund a year of Z-space.

Once the SDOC was notified the grant was awarded, training opportunities were scheduled for teachers in order to move the program forward quickly. To date, several elementary, middle, and high school science teachers have attended Z-space trainings and are very excited about the potential of the software.

This spring, the eighth grade science classes at Seneca Middle School and a chemistry honors class at Seneca High School utilized the units. The Z-Space units come with several pre-loaded lessons, allowing teachers to get started immediately. The teachers can develop their own lessons once they are comfortable with the technology.

For example, in the honors chemistry class, the pre-loaded lessons on elements on the periodic table have already been used. The periodic table is a fundamental concept for chemistry, but understanding the protons and neutrons and electrons and how they interact when combined with other elements is extremely

abstract. Using Z-Space, students can manipulate the molecules via 3-D, and can put together two hydrogen molecules and one oxygen molecule to see what the water molecule looks like.

Students work in teams of two or three. One student wears 3D glasses with the sensor that controls the program on the computer. The other two team members wear regular 3D glasses. They can see what is being manipulated and the result of their actions. The groups discuss the outcomes and call on the teacher to answer questions they may have.

Another instruction resource teachers can use is their school's observational honeybee hive. Teachers base interdisciplinary learning modules on the hives year round. Soon, SDOC will become the first district in the nation to have an observational hive in every school. This initiative is successful because of a unique collaboration between the district and members of the Oconee Beekeepers Association. Thank you, beekeepers!

In addition to classroom instruction, the district identifies other STEM learning opportunities to provide application for learned concepts. For example, Borg Warner provides science learning kits called A World in Motion (AWIM) for hands on learning experiences. Schools participate in school, district, regional, and international competitions such as the JetToy competition, Fuel Cell Competition, Math Madness, the regional Science Fair, and others. Schools sponsor Hour of Code weeks along with Lego League clubs. All of these strengthen the problem solving skills that form the basis of STEM.

Holding STEM Nights to Involve Families

Schools can teach STEM topics. However, parents also need to become more interested and knowledgeable about STEM careers so they can encourage students to pursue such careers. One way to do that is to attend school STEM night activities with students.

For example, Fair Oak Elementary hosted a "Math and Science Night" this winter. The school had not conducted a STEM night for several years but over 350 people attended the fun-filled evening.



FOE student Jaxson Blackwell enjoys an electricity activity

Teachers organized and facilitated the entire event and provided pizza for families as well. The family learning stations included a Star Lab with planetarium shows, electricity activities, exploring light and shadows, space exploration and STEM, and family science challenges. The evening allowed parents to see and experience some of the topics their children have been and will be exposed to.



Natalie Hindershot, Grady McGlothen, Caelyn Stancil participate in STEM night activities

Preparing Students for STEM Careers in Oconee County

Sometimes, in thinking about STEM careers, parents think of major scientists and researchers. However, STEM careers are abundant in Oconee County and the Hamilton Career Center is well-positioned to prepare students for these careers.

"HCC prepares students for many well-paid, technical occupations," said Chad Lusk, Director of HCC. "Students can go on from here directly into work or into more training or education, but HCC provides an excellent foundation for STEM careers. I encourage students to look through the HCC course guide to see all the courses available at HCC."



NOW Program participants visiting Just Aircraft



Developing the NOW Program at HCC

This year, Hamilton Career Center (HCC) and SDOC partnered with local businesses to provide an innovative work experience program to students in the district's new NOW, Nurturing Oconee's Workforce, program.

NOW participants are selected via an application process. Throughout the year, they meet with industry leaders in small groups and attend industry tours. They attend sessions that provide hands-on experiences in a real work setting, and are often offered paid internships, co-ops and apprenticeships. Participants could also receive preferential consideration for long-term employment after high school or post-secondary training/education.

This program will also emphasize to students that the occupations available now are very different from their grandfather's manufacturing jobs. These are highly technical and well-paid jobs working with computers and expensive machinery. Some internships even pay \$15.00 per hour to the students even while they are still in high school!

Manufacturers in this area need good workers and are serious in helping the school district develop and provide these workers. This is a definite win-win for the students, the community and the school district. For more information, call the Hamilton Career Center at 864-886-4425.

Partnering with Parents for the Future

One website says that "STEM is life." It is difficult to think of many occupations that do not use problem solving and some type of math or science or technology. When schools sponsor Lego League competitions or Hour of Code applications, they are teaching students much more than just book knowledge. They are teaching problem solving and analysis and planning. These skills are critical for most careers of the future and SDOC is determined to partner with parents to lead students there!



Students at Westminster Elementary School try out the eclipse glasses donated to the district by Duke Energy.

Duke Energy donates eclipse glasses to Oconee County schools

On August 21, 2017, South Carolina will experience a full solar eclipse with the main path of darkness traveling in an arc across the center of the state, beginning in Westminster in Oconee County.

"We are looking forward to providing rich learning experiences at the schools during this once in a lifetime experience of a full solar eclipse," said Dr. Michael Thorsland, Superintendent.

To facilitate the safe viewing of the eclipse, Duke Energy has generously donated 5,000 pair of eclipse glasses. The first boxes of the glasses were presented to Dr. Thorsland at Westminster Elementary School by Chris Rimel, South Carolina Communications Manager with Duke Energy.

Students at Westminster Elementary School try out the eclipse glasses donated to the district by Duke Energy.

Students in Ms. Elaine Rankin's fifth grade science class were able to go outside and put the glasses on while Mr. Rimel explained the importance of eye protection during the eclipse. He also talked to the class about the many activities planned at the World of Energy.

"Our eclipse display is complete now and is available to the public," said Mr. Rimel. "We encourage parents and community members to stop by and see it before the actual eclipse in order to better understand this amazing natural occurrence."

He also encouraged families to consider spending August 21 at the World of Energy. The facility will have a large field available for viewing the eclipse.

"We know that some parents will want to spend that afternoon with their children," said Dr. Thorsland. "We will accommodate those requests and count them as educational events."

The height of the eclipse will take place in Walhalla at 2:37, during the time elementary schools typically dismiss. In order to take full advantage of this educational opportunity, the district plans to dismiss students 15 minutes late all across the district.

"Dismissal time on August 21 will be 15 minutes later than the regularly scheduled time at each school," he continued. "We want to give teachers full opportunity to guide students in this event as well as to provide for a safe dismissal."

Chris Rimel, South Carolina Communications Director at Duke Energy, presents a box of eclipse glasses to Dr. Michael Thorsland, SDOC superintendent.

The district is also working to provide a wealth of information to teachers and parents about the occurrence. A page on the district website, www.oconee.k12.sc.us, under the "Parents" tab will list various resources parents can use with their children, as well as other activities taking place in the area.

SDOC thanks Duke for this donation. These glasses will allow our students to safely view the entire progression of the eclipse and will allow them to fully experience this once in a lifetime event.

SDOC aims for foreign language instruction in all elementary schools

A goal of the board and administration of the School District of Oconee County is to offer foreign language instruction to all elementary students. Research shows that early language learning results in better pronunciation and higher levels of proficiency, as well as several cognitive benefits that are associated with being bilingual. This also gives students a good foundation to pursue more advanced language development in middle and on into high school.

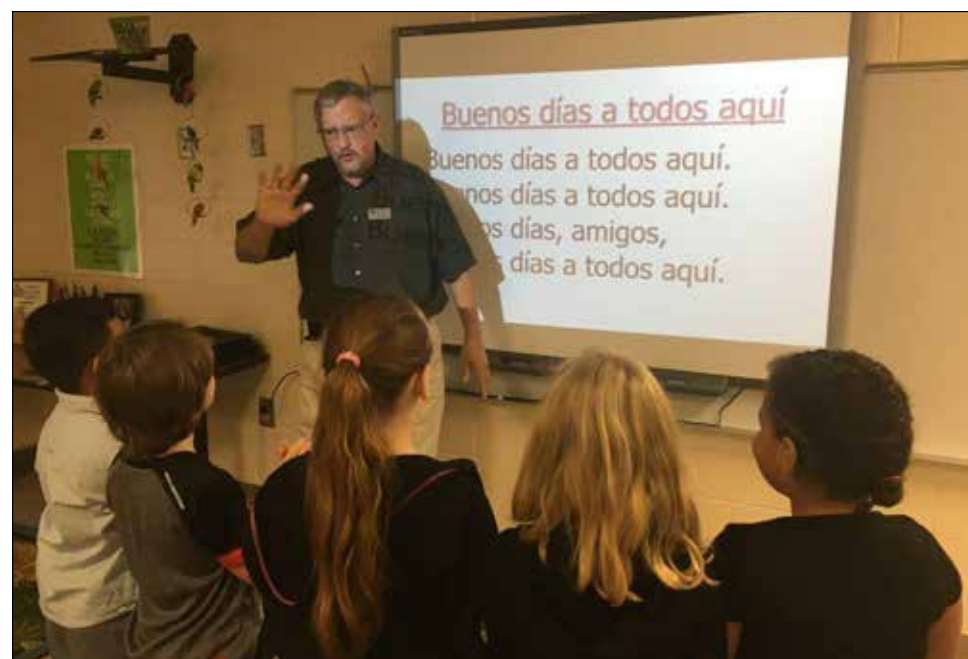
Locating funding for these programs and finding time in the elementary schedule are challenges the district faces in moving toward this goal. In 2016-17, several SDOC elementary schools have piloted language programs for their students. The schools addressed the challenges in different ways, allowing the district to analyze alternatives.

In 2015-16, SDOC participated in a program that provided a Chinese teacher to the district for minimal cost. Mrs. Sui visited all Seneca area schools and provided Chinese language instruction, along with cultural exposure, to those schools.

The program was very successful and this school year, the same program provided another Chinese teacher who could be assigned to the elementary schools. Mrs. Sui then expanded her services at Seneca Middle and Seneca High School.

There were also various Spanish programs offered throughout the district. These programs were available at James M. Brown, Ravenel, and Fair-Oak Elementary. The programs were successful but depended on available employees.

Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, Orchard Park Elementary piloted Rosetta Stone software and offered students the option of learning French, German, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Japanese. The experiment was a success and did address some of the challenges so the district searched for



Dale Link teaching Spanish to students at James M Brown Elementary.

ways to expand that offering. The company was excited about the initiative and offered the district the opportunity to provide all elementary students with access to Rosetta Stone software for a fraction of typical cost. Next year, all schools will have access to those expanded offerings, the first district to do so.

The School District of Oconee County is excited to provide these language learning opportunities to all students. In doing so, the district is definitely on the cutting edge of providing SDOC students with skills for the future.

SDOC Receives 3D Technology Grant from Pete and Sally Smith Foundation

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) career pathways will occupy a large part of the workforce in the near future. School districts try to provide solid STEM foundations for students to prepare them for this new future. However, many STEM concepts are abstract and non-intuitive and difficult to teach.

To provide better instruction for these concepts, SDOC identified Z-Space technology as a resource. Z-space is 3-D technology which provides virtual reality learning explorations. Through the lessons, students working in small groups to manipulate abstract variables, and then physically view the results via 3-D.

However, this technology is expensive and a mobile lab of 10 units (which can accommodate 20-30 students) costs \$22,000 per year. SDOC grant writer Jennifer Dodd was familiar with the Pete and Sally Smith Foundation which exists to support educational programming. Mrs. Dodd worked with Jodie Shirley, district STEM Specialist, to submit a grant to cover this expensive new technology.

Once the SDOC was notified that the grant was awarded, training opportunities were scheduled for teachers in order to move the program forward quickly. To date, several elementary, middle, and high school science teachers have attended the trainings and are very excited about the potential of Z-space.

"We will mainly target middle and high school at first with this technology," said Mrs. Shirley. "Some elementary teachers have received the training and we will hope to be able to schedule those students with instructional time on the units in the near future."



Z-Space technology allows students to manipulate difficult topics in 3D.

This spring, the eighth grade science class at Seneca Middle School and a chemistry honors class at Seneca High School have utilized the units. The Z-Space units come with several pre-loaded lessons, allowing teachers to get started immediately. The teachers can develop their own lessons once they are comfortable with the technology.

For example, in the honors chemistry class, the pre-loaded lessons on elements on the periodic table have already been used. The periodic table is a fundamental concept for chemistry, but understanding the protons and neutrons and electrons and how they interact when combined with other elements is extremely abstract. Using Z-Space, students can

manipulate the molecules via 3-D, and can put together two hydrogen molecules and one oxygen molecule to see what the water molecule looks like, for example.

Students work in teams of two or three. One student wears 3D glasses with the sensor that controls the program on the computer. The other two team members wear regular 3D glasses. They can see what is being manipulated and the result of their actions. The groups discuss the outcomes and call on the teacher to answer questions they may have.

"This technology has already illustrated the importance of student-led learning that is facilitated by the teacher," continues Mrs. Shirley.

The \$25,000 grant will be used for various Z-Space purchases. \$22,000 of the grant has already been used to cover the year's leases on ten mobile lab units, \$2,500 will be used for teacher professional development and \$500 will be used for incidentals and replacements, such as for the 3D glasses.

"Watching the students learn and manipulate difficult concepts on their own is very exciting," adds Mrs. Shirley. "Student interaction with this technology will truly have a meaningful impact on our STEM program, student achievement, and student preparation for STEM related career pathways."

The School District of Oconee County is located in the Upstate of South Carolina. It serves 10,500 students with 949 certified staff in 16 schools. The mission of SDOC is to develop productive citizens who are life-long learners by providing exemplary educational experiences for all students. The SDOC is accredited by AdvancED.



Fast Facts

School District of Oconee County
Education is Everybody's Business



The mission of the School District of Oconee County is to partner with families to develop responsible, productive citizens who are life-long learners.

School Sites

Elementary/Intermediate	10
Middle	3
High	3
Career Center	1
Oconee Academy	1
Adult Education at Code Learning Center	1
Square Feet of Building Space	approx. 2.3 Million
Square Miles of District	673

Transportation

Buses	103
Activity Buses	29
Daily Services	91 buses traveling 7,885.2 miles

Student Demographics

Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 5	5,154
Grades 6 - 8	2,334
Grades 9 -12	2,954
Total Student Enrollment	10,442
Students Qualifying/Academically Gifted Services	1,695
Students Qualifying Free/Reduced Lunch	.53%
American Indian/Multi Racial	432
African-American	1,057
Asian	.89
Latino	727
White	8,137
Countries Represented in SDOC	34
Students Receiving ELOS Services	401

Employees

Employees 2016-17	1549
Certified Staff Members	943
Classified Staff Members	603
National Board Certified Teachers	94
Teachers with Master's Degrees and above	69%

The SDOC is the largest employer in Oconee County

Budget (School Year 2015-2016)

Total Operating Expenditures	\$106,074,286
Funding From Local Property Tax	\$44,761,471
Per Pupil Expenditure	\$11,176*
Beginning Teacher Salary	\$33,529
Average Teacher Salary	\$48,402

*Prior year audited financial data reported.

2016 Graduating Class

*Four Year Graduation Rate	84.1%
Diplomas Earned	707
Life Scholarships	377
Palmetto Fellows Scholars	29
Total Scholarships Awarded 2016	\$23,022,197

*Prior year data reported

The School District of Oconee County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities.

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Services (Title IX);
contact (864) 886-4400 ext 6121
Director of Special Services (504/ADA Coordinator);
contact (864) 886-4400

414 South Pine Street
Walhalla, SC 29691
(864) 886-4400 Fax: (864) 886-4408
www.oconee.k12.sc.us
updated 11/16/16

Updated SDOC Section 504 Grievance Procedures

Recently, revised 504 grievance procedures were posted to the district website. The procedures may be accessed through this link <http://www.oconee.k12.sc.us/departments/instructional-services/grievance-procedures>. This link has also been added to the student handbook.

The recently revised procedures do not address gender or campus/facility access. For gender concerns, please contact the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources at erwilliams@g.oconee.k12.sc.us and for facility/campus access concerns contact the Assistant Superintendent of Operations at shanvey@g.oconee.k12.sc.us.

Please make contact by mail at the School District of Oconee County, 414 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691 or by phone at 864-886-4400.



Seneca High School Named 2017 Palmetto's Finest High School

Seneca High School (Principal T. Cliff Roberts) serves 970 students in 9th through 12th grade. Seneca High offers meaningful programs ranging from Graduation and Transition Services through a 21st Century grant program for their most at-risk population to offering 20 Advanced Placement courses to challenge their most ambitious students. The development of a Hybrid Program, Advisement Period, and implementation of BOBCATS Central help equip students with the skills needed to excel after graduation. These programs have caused a rise in standardized test scores and an increase in the graduation rate over the past five years. Seneca High has received the Palmetto Gold Award the past two years and was named a 2016 Top 20 Public High School in South Carolina by US News and World Report.

"We are proud that Seneca High School was named Palmetto's Finest for 2017. This provides recognition to the school for a job well done," said Dr. Michael Thorsland, SDOC Superintendent. "Congratulations, SHS!"



JAMES M. BROWN ELEMENTARY

Accomplishments

- JMB hosted a computer coding event, a literacy evening, and a student-led conference evening for students and their families.
- “Camp JMB”, our last Family Fun event, had over 630 attendees! We love to have family and community participation in all we do.
- JMB’s annual Jump Rope for Heart event raised \$7,000 for the American Heart Association.
- JMB team placed third in the district’s STEM Jet Toy Competition by less than a second!
- Many third, fourth, and fifth grade JMB students participated in Math Madness. The JMB third grade team placed first in the district team competition.
- JMB placed second at the district Battle of the Books competition.
- JMB was selected to house a traditional bee hive box from the Oconee County Beekeepers Association to complement our observation hive. Our JMBees are a hit with students and families!



Guest readers from the community, including some from the SDOC district office, read to students on World Read Aloud Day.



Reading under a tent at Camp Read-a-Lot makes reading even more fun!



Second graders used project based learning in a study on measurement with a medieval theme. The students created custom tunics for the knights as they learned about linear measurement.



Fifth graders, chaperones, and teachers excitedly headed to our nation’s capital for a fabulous field trip.



Students from James M. Brown Elementary’s 4K and PIP classrooms planted pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention month. At JMB we promote “protecting children, building strong families, and raising awareness.” Pinwheels were provided by Oconee First Steps.

KEOWEE ELEMENTARY



Keowee Elementary’s Student Service Club sponsored a drive for the Oconee Humane Society. The “Paws for Pets” collection was very successful in bringing in large amounts of food, treats, and litter for the furry friends there.



To recognize the importance of reading, Keowee celebrated Read Across America Week. The celebration concluded with the Annual School-wide Book Character Parade.



The Beta Club Induction Ceremony was held on March 23 with its largest number of eligible participants ever--52! This is Keowee’s fifth year sponsoring a Beta Club.



Keowee fifth graders won First Place in the Team Competition at the recent Math Madness event sponsored by the SDOC.



Eight KES fifth graders participated in the SC Region 1 Science Fair.

TAMASSEE-SALEM ELEMENTARY

Accomplishments

- TSE’s third, fourth, and fifth grade students competed in the SDOC Math Madness competition
- TSE competed in the SDOC Battle of the Books competition
- Our Fifth Grade Jet Toy team was the SDOC overall champion and competed in the AOP Regional Jet Toy Regional competition
- TSE had four students place in the SDOC Tornado Safety Poster Contest
- 26 of our fifth grade students had their personal poems published
- We are nearing completion of an on-campus TSE walking track
- We had our first TSE Vocabulary Word Parade this year
- TSE had a tremendous response to our Family Literacy Night and our Math and Science STEM Night



TSE’s Math and Science STEM Night



TSE’s Vocabulary Word Parade



TSE’s Math Madness Top 10 Problem Solver



TSE’s 2017 Battle of the Books Team



TSE’s Tornado Safety Poster District Winners



TSE’s SDOC Jet Toy Competition District Champions

WALHALLA ELEMENTARY

Accomplishments

- Fourth grade student team participated in the SDOC's Battle of the Books.
- Walhalla Elementary hosted three well-attended family nights throughout the year.
- Many of our third, fourth, and fifth grade students participated in the SDOC's Math Madness Event.
- Walhalla Elementary had three Tornado Poster Contest winners this year. Emily Putnam was the SDOC's overall winner. Mara Chappell earned first place in the third grade age division. Hannah Winchester placed second in the first grade age division.
- 2016 – 2017 Teacher of the Year is Lisa Jensen.
- 2016 – 2017 Support Staff of the Year is Nickie King.
- 2016 – 2017 Volunteer of the Year is Leighann Sherman.



Emily Putnam was the overall Tornado Poster Contest winner for the SDOC!



Isaac Kanagy represented Walhalla Elementary in the SDOC's Future Chef competition



Walhalla Elementary School enjoyed many fun activities celebrating Read Across America week.



Walhalla Elementary School held our thirteenth Annual Family 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run this year. Pictured are some of the participating students proudly displaying their trophies and medals.

WALHALLA MIDDLE



Jaden Taylor, an eighth grade band student, was accepted to the SC Governor's School for the Arts Summer Program. Jaden plays the French horn. Also, the WMS band received a Superior rating at this year's concert performance assessment. This is the sixth year in a row WMS has scored Superior, which makes our band program once again eligible for the Outstanding Performance Award.



Isabella Covington was crowned Miss Walmira on April 1. Scarlett Chandler was Miss Eighth Grade and Kirsten Cobb was the first alternate. Makayla Sample was crowned Miss Seventh Grade with Drew Bailey and Anna Lee Smith as the first and second alternates. Miss Sixth grade was Emma Sanders. The alternates were Reagan Keys and Tessa Backman. The Miss Walmira Pageant is a fund raiser for the school and the White Christmas fund.



The WMS boys' basketball team won the region tournament by defeating Riverside in the championship game.



Mrs. Amy Lee's Razor class has been working on anti-bullying initiatives. One project they have developed is our "Spread Kindness Like Confetti" campaign. Students write positive and inspiring messages to other students on a piece of confetti. Mrs. Lee's class collects the notes and posts them on a bulletin board in the lobby. After a few days, the confetti messages are given to the students.



Congratulations to the PTO Chili Cookoff winners. The first place winner was Sara Wright; the second place winner was Connie McClain, and the third place winner was Crystal Gibson. Thank you to everyone who attended the event and supported Walhalla Middle School.



WALHALLA HIGH SCHOOL

Accomplishments

- Ranked #33 out of 215 as Best Public High Schools in South Carolina by NICHE Opinion Poll 2017
- Ranked 61st out of 225 SC High Schools based on ACT & EOC 2016 test scores
- Graduation Success Program hosted incentive luncheon for students with Clemson University football players as the guest speakers
- Every senior applied for college during College Application Days
- Athletic Academic help sessions are held after school weekly
- Grace's Closet hosted Prom Days for students needing clothing for the Prom
- WHS and SWU began a mentoring partnership for our athletes and Hispanic students
- First annual Walhalla United Family Night Razorback Football game was held involving Walhalla area choral students and free admission for Walhalla area students
- JROTC Rifle team set a school record and finished 15th at Army JROTC National Championships
- JROTC Drill Team won the county drill championship record for the 6th straight year
- Walhalla JROTC Leadership Team advanced to semi-finals of National Leadership Competition
- WHS JROTC Academic Team advanced to the semi-finals of the National Academic Challenge
- Six choral students selected to perform with 2017 SC All State Chorus and two Choral Ensembles received Excellent ratings at the SC Choral Assessment
- 3 Choral Ensembles and 9 soloists received Superior awards at the SC Solo and Ensemble Festival
- Choral student, Mallie Lewis, was selected as runner-up for SC Choral Division Vocal scholarship
- WHS hosted the first VEX Golden Corner Starstruck Robotics Competition; The Razor Robotics Team won The Electric City Starstruck VEX Tournament
- Shotgun Team won 2nd Place at the SCDNR Youth Skeet Championship 50 Target Event
- Marching Band finished 14th in the Upper State Championship
- Boys Cross Country Team was the Region 1AAA Champion
- Every varsity team sport advanced to the AAA State Playoffs for 2016-2017
- Boys Soccer Team was the Region 1AAA Champion
- WHS wrestler, Cody Gibson, qualified for the 3A State Wrestling Championship
- WHS Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble classes received an Excellent rating in combined performance at the Region II 2017 Concert Performance Assessment.
- Strings students received 48 Superior ratings and 13 Excellent ratings at 2016 Solo & Ensemble Festival
- 1 student chosen for 2016 Region Orchestra and All-State Orchestra; 1 student chosen for 2017 Region Orchestra; 15 WHS students chosen for 2017 Oconee All County Orchestra
- Ten WHS students participated in Mark Wood's Electrify Your Strings rock orchestra workshop at Pickens High School
- The WHS Concert Band and Symphonic Band each received a rating of Excellent at Concert Performance Assessment
- WHS Band Program placed 11 students in Region Band and 2 students in All-State Band.
- WHS Band received the Outstanding Performance Award for the first time in school history.
- WHS SIC member, Dora Leonard, was selected to serve on the SSC SIC Board



FAIR-OAK ELEMENTARY

Fair-Oak Spring Events

- Math and Science Family Night
- Love for Literacy Day
- CU Basketball Players visit FOES
- Adventures with Artists
- CU Orchestra Performance
- Donuts for Dads
- Spring Family Conference Night
- Muffins for Moms
- Field Day



ORCHARD PARK ELEMENTARY



Community members, students, and families had the wonderful opportunity to experience culture and cuisine from the five different languages taught through our Rosetta Stone initiative.

OPE celebrated the love of reading and Dr. Seuss by dressing up each day of the week. Students dressed in colorful socks to their pajamas and celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday with cupcakes at lunch.



Fourth and fifth grade students had the opportunity to read books and compete in a school level competition. The group who won the school level competition went on to compete in the district competition. Fifth grade students at OPE worked extremely hard to be this year's Battle of the Books District Level Winner.



Fourth and fifth grade students were inducted into the National Junior Beta Club on January 27th. Beta Club members have been busy this year providing service to our community and OPE. The group visited Dot's Kitchen on Valentine's Day and gave out cards and candy. They also held a soup drive for Dot's Kitchen. During National Beta Week, members served students in the cafeteria, read to students, sold snow cones, and made cards for OPE teachers.



Families and community members were invited into the school to enjoy a day full of coding and STEAM activities. Students enjoyed rotations through the school with many different math, science, and technology activities.

WESTMINSTER ELEMENTARY

- • WES students participated in Jump Rope for Heart, raising \$6,051.60 for the American Heart Association
- • Students raised \$1270.42 to support the South Carolina Make a Wish Foundation
- • Fifty-two WES students participated in the Math Madness Competition. Our numerous medalists were highlighted by our fifth grade students who won first and second place in the team competition event.
- • WES hosted community events, including the Princess Party, WES Spring Carnival and movie night.
- • We had a special visitor on math/science night, Evan Oglesby a Pro Football Player.
- • A new district initiative, the John Collins Writing and Thinking Program, has improved WES students' writing and critical thinking skills
- • WES hosted National Walk to School Day to promote pedestrian safety and physical activity
- • Students planted, harvested, and enjoyed eating from our school garden.
- • This year, students had access to increased technology. All second through fifth grade students had access to Chromebooks and younger students learned on iPads
- • WES fifth grade students entered a Blog competition promoting post-secondary education. We had a winner.





WEST-OAK MIDDLE

Accomplishments

- 217 WOMS students earned Honor Roll for the second quarter; 209 students earned Honor Roll for the third quarter
- First place winner in the USC Engineering Competition T-shirt Challenge
- Thress students were selected to All County Strings
- WOMS Orchestra received a Superior Rating
- WOMS Chorus received an Excellent Rating
- WOMS Band received an Excellent Rating
- Oconee Soil and Water Conservation contest winners
- WOMS eighth grade art students won first, second, and third place in the Oconee Soil and Water Conservation Contest in Oconee Soil and Water Conservation District art contest.

Upcoming Events

- SC Ready Assessment in ELA and math
- SC PASS Assessment in science and social studies
- May 26 - Awards Day
- May 30 - Yearbook Day
- June 1 - PBIS Celebration



Ryan Dobbs, an 8th grader, was the first WOMS student to win state at the SWCA Carolina Invitational Championship for wrestling



Tornado Poster Contest Winners: Priscilla Ellis (art teacher), Hannah Dobbs (3rd place), Graceson Powell (1st place), and Makayla Wright (2nd place)



Miss West-Oak Pageant Winners: Madison Roper (Miss 7th Grade), Erica Headen (Miss West-Oak), Baylee Sullivan (Miss 8th Grade), and Savannah Butts (Miss 6th Grade)



Teacher of the Year: Kristy Hood, Volunteer of the Year: Lori Dobbins, and Support Staff of the Year: Teresa Cobb



WOMS Spelling Bee Winners: Rachel Cornett (6th), Alorah Scott (7th), Justice Powell (8th)



Basketball Conference Tournament Champions



Special Olympics



WEST-OAK HIGH SCHOOL



The WOHS Early-Bird Jazz Band rehearses in the mornings, before school, starting at 7:00 am. They perform multiple gigs throughout the community each year. Band awards this year include: State marching band qualifier, finishing fourth in the state, and percussion state champions



WOHS wrestlers defeated Battery Creek High School 34-24 to win the 2017 AAA State Championship. Ten wrestlers also placed in the individual state tournament: five state champions, two state runner ups, two third place winners, and one wrestler fourth place.



WOHS FFA Vice President Lilly Nuttall and Sentinel Holly Merritt worked with draft horses during October's Ag. Days at the Fair event, helping to promote and educate students about agricultural activities. Over 1,100 elementary school students visited during the two day event. VP Lilly Nuttall was also appointed as one of seven South Carolina students to the AgriSafe Young Advisors Council.



WOHS Cross-Country runner Michael Spearman is the 2016-2017 Cross-Country State Champ, the first in West-Oak history. The team placed 11th in the state. Pictured with Michael is his freshman brother Andrew who received All-State honors.



WOHS Drama students have completed several performances this year including two murder mystery dinner theaters as well as Alice in Wonderland. A spring performance of Peter Pan is planned. Approximately 84 students participate in drama.



WOHS Earth Warriors Club, a student-led organization, helped educate faculty, staff, and students about the importance of reducing our carbon footprint. They assist in a weekly recycling program by sorting paper, plastic bottles and aluminum cans to specific recycling containers in lieu of the Oconee County Landfill.



Spanish National Honor Society: WOHS Spanish National Honor Society is an elite organization for dedicated, high-achieving students in Spanish. These students use their time to volunteer in the community in addition to practicing their Spanish skills with locals.



WOHS Chamber Choir are made up of tenth through twelfth grade students who audition to be a part of the group. This year the Chamber Choir received an excellent rating in Sight Singing.



WOHS JROTC Raider Team Cadets working together to build a one-rope bridge during a Raider Team Competition at Landrum High School in SEP 2016.



WOHS Interact members serve locally and internationally while building leadership skills. Some activities include Palmetto Pride, Shop with a Warrior, Toys for Tots, and the Purple Pinky Project as well as sponsoring foreign exchange students from Taiwan and Norway to attend WOHS. WOHS students have also been sponsored to visit Taiwan and Belgium.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY
 414 South Pine Street • Walhalla, SC 29691
2017 - 2018 SCHOOL CALENDAR

(Revised 2/20/17)



July 2017							August 2017							September 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31																			
October 2017							November 2017							December 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
														31						
January 2018							February 2018							March 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3					1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
April 2018							May 2018							June 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY

AUGUST 2017
 First Day for Returning Teachers August 10
 First Day for Students August 17

SEPTEMBER 2017
 Labor Day Holiday September 04
 Interim Reports no Later Than September 21

OCTOBER 2017
 End of Period 1 October 19
 Teacher In-Service October 23
 Report Cards Issued no Later Than October 26

NOVEMBER 2017
 Thanksgiving Break November 22-24
 Interim Reports no Later Than November 28

DECEMBER 2017
 Christmas Break December 21 - January 02

JANUARY 2018
 Teacher In-Service January 02
 End of Period 2 & Semester January 10
 Martin Luther King Day January 15
 Report Cards Issued no Later Than January 18

FEBRUARY 2018
 Interim Reports no Later Than February 15
 Teacher In-Service February 23

MARCH 2018
 End of Period 3 March 19
 Report Cards Issued no Later Than March 26

APRIL 2018
 Spring Break April 02 - 06
 Teacher In-Service April 09

MAY 2018
 AP Exams First two weeks in May
 Interim Reports no Later Than May 01
 PASS Testing TBD
 Memorial Day May 28
 End of Course Testing TBD
 End of Period 4 May 31

JUNE 2018
 Report Cards Go Home June 01
 Teacher In-Service June 04
 Graduation June 02

West-Oak High School @ 9:00 AM
 Walhalla High School @ 11:30 AM
 Seneca High School @ 2:00 PM

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

WYFF, WSPA, WLOS, FOX
WGOG / 101.7 FM; WSNW / 1150 AM;
103.3 FM; WJMZ / 107.3
www.upstatetoday.com
School closing decisions are made by 6:00 AM if possible. Our website will also post closings.
www.oconee.k12.sc.us

Inclement Weather Days - Student holiday if not needed
Teacher In-service Days
180 Instructional Days
Holidays

Solar Eclipse Changes SDOC Schedules

Start Date Change for 2017-18

As shown on the new 2017-18 calendar, students in the School District of Oconee County will now start back to school on August 17, 2017 and the first day for teachers will be August 10, 2017. This updated calendar is available on the district website: www.oconee.k12.sc.us.

According to state law, school districts are prohibited from starting school earlier than the third Monday in August, which is August 21, 2017 for the 2017-18 school year. This year on that date, the state will experience a full solar eclipse with the main path of darkness traveling in an arc tracking directly over Oconee County. The height of the occurrence will take place at 2:42, about the time elementary schools typically dismiss.

Legislators responded to requests from school districts to consider a one year waiver to the later start date because of this event. Governor McMaster signed a Resolution that allows local school boards to approve Thursday, August 17,, 2017 as start date for the 2017-18 school year only.

"Having such an event happen on the first day of school would

contribute to chaos at dismissal," said Steve Hanvey, Assistant Superintendent of Operations. "We are glad the legislature recognized the situation and provided leniency on the start date for next fall."

The school district recognizes that students and staff might have already made summer plans based on the originally approved calendar that would conflict with this change. Parents who have a previously planned vacation should call their child's school to notify them of the conflict. Employees with a conflict should notify their principal and will be allowed to use annual leave days to cover days missed on August 10 or 11. Parents who have questions about this date change should contact their school or call the district office at 864-886-4400.

"We are looking forward to providing learning experiences at the schools for this once in a lifetime experience of a full solar eclipse," said Dr. Michael Thorsland, Superintendent. "But we agree that should not happen on the very first day students return to school."

Dismissal Time Change on August 21, 2017

The height of the eclipse will take place in Walhalla at 2:37 pm, during the time elementary schools typically dismiss. In order to take full advantage of this educational opportunity, the district plans to dismiss students 15 minutes later throughout the district.

"We also want to make parents aware that we will dismiss 15 minutes later on August 21 to give teachers time to provide educational guidance during this event," he continued. Dismissal time on August 21 will be 15 minutes later than the regularly scheduled time of each school," he continued. "We want to give teachers full opportunity to guide students in this event as well as to provide for a safe dismissal."

Eclipse Resources for Parents

The district has created an Eclipse Resource Page on the district website, at www.oconee.k12.sc.us, under the "Parents" tab. This page lists various resources parents can use with their children, along with a list of other activities taking place in the area. Parents are urged to check out the resources listed there.