

School Improvement Council
 Report to the Parents of Liberty Elementary School
 2023-2024

State of the School Narrative and Overview of Student Data 2023-2024

Liberty Elementary School faculty, parents, and community worked diligently throughout the 2023-2024 school year to engage students in learning and growing. School-wide, we have focused on creating student-centered teaching and learning to reach our goal of engaging every learner. Recently we created a new Mission and Vision for Liberty Elementary School. Our Mission is to “Engage each student in order to build a collaborative learning community that prepares him or her for future success.” Our Vision is to “Empower each student to pursue their goals and contribute to the world around them.” Our beliefs are outlined by our mascot the **LABS**. “We believe: all students can **Learn/ Achievement** comes through perseverance/ Every student **Belongs** to the LES family/ in **Serving** others”. This set of Mission, Vision, and Beliefs along with student data is what guides every decision and course of action at Liberty Elementary School.

Our faculty, staff, and administration strive to provide a safe, caring, and academically challenging environment for all our students. Our goal is for each student to learn and reach their full potential. We are proud of our students and teachers’ hard work.

The past few years we worked closely with Liberty Primary School to ensure our future rising students and parents experience a smooth transition and to make sure we build a working relationship. We also work closely with Liberty Middle School to ensure our 5th graders transition smoothly to the middle school.

Student preliminary achievement data from previous SC Ready Tests and the Spring MAP Projected Proficiency has been analyzed. Our SC Ready Test should be at or above our Projected Proficiency scores on Spring MAP. We are excited about the growth in our MAP scores, and the improvement in our SC Ready test scores. We feel we are headed in the right direction.

MATH Percent Meet and Above (Proficiency) on SC Ready				
Grade Level	2020-21 SC READY State Report Card	2021-22 SC READY State Report Card	2022-23 SC READY State Report Card	Spring 2024 MAP Projected Proficiency on SC Ready
3rd	44.8%	54%	50.3%	67.1%
4th	48%	42.7%	49.2%	47.33%
5th	23.3%	41%	46.2%	51.45%

ELA Percent Meet and Above (Proficiency) on SC Ready				
Grade Level	2020-21 SC READY State Report Card	2021-22 SC READY State Report Card	2022-23 SC READY State Report Card	Spring 2024 MAP Projected Proficiency on SC Ready
3rd	31.1%	48.8%	44.9%	47.25%
4th	45.3%	45.2%	57.1%	45.69%
5th	32.5%	46.5%	50%	50.73%

When breaking down the subgroups, one of our areas of focus is our students with disabilities. In an attempt to help with this area our resource teachers began to push in and serve students in the classroom setting as much as possible. It is our belief that this helps students learn grade level content ensuring they don't miss quality Tier I instruction and create new learning gaps. It is our belief this translates to a better understanding of grade level content and thus better student achievement on the SC Ready Tests. Our instructional coaches provide special education teachers with professional development so that they effectively assess the students growth as readers and in math. We worked to create a master schedule that identifies when our essential Tier I instruction is taking place so that we may do inclusion services during that time and when less important skills are being taught so that pull out services can take place during that time.

We make sure our curriculum is aligned to the SC State Standards for ELA and math, while making sure our curriculum is aligned to the state standards in science and social studies. This is accomplished by helping teachers learn how to use state standards and support documents as their planning tools instead of relying on a textbook, and by supplying teachers with instructional supplies to aid in the teaching and learning process. As a school, in order to see consistent and sustained improvement in instruction, we make sure our curriculum is unified and viable both vertically and horizontally. Feedback during Data Days throughout the school year showed a need for teachers to have additional time to analyze data and the need of an instructional coach to work one-on-one and in small groups with teachers and school leadership to provide guidance, training, and other resources as needed to help increase student achievement and standard alignment. Therefore the instructional coaches began meeting weekly with teachers to plan.

Additionally, SC Ready data showed a need to increase scores in both reading and math. School leadership discussed meeting this need through the use of a reading coach, reading interventionist, MTSS, math coach, math interventionist, and technology. Providing conferencing, having student Goals and providing student incentives for reaching reading and/or math MAP goals, and additional parent workshops to help teach parents the skills being taught in the classroom will be needed. Additionally, teachers requested subscriptions to monthly and/or quarterly magazines and/or newspapers to provide multimedia text to increase informational text exposure, build background knowledge, and/or increase vocabulary to address additional reading needs in the classroom. SC Ready and MAP data shows that additional professional

development is needed to help faculty and staff understand the needs of working with parents in poverty as well as helping provide disadvantaged children with a high quality education. Therefore we provided them professional development in this area.

The school continues to try innovative ways to meet the needs of our student population. We are 1:1 with Chromebooks in grades 3, 4, and 5. We continue to integrate technology into classrooms to meet the needs of our students by providing reading and math site licenses to high impact and motivational software such as DreamBox. Additionally, site licenses continue to be a need to help aid in reading and math instruction.

Over the years we have been able to use Title I funding to purchase various technologies to address the technological divide between students of poverty and their peers. Our goal was to be able to provide our students with exposure and opportunities to engage with technology. However, we now understand that not only is technology a critical need to prepare students for the future, career education and exposure is also imperative. The entire Liberty attendance area, to include Liberty Primary, Liberty Elementary, Liberty Middle, and Liberty High School, created a plan to partner with our local Career and Technology Center (CTC) to provide students with exposure to various career skills and technology by the time they graduate so that 100% of our students graduate career ready. In an effort to achieve this goal, Liberty Elementary created CATE Carts (Career And Technology Education) that will be utilized weekly in the classrooms to expose students to various career skills and technology that they will use during their time at the CTC in high school. The Liberty area schools were recognized as a National Model School and invited to come and present about this area wide Career focus and partnership at the National Model Schools Conference in Orlando.

Discipline data, absences, and parent/teacher surveys were used as a basis to determine the needs of the school climate. Based on this, an emphasis is being placed on culture and positive behavior interventions and support for all students. At school, we are also enhancing communication tools and parenting classes to meet the needs requested in parent surveys. These needs include workshop topics, times workshops are offered, location of workshops, and needs to help increase participation such as childcare being offered. A recent study of our discipline data showed a decline in our number of discipline referrals since creating our Behavior Interventionist position with Title I. We feel this decline in the number of referrals is a direct result of our Behavior Interventionist. Our Behavior Interventionist is able to meet with students in small groups working with them on making good choices and often is called to the classroom to redirect them when they are acting out. This keeps them from getting an office referral and keeps them in the classroom so they can continue to receive direct instruction. There is no doubt this also has a positive impact on our student achievement.

LES seeks input from stakeholders to reach our mission and vision to empower and to engage students. Students, parents, and teachers are polled for input in a variety of ways. Students identify ways to improve our school through informal conversation with their teachers and administration. Parents are surveyed numerous times throughout the year at parent nights for their input in what we can do to better serve our students. Parents are sent a Title I survey titled "How Does Your Garden Grow". All students, teachers, and parents participate in the annual report card survey in order to identify ways to enhance our school. Teachers, parents and community members serve on the Title I planning committee, School Improvement Council

(SIC), and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). During Title I, SIC, and PTO meetings, needs of the school are discussed by parents, school staff, and community members.

We have a need to provide professional development to our staff on working with children and/or families of poverty due to our school's poverty percentage rate. Also, teachers input and surveys have shown a need to continue to provide additional educational support through reading and/or math interventionists, provide reading and math tutoring, provide home-to-school communication tools in the form of communication folders, provide instructional supplies and site licenses as needed, and to help reduce class sizes as much as possible.

The South Carolina State Department of Education is providing a Reading Coach to assist teachers in their planning and instruction in the area of ELA; however, this position is to work with the teachers and not the students. The district requires us to use an FTE to create a Reading Interventionist that works with struggling readers in order to improve student achievement. The State Department provides no support in the area of Mathematics. Therefore, given our SC Ready Math Scores, our Math MAP scores, and teacher input surveys, math remains as one of our areas of focus in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. Considering the data, we felt there was an immediate need to provide a Math Interventionist / Instructional Coach for teachers to assist in planning and instruction in the area of Mathematics. As stated above, teachers also made it known through our input surveys that they felt we needed additional math intervention support.

Throughout the school year, parents are provided with many opportunities to communicate their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. Social media accounts, Schoology, email, newsletters, and Title I parent surveys are examples of the different means by which parents can communicate with faculty and staff at LES. Parents also serve on PTO, SIC, Title I Committee, and parents are allowed to participate in the state report card survey. Like the results from the student and teacher surveys, parent responses on the survey help to identify strengths, weaknesses, and identify areas for growth. Stakeholder input is necessary in order to improve weaknesses and build upon our strengths for the students, families, and staff of LES.

Liberty Elementary continues to be responsive to the needs of all students. This past year afterschool enrichment provided students with opportunities such as Chorus, Dance Club, Cooking Club, Girls on the Run, Yams, Book Club, Walking Club, Clay Club, Harmonica Club, Art Club, Photography Club, Good News Club, Tutoring, as well as enrichment was offered through our 21st CCLC grant. We also partnered with the local Career and Technology Center (CTC) and expose our students to career pathways by having the CTC students come over to LES to demonstrate and lead students in an electrical project as well as a tool and carpentry project. It is our hope that we ignite a passion in a particular content by exposing our students to the area.

Reading intervention is offered to students in all grade levels who demonstrate a need. Teacher feedback showed a need for both a reading and math interventionist. Additionally, qualifying students in designated grade levels are offered the opportunity to attend educational camps during the summer provided by our district. Camp I-ROCK, a six-week summer reading camp, is offered for students in grades K-3. As well as our district's three-week math camp for students

in grades kindergarten through 4th grade. Both camps offer transportation for attendees to accommodate transportation needs.

A review of teacher quality data has led to continued focus on the retention and recruitment of highly effective teachers. The School District of Pickens County continues to offer programs to support and retain teachers. Each first year teacher is required to attend a class, “Year Won”, each month to network, ask questions, and learn in preparation for their evaluation year during their second year of teaching. Each first year teacher is also provided with a mentor teacher to assist them and guide them during their first year teaching. At LES we also offer any teacher new to LES regardless of years experience a mentor to help in their transition. Read-to-Succeed endorsement courses are offered by the district and state in order for staff to positively influence literacy in our school. Staff development is offered through PLCs to teachers throughout the school year. SLOs continue to be required and offer valuable conversation and reflection on student growth and understanding.

The faculty and staff of Liberty Elementary School continue to believe parent involvement is a key contributor to student success. Therefore, LES will continue to provide numerous opportunities to encourage and support parents such as communication folders which were identified as needs in our teacher survey to help keep parent and teacher communication open. Our teachers are also required to hold two parent conferences throughout the school year to review student achievement and classroom performance. Parenting engagement opportunities, such as workshops, Third Grade Night, STEM Night at the CTC, and Title I Parent Nights at LES are offered at a variety of times to provide parents with information on how best to help their child. Both administration and teachers communicate regularly with parents in various ways such as weekly class newsletters, school messenger phone calls from the principal, messages on Facebook, and Schoology.

Based on this needs assessment, LES will work to continue to grow instructionally to ensure that every child demonstrates a full year’s growth at the end of each school year. Administration and teachers look at their comparative growth data (data that compares student growth nationally) to ensure students are making adequate growth. Being a Title I school, many of our students begin their school career already behind grade level standards. Therefore, we must make more than a year’s growth each year if we are to have them on grade level by the time they leave elementary school. Many of our teachers met this challenge by growing their students more than a years growth inside of the school year. We require teachers to schedule a minimum of thirty minutes of MTSS each day to provide targeted instruction to at risk students. Our teachers will continue to ensure that our curriculum is aligned and that we are fully implementing the SC College and Career Ready Standards. LES will continue to grow in our use of technology and in the students’ use of technology in their learning. We will continue to develop our character education program as we work to teach students The Six Pillars of Character and work with them to be respectful and caring to others.

J. Lowell Haynes, Ed. D. – Principal
Ginger Chastain- School Improvement Council Chairperson