



# 2025-2026 Report to Parents

*Prepared by the School Improvement Council*



## **Mission**

The mission of Heyward Gibbes Middle School is to develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, lifelong learning, and a sense of school pride among students as we prepare them for a successful future in a globally competitive society.

## **What is the SIC?**

In South Carolina, a School Improvement Council (SIC) is an advisory council to the principal and the school on issues related to school improvement.

## **Purpose of the Report**

This report is issued annually by the Heyward Gibbes Middle School Improvement Council in accordance with South Carolina law to share information on the school's progress in meeting various goals and objectives, the work of the SIC, and other accomplishments during the school year.

## **Get Involved**

The SIC meets monthly alternating between in-person and virtual meetings. SIC meetings are open to all. Elections for representatives and officers are held during the first quarter of the school year. For more information, email Mrs. Johnson-Thomas, assistant principal, at [zerita.johnson-thoma@richlandone.org](mailto:zerita.johnson-thoma@richlandone.org)

### **Heyward Gibbes Middle School**

500 Summerlea Drive  
Columbia, SC 29203  
Office (803) 343-2942

### **Principal**

Dr. Gregory Pickett  
[gregory.pickett@richlandone.org](mailto:gregory.pickett@richlandone.org)

### **Assistant Principals**

Dr. Angela Palmer-Williams, 6th  
Mrs. Zerita Johnson-Thomas, 7th  
Mr. Jamaal Barr, 8th

### **SIC Members**

Barbara Tiller, Chair  
Raina Darby  
Shelly-Ann Campbell  
Jesca Diaz  
Magdalene Chisolm  
Zerita Johnson-Thomas  
Sherrie Belton

# School Demographics

Heyward Gibbes Middle School is a public, urban middle school located centrally in the Eau Claire community. The current enrollment is 228 students (71 sixth-graders, 77 seventh-graders, and 80 eighth graders).

Demographic Characteristics	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2YR Chg	5YR Chg
45-Day Avg. Daily Membership	322	304	272	263	249	-14	-73
Teacher Attendance %	96.4	90.5	94	85.8	91.4	5.6	-5
Student Attendance (Chronically Absent)%	37.6	50.3	50.2	46.2	31.7	-14.5	-5.9
Ethnicity – Black %	97.1	96.5	97.3	96	94.4	-1.6	-2.7
Ethnicity – White %	1	0.6	1.2	1.2	1.7	0.5	0.7
Ethnicity – Other %	1.9	2.9	1.6	2.8	3.9	1.1	2
Poverty Index %	95.8	96.5	95.7	95.6	97.5	1.9	1.7
Special Education %	17.1	17.9	14.8	12.9	13.3	0.4	-3.8
Limited English Proficient %	0	0	0.3	1.1	0.7	-0.4	0.7
Suspension Rate %	8.9	52.1	56.7	46.2	44.2	-2	35.3

# Assessment Data

SC School Report Cards provide information about test performance, teacher qualifications, student safety, awards, parent involvement, and more. Overall ratings are measured on a 5-point scale of unsatisfactory, below average, average, good, and excellent. Scan the QR code or [click here to view the full school report card](#).

Performance Level	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2YR Chg	5YR Chg
English							
Does Not Meet	59.2	48	43.8	46.4	29.8	-16.6	-29.4
Approaches	24.5	34.5	33.1	25.1	32.9	7.8	8.4
Meets	13.6	13.2	15.7	22.1	32.9	10.8	19.3
Exceeds	2.7	4.3	7.4	6.4	4.4	-2	1.7
Math							
Does Not Meet	70.9	67.8	65.9	63.7	57.6	-6.1	-13.3
Approaches	21.9	25	26.9	27	33.9	6.9	12
Meets	5.1	5.3	6	6.8	6.3	-0.5	1.2
Exceeds	2	2	1.2	2.5	2.2	-0.3	0.2
Science <sup>1</sup>							
Does Not Meet	74.6	71	74.4	NA	44.9	NA	NA
Approaches	14.1	15.1	16.7	NA	28.2	NA	NA
Meets	11.3	10.8	6.4	NA	24.4	NA	NA
Exceeds	0	3.2	2.6	NA	2.6	NA	NA

View the Full Report Card



# School Improvement Goals

**Goal 1:** By 2029, the percentage of students scoring meets and exceeds on the SC Ready assessment will be 60% in ELA, math, and science.

**Goal 2:** By 2029, 100% of students will pass the End of Course Examination Program assessment in Algebra 1.

**Goal 3:** By 2029, teacher retention rate will increase by 76.3%.

Heyward Gibbes Middle School focuses on the Five C's of Success: **Culture, Climate, Communication, Collaboration, and Celebration.** By making these key elements priorities, we will create a learning environment where our students thrive academically, our faculty and staff grow personally and professionally, and our school achieves new milestones.

# Learning Dispositions

Learning dispositions are habits of mind that help us learn effectively. They shape how we approach challenges, not just what we learn. At Heyward Gibbes Middle School, we are:

**Engaged Learners**  
**Goal-Oriented Learners**

**Resilient Learners**  
**Risk-Taking Learners**



# Points of Pride



Through significant improvement on the South Carolina School Report Card, HGMS is no longer identified as a Priority or Underperforming school in South Carolina. HGMS earned "Good" ratings in Student Progress and School Climate, signifying our commitment to the growth of all our students in a safe environment that embraces high expectations.



HGMS established a STEM Robotics Club in collaboration with Earlewood Baptist Church. The team will begin competing during the 2026–2027 school year.



HGMS collaborated with Photo SC nonprofit to provide free photography classes to students through our afterschool program. The classes culminated in students participating in a photography showcase sponsored by Photo SC.



Three students at HGMS were selected to participate in the Richland One Honor Chorus.



Students in the HGMS art program placed first, second, and third in the Richland One Secondary Art Show.



The HGMS dance program earned an Excellent Rating at the South Carolina State Dance Performance Assessment.



Seven students were selected for the Richland One Honor Band, and five students earned placement in the Honor Jazz Band.



At the Concert Performance Assessment, the concert band earned an overall Excellent Rating, receiving straight II (Excellent) ratings on stage performance, and a I (Superior) rating in sight-reading.



At the 2026 South Carolina Theatre Association Theatre Festival, HGMS students earned Excellent Ratings in solo acting for both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade performers and an Excellent Rating in group acting for 8<sup>th</sup> grade performers.



The Mock Trial team took the stand at the regional competition and their hard work reflected in individual honors for five students: Most Effective Attorney and Most Effective Witnesses.



The HGMS girls basketball team finished the season with many accolades: runner-up champions in the District 9 Officials Christmas Tournament, top 3 in the district standings for the first time in over two decades, and advanced to the district playoff semifinals.



The HGMS track and field program closed the year with 12 total district medals and earned the distinction of district runner-up champions.



The HGMS volleyball team advanced to the district semifinals in its remarkable turnaround season.



The HGMS football program advanced to its third consecutive district championship game.