

What is SIC?

In South Carolina, a School Improvement Council is an advisory council to the principal on school-related issues, helping to formulate positive school improvement. By law, every K-12 public school in South Carolina must have an SIC composed of parent, teacher, student (grades 9-12), and community member representatives. The principal is an ex officio member of the SIC.

Purpose of the SIC Annual Report

Each year, the SIC and administration are charged with preparing an annual report to the Parents/Community in accordance with South Carolina law. The purpose of the annual report is to provide an overview of the school's progress towards the goals and objectives outlined in the School Improvement Plan.

Blythewood High School is celebrating 20 years of serving the greater Blythewood Community. We are fortunate to have teachers and staff who go above and beyond for our students and their families. The Blythewood Community and school continue to show strong support, compassion, and cooperation to all students and families who are a part of Bengal Nation. I am proud to serve as Principal of Blythewood High School as we continue to serve students, family, and our community.

2025-2026 School Improvement Council (SIC) Members

*Pasquail Bates - Chair
Nat'lee Jua - Co Student Chair
Ahmed Ali
Leo Anderson
Amy Cavanna
Melody Cooke-McDuffie
Lisa Ellis
Gynovia Gathers
Diedra Hightower
Heather Kelly
Chris Leevy
Justin Simpson
Debbie Sweat
Giada Menchetti - Student
Caroline Powell - Student
Brantley Soong - Student*

*Ralph Schmidt (Principal-Ex Officio)
Benjara Elliott (API-Ex Officio)*

Blythewood High School Administrative Team

*Ralph Schmidt-Principal
Benejara Elliott - Assistant Principal For Instruction (API)
Jeremi Madden - Assistant Principal
Jo Hawkins - Assistant Principal
Ahmed Ali - Assistant Principal
Justin Simpson - Assistant Principal
Jesse George - Assistant Administrator
Meranda Esters, EdD.- Assistant Administrator
Lisa Ellis - Student Activities Coordinator
Barry Mizzell - Athletic Director
Sharlene Drakeford - Director of School Counseling*

Blythewood High School Annual SIC Report 2025-2026



Mission Statement

Together, we create a Safe Environment for Growth, filled with Pathways of Success for All Bengals.

Our Vision

In four years, every Bengal will be prepared with the Skills and Knowledge to be enrolled, enlisted, or Employed.

Our Core Values

Show Respect, Take Responsibility, and Build Relationships

Our Priorities

Student Success, a Safe Environment, Purposeful Collaboration, and Rigorous Instruction

Fine Arts Excellence

Band Achievements

2025 Bands of America Regional Finalist

Bands of America 3A High School Music Award

SCBDA 6A Marching Band State Finalist

41 Students – Region Band

11 Students – All-State Band

Performance Ratings

Concert Band – Superior

Wind Symphony – Superior with Distinction

Orchestra & Strings

Performance Excellence

String, Concert, Chamber Orchestra & String Society

All earned Superior with Distinction (SCEMA)

23 Students – Richland Two Honors

Orchestra

SCEMA Solo & Ensemble: 11 Superior,

3 Excellent Ratings

Faculty & Staff Honors

Debbie Sweat – Gold Financial Literacy Teacher

Dr. Daniel Viewers – National Board Certification

Emily McElveen – Women’s Basketball Coach of the Year

Brent Silva – Men’s Golf Coach of the Year

Kim English – Teacher of the Year (2026–2027)

Blythewood High School Accomplishments

2025–2026 School Year

Academics & Student Achievement

Academic Distinction

3 National Merit Finalists

33 Biliteracy Seal Recipients (Bronze, Silver, Gold)

AP Bronze Award School

Palmetto Silver School

Ranked #1 in Richland Two and #26 in South

Carolina (U.S. News)

Leadership & Programs

2025 National Gold Council of Excellence (NASC)

Host Site for Southern Association of Student Councils (October 2026)

Bengal Robotics – 2 Teams Qualified for State Finals

BioDiesel Summer Program

College & Career Readiness

30 Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Recipients

HOSA – National Competition Qualifiers

DECA – National Competition Qualifiers



Athletics

State & Regional Excellence

Caroline Hawkins – 5A Individual Women’s Golf

State Champion (4 consecutive years)

Women’s Basketball – State Champions (2 consecutive years)

Region Champions

Boys Volleyball

Boys & Girls Swim

Boys & Girls Cross Country

Cheer

Girls Basketball

Girls Wrestling

Baseball

Boys & Girls Soccer

Boys Golf

Girls Track

Individual Honors

Andrew Bottar – Volleyball Region Player of the Year

Nolan Palmer – Boys Golf Region Player of the Year

Chase Thomas – Region Player of the Year & SC Co-Player of the Year

India Williams – Basketball All-State Selection

Chase Thomas – Basketball All-State Selection

Anna Kelly – Cross Country State Runner of the Year

Coaching Excellence

Aleshia Hawkins – Region Coach of the Year

Emily McElveen – Region Coach of the Year

Brent Silva – Region Coach of the Year

Katie Litton – Boys & Girls Swim Coach of the Year