

# A. R. Rucker Middle

*Rams*

## Our demographics

**School principal:** Michelle Crosby    **Began at school:** 2019    **In district:** 1996    **In education:** 1996

**Grades served:** 6 – 8    **Enrollment:** 564    **Economic status:** 71% free & reduced lunch

**Diversity:** 30% White, 55% African-American, 12% Hispanic, less than 1% Asian, 2% Other

**Number of teachers:** 41    **Classified:** 14    **Administrators:** 3    **Counselors:** 2    **Media specialist:** 1

**Other:** Full-time Nurse, PMD nurse, one 29-hour employee

**Teachers with advanced degrees:** 55.3%    **Teacher attendance:** 95.6%    **Student attendance:** 95.7%

## Our mission

The mission of A.R. Rucker Middle School, in partnership with parents and community, is to prepare students to become productive, global citizens and life-long learners by providing a quality education.

## Our facilities

**Date main building was built:** 2002    **Date of renovations:** N/A

**Square feet:** 120,000    **Number of computers:** 266    **Number of classrooms:** 54

**Specialty areas:** 5 computer labs • 1 iPad cart • one-to-one Chromebook in each class

## Our school programs

- **A. R. Rucker Middle School** is diligently working to develop and grow students in all areas of their lives to ensure that they are best equipped to face any new challenge they are met with. To help us reach this goal, we will continue to center our improvement efforts on the four domains of the Schools To Watch Program (Academic Excellence, Developmental Responsiveness, Social Equity, and Organizational Structures and Processes). Systemic approaches are in place for instruction, professional development, discipline, and community involvement and partnerships. In a school year like no other, we have had to be creative in providing opportunities for our students to be involved in athletics, afterschool program/activities, and with the arts to ensure that we are meeting their needs socially, academically, and emotionally.
- **RAM Tough Book Clubs – R(eading) A(nd) M(eeting)** – Clubs are small voluntary book clubs held during lunch. Teachers facilitate small groups of students who choose to meet and discuss a particular book while they eat lunch.
- **Food for Thought** – Students who demonstrate they are exemplary readers and writers are invited to a quarterly lunch in the media center. The focus of these luncheons varies. Local authors may describe their

writing process, the media specialist might book-talk great new books or students might design book promotion tools to air on Rucker AM. Other reading incentives include Clemson/Carolina reading program and the SCJBA voting party.

### Our co-curriculum, clubs, athletics

- **Beta Club** – This nationally recognized organization runs the school bookstore and provides many service-related projects for its members.
- **Football** – This sport is available to our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- **Basketball** – This sport is available to our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- **Volleyball** – This sport is available to our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- **Cheerleading** – This sport is available to our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- **Band** – All interested students are encouraged to participate. We strive to provide instruments for students who may not be able to afford one. The band performs at pep rallies, ballgames and semi-annual concerts. Rucker also provides classes for Chorus and Piano Lab.
- **Step Team** – The Rucker Step Team is comprised of 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who exhibit a strong sense of dedication and cooperation. These students practice two to three times weekly to unify their step performance. Steppers compete in competitions, perform in community service events and perform at school functions.
- **Academic Challenge** – Team is comprised of 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders who compete to answer grade level standard questions.
- **Robotics** – Sixth-eighth grade students build and program robots that complete specific tasks. They also research major problems that affect the world and present creative ways to solve the problems. The team has qualified for state competition and looks forward to a new season thanks to PTA sponsorship.
- **Relay for Life School** – A.R. Rucker sponsors a team each year for Relay for Life as part of our community service.
- **POWER HOUSE** - Leadership class to teach male students to “Spark Hope, Ignite Optimism, and Create the Currents for a Brighter Future.” Through the use of a corporate theme, branding, boardroom setting and creative teaching strategies the Powerhouse operates as ‘safe place’ for students or Power-Brokers to transact or trade the unwanted emotional, mental and social baggage in their lives for valuable and useful commodities or skills that will enable them to be successful in the classroom, work and family environment. Each student’s work area or ‘office’ is set up in an executive style with a corporate board manual containing curriculum, desk pad, pencil cup,

business card holder and name plate. To increase each student’s self-esteem and self-worth as well as to enable them to envision a ‘brighter future’ for themselves, students are referred to as “Dr. and their last name.”

- **After School Programs** – After school enrichment and academic support.
- **Rucker AM** – This news crew prepares the broadcast each morning. Anchors, technical directors and special correspondents develop the content of each program.
- **Student Advisory** - Advisory is designated for staff members to meet with students and check on their social and emotional needs.
- **Student of the Month and Bus Student of the Month** - Students are recognized for great character in the school and on the bus.
- **Raising Academic Making Successes (RAMS) Recovery** - Each morning from 8:00 a.m. until 8:40 a.m., teachers work with students to recover missed assignments and academic concepts.
- **First Priority** - Student-led evangelical club.
- **Triple A Club** - Students are recognized for attendance, attitude, and academic achievement. Students receive certificates, gift cards donated by local businesses, and free electronic time for members of the club.

## Our parents/parent support programs

- **School Improvement Council** – This group meets on a monthly basis to discuss school-related issues and concerns.
- **Parent-Teacher Association** – The PTA, along with the executive board, meets monthly with an administrator and teacher representative to discuss items of interest and concern. The PTA sponsors a yearly fundraiser as well as other activities for the school.
- **Website** – A website that keeps parents informed about class activities, upcoming deadlines and student progress. Parents can register on this site to receive email alerts about upcoming homework and projects.
- **Town Hall Meetings** - Parent and community meetings to keep parents informed of upcoming events and protocols of the school via Google Meets and FaceBook Live.
- **Virtual Open House** - Virtual Tour of the school
- **PowerSchool for Parents** – A website or app parents can use to view a student’s grades and attendance.
- **Facebook** – A website to view news and pictures of our school community. Search “Rucker Middle.”

- **ConnectED** – An automated phone system used to inform parents and students of important school announcements. Messages are sent weekly.

### Our school strengths

- **Student Centered** – In all administrative decisions made at A.R. Rucker, the student comes first.
- **Literacy Focus** – The school works to ensure students are actively making gains in literacy. Students participate in literacy blocks where they gain strategies to use in class.
- **Open Minded Staff** – The teachers at A.R. Rucker are willing to try something different if a student will benefit. Teachers share ideas to help one another.
- **One-to-one** – One-to-one technology has increased student involvement of technology.
- **Teams** – Students are placed on teams for learning communities.

### Our improvement/growth areas

- **Achievement Gap** – There is a clear need for a larger number of our students to become engaged in all academic areas. We believe our test data would show positive gains as we continue to work to close the academic achievement gaps between our higher and lower socioeconomic students.

### Our honors & awards

- **Beginning Teacher of the Year** – Our school has had two recipients for teacher of the year.
- **Volleyball** – Our volleyball team was undefeated three times.
- **Basketball** – Our girls' and boys' basketball teams have been undefeated numerous times.
- **Football** – Our football team has one undefeated season.
- **Relay for Life** – Our school raises money each year for Relay.
- **Band/Chorus** – Our band and chorus participate in the Carowinds festival of music. Our students are also nominated for All-County Chorus and Band.
- **Junior Scholars** – Our students continue to qualify for Jr. Scholar status.
- **S.C. Jr. Book Award** – Rucker Rams have placed in this program three different times.
- **One-to-One** – Each student will receive a Chromebook to better improve their global learning.

- **ST-ARTS** – Students are nominated for the ST-ARTS program, a program for the arts.
- **Robotics** – Grand Champion for Pee Dee region in 2014-15 and 2015-16; first place in state for Gracious Professionalism in 2015-16; and first place regional for Core Values in 2016-17, 8<sup>th</sup> grade won small middle school divisionat Regional Tournament, 2017.
- **Academic Challenge**  
Middle School Division 2 Winner 2017  
OEC Regular Season Champions 2017  
OEC Regional Tournament Champions 2017