

# Heath Springs Elementary

Hornets

## Our demographics

**School principal:** Sheri Watson      **Years at school:** 31      **In district:** 31      **In education:** 31  
**Grades served:** PreK – 5      **Enrollment:** 429      **Economic status:** 48% free & reduced lunch  
**Diversity:** 73% White, 22% African-American, 2 % Hispanic, 3% Other  
**Number of teachers:** 27      **Classified:** 14      **Administrators:** 2      **Counselors:** 1      **Media specialists:** 1.0  
**Other:** Nurse, Reading Recovery, Parent Coordinator, Preschool (4), Primary and Elementary Interventionist  
**Teachers with advanced degrees:** 70.4%      **Teacher attendance:** 94.9%      **Student attendance:** 96.4%

## Our mission

Putting Our Children First

## Our facilities

**Date main building was built:** 1954      **Date of renovations:** 2000, 2001  
**Square feet:** 59,456      **Number of computers:** 188      **Number of classrooms:** 31  
**Specialty areas:** 1 computer lab, gym, keyboard lab

## Our school programs

- **Reading Recovery** – Students in grade 1 who struggle with the fundamentals of reading are enrolled in this program. One-on-one services are provided. Small group instruction is provided for grade 1 and 2 students, as needed.
- **Arts Focus** – We have begun planning for a greater focus on the arts. We feed into an arts focused middle school and high school. We are beginning to look more closely at integrating the arts into the classroom through unit development.
- **Academic Challenge Team** – A group of students who are entered into in the district competition.
- **Keyboard Lab** – Students use this lab in scheduled music classes.
- **Pledge Leaders (grade 2)** – A different grade 2 student leads the school in the pledge over the intercom each morning.
- **Safety Patrol (grade 5)** – Students from grade 5 open car doors each morning and afternoon. These students raise and lower our flags and are available to help in any capacity.
- **Uninterrupted Reading Block** – The school works to see that teachers and students are afforded a 2-hour reading block free from interruptions.
- **PACT Pep Rally** – A pep rally is planned the Friday before PACT testing begins.
- **PACT Breakfast** – The PTO feeds every student and faculty member the mornings of PACT testing.

- **Homework Center** – Students are helped with homework 60 minutes after school on Monday –Thursday each week.
- **After-School Tutoring** – Teachers in grades 3 – 5 meet with students after school to work on weaknesses identified by MAP testing.
- **Awards Days** – Each grade level schedules awards day in May to celebrate the accomplishments of each student. Parents are invited.
- **Reading Counts Program** – Student names are called over the intercom indicating reading levels reached by individual students. Prizes and parties are part of a reward system.
- **St. Jude’s Math-A-Thon** – Our students have raised \$21,000 over the past several years for St. Jude’s research.
- **Teacher Cadets** – Students from Andrew Jackson High School intern in several of our classrooms regularly.
- **Computer Lab** – ClassWorks, Brain Pop, Achieve 3000. Research and Everyday Math online games are provided for classes to schedule to use.
- **South Carolina Focus** – Our school sign, murals in the hallway, The Sandlapper Garden, and murals in our cafeteria share a common focus on our state and our county.
- **Carolina/Clemson Canned Food Drive for K.A.R.E.** – The Kershaw Area Resource Exchange helps benefit the less fortunate. We help with a canned food drive competition two weeks before the Carolina/Clemson game for Thanksgiving. We collected 1,800 cans this year.

### Our co-curriculum, clubs, athletics

- **Arts Clubs** – Every other Friday the students go to a club sponsored by our School Improvement Council. The students list first, second, or third choices from a list of possible clubs. The students change clubs each semester. The list includes chess, unicycles, book talks, landscaping, French, Spanish, sign language, cooking, crafts, gymnastics, etc.
- **Chorus** – Students in grades 4 and 5 audition for this group. They join with other choral groups across the district to perform for various functions. They also perform for school celebrations and meetings.
- **LEGO Robotics Club** – Selected students in grades 1 through 5 meet weekly to design and build LEGO robots to perform particular functions.

### Our parents/parent support programs

- **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)** – This group sponsors fundraisers. Fundraiser money has been used toward the purchase of arts materials, P.E. equipment, landscaping, TAP artists, sound system and

school welcome sign. The PTO plans wonderful activities to show teacher appreciation including feeding the faculty, providing limousine rides to go to lunch, massages, and providing for gift certificates.

- **School Improvement Council (SIC)** – The SIC sponsors our Arts Clubs.
- **Parent Volunteer Program** – Heath Springs families are asked to donate 30 hours of service to the school per family, per year. Families usually exceed that goal. Our parent volunteer coordinator manages this process.
- **Open House** – We schedule an open house on the Thursday before school starts so parents can meet the teachers and discuss schedules and supplies lists. Normally, at least 75% of our families attend.
- **Family Activity Nights** – Twice each semester we plan activity nights for parents. We provide information about testing, test results and offer a chance for parents to experience school as their children experience it.

### Our school strengths

- **Reading** – We have a better understanding of the importance of the five components of reading emphasized by the National Reading Panel. Through training and professional development, we effectively use diagnostic tests, such as the Dominee, to plan for individualized reading instruction for every K – 3 student. We have realized the rewards of well-planned, small group instruction.
- **Reading Recovery** – We have two Reading Recovery teachers.
- **Professional Development** – Our teachers have worked hard over the past four years attending workshops and training sessions to effectively blend portfolios, student-led conferences, reading instruction, and student engagement. Total Teacher training has aided in the improvement of authentic engagement through calendars, bell curves and pacing guides.
- **Professional Training Teams** – The first Monday of each month, our faculty meets to discuss assigned reading and/or instructional practices or programs. The second Monday, one teacher from each grade level and department meet to discuss school leadership topics. The third Monday, one teacher from each grade level meets to look at assessment and data. Student Intervention Team. The fourth Monday, Grade Level Teams meet to look at data and student work.

### Our honors & awards

- **Red Carpet Award, 2003** – Our School Improvement Council worked with our faculty to apply for and to receive this award.
- **Met Adequate Yearly Progress** – 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011

- **Exemplary Writing Award** – 2010-2011
- **ABC (Arts in Basic Curriculum) Site Award** – 2010-2011