

Heath Springs Elementary

Hornets

Our demographics

School principal: Sheri Watson **Began at school:** 1980 **Years in district:** 31 **In education:** 31
Grades served: PreK – 5 **Enrollment:** 426 **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, Science 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.
- **Interventionists**- Two staff members work with 1st-5th grade students who need help in reading and math.
- **100 Book Challenge**- Students are required to read for at least 30 minutes each night at home as well as at school. They keep a reading log that is turned in each week. By the end of the year, each student should have 800 steps.
- **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.
- **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 and Math Block** – The school works to see that teachers and students are afforded a 2-hour reading and a ninety minute math block free from interruptions.
- **PASS Breakfast** – The PTO feeds every student and faculty member the mornings of PASS 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, and Study Island. 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.
- **Computers for Education-** Magazine drive to raise funds for various activities at school.
- **Back Pack Buddies-** Local churches pack food items in lunch boxes for a select group of students in need.
- **United Way-** Staff and students raise funds to donate to the Lancaster United Way.
- **Relay for Life-** Staff and students raise funds to donate for Cancer research.
- **Junior Achievement-** Local businesses come into classrooms and teacher our students about career opportunities.
- **Pennies for Patients-** Students raise money to cancer research.
- **Box Tops-** Students compete by grade level to turn in the most box tops, twice a year. The winning classroom receives a prize.

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.
- **School Wide Book Publishing**- Students write their own stories which are then published.

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.
- **BETA Club**- Fifth grade honor students recycle for the school.
- **Exemplary Writing School, 2010**- Applied for this writing award and was one of 8 schools in the state to receive this recognition.
- **Met Adequate Yearly Progress** – 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011
- **ABC (Arts in Basic Curriculum) Site Award** – 2010-2011