

# Kershaw Elementary

**BULLDOGS**

## Our demographics

**School principal:** Michael Bender      **Began at school:** 2017    **In district:** 2014    **In education:** 2004

**Grades served:** 4K – 5      **Enrollment:** 437      **Economic status:** 68% free & reduced lunch

**Diversity:** 70% White, 24% African-American, .5% Hispanic, 5.2% Other

**Number of teachers:** 32      **Classified:** 15      **Administrators:** 2      **Counselor:** 1      **Media specialists:** 1

**Other:** Nurse, Reading Coach, Parent Coordinator

**Teachers with advanced degrees:** 74%    **Teacher attendance:** 92.8%    **Student attendance:** 95.7%

## Our mission

Mission Statement of Kershaw:

Building  
Upstanding  
Lifelong  
Learners  
Developing  
Optimistic  
Graduates

## Our facilities

**Date main building was built:** 1961      **Date of renovations:** 1993, 1998, 2001

**Square feet:** 61,397    **Number of computers:** over 200 with SMARTboards in every classroom

**Number of classrooms:** 27      **Specialty areas:** 2 computer labs, science lab and iPads for classroom use

## Our school programs

- **Literacy** – Emphasis on strengthening reading comprehension across all content areas.
- **Teacher Cadets** – Students from Andrew Jackson High interested in becoming educators complete internships in several of our classrooms on a regular basis.
- **Technology** – Two computer labs and one portable lab are available to our students on a weekly basis. Students use ClassWorks and various online programs to work on math and reading standards. Chromebooks and iPads are available for instructional use on a checkout basis.
- **Keyboard and Steel Drums Lab for Music Instruction** – Classes participate in music instruction on a weekly basis.

- **Title I Inclusion** – Through school-wide Title I funds, we provide leveled readers, home and school access to several websites, lower class size in grades 1, 2 and 3 and employee and parent coordinator to facilitate family involvement opportunities.
- **School-wide literary and character themes** – A “book of the year” is provided for each classroom and area that provide the foundation that encourages academic achievement and promotes life skills. Recent titles include *How Full is Your Bucket for Kids?* And *The Seven Habits of Happy Kids*. This serves as the foundation for one character education program for students, staff and families.

### Our co-curriculum, clubs, athletics

- **KES Chorus** – Grade five students audition and perform as a small group here at school and as part of the Lancaster County Elementary Chorus in the spring.
- **Junior Beta Club** – Membership recognizes grade five students with outstanding academic achievement and character. The organization encourages these traits along with positive attitude, leadership, and service through monthly service projects in the school and community.
- **Student Council** – The school counselor coordinates service learning and special projects throughout the year with representatives from each third through fifth-grade homeroom.
- **Fourth-Grade Swimming** – This grant-funded instruction takes place for Kershaw Elementary fourth graders at the outdoor Kershaw pool.
- **Safety Patrol** – Our safety patrols walk kindergarteners to class each morning and greet car riders by opening car doors as they arrive.
- **Bulldog Bulletin Morning News Program** – This show highlights morning announcements and other school news. Students are involved in on and off camera responsibilities.
- **EAGLE Gifted and Talented Program** – Grades three through five participate in off-site classes once a week.
- **Junior Achievement** – Volunteers from local businesses teach lessons in grades two and three and in the afterschool program.
- **21st Century Learning Center** – This grant-funded program offers free academic assistance and enrichment activities Monday through Friday. Bus transportation is provided.
- **iLead** – Students in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade participate in this leadership and community service project
- **Robotics** – The Robotics team works to complete challenges and to program their robot. They use their

experience in a competition at the end of the year.

### Our parents/parent support and community programs

- **School Improvement Council (SIC) Family Nights** – Family nights for all grade levels provide activities and ideas for academic enrichment at home.
- **PTO** – KES PTO actively supports our school through volunteers and funding for instructional supplies.
- **Retiree Luncheon** – We host local school retirees for our annual Thanksgiving meal.

### Our school strengths

Kershaw Elementary is helping all students develop the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate through the collaborative efforts of teachers, support staff, students and families. Kershaw Elementary strives to instill a future-focus as evidenced by our school mission statement – “**Building Upstanding Life-long Learners. Developing Optimistic Graduates.**” KES enjoys community support and involvement through family events, parent-teacher conferences, Backpack Buddies, volunteers and *All-Pro Dads*. Building *World Class Knowledge* is an on-going effort. Teachers have participated in targeted professional development focused on literacy, the integration of science and social studies and math comprehension. Understanding the art and science of teaching reading that includes independent and instructional levels, along with guided reading techniques is strengthening the success of our students. Gains have been noted through Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), PASS and individual assessments. Students are aware of their own learning targets and set goals to show growth. Plans to extend the instructional framework to include STEM are in place for the coming year. Honing *World Class Skills* is fundamental to the teamwork, communication and creativity promoted at KES. Students use *Chromebooks* and *mini-iPads* for research and access to digital leveled readers. Students have been trained to produce and participate in the KES morning news, further enhancing their communication and technology skills. The scientific inquiry process is taught beginning at kindergarten. The arts also play an integral role. The music teacher coordinates student performances by grade level, small groups and individually to showcase talent. The art teacher integrates grade level standards and coordinates the visit from a local potter. Plans are in place to broaden exposure to the arts next year to include a painter to work with students and staff. Enhancing *Life and Career Characteristics* is vital to fostering well-rounded citizens. KES has introduced and implemented the “7 Habits of Happy Kids” as the foundation for building positive character traits that include interpersonal, intrapersonal, and problem-solving skills. Service to others is promoted through service learning projects. Each morning on the news, students lead the school in singing the *National Anthem*. Effort and motivation are recognized

and celebrated throughout the year, along with academic achievements. Kershaw is committed to providing experiences that will prepare all students for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Balanced literacy is a focus at Kershaw Elementary. Students work in both reading and writer's workshops.

STEM is a focus at our school. We have added several engineering units to our curriculum that supports science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

### Our honors & awards

- **Lt. Governor's Essay Contest** – Grade five District winners, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2010-2011
- **Honor Roll/Principal's List Awards** – Student achievement is celebrated on a six-week and semester basis along with perfect attendance, citizenship, and other student incentives.
- **Essay and Poster Contests** – Kershaw Elementary students are recognized periodically through award winning participation in essay and poster contests sponsored by local groups and Lancaster County Council of the Arts Youth Art Month.
- **Palmetto Silver Award 2011-2012**
- **Science Fair** – A number of KES students were recognized for their scientific projects at the district level the past two years.
- **Spelling Bee School Champion**