

Kershaw Elementary

BULLDOGS

Our demographics

School principal: Kelli Farmer **Began at school:** 2017 **In district:** 2017 **In education:** 2003
Grades served: 4K – 5 **Enrollment:** 459 **Economic status:** 74.8% free & reduced lunch
Diversity: 60.8% White, 27.6% African-American, 2.2% Hispanic, 9.4% Other
Number of teachers: 29 **Classified:** 11 **Administrators:** 2 **Counselor:** 1 **Media specialist:** 1
Other: Nurse, Reading Coach, Parent Coordinator/LLI Instructor, Math/Technology Coach
Teachers with advanced degrees: 74% **Teacher attendance:** 92.3% **Student attendance:** 94.6%

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 400 (1:1 device implementation grades 2-5) with SMARTboards in every classroom
Number of classrooms: 27 **Specialty areas:** 2 computer labs, science lab, STEAM room, Literacy room

Our school programs

- **Literacy** – Emphasis on strengthening reading and writing through the workshop model; literacy is emphasized across all content areas.
- **Teacher Cadets** – Students from Andrew Jackson High interested in becoming future educators complete internships in our classrooms on a regular basis.
- **Technology** – KES has two computer flex labs as well as a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) room. We also have a minimum of two desktop computers, 3 iPads and a SMARTboard in all classrooms. All students in grades 2-5 have a personal chromebook for classroom instruction and engagement.
- **Music Instruction** – Classes participate in keyboard and steel drum instruction on a weekly basis.

- **Title I Inclusion** – Through school-wide Title I funds, we provide leveled literacy opportunities, home and school access to several educational technology applications, lower class sizes in grades 1,2 and 3, and a parent coordinator to facilitate family-involvement opportunities.
- **School-wide literary and character themes** – A “book of the year” is provided to each classroom and area that provide the foundation that encourages academic achievement and promotes character education. Recent titles include *How Full is Your Bucket for Kids?* And *The Seven Habits of Happy Kids*.
- **Project-based Learning/STEAM** – Students at all grade levels participate in project-based learning and science, technology, engineering, art and math projects. During 2018-19, the projects will focus on initiatives with the town’s Heart and Soul grant.
- **Elementary School Partnerships** – KES and Heath Springs elementary schools have partnered together to collaborate on the state STEAM continuum, arts integration and the implementation of project-based learning.
- **Career Education** – KES provides career education to all students through Career Day, Vehicle Day, Lunch-N-Learns, community speakers and readers, guidance sessions and Junior Achievement.

Our co-curriculum, clubs, athletics

- **KES Chorus** – Fifth graders audition and perform as a small group at school and as part of the Lancaster County Elementary Honor Chorus in the spring.
- **Junior Beta Club** – Membership recognizes fifth graders with outstanding academic achievement, community service and character.
- **Student Council** – Grades three through five elect a representative for each classroom that leads in the coordination and engagement of service-learning projects and community partnerships.
- **Swimming** – Fourth graders complete swimming lessons as well as a water safety course, which is grant-funded. This program takes place at the outdoor Kershaw community pool.
- **Safety Patrol** – Fourth and fifth graders apply to provide the service of walking kindergarten students to class each morning and/or greeting car riders each morning and afternoon.
- **Bulldog Bulletin Morning News Program** – This show highlights morning announcements and daily school announcements and celebrations. Students are involved in on- and off-camera responsibilities.
- **EAGLE Gifted and Talented Program** – Grades three through five participate in weekly GT enrichment classes. Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, these classes will be onsite.

- **Math Enrichment Program** – Students in grades three through five that score in the top 15% on the Measures of Academic Progress receive PBL-based math enrichment for 45 minutes daily.
- **Junior Achievement** – Community business leaders volunteer and teach lessons regarding work-readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy skills to grades two and three as well as the afterschool program.
- **21st Century Learning Center** – This grant-funded program offers free academic assistance and enrichment activities Monday through Thursday. Bus transportation is provided.
- **iLead** – Fourth and fifth graders participate in this student leadership program, which promotes civic responsibility for students.
- **Club Day** – Students participate in the club of their choice once per month. Clubs include: health/fitness, karate, readers’ theater, drama, engineering, animation, robotics, art/drawing, craft-making, public speaking, yoga, soccer, kickball, cheerleading, line dancing, gymnastics, board games/team challenges, steel drums/chorus.
- **Field Studies** – KES students enjoy learning on trips to various locations. Examples include historic Charleston, walking tour of historic Kershaw, pumpkin patch, strawberry farm, Riverbanks Zoo, Historic Brattonsville, the state museum and area theatrical performances.

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. These nights focus on literacy and math skills and how parents can assist their children most effectively.
- **PTO** – The KES Parent Teacher Organization actively supports our school through volunteers, celebrations, academic assistance and funding for instructional supplies.
- **Retiree Luncheon/Thanksgiving Dinner** – We host local retirees at our annual KES Thanksgiving meal.
- **Family Food Days** – KES hosts Donuts for Dudes, Grits for Grandparents, Muffins for Moms, and Open Lunch Days where family members can enjoy time with their student(s) during school hours.
- **Share the Table** – Our students collect unopened non-perishable food items from their peer students during the school breakfast hour. These items were packed by students and sent to KARE of Kershaw for families in need in our own community.

- **Student Needs Drives** – Our families and community members donate coats, books, bookbags, canned items and school supplies throughout the year.
- **STEAM Days** – Students and families collaborated to design and engineer various projects such as Escape rooms or “Hide the Turkey” kindergarten Thanksgiving barn creations. Students introduced the STEAM concepts to parents and were then able to integrate the steps into the grade level curriculum with assistance of the families.
- **Bulldog Beautification Day** – Our families and community members work on an annual basis during the summer to complete projects that improve the aesthetics of our school building and school yard.

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, families and community members. All stakeholders are committed to creating a student-centered, nurturing learning environment that recognizes the varying learning styles of our diverse population. As the Bulldogs, Kershaw Elementary strives to instill a future-focus as evidenced by our mission statement – “**Building Upstanding Life-long Learners. Developing Optimistic Graduates.**” Building *World Class Knowledge* is an on-going effort for both the adults and students of KES. Teachers continued to participate in targeted professional development focused on balanced literacy, math comprehension and processes through the workshop model, the authentic integration of technology into the classroom, and the creation of student-centered engaging strategies. For our students, we have incorporated 1:1 technology in grades two through five, with all grades having access to our computer lab and wi-fi in all classrooms, expanding their learning experiences to escape rooms, virtual reality, virtual tours, technological pen pals, differentiated learning, mystery hangouts with classrooms across the nation and family/community-oriented engineering projects.

Honing *World Class Skills* is fundamental to the teamwork, communication and creativity promoted at KES. The literacy leadership team, common planning times, professional learning community collaboration and schoolwide procedures, coupled with consistent high expectations have reinforced our commitment to working together effectively. This expectation is now extending to our students through small-group instruction, student individual accountability data folders, the integration of technology and the arts, and a move towards becoming a STEAM school. KES began a partnership with Heath Springs Elementary and the Town of Kershaw. These partnerships assist with our integration of project-based learning into our curriculum.

Enhancing Life and Career Characteristics is vital to fostering well-rounded citizens. KES has introduced and implemented the “7 Habits of Happy Kids” and the iLead Leadership Program as the foundation for building positive character traits that include interpersonal, intrapersonal and problem-solving skills. In addition, KES has hosted Parenting Partners, a monthly opportunity for families to engage in positive dialogue with and about their children. KES created a community mentoring program for struggling students through local churches and KARE of Kershaw. Our students participated in the community’s “Share the Table,” a food conservation program that prevented waste at meals. Additionally, Andrew Jackson Middle assisted KES in developing a peer tutoring program with seventh graders assisting students in every classroom on a weekly basis for seven weeks of the year.

Kershaw Elementary is committed to a culture of excellence to engage students in rigorous, real-world experiences, provide challenging opportunities that allow our children to make choices that motivate and enhance their learning. Kershaw Elementary is on the move!

Our honors & awards

- **Science Fair** – KES third through fifth graders compete at the school and district level. KES has had multiple district winners.
- **Essay and Poster Contests** – KES students are recognized through award-winning participation in essay and poster contests sponsored by local groups and Lancaster County.
- **Honor Roll/Principal’s List Awards** – Student achievement is celebrated each reporting period along with perfect attendance, character education awards and other student incentives.
- **Grant Winners** – KES has received arts, technology and miscellaneous grants through ABC, Donors Choose, Partners in Youth and various other foundations in order to provide the highest quality of education for our students.
- **Teacher/Staff Quality** – KES has three national boards certified teachers and multiple district teacher-of-the-year finalists on staff. Our school nurse has been recognized by the state for her excellence in service.
- **Community Service Pilot** – KES was chosen to serve as the district’s pilot school for the student-centered and student-led “Share the Table” community service project.
- **Junior Beta Club** – The KES Jr. Beta Club was chosen as a National School of Distinction for the 2015-16 school year. This club continues to grow and promote academics and character for our students.