

## Our demographics

**School principal:** Keishea Mickles      **Began at school:** 1998      **Years in district:** 18      **In education:** 18  
**Grades served:** Pre-K-5      **Enrollment:** 747      **Economic status:** 59% free & reduced lunch  
**Diversity:** 42.05% White, 40.16% African-American, 12.67% Hispanic, 5.12% Other  
**Number of teachers:** 43      **Classified:** 14      **Administrators:** 3      **Counselors:** 2      **Media specialist:** 1  
**Other:** Nurse      **Teachers with National Board Certification:** 12      **Doctoral Degree:** 0  
**Teachers with advanced degrees:** 68%      **Teacher attendance:** 96.4%      **Student attendance:** 95.9%

## Our mission

The mission of North Elementary School is for our students to be responsible, hardworking, life-long learners.

## Our facilities

**Date main building was built:** 1966      **Date of renovations:** 1998, 2001, 2010  
**Square feet:** 91,531      **Number of computers:** 270      **Number of classrooms:** 50  
**Specialty areas:** 3 mobile iPad labs, 3 technology labs, literacy lab

## Our school programs

- **Balanced Literacy-** The goal of our balanced literacy program is to include the strongest elements of each. The components of a balanced literacy approach are as follows: The read aloud, guided reading, shared reading, interactive writing, shared writing, Reading Workshop, Writing Workshop and Word study. In Reading Workshops, skills are explicitly modeled during mini lessons. The mini lesson has four parts- the connection, the demonstration, the active engagement and the link. The teacher chooses a skill and strategy that she believes her class needs based on assessments she has conducted in her classroom. Writing Workshop follows the same flow. Students are explicitly taught skills and strategies for writing during a mini lesson. Then they go off and write independently. They choose the skills they are trying out that day. The teacher comes around and confers with students to help them with their goals. Shared reading is when the students read from a shared text. Guided reading is a small group activity where more of the responsibility belongs to the student. Students read from leveled text. They use the skills directly taught during mini lessons, interactive read alouds and shared reading to increase their comprehension and fluency. The teacher is there to provide prompting and ask questions. Finally, independent reading is exactly what it sounds like: students reading self-selected text independently. Students choose books based on interest and independent reading level.
- **KITE-** Kids Interacting with Text Every Day is reading intervention designed to accelerate the development of reading proficiency for our kindergarten, first, second, and third graders who are identified as needing individualized responsive instruction. Daily observation and ongoing formal assessment using the LLI Intervention of Fountas and Pinnell. The KITE teacher and assistant closely monitor and meet the reading needs of each student.

KITE teacher and assistant to closely monitor and meet the reading needs of each student. The fluidity of the program and the careful monitoring of all students by our teachers allow students to enter and leave KITE throughout the school year as we work together to provide the best learning environment for our emergent and early readers.

- **Response to Intervention (RTI)**- Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. RTI is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.
- **Accelerated Reader**- In an attempt to encourage students to read for pleasure, AR celebrations are held each semester. Our last celebration included a trip to Lancaster Bowling Center. Students qualify for these celebrations by reading AR books and taking comprehension tests on them. Students have opportunities to meet the qualifying criteria each semester.
- **Service Learning**- Young people are encouraged to learn, develop, and grow through service to others. We provide time for active participation in ample, organized service experiences. These opportunities provide early life lessons about dependability and responsibility to many North students. Service-learning opportunities include:
  - North Helpers – Fifth-grade students learn about dependability and responsibility by helping teachers and other students. Example duties include: helping specials teachers prepare for the day, helping students take AR tests, updating the school sign, preparing computers in the labs, delivering birthday cards to our students, and reading with kindergarten.
  - Safety Patrol - Fourth graders greet students by opening car doors for car riders each morning.
  - Canned Food Drive - An annual food drive encouraged by a friendly competition between USC and Clemson fans to see which team gathers the most food. Fifth grade students count cans daily throughout the month of November and package them in boxes. The food is donated to HOPE before Thanksgiving.
  - Jump Rope for Heart is supported through our physical education teachers. Students jump rope to raise money for children with heart defects.
  - Relay for Life is a school focus. Money is collected over the course of the year. Teachers and students come together to support our booth at LHS and walk in honor of cancer survivors and in memory of lost loved ones.
  - Special Friends - Students from fifth grade share special time with our exceptional students before school, in art, music and P.E.
  - School Store - Fifth graders manage the school store.
  - WNES - School news anchored by fifth-grade students

### Our co-curriculum, clubs, athletics

- **National Junior Beta Club-** Beta Club organizations are committed to recognizing and promoting high academic achievement, rewarding and nurturing worthy character, fostering leadership skills and encouraging service to others. The students have participated in several service learning projects, such as our Clemson vs. Carolina Canned Food Drive for Hope, Angel Tree Project, and organizing Livi's Library book donation, which will provide books to promote literacy for all students.
- **Robotics Club-** The robotics club is a team of eight students made up of fourth and fifth graders. During the year, they build a robot and use various technologies to program it to perform several missions on a mat designed specifically for our annual robotics competition. The students also complete a research assignment during the year that relates to the theme of the competition each year. They develop a skit to perform for the judges explaining all of their research on competition night.
- **Knights Run-** This program will be designed to assist young girls in living a healthy lifestyle while discussing topics that occur socially at school. Your child will be exposed to a curriculum to help them be successful in difficult social situations while training to run a 5K!
- **iLead-** This program communicates to students the importance of accepting the responsibility of being a leader. Students are exposed to various principles to apply in their lives which allow them to become a person of influence and make a difference in their world.
- **Grade Level Author Study** – Students focus on an author and studies his or her biography. Students complete projects from their favorite piece of the author's literary work. They also participate in Readers Theater and classroom videos about the author are incorporated.
- **Book Club Read-In** – Fifth grade students read a predetermined text. The media specialist meets with these students regularly to discuss important events and to share their reflections about the district to discuss book themes and to complete culminating activities.
- **A Little Knight Music** – A choral group of approximately twenty grade five students chosen through an open audition. The chorus rehearses each Thursday after school from 2:30- 3:30 p.m. This provides quality choral music experiences for our students and the community. The group performs for school functions, sings at Christmas in the community, and participates in the All-County Choral Festival each year.
- **Peer Mediators-** Peer mediation is the voluntary, peaceful resolution of disputes or conflicts in which one or more neutral parties act as Mediators. It provides students with a positive alternative to conflict and makes school a safer place to be and learn. It is a positive way for students to learn conflict resolution.
- **Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs** – A fishing program for all grade two students held during the school day. Students learn that fishing is a good individual or family activity. They learn how to take care of their environment, how to fish, about the anatomy of fish, and about pond life. The program includes a fishing trip to a local pond.

- **PAX Leadership-** The focus of the group is to the better world and to start with one's self. PAX teaches students self-regulation, self-control, and self-management in context of collaborating with others for peace, productivity, health and happiness.
- **Nature Stewards-** Our Nature Stewards Club introduces our 4th and 5th grade students to the wonders of nature and teaches them how to preserve those wonders through life long service. Our mission is to help our natural habitat by engaging our students in environmental activities, and completing P.E.A.C.E Projects (Peaceful Environmental Activities Concerning Everyone).
- **North Green Team-** Our North Elementary Green Team is comprised of 4th and 5th after-school helpers. We collect recycled paper, cans, boxes, and plastic items throughout the school each Friday afternoon. We place the recyclable items in the City of Lancaster's big blue bin.
- **North's Art Club** – This is an after-school activity made up of interested grade five students who help enhance the school, make props for North's plays, and complete art projects for the school community.

### Our parents/parent support programs

- **PTA** – Organizes and promotes student learning through fundraising. Fundraising monies are allocated through our PTA Board to enhance instruction.
- **Teacher Appreciation** – Monthly celebrations are planned by parents in honor of teachers' birthdays and various holidays throughout the school year.
- **Volunteers** – Parents and community members give generously of their time to assist in areas of their own strengths and interests to promote student learning and safety.
- **School Improvement Council (SIC)** – Advisory board who acts as a liaison between the community, school, and administration.
- **Parent Volunteer Coordinator** – Serves as a liaison between school and families to encourage all parents to volunteer and participate in family events.

### Our school strengths

- **Fostering excellence** – Our faculty and staff have a common goal to foster excellence for every child in the areas of learning and behavior. That is also the standard we hold for ourselves. Although there is a framework for our school's policies and procedures, within each classroom we foster and nurture creativity through hands-on activities, paired sharing, and small groups. The teacher is the facilitator of learning.
- **Professional Learning Teams** – We work as a team with our parents and community to meet the needs of each child while supporting and working together. Our teachers and staff are nurturing, creative, and resourceful. We collaborate with grade level teams and through vertical teaming. Our Specials teachers who teach art, music, PE, and computer lab coordinate unique learning experiences that complement the general curriculum. Our community and parent volunteers support our school through Junior Achievement, tutoring, mentoring, classroom assistance, attending field trips, and fundraising.
- **Literacy By Design (LBD)** – This innovative reading system offers a specific plan for differentiated instruction to ensure that the needs of all students are met. The comprehension component promotes

interactive reading that energizes class instruction, enhances oral language proficiency, and improves retention of content and vocabulary. The vocabulary component includes a six-step instructional process that allows teachers to teach and reinforce vocabulary terms with success. The phonics and phonemic awareness component helps students build meaningful associations so they can make sense of how to use phonics when reading. The fluency component provides systematic and explicit fluency instruction designed to heighten students' reading comprehension. The writing component provides daily practice that attends to all facets of writing: genre, process, traits, craft, and conventions. This comprehensive, research-based tool is designed to help all students develop into fluent, engaged, successful readers and writers.

- **Writing** – Our teachers meet or exceed all state curriculum standards with particular strengths in the areas of writing and math. We have been awarded the Exemplary Writing Award for 2004 – 2007 and 2007-2010. We participate in writing staff development yearly. All teachers teach the writing process which includes prewriting, writing, editing, conferencing, revising, and publishing.
- **Double-blocked math** – We double-block our math so that every child in grades 2-5 receives two blocks of math daily. The first block of math takes place in the regular classroom where the students participate in standards-based lessons. A second math block offers additional math instruction in leveled groups based on MAP and SC Ready data. Students are introduced to mathematical concepts and strategies not addressed during regular classroom instruction time and participate in problem-solving activities. During this time of personalized learning, every child gets what every child needs.
- **Incorporating media standards** – The incorporation of media standards with grade level standards has improved many curriculum areas. Through the use of technology, our media specialist reinforces the standards classroom teachers are covering. Basic computer skills for our younger students are expanded into research skills for our older students. The media specialist models technology standards and allows students to practice these skills in the computer lab.

### Our honors & awards

- **Beta Club School of Distinction**, 2015-2016
- **South Carolina Palmetto Gold Award for General Achievement**, 2014-2015
- **South Carolina Palmetto Silver Award for Closing the Achievement Gap**, 2014-2015
- **ESEA rating of “A,”** 2012, 2013, 2014
- **South Carolina Palmetto Gold Award**, 2012, 2013, 2014
- **Title 1 Award School for Academic Performance**, 2012
- **South Carolina Palmetto Silver Award**, 2011-2012
- **ADVANC-ED District Accreditation**, 2011
- **South Carolina Distinguished Title I School Honorable Mention 2009-2010** for Closing the Achievement Gap
- **Certified as a National Wildlife School**, 2006
- **Grants** – Over \$200,000 grants over the past ten years
- **Exemplary Writing Award**, 2004-2007, 2007-2010

- **Red Carpet Award**, 2002-2005, 2005-2008
- **Dick and Tunkey Riley Award Finalist**, 2003- 2004
- **Met AYP**, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010
- **School Report Card Absolute Rating: Good**, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 200







