



## SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS TO WATCH MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR'S GUIDE

### Palmetto Middle School

### 2007-09 School Statistics

Source: South Carolina Department of Education

Community: Rural  
Enrollment: 861  
Grade Levels: 6-8  
School Schedule: A team block within a nine period day.

#### Student Demographics

8% Hispanic  
83% White  
6% African American  
1% American Indian  
3% Multi-Racial  
<1% Asian  
0% Pacific Islander

54% Free/Reduced Lunch  
<1% English Learners

2008 AYP: Met 17 out of 25 objectives  
2009 AYP: Met 23 out of 23 objectives  
2010 AYP: Met 23 out of 23 objectives



#### Designated in 2008; Redesignated 2011

Palmetto Middle School • District Anderson District One •  
County Anderson • State SC • Principal Barry Knight •  
School Address 803 North Hamilton Street, Williamston,  
SC • Phone (864) 847-4333  
E-mail KnightB@anderson1.k12.sc.us

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

### Academic Excellence

Continuing our fundamental philosophy, **Failure is NOT an Option**, we have added new academic initiatives and refined those proven effective over the past three years.

- New initiatives such as *SSR (Silent Sustained Reading)*, *LTL (Lunch Time Learning)*, and *F2F (Face-to-Face Learning)* provide additional support for students to reach academic excellence.
- Palmetto Middle School addresses rigor in academics by promoting organizational skills and goal setting.
- Authentic learning experiences are provided through interdisciplinary and technology-enriched instruction and assessment.
- Period rotation is implemented to accommodate different learning styles and peak learning times of our students.
- Common grade level planning initiates professional learning communities, examine student work, share teaching strategies and provide support systems to make rigor of excellence a reality.
- Our academic assistance programs: *LIFT (Letting Individuals Fine Tune)*, *Second Chance*, *F.I.D.O. (F's, Incompletes, D's, zero effort)* have been refined to give students multiple opportunities to master rigorous academic standards throughout the school day.

## South Carolina Schools to Watch PALMETTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

### Developmental Responsiveness

Palmetto Middle School strives to serve the unique needs of the middle school adolescent. Therefore, collectively, we work to meet the diverse needs of our students. Programs offered to nurture developmental growth are:

- *Guidance Counselors*: Three guidance counselors serve as adult mentors to one grade level for three years building rapport by meeting with students in individual and/or groups settings.
- *Student Council* and *Beta Club* allow students in leadership roles to participate in decisions and invest in the general welfare of the school.
- *Recycling Rangers*: A group dedicated to keeping our school clean and environmentally friendly.
- *P.A.L.S. (Partners Assuring Learning Success)* is our advisor/advisee program. Students meet to discuss a variety of topics that are significant and applicable to our diverse group.
- Our school staff members develop alliances with families to enhance and support the well-being of the children, which is a key component to academic achievement.
- In order to develop a sense of community service, students who wish to be recognized as one of our *Palmetto's Finest* are required to conduct ten hours of community service each quarter. Students must focus on good grades,
- Breakfast in the classroom provides the nutritional needs of our students and helps accelerate the learning process at the start of the school day.
- Connections made across disciplines reinforce important concepts, address real-world problems and compliment student creativity.

### Social Equity

All students, regardless of learning levels, deserve equal access to highly qualified teachers. Our teachers and support staff are certified and trained to meet the needs of young adolescents

- All students annually participate in Art, Music, Home and Careers, Technology Education and Integrated Computer classes.
- All classes (except for accelerated courses in grade 8) are heterogeneously grouped
- Team teachers use subject and grade level planning to analyze data and create lessons to help close the achievement gap.
- Teachers have received training in developing lesson plans using Multiple Intelligences Theory practices: differentiated learning, brain-based learning strategies and active learning.
- Our classroom curriculum is aligned with state standards using vertical alignment, the logical, consistent order for teaching content in a subject area from on grade level to the next.

### Organizational Support

Palmetto Middle's motto seems to say it all. Our belief in this statement radiates throughout everything we do for our students. Our school family agrees that success is becoming the best one can be; this we seek in all we do.

- Our school establishes high levels of performance for administrators and teachers, putting the academic needs of students first.
- New teachers are supported through a formal, 2-year Mentor Program.
- As a means of becoming more successful, teachers and administrators network with other professionals through membership organizations.
- Palmetto Middle School works with area colleges and universities to recruit, prepare, and mentor novice and experienced teachers.
- Our school engages all stakeholders to promote school improvement.
- The school collect, analyzes data as a basis for academic improvement. Data includes: PASS scores, MAP scores, Pre/Post test scores and scores by subgroups.
- Effective routines and systems allow teachers to focus on student data and learning.