

SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL TO WATCH



Castle Heights Middle School



Designated in 2011; Redesignated in 2014

Castle Heights Middle School • Rock Hill School District III
• York County • Rock Hill • Principal Ms. Kelly Kane•
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2013 School Statistics

(Source: Enter name of data source for stats listed below.)

Community: Rural
Enrollment: 791
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: 60-minute core classes, 45-minute exploratory/elective classes, and 40-minute enrichment/character education/advisor-advisee period

Student Demographics

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|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 4.4% | Hispanic |
| 57.7% | White |
| 1.5% | Asian |
| 26.1% | African American |
| 6.1% | American Indian (Native American) |

| | |
|-------|--------------------|
| 64.3% | Free/Reduced Lunch |
| 1.4% | English Learners |

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Teachers plan collaboratively for standards-based instruction. Planning time is deliberately structured to allow for this collaborative approach.
- A wide variety of strategies is in place to measure and promote student engagement.
- There is an increasing knowledge and implementation of intervention strategies to meet individual student needs.
- A school-wide grading policy communicates a desire for student excellence.
- Assistance and acceleration opportunities are present before, during, and after school hours.
- Students receive individual academic counseling through the guidance department as well as through the use of Personal Progress Portfolios.
- Effective uses of current technology are integrated into instruction.
- All students are instructed at grade level or above.
- An enrichment period is designated to address individual student academic needs.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are integrated into content instruction.
- Professional development for staff is focused on topics and approaches that are indicated through data and a formal needs assessment.

Developmental Responsiveness

- A sense of student place and identity is created within the team structure. An assistant principal and counselor team loop with students from grade to grade.
- Sixth grade students are encouraged to explore a wide range of related arts through an exploratory wheel. Seventh and eighth grade students have a choice of elective classes.
- Student voice is encouraged through focus groups, student surveys, and creative writing opportunities throughout the school year.
- The staff receives professional development training specifically in the area of adolescent development throughout the school year.
- A daily period of time is allocated for character education and individualized counseling.
- A strong sense of community is encouraged. Service projects within and for the community by students are promoted within the school
- A plan for improved parent communication has been implemented and approved by parents. A parent resource center is available.
- A wide range of extracurricular activities is encouraged for students.
- A range of services through nurse's office, a community counseling program, and a resource officer are provided.
- Mentoring groups are formed from the community and within the school.
- A teacher-developed Code of Conduct has been implemented that recognizes the need for varying levels of interventions; the suspension and expulsion rates have fallen dramatically.

The PE program for health and wellness has been restructured to focus more on activities to engage students in a variety of healthy movement activities while maintaining opportunities to learn sports-related curricular.

More clubs and intramurals have been introduced and incorporated to the life of the school. These activities include an archery club, fishing club, student wellness club, drama club, color guard flag spin club, and a variety of sports intramurals.

Social Equity

- Expectations for all students and all staff members are high.
- A collaboratively developed set of beliefs guides daily practices and decisions.
- The special education program has been restructured so that students are instructed at grade level or above.
- Student academic assistance and acceleration needs are met.
- A wide range of cultural heritages and histories are explored throughout the school year.
- Students are recognized in the areas of academic, arts, and athletic achievement. A recognition program is held at each grade level.
- A teacher-developed Code of Conduct provides a clearly defined discipline policy for all students.
- An advanced course of study within the core content areas is deliberately separated from the more limited Gifted and Talented program to allow wider access for students.
- A standardized dress code promotes equity among students.
- Student incentive programs are focused on all levels and areas of achievement.

Organizational Support

- Teachers are united in their passion for growth and development toward excellence.
- Communication among staff members is strong.
- Leadership is clearly defined; staff, community, student, and parent input is encouraged and utilized.
- The district provides resources that allow for teaming, planning, and a strong elective/exploratory program.
- Data is analyzed regularly and used to make curriculum decisions.
- The staff is recognized for commitment to the needs of individual students.

- **The school has a strong working relationship with other middle schools within the district, feeder elementary schools, and receiving high schools.**
- **Input is sought from active parent groups.**
- **Structure is guided by the Schools to Watch matrix, The Rock Hill Climb, and the Making Middle Grades Work reform model.**