

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Todd Binnicker  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Powdersville Middle School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 130 Roe Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Greenville State SC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 29611-7519

County Anderson

Telephone (864) 269-1821 Fax (864) 269-0795

Web site/URL https://www.anderson1.org/Domain/793 E-mail binnickt@apps.anderson1.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Robbie Binnicker E-mail Binnickr@apps.anderson1.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Anderson School District 1 Tel. (864) 847-7344

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mrs. Nancy Upton  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The electronic signature on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 8 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 3 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 14 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)  
 Suburban  
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	114	122	236
7	130	110	240
8	118	130	248
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	362	362	724

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3 % Asian
  - 10 % Black or African American
  - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 71 % White
  - 9 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 7%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	33
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	49
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	712
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Wolof, Mixtec

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 7 %

54 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 27 %

Total number students who qualify: 193

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %

125 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <u>13</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>34</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>70</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>14</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	28
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	18
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
 Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Powersville Middle School is committed to continuing the Anderson School District One tradition of excellence by providing world-class knowledge, skills, and life characteristics based on the individual needs of each student.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

For the first three weeks of the 2020-2021 school year, Powersville Middle School operated on a hybrid model for all face-to-face students and there was also a virtual option. The remainder of the school year was open as usual for our face-to-face students with a virtual option for students and families opting out of face-to-face instruction.

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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The following message is located on the front office wall when entering Powdersville Middle School, "Every family has a number. Every number is a student, every student has a name, every name has a story, every story matters, what is your story?". This is the story of Powdersville Middle School (PVMS). PVMS opened in 1991 and the school colors of red, white, and blue, the Patriot mascot, and the school name were selected by the community. 375 students were enrolled that first year and each student had a story. Thirty years later, Powdersville is a residential community located in the northwest corner of Anderson County. Most of the residents commute to larger cities such as Greenville or Spartanburg for their work. Families relocating to the Powdersville area do so because of the highly rated school system, known for its excellence in academics, arts, and athletics. Powdersville has become one of the fastest-growing areas in South Carolina and while the landscape of our community has changed from woods and pastures to shopping centers and small businesses, the commitment of knowing every student no matter the number, now 725, remains the same.

While our school classification is considered suburban, that is not the overall feel that one experiences when attending or working at PVMS. PVMS still feels like a small rural school where parents and community members have great trust that their child will learn and grow in a safe and caring environment. It's a school where academics are valued. There are high expectations that students will be prepared for the demanding high school courses and all students will be college and career ready. Due to funding, all members of the PVMS family have to take on many responsibilities to ensure all students succeed. Our school and district are currently among the lowest per-pupil revenue funding in the state of South Carolina. However, we consistently score in the top 10% of South Carolina state assessments.

Our teachers work tirelessly with our students to ensure that all students have access to a viable and guaranteed curriculum that gives students access to the same essential learning standards regardless of who is teaching the class. Collaboration is viewed as an essential component of our instructional success. All grade-level teachers have a common planning time in order to discuss student progress, create common assessments, examine various data points, and plan engaging lessons. The basis for all planning and instruction is rooted in South Carolina's College and Career Ready Standards. Teachers have in-depth knowledge of these standards and teach for mastery so that all students are college and career-ready. PVMS is in its third year of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Through our PLCs, examination of data, and support systems, we are able to continuously improve teaching and learning for students.

Our intervention/remediation process consists of a combination of several programs, instructional classes, and best practices. One program, such as the "Power of ICU," created by Danny Hill and Jayson Naive, is being used to defeat student apathy and help, not only to identify struggling students but to give them opportunities for extra time and help. Students not reading on grade level are scheduled for READ 180. READ 180 is a multimedia, comprehensive reading program designed to meet the specific needs of struggling readers. Over the last few years, we have seen the need to incorporate time in the instructional master schedule to enrich and remediate based on a student's progress. All grade levels have a math lab and ELA lab class that meets every other day. Students' academic strengths and weaknesses are identified and are placed in differentiated ability groups. Students are able to move up or down levels depending on their progress. However, due to COVID-19 our master schedule could not accommodate these lab classes for 2020-2021.

Ten years ago, in conjunction with the Reedy River Rotary Club and The Knights of the Guild (a non-profit educational services organization), PVMS became the first school on the east coast to implement Early Act FirstKnight (EAFK). EAFK is a revolutionary character and ethics education program for students in grades K-8 that teaches business ethics based on the historic theme of noble knights and the Rotary motto of "service above self." The daily curriculum is taught during a ten-minute portion of our advisory class and focuses on the virtues of Prowess, Justice, and Loyalty. EAFK classes allow our teachers to build more meaningful relationships with their students outside the regular classroom. Periodic knighting ceremonies are held where students receive medals and special recognition for exemplifying the qualities of the virtue being studied. Unfortunately, our character education program was postponed due to the epidemic.

The COVID-19 epidemic has changed the way instruction is delivered daily. PVMS teachers were tasked with teaching face-to-face and virtual students simultaneously. This has been accomplished by using the WebEx media platform. Even though this has been very difficult, we are very fortunate to have had the opportunity to return to school the entire year.



## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

PVMS uses the South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Standards for ELA, math, science, and social studies curriculums. In sixth grade ELA, students will develop reading skills in literary texts from a variety of cultures, an assortment of informational texts, and non-print texts. Students will learn strategies for making predictions, inferring, and drawing conclusions in various genres. Students will engage in the writing process to create a variety of written works for different audiences and purposes. Through inquiry, students will explore a variety of texts and will learn to support their thinking, writing, and speaking with evidence from those texts.

In seventh grade, ELA students will continue to develop skills and strategies in reading literary texts from a variety of cultures, reading informational texts, and comprehending print and nonprint resources, including digital formats. Through inquiry, students will analyze primary and secondary sources and learn the procedures for documenting and citing sources to avoid copyright issues. In writing and oral communication, students will develop clarity, organization, the use of detail, and identification of audience and purpose. Students will engage in the writing process to generate a variety of writing products.

In eighth grade, ELA students grapple with major works of fiction and nonfiction texts that extend across cultures and 9 centuries. As they work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, students will also learn to question an author's or speaker's assumptions and assess the accuracy of his or her claims. Students in this course will expand their skills in the area of research through the analysis of both print and non-print resources. Students will develop skills and strategies in reading literary and informational texts including primary and secondary sources. Students will analyze and synthesize texts to compare ideas, themes, and information. Students will develop clarity, organization, the use of detail, and identification of audience and purpose in writing and oral communication.

Qualifying eighth-graders participate in English I Honors. This course is designed to challenge and extend the learning of students who demonstrate commitment and the ability to engage in this rigorous curriculum. This course develops proficiency in communicating abstract and complex ideas, relationships, and issues. Students will analyze, define, compare, and evaluate ideas when reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In this course, students will continue to develop reading skills through structured study and independent reading of literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading, students will study various themes and cultural perspectives and will focus on reading to draw evidence from literary and informational texts in order to support analysis, synthesis, reflection, and research. Students will be challenged to use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to readers or listeners, or constructively evaluating others' use of evidence. Students will produce clear and coherent writing that focuses on arguments to support claims and writing informatively to convey complex ideas. Students will participate in research that is based on focused questions and will learn how to gather information from and assess the credibility of both print and digital sources. Upon successful completion of the course, students will receive a Carnegie unit which will be included in both grade-point-average and class rank on their high school transcript.

In all ELA courses language instruction will focus on the correct use of Standard American English including a study of conventions of grammar and usage in writing, including the author's use of craft to influence and communicate to readers. Students will apply vocabulary skills to include word analysis such as words in context and Greek and Latin stems.

The sixth-grade math course focuses on these four critical areas: connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; understanding division of fractions and extending the notion of numbers to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and developing an understanding of statistical thinking. Problem solving and applications to real-life situations are infused throughout the curriculum. The use of manipulatives and technology is emphasized throughout the course.

The seventh-grade math instruction focuses on the mastery of these concepts: developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and applying the concepts of linear equations and inequalities; applying properties to simplify and factor algebraic expressions; developing an understanding of and applying proportional relationships; solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; applying concepts of theoretical and experimental probabilities; and drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

The eighth-grade math course is designed to prepare students for Algebra I. Instruction will focus on mastery of these concepts: exploring the real number system to include irrational numbers; investigating and evaluating square roots and cube roots; formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation; solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; recognizing the three types of solutions to linear equations; grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; investigating and applying properties of rigid transformations; applying the Pythagorean Theorem to model and solve problems; analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence; and extending concepts of volume to include cones, cylinders, and spheres.

Qualifying eighth-grade students have the opportunity to take Algebra I Honors. Students will acquire the facility in applying algebraic concepts and skills to real-world problems. This course is the basis for all further studies of honors-level mathematics. A student enrolling in this course should have demonstrated a high level of mastery of K-8 fundamental concepts and operations of arithmetic and a basic understanding of linear relationships. This course will include the study of the real number system, linear equations, inequalities, polynomials and factoring, graphing and modeling of functions and relations, quadratic and exponential relationships, as well as irrational numbers and descriptive statistics. Students will work at an accelerated pace and with above-grade-level content. This course uses a graphing calculator and other graphing utilities. This course is intended to challenge the highly motivated and high-performing student desiring an advanced study of mathematics. Upon successful completion of the course, students will receive a Carnegie unit which will be included in both grade-point-average and class rank on their high school transcript.

Sixth-grade science students will engage in science and engineering practices and use the crosscutting concepts to make connections and master content. Science standards support active engagement in learning, and students will be exposed to a wide variety of experiences, materials, and instructional strategies that accommodate all learners. Core areas of study are Earth's Weather and Climate, Energy Transfer and Conservation, Diversity of Life – Classification and Animals, and Diversity of Life – Protists, Fungi, and Plants.

Our seventh-grade science students will engage in science and engineering practices and use the crosscutting concepts to make connections and master content. Science standards support active engagement in learning, and students will be exposed to a wide variety of experiences, materials, and instructional strategies that accommodate all learners. Classification and Conservation of Matter, Organization in Living Systems, Heredity – Inheritance and Variation of Traits, and Interactions of Living Systems and the Environment are core areas of study.

The eighth-grade science students will engage in science and engineering practices and use the crosscutting concepts to make connections and master content. Science standards support active engagement in learning, and students will be exposed to a wide variety of experiences, materials, and instructional strategies that accommodate all learners. The core areas of the grade eight standards are Forces and Motion Waves, Earth's Place in the Universe, Earth Systems and Resources, and Earth's History and Diversity of Life.

Sixth-grade Social Studies is the study of World Civilizations from prehistory to the present day, and major topics included in the course are civilizations, increased global interactions, development of the Atlantic World, global exchanges and revolutions, and global interdependence. Throughout the course, students will use historical thinking skills which will help them develop into global citizens with a global perspective.

The seventh grade Social Studies curriculum is designed to enable students to master the South Carolina Social Studies College- and Career-Ready Standards. The course is a study of Earth from a regional perspective through the themes of places and regions, environment and resources, human systems, and applied geography. Students will study geography by learning about the seven continents of the world. Throughout the course, students will use the skills of geographers.

Students in eighth grade Social Studies learn about the history of South Carolina within the context of the United States from the settlement and colonization of North America to the present day. Throughout the course, students will use historical thinking skills which will help them develop into informed, responsible citizens.

Our major goal is to ensure all students have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Teachers have been trained on how to prioritize the most essential of these standards. Through our PLC's, teachers work together using the backward design method to create quality formative learning assessments. Teachers plan lessons and create a pacing guide for each learning standard. Instruction is varied based on the standard but usually involves whole-group learning, student application, small-group learning, individual questioning, and whole-class review. Formative learning assessments are completed by the students; the teachers analyze the results and plan for either remediation or extension. Students who are still struggling with mastery of a standard are referred to our intervention team. It is only by confronting the data and setting goals that continuous improvement occurs.

Using data from student assessments and an examination of professional practice, school personnel monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment as needed.

Our curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments did change this year because of COVID-19. Safety protocols requiring cleaning of desks between classes and limiting the number of students in the hallway/restrooms decreased instructional time by approximately 10 minutes per class. This instructional time loss required our teachers to re-examine the essential standards and reduce the curriculum to allow for mastery. Instructional practices such as cooperative learning, think-pair-share, use of manipulatives, process skill labs have not been available for teachers to use due to cleaning protocols and the need to keep students appropriately spaced. We were able to adapt to our current limitations. For example, all science and math teachers have access to Explore Learning Gizmo program. Gizmos are interactive math and science simulations that allow for inquiry-based learning that in the past had been completed with hands-on experiments and group activities.

Most of our teachers use instructional processes that inform students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are sometimes provided to guide and inform students. The process may include multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction and providing students with feedback about their learning. All students have iPads that teachers use in a blended instructional model. All PVMS teachers use Google Classroom as their delivery method of assignments and assessments to students. Teachers have the discretion to utilize resources they feel are most appropriate for their subject. These resources include Google Forms, Notability, Socrative, Near Pod, Gimkit, USA TestPrep, and Edulastic for students to demonstrate learning.

All assessments at PVMS are considered formative. The only summative assessments are the end-of-the-year state tests. Formative assessments are considered part of the learning. Many times they are not graded or posted in the grade book. Rather, they serve as practice for students and are used to check for understanding along the way and guide teacher decision-making about future instruction. Quality assessments provide feedback to students so they can improve their performance. Our teachers use many different formative assessments such as exit slips in which students write one or two sentences on what they have learned and what they want to know, student checklists completed by the students, assignment checklists and rubrics, and conferences on planning projects or writing prompts. All students are tested in the fall and again in the spring using NWEA's MAP. ELA and math teachers use the data from MAP to guide instruction on areas of weakness. Lower-performing students are referred to our intervention team.

**1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):**

The ultimate goal of middle school is to help produce students with the skills necessary to succeed as they transition to high school and ultimately college or a career. To help ensure our schools are successful in this endeavor, a framework was developed by the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness which drew upon the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes identified by employers and business leaders as being critical to the future success of the state's workforce. This framework, known as the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate, seeks to align the state's education system with these identified traits.

The Profile of the South Carolina Graduate identifies three broad sets of attributes, as well as several specific related elements, that render the state's workforce competitive in the global marketplace. These attributes are world-class knowledge; world-class skills; and life and career characteristics.

This profile has been adopted as a model by a number of key state entities, including the SC Department of Education, the SC Education Oversight Committee, and a variety of public school districts throughout South Carolina. The partners that make up the K-12 School Technology Initiative likewise view this model as an excellent portrait of the graduate of the state's K-12 education system, which is served by the digital learning content and data communication infrastructure provided and enabled by the Initiative's efforts. Such efforts include the areas of network infrastructure, connectivity, security, high-quality digital learning content for students, professional development and curriculum support for educators, and communications and collaboration opportunities linking learners, educators, parents, and the broader community.

PVMS is also involved with the TIP (Talent Identification Program) program through Duke University for seventh-grade students and the Junior Scholars program for eighth-grade students. Qualifying seventh-graders may take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) at local high schools while qualifying eighth-graders take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) here at our school. Both of these programs allow students to take advantage of various offerings by local and regional universities.

### **1b. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Students in every grade have the opportunity to take visual arts. In sixth-grade art, students explore a variety of media as they continue to build their skills in drawing, painting, graphics, calligraphy, and sculpture. In seventh-grade art, students focus on further developing art skills, vocabulary, creativity, and concepts of design. Two-dimensional lessons may include painting, collage, drawing, and printmaking. Three-dimensional projects may include functional or sculptural ceramic experiences. In eighth grade art, students express themselves creatively through drawing, graphics, sculpting, painting, metalwork, 3D ceramic sculpture, and jewelry to develop art skills and concepts. Composition, technique, the elements and principles of design, and attention-to-detail are explored. Due to COVID-19, fewer resources are available for students to use because they are not able to share. We required a routine for using the digital platforms to turn in work to cut down on artwork stored in the art room.

Students have the opportunity to take PE/Health in all three grade levels. The sixth-grade physical education curriculum is designed to transition students from the once-a-week elementary curriculum to a more physically demanding every-other-day course at the middle school level. In all grade levels, a heavy emphasis is placed on students attaining and/or maintaining a healthy level of personal fitness as measured by the Fitnessgram tests of health-related fitness. In all grade levels, students are exposed to many different physical activities. The goal is for each student to find an activity that they enjoy and may pursue over a lifetime. Forty percent of the course is dedicated to health. The goal is to learn about the physical, mental/emotional, and social aspects of health. An emphasis is placed on the importance of making healthy decisions that will lead to a higher quality of life. COVID-19 certainly impacted the PE curriculum because students were not allowed to share equipment or participate in team activities. Fortunately, these safety regulations were lifted after the first nine weeks.

opportunity to explore foreign words and phrases to increase their awareness of different cultures, customs, and thought patterns. The content includes such ideas as everyday expressions and greetings, family life, clothing, foods, time, sports, and weather. A high school credit course, Spanish I, is offered in eighth grade to those students who have shown an aptitude in exploratory Spanish.

Fundamentals of Computing is offered to all seventh-grade and eighth-grade students for high school credit. This course is designed to introduce students to the field of computer science through an exploration of engaging and accessible topics. Through creativity and innovation, students will use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to implement projects that are relevant to students' lives. Students will gain a fundamental understanding of the history and operation of computers, programming, and web design.

The Project Lead The Way, Gateway to Technology, and Robotics courses are offered to all sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students. Middle school is the perfect time for students to explore and learn that there is more than one way to reach a solution. These courses provide an engineering problem-solving curriculum for middle school students that challenges and inspires. Students get rigorous and relevant experiences through activity-, project-, and problem-based learning. They use industry-leading technology to solve problems while gaining skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. PVMS has qualified four teams for the VEX Robotics World Championships this year! No South Carolina school has ever sent that many to the world championships. This year's event is live remote. Even though students won't be able to travel across the country as they have done in the past, it is a special opportunity and better than last year when the event was entirely canceled.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

PVMS uses the RTI (Response to Intervention) model for academic support. Progress is monitored to assess the impact of the intervention and determine future steps. This process is initiated at the grade level PLC team meetings with collaboration between administrators, interventionists, and support staff. Interventions can support a large number of students, a small group of students, or individual students, highlighting the "multi-tiered" aspect of the model. Read 180 is used primarily for our reading intervention. Read 180 has a set curriculum that identifies areas of concern, target instruction, and monitor and assesses learning. While these two intervention programs are primarily used with our identified special education population, over the last 3 years, general education students who are not reading at grade level have been using Read 180 in lieu of their Social Studies class. Our reasoning for this needed schedule change is if students are not able to read text on their grade level then they will continue to struggle in subjects that require that level of reading comprehension. Students do have the ability to exit this reading intervention when their goals have been met. Students needing math intervention are scheduled in a math intervention-related art class. Students use a combination of computerized interventions such as Dreambox, ALEKS, and Edulastic and teacher-generated lessons based on their grade level.

Our Gifted and Talented Program (GT) provides additional experiences to meet the needs of high achieving and high-ability students. The primary purpose of the Gifted and Talented Curriculum is to challenge eligible students to think differently and critically through a variety of instructional approaches. Such instructional approaches may include brainstorming, cooperative learning, oral demonstrations and presentations, creative analytical writing, and creative problem-solving techniques. Sixth-grade students are taught through advanced social studies and math classes. Seventh-grade students are served through math and ELA enrichment classes. Eighth-grade students are served through English I and Algebra I Honors classes. Gifted art students in the eighth grade receive their instruction during related arts classes, which meet 45 minutes every other day. PVMS is also involved with the TIP (Talent Identification Program) program through Duke University for seventh-grade students and the Junior Scholars program for eighth-grade students. Qualifying seventh graders may take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) at local high schools while qualifying eighth-graders to take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) here at

our school. Both of these programs allow students to take advantage of various offerings by local and regional universities.

Students with identified special needs have Individualized Educational Learning Plans (IEPs) and are supported by case managers and specialists, grade level teachers, resource classrooms, and push-in or pull-out instruction based on need. The special education teachers work closely with the academic teams on a daily or weekly basis to monitor and adjust for student progress. Our Mild Intellectual Disabled (MID) self-contained class is taught by one teacher and one full-time assistant. Our Learning Disabled (LD) self-contained class is taught by one teacher and one full-time assistant. Resource students are served in regular education classes and receive, on average, five additional hours per week of instruction from a full-time teacher during a pull-out class. The inclusion model is used in math instruction.

PVMS has an English Language Learner (ELL) program supporting students who qualify for service. ELL students receive formative assessments and academic monitoring in each content area by the ESOL instructor in order to differentiate instructional practices to ensure that the language development needs of students are met. Continued monitoring will determine if adjustments need to be made on a yearly basis. Once the school identifies a student as needing additional English language support, the teacher writes an individualized plan to ensure students progress in reading, grammar, oral English conversation, vocabulary, and writing. Teachers then deliver instruction designed to accelerate English language acquisition. Grade-level teams use assessment data, multiple district-approved resources, and instructional strategies aligned to the English Language Proficiency Standards to plan academic interventions for those in the ELL program.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Students entering PVMS are engaged from enrollment. Rising sixth grade students from our feeder elementary school are given an orientation. They tour the school and are able to meet their future teachers. The tours are led by our eighth-grade students. Students not having the opportunity to participate in orientation are engaged through our Patriot Ambassador Program. At PVMS we recognize the anxiety and trepidation associated with moving to a new school, especially to a middle school. For this reason, all new students who enroll after the first day of school are paired 1-on-1 with a Patriot Ambassador. Patriot Ambassadors are current PVMS students who have a passion for meeting and welcoming new friends to PVMS. These students have been trained on new student orientation and have been highly recommended by their teachers. The best way to engage students is to build relationships. It is important for every adult person at PVMS to interact and engage in conversations with students to build relationships. Only by knowing that student's "story" can we effectively engage them in academic, social, and emotional learning.

PVMS offers an abundance of athletic and academic activities for students to participate in. We offer EarlyAct Council which is our Student Government sponsored by the Greenville Reedy River Rotary Club. The purpose of the EarlyAct Council is to provide an organization through which student service activities and projects may be carried out. Each spring, student body offices of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and service-learning representatives are elected for the ensuing year. In addition to these offices, homeroom representatives are elected in the fall. The emergence of student leadership is very much encouraged. Junior Beta Club recognizes and stimulates achievement in the classroom and in life, promotes character, encourages service to the school and community, and develops leadership skills in our students. Our yearbook, *The Patriot*, is published each spring. The sponsor selects editors and staff members from students from each grade level. Students are also able to participate in the Battle of the Books competition where students read books, come together in a game-show competition format to demonstrate their abilities, and test their knowledge of the books they have read.

Powdersville Middle offers interscholastic athletics for seventh and eighth graders. Volleyball, football, cheerleading, and girls and boys basketball, wrestling, and baseball are sports offered by the middle school. Cross country, girls and boys golf, girls and boys tennis, baseball, dance, girls and boys soccer, girls and boys track, swimming, and competition cheerleading are offered for middle schoolers at the high school.

Our students have many opportunities for extra-curricular participation and we believe it enhances their educational experience. It should demonstrate high standards of ethics, sportsmanship, and promote the development of good character and important life skills.

Due to COVID-19, students have not been able to participate in band/strings/choir concerts, drama productions, Veteran's Day assembly, Diversity Club celebrations, and numerous field trips. Our Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) students have been our hardest group to engage. We were able to deliver Valigrams to our VLA students over Valentine's week letting them know they are missed and loved.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

We have actively involved Boys and Girl Scout troops in the area that have partnered with our school to build major projects on our campus such as our Patriot Pavilion (outdoor learning and eating area); fellowship benches; and rock gardens. Faith-based organizations annually volunteer their time to landscape, paint, and clean the campus. Our Parent-Teacher-Student Organization is actively involved in our school community on a weekly basis. They raise funds to support teachers with classroom supplies and technology. They are an integral part of recognizing staff members and showing appreciation to our teachers on regular basis.

In addition, we hold several annual activities in which parents are encouraged to attend such as band/strings/choir concerts, classroom activities, sporting events, drama productions, Veteran's Day

assembly, Diversity Club celebrations, and numerous field trips. However, due to COVID-19, many of these activities had to be canceled.

PVMS has a strong Y Mentor Program in conjunction with the Powdersville YMCA. A mentor is a suitable adult role model committed to serving as a guide, advisor, and friend for a designated student. Mentors are mature, caring individuals who are genuinely interested in helping students strive to meet their goals and meet their full potential. Each mentor is fully trained and screened by the Powdersville YMCA. Mentors meet one-on-one with students for approximately 30 minutes each week throughout the school year in a supervised location at the school. These meetings take place during regular school hours, before school, or after school depending on the mentor's and the student's schedule and availability. Time is spent having breakfast or lunch together, reading, playing games, or simply talking about topics that interest the student.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

All faculty and staff at PVMS are expected to be leaders. They are leaders in building relationships with students and fellow staff, leaders in working collaboratively with team members, leaders in their content knowledge, leaders in their teaching pedagogy, leaders in their assessment of learning, and leaders to ensure all students learn.

We have shared beliefs and values. We believe students learn best in a safe and secure environment where they are valued and treated with fairness and respect. A safe environment includes the physical, emotional, and social well-being of all students and staff. We believe all individuals can learn, be successful, and make a valuable contribution to society. Each individual has different needs and deserves equal opportunities to achieve his/her greatest potential. We believe learning is a lifelong process that requires perseverance and self-direction.

PVMS culture is based on positive regard and kindness for all members of the school family. Our family atmosphere fosters opportunities for personal relationships on many levels. These relationships form the unique and special culture innate to the school. Once hired at PVMS, many teachers never leave because of the culture in place. Our turnover rate is extremely low. New teachers are assigned mentors to help ease the transition into a new school and the district provides new teacher orientation classes for first-year teachers. This type of continuity has been advantageous to the success of our students.

While our culture is professionally based. We believe that we can take our jobs seriously, but not ourselves. This means we have to have fun along the way. A continued effort is made throughout the year to let all staff know that they are appreciated. Our band plays Happy Birthday to every faculty member on their birthday and our PTSO and social committee plan fun events and activities to allow teachers and staff to mingle and interact in a less stressful environment.

Due to COVID-19, our faculty and staff did feel more isolated this year in almost all aspects of the teaching profession. We had fewer meetings in person, and personal interactions between staff decreased due to the nature of social distancing.

### **4. School Leadership:**

Leadership in PVMS begins with our local school board. Anderson School District One (ASD1) is very fortunate to be governed by seven dedicated school board members. All seven members work together, alongside the district Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, and other district personnel, to ensure the success of all students in ASD1. The district administrative team meets monthly/as-needed with all principals to discuss district policies and goals, current issues, and professional development for ASD1 employees. The compatibility between the district administrators and local school administrators allows for collaborative decision-making when dealing with policies, initiatives, and issues.

The PVMS Principal and two Assistant Principals encourage and support our staff and faculty to maintain high standards and hold students accountable to those high standards. PVMS administrators are intentional in building relationships with teachers and other staff members, getting to know them at a personal level.



There are also moments when school leadership nurtures beyond their professional obligations to tend to the personal needs of teachers. Leadership provides support and feedback to ensure teachers' success which results in student success as well.

Research shows that the principal sets the tone, expectations, direction, and vision for a school. In order to promote positive relationships, it is imperative that the school leader communicate and involve all members of the learning community. Planning, reflection, and conferencing between teachers and administrators are ongoing. The principal is an advocate of shared leadership and participates in shared decision-making and his "open door policy" allows accessibility to all. The PVMS administration serves on the School Improvement Committee (SIC), the School Leadership Team (Guiding Coalition), the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) and participates in PLCs. The administration works with the staff to make decisions that allow our students to excel in the academic environment, extracurricular activities, social/emotional, and in our community. Our Principal listens to the staff, analyzes the information, decides on a course of action, clearly delivers the information to the staff, and then stands behind and supports the decisions.

Our guiding coalition is the second level of leadership in the building. Different perspectives covering the entire educational setting are represented in the coalition. The team meets monthly to bring issues for discussion, identify educational, socio-emotional, financial, and facility needs. The next leadership level consists of our grade-level Team Leader. Leaders share information from those meetings and lead daily team meetings focusing on matters related to grade-level curriculum, student issues, cross-curricular planning, scheduling, etc. The team leader works in collaboration with other members and delegates when necessary. Communication is imperative, and we strive for consistent, clear communication between leadership levels to provide a safe and successful student.

## **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

As was mentioned in the summary section of this application, every student has a story and each story is diverse. The first step to culturally responsive teaching and learning is understanding the diverse needs of each learner through relationships. All adults in the building are expected to express a personal interest in students' outside activities and interests. Students must believe they are treated fairly by the school faculty and staff. Caring relationships between teachers and students are integral to academic success and a positive learning environment. In all classrooms, the strengths of every student are recognized, respected, and valued. Students are taught a challenging, rigorous curriculum in ways that capitalize on the strengths of their learning style. We believe students should receive praise for their efforts to foster motivation and take responsibility for their learning. Leadership opportunities are shared among students in collaborative learning activities. Every student has an important role in the school.

The classroom setting is an excellent place for the implementation of culturally relevant instruction. We incorporate the use of language that students have acquired in their families and communities to bridge the gap between what students know and are able to do and what they need to learn in school. Through instructional planning, everyday issues and concerns of families and the community are able to be discussed in a safe environment. For example, students have the opportunity to read the book "Ghost Boy" in ELA class. This poignant story about a 12-year-old African American boy shot by a white police officer who mistakenly thought his toy gun was real. Through class discussion, our students learn to recognize how historical racism may have led to the events of the boy's death and also how children and families face the complexities of today's world. Students learn empathy means understanding and caring about another person's feelings and how it improves our entire school community. We stress the importance of noticing, having empathy beyond immediate friends, including those students who oftentimes are not seen or appreciated because they are different.

Four years ago, our guidance department, through data received from our wellness survey, developed the PVMS Diversity Club. Its mission is to provide a safe and inclusive space for all members of the school community regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or ability. The Diversity Club is geared towards all students who are looking to foster a school-wide culture of appreciation for diversity. Members are open-minded and ready to spread the message of inclusion and acceptance throughout the school and community. The goals of the club are to raise awareness for the various populations that exist in our school and that they should be supported and respected. The Diversity Club enhances the school climate by ensuring that all students are accepted and can have a place to be themselves. They also provide peer-to-peer support and function as a healing space for students facing any adversity in their lives. Finally, Diversity Club members learn about other cultures and communities in an effort to enhance empathy. Monthly, our Diversity Club spotlights a culture/race prevalent in our school. Members of the community are invited to come to school and present artifacts, food, and the history of their respected culture/race. Every February, we host a diversity celebration where all students are recognized and praised for their unique diversity.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Over the last ten years, the one practice that has been most instrumental in our academic success is changing from a mindset of teaching to a mindset of learning. This was accomplished with the implementation of the PLC model of continuous improvement and using the philosophy of “Power of ICU” to defeat student apathy.

Understanding that teacher efficacy is a key factor to student success, PVMS established the PLC model in order to plan the curriculum, discuss instruction, and make data-based decisions. The PLC model allows us to incorporate research-based strategies for academic and socioemotional success through the use of assessment data that is analyzed for the sole purpose of continuously improving our instruction so all students have the opportunity to learn at high levels. Grade level PLCs meet on a daily/as-needed basis to discuss student academic, social, and emotional needs. This allows all teachers of a grade level to meet and discuss the needs of students, curriculum, cross-curriculum ideas, and planning and implementation. Meetings with parents, counselors, and administration subject-area teams use this time to evaluate student performance, inform their instruction and revise curriculum through data analysis of local and state assessments. This time allows for teachers to evaluate current performance and determine needed intervention or extension. Students are referred to our intervention team as needed. PVMS PLC’s focus is on learning, creating a collaborative culture, and is results-oriented.

After our guiding coalition attended an SREB conference session presented by Danny Hill and Jayson Naïve, authors of the book “Power of ICU,” we knew this was a missing piece in our instructional program. We needed to change our mindset on grading. In the past, our mindset has been to offer students the opportunity to learn and if they chose not to then their grade was reflected with a zero. After far too many years of witnessing the negative effects of zeroes recorded in grade books, PVMS became convinced it was necessary to hold students accountable for completing assignments rather than allowing them to simply choose to not do difficult work. When a student makes below a set grade for a pre-determined key assignment/assessment, he or she must bring it up. An “I” or incomplete is entered into the grade book instead of a zero. Parents are notified, and a recovery process has begun. This requires additional time on task, time with the teacher, and general study for improvement. “The Power of I” is a system that fits perfectly in our culture of high expectations. It is a matter of mastery learning. As a result, students are engaged in their learning environment and take pride in their successes.