

## Partnerships 2008-09

Louise Rogers agreed to head the Partnership Committee for Greer Middle School. The committee members include Cindy Wade, Pam Norris, Kim Kelly, Frank Hwu, Beth Howard, Holly Loftis and Sarah Rose.

Our current partners include the American Cancer Society, Greer Mental Health, the Greer Christian Learning Center, Target, LifeTouch Studios, Pepsi, Palmetto Vending, Market Day, the Greer Athletic Club, the Greer Police Department, Ford Motor Credit, Junior Achievement, South Carolina Children's Theater, Greer State Bank, Partnership for Tomorrow and the Greer Recreation Association. Other partners include Ryan's Steakhouse, Chick-Fil-A, Zaxby's, Applebee's, Gerard's and Quizno's.

The partnerships that GMS has vary quite a bit in the ways in which they serve our students. The partnerships serve the students academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. The partnerships at Greer Middle School are offered through businesses and individuals, as well as from the community as a whole.

The Greer Christian Learning Center, across the street, is very involved in the learning of our students. They offer a Release Time Program for our students. This is a voluntary program where students can go one hour a week for Christian education. Local churches and private donations maintain the building and the care of the facility. The facility has five paid employees that provide the Christian education curriculum. Volunteers from the community drive vans to shuttle students back and forth from the facility. It is non-denominational and is offered to all students at Greer Middle School. More than one half of the student body at the school is involved in this program. At Christmas, the Learning Center donates money for gifts for low income students at our school. They also offer extra help to students in an after school program.

The Peace Center offers all Greenville County students the opportunity to attend performances such as "A Midsummers' Night Dream", and "The Velveteen Rabbit", at a minimal cost to the student. For teachers, the POP program provides grant writing workshops for artists-in-residence and study guides for the performances. This program allows teachers a great way to extend and enhance learning by giving students an enriched arts and literature curriculum.

Greer Middle School offers students in the eighth grade the opportunity to shadow local businesses that interest them. In 2006-2007 Mr. Erie Williams our EEDA representative took several students to visit

Fuddruckers. Students prepare themselves for this partnership by doing pre-visit and post-visit activities. The students spend a day with members of the business community such as bankers, architects, engineers or business people learning what a typical work day is like in these occupations. In 2008, Kelley Smith our other EEDA representative is organizing Greer Middle School's first Career Fair. She is involving various businesses in the community to make it a success.

The School Improvement Council has twelve members from the school and the community who are charged with the responsibility for the school improvement plan and preparation of the school report card narrative. This group of involved community members, parents and teachers are involved in advancing student achievement and assisting the principal in developing the school improvement plan and evaluating the school's success in reaching the objectives and goals of the plan.

We have several business partnerships that support our athletic programs. These supporters provide money for the purchase of equipment that is needed to field our athletic teams. The school provides advertisement for the local businesses through banners and ads in the programs.

The Greer Athletic Club and the Greenville Hospital System have been established partners with Greer Middle School. The owner of the Athletic Club has volunteered many hours of service in helping the physical education department monitor student's fitness levels. He has donated many pieces of equipment and sold some equipment to the school for a nominal fee so that we can have a modern fitness facility. The hospital system has provided grant money for equipment, as well. Greer Middle offers a lifestyle fitness class to students in the seventh and eighth grade. This class is designed to help students develop a lifestyle of good health practices for the rest of their life. In return for the athletic club's time and donations, students are encouraged to continue to practice a lifestyle of fitness at an athletic club for the rest of their adult life.

As a part of our ongoing character education program, we are excited to be working with The Partnership for Tomorrow. They have donated \$10,000 for developing a school ambassador program and social skills program here. This generous donation will fund training for students in social etiquette, public speaking, business courtesy, and relationship building. We partner with Chick-Fil-A to sell chicken biscuits to raise funds to provide our school with Promethean Boards, Activotes and money for student council activities .

PTA volunteers operate the school store each morning and afternoon and sell tea in the cafeteria daily. Middle school sports have raised our

community profile, with parents providing assistance in the athletic programs. Although our PTA actively seeks to recruit parents for volunteer work, more parental involvement would be welcomed.



Greer Middle School values the partnerships formed within the community. However, the Partnership Committee feels that GMS could increase and expand involvement with the community and its partners. In return, the school hopes that our students become productive and vibrant members of our community.