

Greenville County Schools District Profile—January 2008

Geographic Location

Greenville, South Carolina is situated in the Piedmont region in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As reported by the 2005 census data, Greenville County has more than 407,300 residents, a 7.3 percent increase since the 2000 census. Greenville County, once known as the textile giant of the Upstate, has one of the most diversified economies in South Carolina. Greenville has experienced tremendous success in recruiting top tier corporations. Over the past several decades, Greenville has recruited Michelin, General Electric, Hitachi and BMW to the region.

According to 2000 census data, the homeownership rate in Greenville County was 68.2%. The median annual household income for Greenville in 2003 was \$41,984, while 47,205 persons were living below the poverty level. Total assessed property within the Greenville city limits equals over \$221 million.

There are 12 universities and colleges in the local area: Anderson University, Bob Jones University, Clemson University, Converse College, Furman University, Greenville Technical College, North Greenville College, Southern Wesleyan University, USC Upstate, Tri-County Technology College and Wofford College.

School District Information

Greenville County Schools (GCS) is widely recognized as a leader in public education. Serving over 68,465 students, GCS is the largest public school system in South Carolina. According to the latest publication from the National Center of Education Statistics, GCS is the 51st largest school district in the nation. The area served by GCS covers over 800 square miles and includes almost all of Greenville County and portions of Laurens and Spartanburg Counties. District facilities include 5 child development centers, 47 elementary schools, 17 middle schools, 14 high schools, 4 career centers and 7 special focus centers. Among the elementary, middle and high schools, 12 International Baccalaureate programs and 12 magnet academics operate for unique educational opportunities. The magnet academics include foreign language, communication arts, pre-engineering international studies, science and technology, fine arts, and year-round education.

Greenville is the site of *The South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts* and the *Roper Mountain Science Center*. GCS has 15 Title I schools that receive funds from the federal government to help raise student achievement in schools with high poverty. Two grants allow funding for GCS teachers and local arts to receive training in integrating arts into the regular classroom curriculum. Beginning with Tanglewood Middle, seven Title I schools are now participating in the program.

GCS serves a culturally diverse population of students. The ethnic make-up of students in GCS is 60.1% White, 26.7 % African-American, 9.8% Hispanic, 2.2% Asian, 0.2% Native American,

0.2% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and 0.8% of students are classified as “Other.” Dedicated to meeting the educational needs of all students, GCS serves over 8,434 students (12.3%) with disabilities more severe than speech and an additional 2,360+ students with speech disabilities; a total of more than 10,790 students (15.7%). Additionally, over 13,000 students (19.3%) of GCS students qualify for the gifted and talented program. GCS also serves over 3,000 students who meet the state specifications of English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL).

GCS stresses the importance of daily attendance and good health for all students. GCS has an average student attendance rate of 97.7%, and a teacher attendance rate of 97.2%. The 2006-07 student dropout rate is 4.1%. There are 22,000 students who ride one of the 325+ buses in GCS. Breakfast is served daily to over 13,000 students.

Learning Environment

The State Department of Education issues annual report cards rating each school and district with an *Absolute* and *Improvement* rating. In 2007, 68% of GCS schools and career centers earned an Absolute Rating of *Excellent, Good, or Average* on the 2007 SC Report Cards. As part of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation, states must also assess whether schools have met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on an annual basis. Many GCS schools have been awarded special honors and titles for school program excellence. Twelve Greenville County schools are *National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence*, while 17 schools have been designated with SC’s highest education honor, the *Palmetto’s Finest Award*. Nine schools and four career centers earned Palmetto gold and silver awards recognizing high levels of academic achievement. Additionally, 38 GCS schools have been named *Red Carpet Schools* in response to their levels of customer service to parents and school communities. There are 29 GCS schools that have been named *National Schools of Excellence* by the PTA.

GCS provides students with a strong, qualified teaching staff. There are approximately 9,089 GCS employees; 5,019 of those are teachers. According to the 2007 GCS Report Card, 57.5% of the teachers hold Master’s degrees or higher. The average years of teaching experience in GCS is 11.7 years. The average teacher salary in 2006-07 is \$42,200. Greenville County has 423 *National Board Certified* teachers and seven *Milliken Family Foundation National* educator awards.

Teachers and administrators strive to create a learning environment supported by parents and the surrounding community. GCS actively recruits volunteers to assist in enhancing every student’s learning experience. In the 2006-07 school year, over 80,000 volunteers donated 1.6 million hours of their time to GCS. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in GCS has the largest number of units in any one district in SC. The *Report Card Survey* from the State Department of Education is administered in GCS annually to parents, teachers and students. In 2007 the majority of all three groups reported teachers have high expectations of students and demonstrate commitment toward student achievement.

GCS pays for schools and other education services through six primary fund accounts. Over \$429 million of those funds are designated General Funds and are used to support the day to day school operating expenses (e.g. teacher salaries, instructional supplies, utilities, etc.). The

remainder of the budget, which changes every year, includes five fund accounts that provide money for things such as state and local taxes, scholarships and grants as well as building costs. The District has had more than 150 audits over the past three years and has been awarded the *Excellence in Financial Reporting* for 19 consecutive years. GCS has also earned the highest credit rating a school district can receive from two of the top financial rating services. Overseeing the budget and District operations are 12 elected School Board members who entrust the daily operations to Superintendent, Phinnize Fisher, Ed.D. Two Deputy Superintendents help coordinate and oversee all District functions in curriculum, personnel, finance, facilities, technology, and operations.

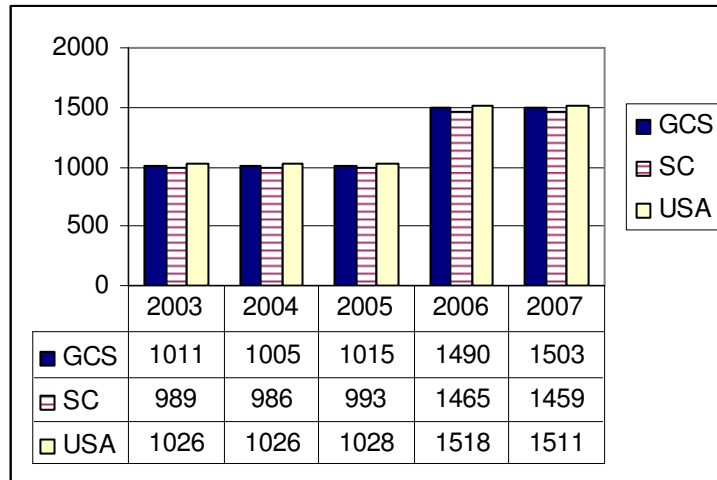
In an effort to provide “equitable” school facilities for all students and accommodate a growing student population, GCS has implemented an aggressive, innovatively funded school construction program. Advantages to this approximately \$1 billion construction program are all schools will be built or renovated within a six-year time frame, versus a traditional construction plan which would require more than twenty years. Additional benefits to the program are that there are no plans for additional tax millage increases in Greenville County to compensate for building costs. Also, the program provides all students with the opportunity to attend schools that support advancing instructional technology. In addition to the new or renovated schools completed before the construction program began, 67 schools have been completed as part of the BEST program. Two new schools are under construction and will open in August 2008. The last school in the program will be bid this fall.

Student Achievement

Committed to student achievement for all students, GCS serves as a leader in education in both the state and nation. Teachers and administrators are continually trained on effective ways to assess student achievement throughout the year. Standardized tests used in the District are Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Academic College Test (ACT), High School Assessment Program (HSAP), Academic Placement (AP) Exams, End of Course Exams (EOCE), Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and most recently Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). Overall, GCS student achievement has risen in 2007 in almost every test area.

Several secondary assessments are given to students on the high school level. In GCS, the average composite score on the SAT increased from 1490 in 2006 to 1503 in 2007. There were 2,365 GCS students tested, and 61% of 2006-07 seniors took the exam. The average critical reading score was 505, the average math score was 508, and the average writing score was 489. Figure 1 displays the SAT results from the past five years. GCS has remained higher than the average SC score and slightly behind the average national score.

Figure 1. 5-Year SAT Composite Scores of GCS, SC and the Nation



* With the addition of Writing on the SAT in 2006, the Composite Score from 2006 and beyond is out of 2400.

The number of GCS students who take the ACT, another college entrance exam, continues to rise every year. The Composite score in GCS increased from 20.7 in 2006 to 21.3 in 2007. One-tenth of an ACT point is comparable to four points on the SAT.

Figure 2. 2007 ACT Results in GCS

Location	# of students	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
GCS	1,223	20.7	21.2	21.6	20.9	21.3
SC	16,716	19	19.8	19.8	19.5	19.6
Nation	1,300,599	20.7	21	21.5	21	21.2

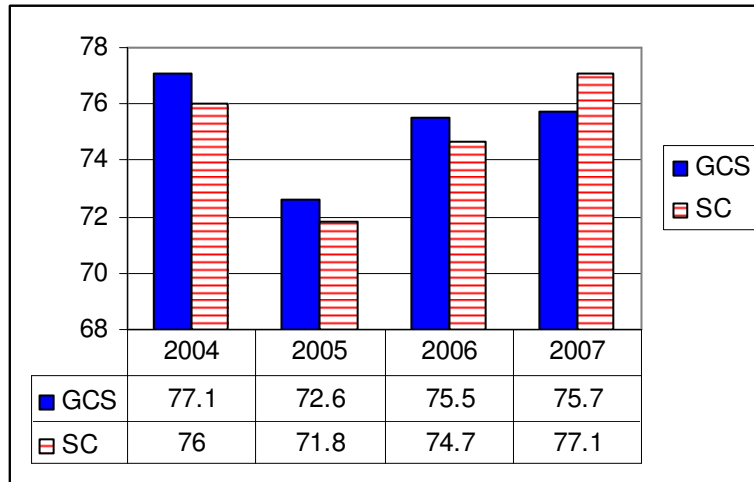
The number of students in 2007 who successfully completed AP courses demonstrated the commitment of GCS to high school curriculum and achievement. As displayed in *Figure 3*, the percent of students scoring 3-5 increased by 3.1% in GCS in 2007.

Figure 3. Number of AP Exams and Percent Scoring 3-5 in GCS

Year	Number Scoring 3-5	Percent Scoring 3-5
2007	2524	51.1%
2006	2192	48.0%
2005	2096	43.0%
2004	1815	48.1%
2003	1803	52.5%
2002	1581	54.9%
2001	1241	59.8%

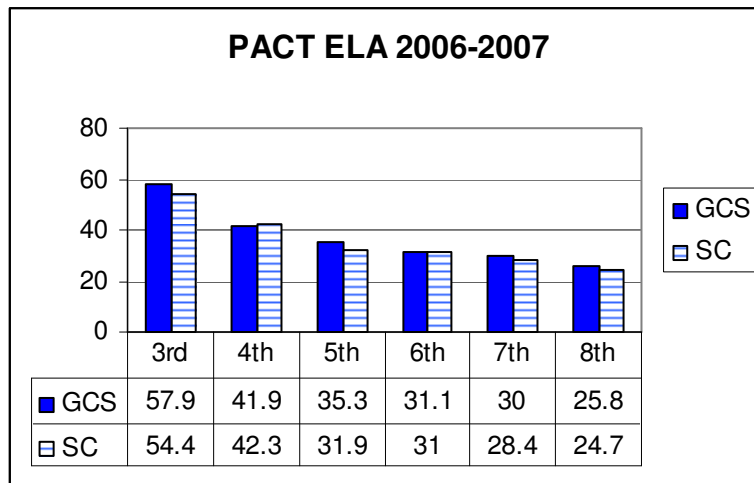
After a three-year implementation phase, in 2005-06, SC's EXIT Exam changed from the Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP) to the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) exam. The 75.7% of GCS students passed both sections of the HSAP on their first attempt is lower than SC's 77.1%. From 2006 to 2007, the percentage of students who passed the English Language Arts section of the High School Assessment Program on the first attempt increased by 2.2%. From 2006 to 2007, the percentage of students who passed the Mathematics section of the High School Assessment Program on the first attempt decreased by 1.1%.

Figure 4. Percent Passing Both Sections of HSAP on 1st Attempt



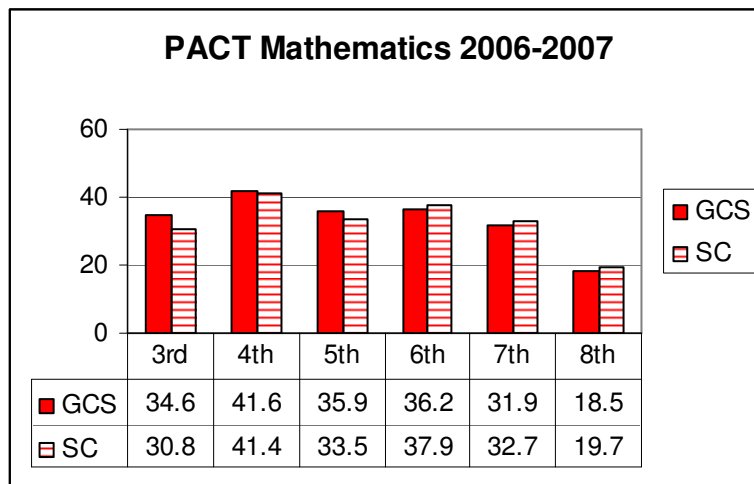
GCS annually tests all students in grades 3-8 on the state's criterion referenced exam, the PACT. As evidence of meeting federal NCLB legislation, GCS annually tracks the percent of students scoring Proficient and Advanced on PACT exams, for English Language Arts (ELA), math, science and social studies. As shown in Figure 5, GCS has outperformed SC's aggregate score of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the ELA portion of the PACT.

Figure 5. Percent Proficient and Advanced on PACT ELA



In GCS, the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced on the PACT ELA was as high or higher than the average percent in SC, with the exception of 4th grade. On PACT Math, GCS students scored higher than SC's averages, with the exception of 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

Figure 6. Percent Proficient and Advanced on PACT Math



The next two graphs, Figures 7 and 8, display the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced in Science and Social Studies. GCS students performed higher than the average of SC students in all grade levels in both Science and Social Studies.

Figure 7. Percent Proficient and Advanced on PACT Science

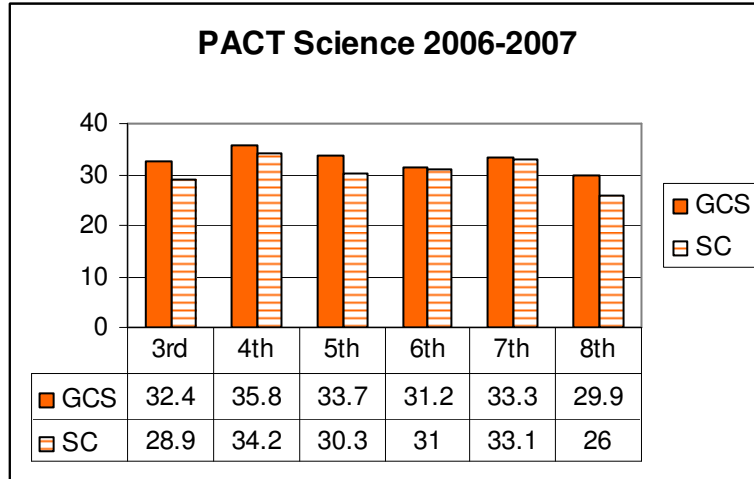
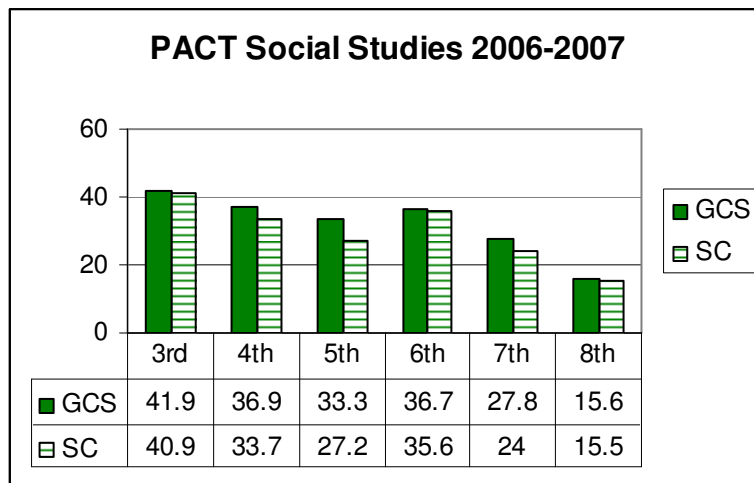


Figure 8. Percent Proficient and Advanced on PACT Social Studies



In 2005-06, an additional resource for assessment in Greenville County is the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. This computerized system of testing is administered two to three times a year in every school in reading, language, mathematics, and one optional subject, science. MAP correlates with national and state curriculum and standards, and is nationally norm-referenced. The difficulty of each test adjusts to individual students' performance; meaning if a student answers a question correctly, the next question will be more difficult and vice-versa. After a student completes a test, the program reports the student's equal-interval RIT score. Unlike the PACT and other standardized tests, MAP reports provide a snapshot of student achievement at intervals throughout the school year.

SCHOOL PROFILE
MOUNTAIN VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2008-2009

Mountain View Elementary School is a K4 through grade five public school in the school district of Greenville County. We currently have 851 students, 2 administrators, 57 certified personnel, and 16 classified personnel. It is one of 47 elementary schools in Greenville County. Mountain View Elementary School is situated in a rural area at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The school is approximately eleven miles from Greer, the nearest city. Due to our remote location, families must travel in order to access banks, post offices, grocery stores, medical facilities, and even the public library. However, members of our community are happy traveling this distance because it allows them to enjoy the calm, picturesque country life that they value.

Mountain View has a long standing history within our community. The original Mountain View School was established in 1911 on the same property currently occupied by our new school. Since then, there have been several changes in the buildings, but the school has remained a steadfast fixture in the community. A significant number of our parents and grandparents attended Mountain View. Many of our teachers attended school here too, and have chosen to raise their families in the Mountain View community. The tradition continues as our former students' own children and grandchildren come to our school. For this reason, our entire community feels a unique bond and a responsibility to maintain the integrity of Mountain View. Our school family consists of hard working people who span the spectrum from all occupations. When we come together to make decisions each person's input is valued and respected. Mountain View Elementary School has the respect and support of our parents and the community.

Mountain View was proud to be recognized as a recipient of the Red Carpet Award in 2003 and 2006. This award is given to schools that provide a warm, friendly environment that helps make visitors feel welcome and part of the school family. This award is very important to us because we believe that having a positive, caring environment will help in our efforts to improve student education, and build partnerships

with the community. Mountain View is known for its family-like atmosphere and will continue to provide a nurturing place for children to learn and grow.

In addition to this award we have received Adequate Yearly Progress for No Child Left Behind in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. We were recognized for Closing the Gap between lower socio-economic students and test scores in 2003-2004. Mountain View was recognized for closing the gender gap in 2004-2005.

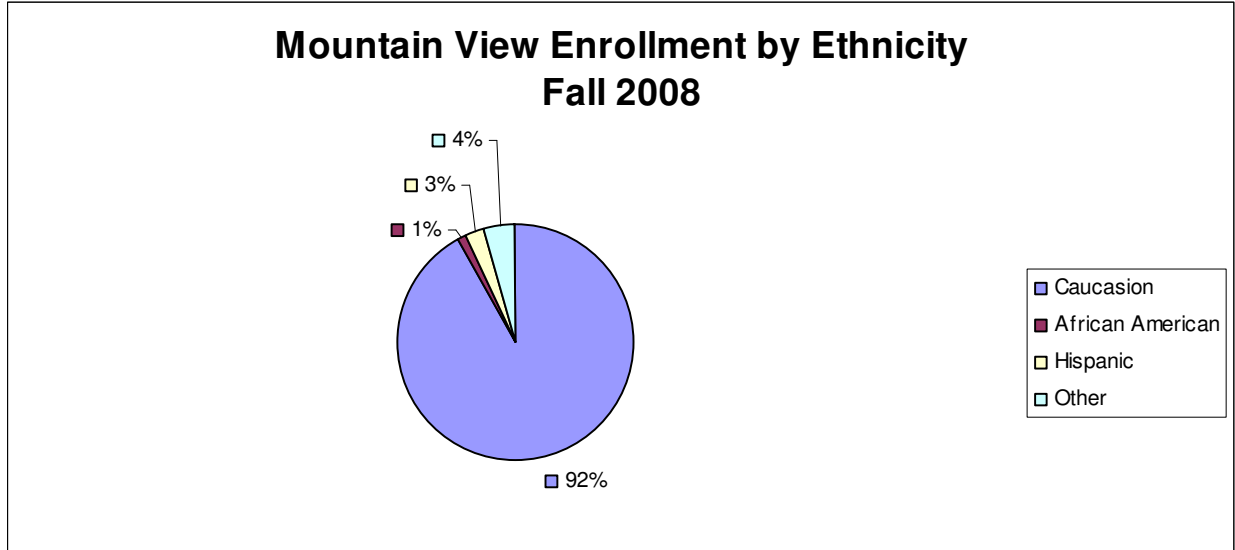
The school motto at Mountain View Elementary School is “Each child, one day at a time”.

Mountain View Elementary School’s current enrollment configuration by grade level is as follows:

Grade	Number of Students
K4	36
K5	117
1	143
2	128
3	143
4	147
5	137

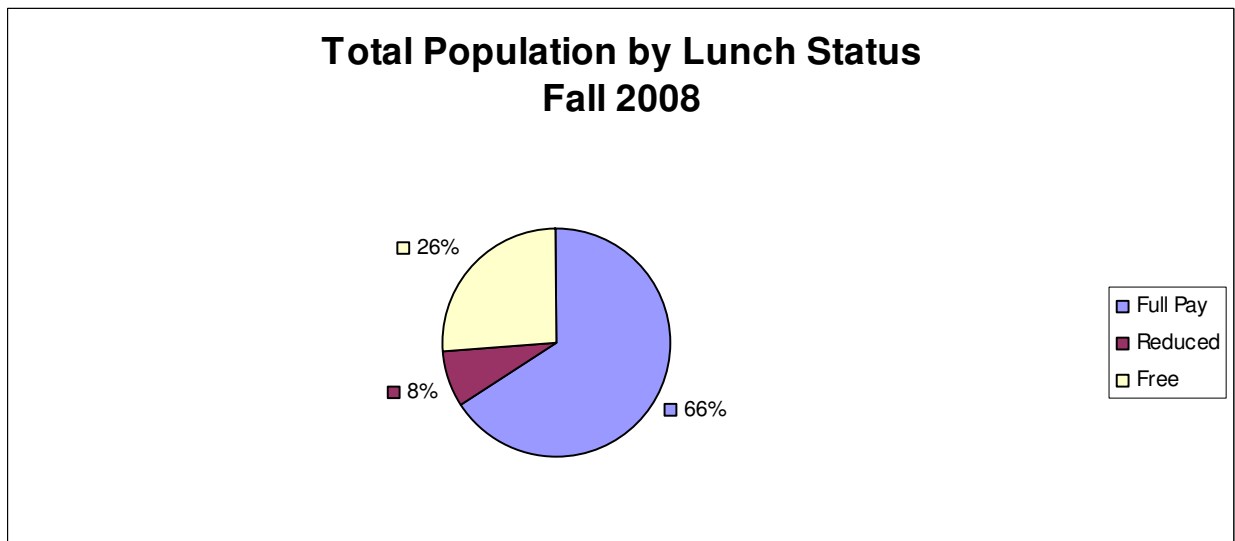
Mountain View Elementary School Students

At the present time, the total student enrollment at Mountain View Elementary School is 851 with a distribution of 92 percent Caucasian, 1 percent African-American, 3 percent Hispanic and 4 percent “Other”, as shown in the pie chart below.



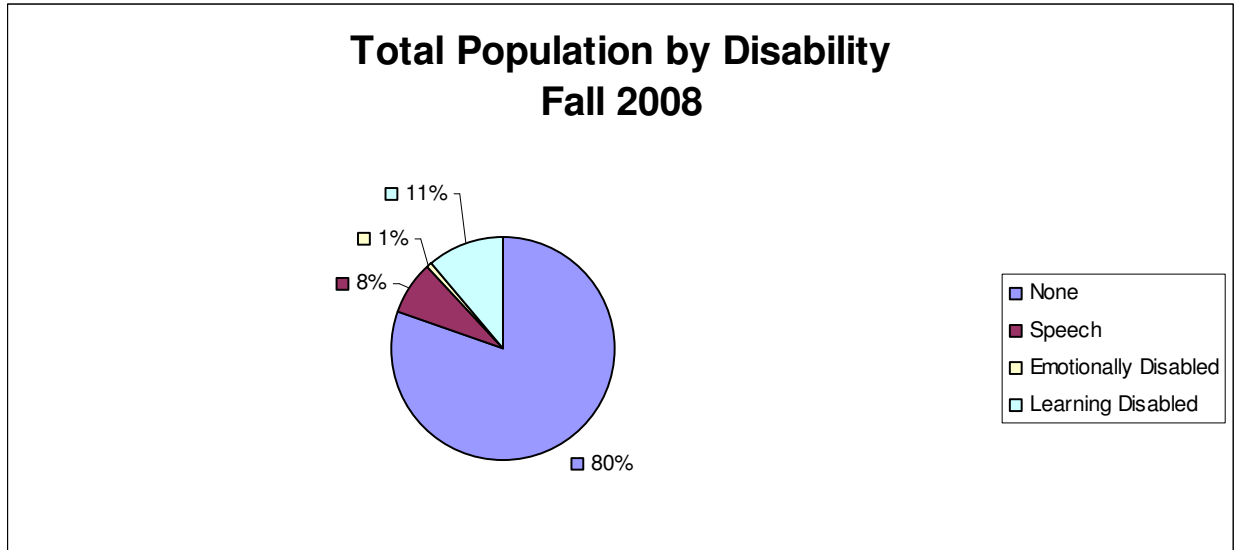
Lunch Status

Thirty-four percent of the students at Mountain View qualify for free and reduced priced meals.



Disability

The chart below shows the student population by disability. Mountain View currently houses one self-contained Learning Disabled class, one self-contained Emotionally Disabled class, and two Learning Disabled Resource classes. We have one full time and one part- time speech therapist.



Attendance and Mobility

For years, student attendance rates at Mountain View Elementary School remained steady with enrollment numbers increasing/decreasing by only about 5 percent annually. However, a recent housing construction boom in our attendance area has caused a larger than average increase in our population. Our current enrollment is 851. Considering the plans for even more new home construction in our area, we anticipate that our attendance will increase at an accelerated rate over the next few years. Our student mobility rate is approximately 5 percent.

Mountain View Elementary has an average daily attendance of 96 percent.

Gender Balance

Gender balance has continued to remain steady with an enrollment of 434 female students (51%) and 417 males (49%).

Mountain View Elementary School Staff

The staff at Mountain View Elementary School includes: 40 self-contained classroom teachers, 1.5 Guidance Counselors, two part time computer technology assistants, a part-time science lab teacher, and 2 self-contained special education teachers. In addition to regular classroom teachers, we have one full time and three half time special education resource teachers, one gifted and talented teacher, 2.4 physical education teachers, 1.4 art teachers, and 1.4 music teachers. Many of our teachers are continuing their education and working on higher degrees. On an average, our teachers have been here 12.6 years. 63% of our teachers hold advanced degrees. Seven teachers are National Board Certified. Eight teachers are currently working on advancing their degrees, including one who is pursuing a doctorate.

Additional personnel include the school principal, assistant principal, secretary, attendance clerk, instructional coach, speech therapists, custodial staff, media specialist, nurse, and food service workers. Our K4 and kindergarten classrooms have a full time teaching assistant. There is one assistant in the media center and 2 part-time clerks in the front office. Children who qualify will receive services from our part-time ESOL teacher. Students may receive services from a hearing specialist, special education resource teacher, an occupational therapist, and a school psychologist on an itinerant basis. Several bus drivers also provide services to students.

All classroom teachers currently meet the “highly qualified” requirements as specified by No Child Left Behind.

Teacher experience and educational level are shown in the following chart.

Avg. Years of Experience	Faculty Educational Levels				
	BA	BA+18	MEd	MEd+30	NBCT
12.6	18	4	22	15	7

Our Leaders

Principal:

Tommy Hughes has been the principal at Mountain View Elementary School for fourteen years. He loves to play with his grandchildren, Jacob and Elizabeth, and spend time outdoors. Most of his free time, however, is consumed with his schoolwork. He is constantly trying to improve our school and oversee the education of our children. He is a wonderful boss because he truly loves and cares about his faculty and staff. He loves all children but especially the children at Mountain View Elementary. He strives to make all of his students see that he is not just Mr. Hughes, the principal, but also a person who cares about them and wants to show them new and exciting things.

Assistant Principal:

Jennifer Gibson is currently in her fifth year as assistant principal at Mountain View Elementary School. Before coming to Mountain View, she was a classroom teacher. She has worked at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; therefore, she brings a variety of experiences to our school. Her love for children is what motivates her to strive for excellence at Mountain View.

Safety, Cleanliness, and Adequacy of School Facilities

Mountain View Elementary School and the district are both committed to having a safe and clean environment for learning. At the site level, there is an emergency preparedness plan; regular fire and emergency drills are held. Planning for various potential emergencies is done in coordination with regional agencies, with the district, and school plans stressing safety for the students first.

Specific safety concerns regarding buildings and grounds at the school site are handled by the district maintenance department if they cannot be remedied by site custodians or utility workers assigned to site duties. Our professional staff of 5 custodians performs basic cleaning operations in the classrooms every day.

Other aspects of the school/district safety program include:

- District safety committee
- Bus evacuation drills
- Fire safety inspections
- Campus supervision

Classroom Discipline/Learning Climate

Mountain View Elementary School provides a disciplined, but stimulating, learning climate for students. The climate for learning at Mountain View Elementary School is enhanced by involved parents. Parents are encouraged to become involved in school communities and councils, to help with homework, and to encourage and honor their child's successes. Student discipline is the responsibility of all Mountain View Elementary School staff members.

Goal 4 of our school plan is to provide a safe and positive environment. We feel that a good environment is essential and will enable students to make greater gains in academic achievement, enhance their self-esteem, and develop positive social behavior. To reach this goal, Mountain View Elementary School offers many opportunities for student participation and recognition.

Students are asked to participate in a school perception survey. In this survey, students respond to a variety of questions concerning the school environment. Two different surveys are administered; one for children in grades K-2 and another for grades 3-5. Students respond to general statements such as, "I am safe." And "I have fun learning at my school". Then they have a chance to respond to open ended questions such as, "What do you like about Mountain View?" and "What do you wish was different at

Mountain View?” The surveys are collected and answers are compiled. Then, faculty members review the responses and discuss ideas for improvement.

All students at Mountain View participate in the Chick-Fil-A Core Essentials program. This is a program that promotes good character. This program is led by a representative from Chick-Fil-A and our guidance counselors. It is reinforced every day in the classrooms and throughout the school.

Students are encouraged and expected to maintain appropriate behavior at all times because disruptions interfere with learning. Because of these expectations concerning our school environment, disciplinary referrals are very low.

Counseling

The guidance program at Mountain View Elementary School is organized and implemented by a full-time and part-time guidance counselor with the support of the principal, faculty and staff, parents, and the community. The program serves all students in K4 through fifth grades. Guidance activities assist students in developing knowledge, understanding, and skills, which are necessary to enhance their personal, social, and educational development. These activities are conducted in whole classroom groups during the school year. Small-group guidance activities and individual counseling are provided as needed. An integral part of Mountain View Elementary School is the character education program, “Core Essentials”, which is sponsored by the Chick-Fil-A Company. Special guidance programs for each grade level are coordinated and implemented throughout the year.

After-School Program

The After School Program at Mountain View Elementary is part of Greenville County Schools and follows all written guidelines. Our program is currently operating in its sixth year and has met with much success. The program was established to provide affordable, quality after school care for school age children in a safe, positive environment. The consistency of structure in a child’s daily routine is considered, as well as the positive public relations afforded the school.

There are six categories of standards that comprise the balanced program. These are: human relationships; health, safety, and nutrition; indoor environment; activities; administration; outdoor environment.

We allow time for completing homework and assistance when needed, snacks, multi-learning activities, and supervised recreation. We have volunteers who provide arts and craft activities. We also have students from North Greenville College who assist with the program and are paid through their work-study program. There are currently two full time teachers and 2-4 part-time assistants. There are approximately 85 students being served in our after school program. Our operating hours are 2:30-6:00 Monday through Friday. We only operate on days that school is in session.

Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness

2008-2009

At Mountain View Elementary School, we have been very successful in our overall approach to educating children. Students' understanding is assessed through a variety of measures, such as teacher-made tests, standardized tests, MAP tests for grades 2-5, projects, and district benchmarks. Some of the processes we use are listed below.

Language Arts

Reading: Our teachers use the Four Blocks Model as the delivery system for their Language Arts instruction. Our textbook for directed reading instruction is Houghton Mifflin. This state adopted text correlates well with our state learning standards at all grade levels. In the fall of 2004, we received new reading textbooks in grades K-5. In addition to the textbook, teachers use a variety of other materials for teaching reading, including teaching units posted in the district Portal. Fifth grade teachers use historical fiction and science and social studies textbooks in integrated units. Kindergarten teachers use songs, poems, and finger plays to support early literacy. All teachers supplement the basal reading series with trade books related to selected thematic units. Teachers in kindergarten, first, and second grades use leveled books such as Early Success, Phonics leveled readers, and Reading A-Z. In addition, we have multiple reading resources with leveled book sets which teachers may check out and use during small group instruction and with literature circles. These leveled texts help teachers meet the needs of children who are either above or below grade level or who need extra support, thereby allowing for differentiated instruction. Teachers at Mountain View also use Accelerated Reader. This is a computer based program which encourages children to read through a points incentive. Students are assisted in setting individual reading goals and in monitoring their progress. Additionally, teachers also use a reading incentive program called Book It. Students set individual reading goals. For every month the reading goals are met, they receive a pizza award certificate to Pizza Hut. Another computer based program we utilize is the S.T.A.R. test. This test allows teachers and students to check reading levels, monitor growth and progress, and set

short term goals. Reading assessments are administered through a variety of methods. MAP assesses student growth and progress in reading, language, once in the fall and once in the spring. Teachers use a combination of the following: S.T.A.R., MAP testing, Houghton-Mifflin Thematic Unit Tests, running records, observational checklists, informal observations, PACT, and ITBS. The careful analysis of these multiple measures help teachers plan for the most effective instruction for each child.

Writing: Teachers monitor student writing progress through the use of writer's notebooks, writing folders, and district writing prompts. Teachers utilize several supplemental books for additional skills practice, such as Write Away, Write on Track, and Writer's Express. In addition, kindergarten teachers use the Building Blocks model for shared writing, morning message, and creating class books. Teachers meet together in grade level and vertical meetings to score specific student writing. During these meetings, teachers use the state writing rubric to determine the level of proficiency for each of the writing domains. They may also use these meetings to compare instructional strategies for improving student writing.

Mathematics

The district Portal provides the basis for our mathematics instruction at Mountain View. It gives us a solid foundation for teaching the state math standards. Standards instruction is supported through the use of Houghton-Mifflin or Everyday Mathematics. Supplemental instruction comes from Everyday Counts Calendar Math or Mountain Math. These supplemental programs offer an opportunity for daily review of mathematical concepts and a chance for students to learn to express their ideas about math concepts in a non-threatening environment. Everyday Counts also builds math vocabulary. Everyday Math enables children in elementary grades to learn math content through games and hands-on experiences to become life-long mathematical thinkers.

Teachers further supplement the text with a wide variety of hands-on materials, such as Unifix cubes, base ten blocks, Judy clocks, sorting/counting objects, etc. Other supplemental programs in use are Math Steps, Math Excursions, Orchard (computer program in our lab), and many math based computer games and programs. Math

progress is monitored with the unit tests, math benchmarks, daily practice, district math checklists, project work, teacher-made assessments, informal observations, PACT, MAP, and ITBS.

Social Studies

Social Studies is taught through a variety of methods at Mountain View Elementary. Again, all instruction is based on state standards. All classrooms are a learning community within a larger school community. Rules, rights, and responsibilities are taught in each classroom to create an effective, positive environment. Children from varied backgrounds are learning the concepts of cooperative learning at Mountain View. These real-life experiences help children make connections with their new knowledge. In kindergarten, children enjoy learning through thematic units supplemented by the Houghton-Mifflin Social Studies series. They learn through picture books, field trips, songs, poems, guest speakers and dramatic play. Real experiences help children make connections for their new knowledge.

First and second grade teachers use the Houghton Mifflin series as well. It consists of a Teacher's Edition, student's textbook, individual consumable workbooks, individual CD Roms of textbooks that can be taken home, and leveled readers that relate to the units of study in the textbook. Teachers may download SC State standards and activities/lessons from a Houghton-Mifflin CD Rom for appropriate instruction, incorporate, ready-made, child-friendly transparencies into their lessons and utilize a Houghton-Mifflin book of ideas for social studies projects that relate to the units of study. First and Second grade also supplement Houghton-Mifflin with a Studies Weekly which is similar to Weekly Reader.

Third grade teachers use the text [At Home in South Carolina](#) which teaches social studies standards through South Carolina History. Third grade teachers have adopted the Scott-Foresman Social Studies Series to study South Carolina history. It includes a student's textbook, student's atlas, and individual consumable workbooks that includes vocabulary practice, lesson reviews, reading skills practice and project pages. This series also has a wide assortment of leveled bibliography readers that supplement the units. The teacher has a big book Atlas that contains geographical terms, political and

physical maps and vocabulary cards. Selected literature studies are also integrated in the curriculum to support the standards.

Fourth and fifth grade teachers teach Social Studies through a new textbook series offered by Scott-Foresman. Their students study historical fiction and non-fiction novels through Literature Circles directed by both the teacher and students. One series, particularly relevant to the curriculum is the *Dear America Series* by Scholastic Books. They are also building a collection of primary documents to support their studies. Technology is incorporated into the curriculum in various ways to reinforce the concepts learned from the textbooks.

Teachers at Mountain View make social studies relevant to students' lives as they go on field trips to the State Capital, Charleston, Walnut Grove Plantation, and Jones Gap State Park. Fifth grade visits Epcot in Disney World annually for multi-cultural studies. They will visit Disney World's Magic Kingdom to learn more about American History by experiencing firsthand the Hall of Presidents and Wheel of Inventions. Guest speakers often visit our school to explain how social studies issues impact everyone's lives in different and realistic ways. Teachers also supplement with learning-friendly maps and globes as they teach geography. Our art teacher reinforces physical geography through lessons that teach students how to meaningfully and artistically represent geography. Our music teacher puts on grade-level programs that reinforce what is being taught in Social Studies in the upper grades. Social Studies is assessed in many authentically different ways, such as, teacher observations, learning games, project work, lessons on computers, written work; such as reports and journaling, communication between peers, classroom discussions/debates, teacher-made and unit tests, written work and PACT testing.

Science

Science at Mountain View Elementary is also taught through several approaches. Our students are encouraged to inquire and investigate specific ideas to build a strong knowledge base in Earth, Life and Physical Sciences. Based on state standards, instruction takes on many forms; such as projects, investigations, research, experiments, data collection and journaling. Our teachers incorporate videos, non-fiction

books, research, and field trips, as well. We use Harcourt Brace textbooks across the grade levels and supplemented with district science kits and the district Portal. Hands-on projects encourage critical thinking, address differences in learning styles, and allow children to build their own knowledge through active participation. Science learning is assessed through experiments and project work, field trips, classroom discussions, students' Power Point presentations, accumulated data that is charted and interpreted, class work, teacher made and unit tests, and PACT practice and real testing. Students create Power Point presentations to support their investigations. This year, we have two part-time teachers, who were hired for the Science Lab, for kindergarten through fifth grade. During their lab time, the students carry out lab assignments which require them to apply classroom knowledge which results in an expansion of Bloom's Hierarchy of Higher Order Thinking Skills. Our students are encouraged to utilize different methods of investigation to find answers. Many of the classes also use the computer lab to further research skills on the internet concerning a variety of science topics. Third grade annually plans several field trips a year to further study the curriculum of Forestry and Geology, Food Chains, Life Cycles and Adaptations. Students also visit Roper Mountain Science Center during the school year to supplement classroom studies. Each year, our school has a Science Fair to encourage participation among students and support from parents. Fourth grade students are required to submit a science project that includes the principles of Scientific Investigation. Scientific thinking is modeled by teachers to motivate students to develop realistic thinking that discovers answers.

Zest Quest

Both students and adults at Mountain View Elementary participate in Zest Quest, a program designed to help us achieve optimal health and well being. We have two full time Wellness Coaches on Staff who help educate and motivate us toward improving ourselves. Our coaches plan nutrition and exercise lessons which they present to students in an interactive 30 minute lesson once a week. Adults and students are encouraged to complete seven monthly challenges.

Character Education

Character education is a final important component of the curriculum at Mountain View. We believe that children learn most effectively in a safe and positive environment. We use the Chick-Fil-A Core Essentials program to teach positive character traits. This program supports our mission and vision and allows for an atmosphere of encouragement and growth in our classrooms. Teachers use trade books, dramatization through role-playing, class discussions, videos, technology reinforcement and journaling to reinforce the core essentials. We also participate in the Terrific Kids program sponsored by the Greer Kiwanis Club. Each nine weeks, students are chosen from each classroom to receive a Terrific Kid Award and t-shirt, gift coupons, etc. for displaying characteristics exemplifying a strong moral character and citizenship. This is noted as a very prestigious award among our students, parents, and school community. Perfect attendance award are distributed each none weeks to our students to encourage consistent attendance in our school community.

Priorities for Improving Instruction

During the fall of 2008 we developed a five-year improvement plan that was submitted for approval through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The process of updating our School Portfolio led us to carefully study our school data. We realized that our students are performing well on PACT, in comparison to other schools like ours throughout the state. We are also growing in the percentage of students scoring at the Proficient and Advanced levels of PACT each year. This year, we have set our performance goals to correlate with MAP results. Student achievement data will be analyzed and new objectives will be set annually based on the percentage of students who meet or exceed their growth goal targets in Reading, Language Usage, and Math.

1. Number of books on Media Center.
2. We are building collections of leveled texts/readers to meet the need of students at varying levels of reading proficiency.
3. We are documenting the State's standards in our daily lesson plans to maintain focus on our teaching practices and learning objectives and goals.
4. We are trained in Learning Focused Strategies and all teachers are including LF strategies within their lesson plans.
5. We participate in weekly grade level discussions to plan and analyze results of assessments and discuss implications on teaching strategies and outcomes of learning.
6. We use two school wide Reading Incentive programs, *Book It* and *Accelerated Reader* to encourage an improvement in individual reading skills and goals
7. All classroom teachers are trained in the use of Everyday Counts Calendar Math which incorporates Math standards in a daily practice.
8. We continue to purchase math manipulatives which provide students with more hands-on materials to help create meaningful learning connections in math lessons.
9. We have a Science Lab teacher who conducts lab experiences with students on a weekly basis to support each grade level's Science curriculum.
10. We have expanded our after school program to include not only quality child care but homework support with highly qualified, certified teachers.
11. We partner with various community members, universities and business organizations to provide extra tutoring resources for targeted children.
12. We have a morning tutoring program that is organized and taught by our school's highly qualified, certified teachers to encourage and provide additional academic support to students in need.
13. We utilize local high school students and our PDS partner to enlist additional tutoring help for our students.
14. We have created an Outdoor Learning Environment under the guidance of our Teacher/Master Gardener and Science Lab Instructor with a \$2,000 Lowes Toolbox Grant to provide further experiences to expand the Science Curriculum.
15. We have a school-wide Health Program, ZEST QUEST, under the direction of two Nutritional Instructors. Both instructors conduct weekly lessons on the importance of Nutritional Health in each classroom on a weekly basis.
16. We have provided our students with two weekly periods of Physical Education to improve our students' physical and mental health which will produce academic results.
17. Every classroom is equipped with a Promethean Board, 3 student computer stations, and a teacher laptop to provide ease with technology integration in lessons every day.
18. We continue to update our classroom novel sets to assist in the integration of Social Studies with Language Arts.