

Hartwell Elementary

Executive Summary

Mrs. Lydia Bennett, Principal

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Hartwell Elementary is a Title I public school located in a rural area of Northeast Georgia within the county of Hart, and the city limits of Hartwell. It is adjacent to the South Carolina border and is near Franklin and Elbert Counties in Georgia. Hart County is comprised of 232 square miles including the town of Hartwell, which is 4.63 square miles, and the beautiful Lake Hartwell. The county has a population of 26,785 while Hartwell's population is 7,120.

Hartwell Elementary School serves grades Pre-K through fifth grade and is one of three elementary schools in the Hart County Charter System. Hartwell Elementary is home to approximately 510 students with an ethnicity of 47.0% White, 41.9% African American, 0% American Indian or Alaskan native, 1.2% Asian or Pacific Islander, 3.5% Hispanic, and 6.2% Two or more races. Of our student population, 52.4% are male and 47.6% are female.

Approximately 4.6% of the student body is enrolled in and receive gifted education services and 13.0% receive special education services. The current pupil/teacher ratio is approximately 19:1. The average homeroom class size is 18 students. Currently, at Hartwell Elementary, 69.94% of the student body qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Hartwell's staff consists of 39 certified staff members, 14 support staff, 1 registered nurse, 1 media specialist, 2 administrators, and 1 counselor.

Hartwell Elementary was built in 1934 to serve both the high school and elementary students of Hartwell during that time. With the construction of a new high school in 1956, it became the city elementary school and has continued to serve the elementary students who are residents of the city and county to this day in grades PreK - 5, as well as, our SKIP Program for students with special needs. Since the school is located within the city limits, a few students walk to school, but most travel by car with parents or in car pools. There are eight buses that also transport students to and from school.

In 2019, the voters of Hart County approved an Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST) that allowed the system to plan for multiple renovations in the school system. In the summer of 2020, ESPLOST dollars allowed the school system to beginthe historic building and gym, which are listed on the Historic Register, were renovated on the inside

while maintaining their charm on the outside to provide students and staff with new offices and newly remodeled classroom and state of the art furniture. During this upcoming school year and next summer, a new wing consisting of eight state of the art classrooms will be built. The remaining classrooms in the 2002 building will be completely renovated on the interior.

Parents are active in the school in support of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the School Governance Team, and the many opportunities associated with Title I programs which provide parents with academic support to help their children at home.

The HES faculty and community are continuously preparing and planning for an improved program and increased student performance. The faculty reviews the *Career and Career Readiness Performance Index* (CCRPI) data upon returning to school each August.

They also review spring *Measure of Academic Progress* (MAP) scores, a norm referenced based assessments at the beginning of a new year, for students in grades K through 12. Response to Intervention (RTI) data is reviewed throughout the school year with teachers in small group settings. Achievement Teams and the process of evaluating student data is done on a monthly basis with teachers on each grade level. Administration also reviews data with the School Governance Team and other stakeholders in the community. The existing needs assessment is reviewed to determine if changes are necessary to include weaknesses outlined by the new test results. Reform strategies and programs are continuously analyzed during Leadership Team meetings and faculty meetings to determine their effectiveness. Data is collected throughout the school year using scientific based programs, and instructional strategies to compile and create an updated needs assessment for the school. Our Standards Based Report Card, helps teachers and parents to identify specific areas of weaknesses and goals for each child in grades K through 3.

School's Purpose

**Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs.
Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.**

HES' s shared mission, vision, and guiding principles rest on the premises of the Hart County Charter School System. With the help of effective leadership and community cooperation, we prepare all students, all individuals to meet tomorrow's challenges by providing quality educational opportunities today. Hart County will be recognized for educational excellence. To help meet

our mission and vision, we provide our students with a school that is safe, secure, and has nurturing environments for all. Stakeholders promote a positive atmosphere that fosters confidence and self-worth for all and each individual is valued and treated with respect. Each individual has the right to be educated and the responsibility to learn. We believe that quality education requires partnership, which is the responsibility of the school system, the students, the parents, and the community.

Hartwell Elementary established a school based governance team in July 2014. The purpose of the school based governance team is to make decisions that support the continuous improvement of the school in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. The members of the school based governance team are accountable to the constituents they serve and will perform those functions and duties and have those responsibilities of a school governance team as are set forth in the Charter. The school based governance team understands that the Charter governs the operations of HART County School System. To the extent that there is any inconsistency between these bylaws and the Charter, the Charter will govern. The school based governance team will determine the methods of communication to be used by the school based on the needs and interests of the school community, will solicit parental input and encourage parental involvement in methods appropriate to the cultural background and interests of the school community, will identify and maintain community resources to support the physical, social, mental and academic needs of the learners, will review assessments to make informed decisions which may include, but are not limited to, allotment of time and allocation of resources, will be actively involved in the review of the district accreditation standards and will participate in goal and strategy development to address any recommendations, to name a few.

At HES, students have the opportunities to work in small groups, and to participate in instructional strategies daily that promote students' different styles of learning. Students are being prepared to contribute to our community, state, and society. Student leaders are members of the ambassador club, and safety patrols. Students are in charge of the morning announcements where they write the script for the morning show and provide a live broadcast over the television. Students are in charge of our PBIS Store, where they have the opportunity to sell items for STAR tickets to other students who have exhibited positive behavior throughout the school.

HES promotes students participation in extracurricular activities, as well as school sponsored programs. Hart as a community has city league sports, dance programs, theatre groups, church youth programs, and community services through the Communities In Schools.

Our school improvement process for the 2019-2020 school year began in the spring of 2019 with data collection in the form of a comprehensive parent survey, a staff professional learning survey, and several brainstorming sessions with data teams, leadership team members, school governance team, and parent groups. Hartwell Elementary gathers information from many

sources to determine school-wide needs. All staff members, including certified teachers and paraprofessionals, complete a system level Needs Assessment (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FY19TeacherNeeds>) each spring to help identify areas to be included in professional learning activities. Certified staff members also complete a TKES Self-Assessment to identify individual strengths and areas of need. These areas are then addressed in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) throughout the school year and their individual professional learning plans.

Hartwell Elementary gathers information from parents through the Title I Parent/Family Engagement Survey and surveys after each Title I Parent Training. Parents are invited to attend the Annual Title I Meeting which is before Curriculum Night in the fall. Title I Parent/Family Engagement week in the late Spring offers a platform for parents and guardians to offer suggestions concerning the programs at Hartwell and the use of allocated funds.

The School Leadership Team engages in collaboration sessions to discuss and explore additional ideas for professional learning and for improving the instructional programs at Hartwell. Information from these sources combined with 2019 MAP, 2018-2019 Georgia Milestones Data, 2019 GKIDS, and 2018 CCRPI Data collection and our students' overall academic progress was used to guide the team's decisions in developing our 2019-2020 plan. Attendance and discipline data was collected and analyzed. Tutoring data was also reviewed and analyzed. The leadership team meets each month to review and adjust student achievement whereby the school improvement plan is an ongoing process.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

When students arrive at school each morning, they can be seen going to the morning show, or assisting teachers as Safety Patrols in the car rider line. Students are also utilizing their skills as library helpers assisting the media specialist. Students are in charge of the school flag pole which is seen from College Avenue and Benson Streets.

Another notable achievement of Hartwell Elementary is their shared student academic achievement with parents and stakeholders. Parents are encouraged to attend not only Open House, but grade level Curriculum Night that provides vital detailed, specific information to help all students be successful. Parents and stakeholders have access to school information via emails, newsletters, and the school's website. Through Title I meetings, parents are informed throughout the school year

on ways to help their children academically at home. Teachers and administrators stress the importance of parents involving their children with reading, writing, and mathematics skills at home.

For the past three years the beginning of the STEAM classrooms has led to numerous activities with students in the classrooms, and with parents to support the education of their child in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEAM classroom lessons are provided by certified teachers who support the Georgia Standards of Excellence, enhancing the regular classroom teachers' efforts.

With the addition of Professional Learning Communities and the collaboration among teachers weekly meetings, academic achievement levels have been raised! These monthly meetings are referred to as "Achievement Teams." During these meetings teachers and administrators collaborate and review data, set goals, and prepare for extended engagement of students' learning.

Below is a list of our strengths and areas for improvement as well as our plan for continuous improvement discussed in our collaborative achievement team meetings.

Specific areas of improvement are:

- Measurement and Data in grades K-5
- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use in grades K-5
- Foundational Skills in grades K-2
- Writing and Editing Skills
- Attendance with an increasing number of students missing more than 10 days
- Discipline (more specifically with a small percentage of students with numerous discipline referrals).

In order to address our areas of improvement we will:

- Use achievement teams to analyze math and ELA data to use to drive instruction for continuous improvement.
- Put forth continuous efforts geared towards every sub-group due to higher state targets each year.
- Utilize our math and ELA instructional coaches to increase performance in both areas.
- Implement an extra instructional intervention block to implement strategies for our SWDs.
- Meet monthly with our PBIS team to analyze SWIS behavior data and provide action plans for targeted areas.
- Provide necessary MTSS interventions for students with numerous disciplinary referrals that include monitoring, mentoring, and counseling support.
- Implement Phonics Units of Study and dedicated an extra instructional block to provide phonics instruction.

Specific areas of strength are:

- Reading Literary and Informational Text
- Geometry

- Numbers and Operations

In order to continue these strengths we will:

- Continue implementing the use of the workshop model in math and ELA to provide instruction on students' academic achievement levels.
- Increase implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)-encouraging students to think critically.
- Incorporate technology devices one to one in grades K-5

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

We are implementing a variety of programs to increase student achievement. Each summer we offer a Bridge Program to upcoming kindergarten students who scored below average on their Kindergarten Readiness test. This is a half-day, two-week program that introduces students to literacy skills that will be focused on during the regular school year. This past summer, the program was extended to upcoming first grade students who scored below average on Math MAP benchmark assessments. This provided an excellent opportunity to remediate skills.

Kindergarten students and their parents also have the option to participate in Kindergarten Camp a week before the first day of school. This is a half-day program, over two days, that provides families with a glimpse into what a typical day in kindergarten is like. It provides a wonderful opportunity for parents to ask questions and for students to get to know teachers and our school.

Furthermore, Hartwell Elementary provides students in all grades, who are struggling with Tier I instruction, the chance to participate in an after-school tutoring program. Certified teachers work with struggling learners to identify skill gaps and address them using research-based instructional strategies. Students also learn essential study skills that improve accountability for test preparation.

This summer, Hartwell Elementary School will provide a summer school enrichment program for qualifying students in grades 2-5 which will allow them to receive an additional fifteen days of instruction in predominantly reading and mathematics. Students will have the opportunity to visit the Georgia Capitol and the Roper Mountain Science Center as an extension of their studies throughout the summer months.