



*Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School*  
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Dear Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School Parent/Guardian,

On Friday, February 23rd, 2018, I received a call that I will never forget. On that day, I was blessed with the opportunity to serve as the second Principal of Fisher Middle School. This was an opportunity I accepted with open arms and I cannot wait to get immersed in the community and schools of Greenville, South Carolina. If I may, I would like to take a moment introduce myself and my family to your family.

Until my appointment with Greenville County Schools which will see my relocation to South Carolina, I have spent all of my life in Central Illinois. I was fortunate enough to attend Millikin University in Decatur, IL, where I was able to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and play championship level football for the Big Blue. I spent my beginning years teaching and coaching at South Central Middle School in Kinmundy, IL. In 2000, I accepted a position at Mattoon Middle School in Mattoon, IL where I taught Literature, Advisory, and Writing. I earned my Master's and Specialist's Degree in Education Administration and Leadership from Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, IL. In 2005, I accepted an Assistant Principalship and then in 2008 a Principalship both at MMS. In 2013, I was honored to be named as the Illinois Middle School Principal of the Year. I have led Mattoon Middle School through the Horizon Schools to Watch process that saw the school be designated as a state and nationally recognized middle school in 2007, 2010, 2013, and 2016. One of my goals is to see Fisher also attain state and national level recognition for exemplary middle grades practices. I feel that our ability to blend the core tenets of middle-grades education with the innovative approach to teaching and learning offered at Fisher Middle School will allow our Firebirds to fly higher than ever!

In addition to serving as a board member for the Arts Connection of Central Illinois, I have served as President of the Association of Illinois Middle-Grade Schools (AIMS) for the past six years. Needless to say, with all of my twenty-plus years being devoted to the middle grades, my heart truly lies in the growth and success of the young adolescent.

I believe in middle school and I believe in the amazing things a learning community can do for children when everyone is working together. I believe that failures are invitations for change and growth. I think that empowering students to have a voice is critical in their progress to a successful adult life. I believe

that the educational approach Fisher Middle School strives for with its students is state-of-the-art and ideal for the 21st Century learner. Mostly though, I believe in relationships. They are at the very core of everything we will do for your child; for OUR children. Every success we experience moving forward will be impacted by the positive relationships we have in place. Our stumbles will equally be attributed to a relationship underdeveloped. I can't tell you how excited I am to begin building those relationships with the Fisher Family.

On the more personal side of me, my beautiful wife, Tammy, and I have been married for 20 years and we have three kids (Alex, Dakota, and Claudia) and now three grandkids (Ben, Isabelle, and Charlotte). We love to travel, spend time with friends and family, and we love to landscape our property. My wife is an artist working primarily in up-scaling furniture and home decor and has been recognized internationally for her amazing work. I love to listen to music...all the time. I love to go camping (in a tent). I am learning how to play the guitar, and in my free time I love to write. I have a ridiculously large collection of t-shirts, baseball caps, and am proud of my growing Pez dispenser collection as well. Sports have always been a huge part of my life especially football and baseball, but I am equally thrilled to see a theater performance, take in an amazing art display, or see a live musician sing or play their heart out. I don't ever want to be contented on ways to expand my experiences when there are so many amazing things to see and do. The amazing city of Greenville will provide so many more of those opportunities in a variety of ways.

Words simply cannot describe how honored I am to be able to serve the students, staff, parents, and community of Dr. Phinnize J Fisher Middle School and Greenville County Public Schools. I look forward to the opportunity to meet the wonderful folks of Fisher Middle School and encourage you to reach out to me with any questions you may have.

Warmest Regards,

*Jeremie R. Smith*

Jeremie R. Smith, Ed. S.

PJFMS Principal (2018)

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#fullSTEAMAhead #nogoalstoohigh