

League Academy of the Communication Arts
Annual Report to the Community
2020-2021

School Mission

The mission of League Academy of Communication Arts is to prepare students to become lifelong learners and contributing members of society through rigorous, arts-focused, standards-based instruction.

Principal: Mary Leslie Anderson

Assistant Principal: Tasha Brockman

Purpose of the Report “This Report is issued by the League Academy School Improvement Council in accordance with South Carolina law to share information on the school's progress in meeting various goals and objectives, the work of the SIC, and other accomplishments during the school year.”

School Profile

League Academy is located in a quiet neighborhood, two blocks south of North Pleasantburg Drive, near downtown Greenville. Originally built in 1965 as a junior high, League was approved to be a Communication Arts Magnet Academy by the School Board in 1995. League's communication arts program provides students the opportunity to explore many art forms and to learn at least one art form well through advanced course offerings. Students can select intermediate and advanced studies in drama, dance, band, strings, choral music and the visual arts. Additionally, students can select communication arts electives, including computer technology, video production, speech and debate and journalism.

Our student population is unique because we do not follow a normal feeder school pattern. Students come to League from about 25 of our district elementary schools, and they leave us after 8th grade to attend almost every high school in our district.

Capturing Kids Hearts

League Academy was designated again in 2020-2021 as a National Capturing Kids Hearts Showcase School. This program is designed to enhance the learning process by improving the relationship skills of the students with each other and between the faculty, staff and students.

Grace Church Downtown Partnership

Grace Church in Downtown Greenville reached out to League this year and has provided many resources to the school including organizing and providing food for our backpack food program, funding for a free after-school program for students two days a week, manning a Work Day to improve the school grounds, attending SIC meetings

each month. The church plans to continue to support League in the 2020-2021 school year.

Schools to Watch

League Academy maintains its National School to Watch status awarded by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform in 2017. League Academy was awarded The National Schools to Watch Re-Designation III Award in January 2020. The goal of the forum desires to make every middle school academically excellent, responsive to the development of the middle school student, and social equitable. The four criteria include academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, organizational structure, and social equity. League Academy has implemented the following programs and activities as a result of going through the Schools to Watch redesignation process:

- Continue to increase rigor in all classes through arts integration techniques, professional development, and student engagement in the curriculum.
- Increased use of technology for students through the purchase of Chromebooks for classroom use, and wrote a Bring Your Own Device Policy for students to have more access to technology.
- Restructured the guidance department to address the guidance of the whole child; thus focusing the counselors more on the students than administrative tasks.
- Increase involvement and partnership with the PTA to fundraise for initiatives such as health and wellness, increased activities for student involvement, and technology needs.
- Developed a partnership with Mentor Greenville to address students of need either socially, behaviorally, or academically.

Outstanding Features and Programs

- Magnet Program with Communication Arts Focus
- High School Credit (Carnegie Units) for Honors Algebra I, Honors Geometry,
- Honors English I, Spanish I & II, Digital Media Arts I, Art I, Theatre I.
- Gifted and Talented Language Arts Program
- Advanced Studies in Dance, Drama, Music, and the Visual Arts
- Capturing Kids Hearts
- National Junior Beta Club
- Beta Club & Honor Roll Celebrations
- Student Government Association
- Mentor Upstate Partnership providing mentors for students
- Honors High School Credit Courses in Orchestra, Drama, Strings, Dance
- High School Credit Course in Chorus
- Peace Center Partnership for Staff Development

- Peace Voices Program
- SmartArts “Artist in Residence” Program
- Metropolitan Arts Council Art Educator of the Year
- STEAM Trained Science and Math Teachers
- Awards Days/Student Recognition Programs
- Cultural and Educational Field Trips
- “Boot Camp” for rising 6th graders and parents
- Boys and Girls Athletic Teams for All Middle School Sports
- Girls on the Run Running Club
- Intramural Sports Program
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- School Improvement Council (SIC)

Achievements and Honors

- Capturing Kids Hearts National Showcase School 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
- A top performing middle school in the District and State
- First Greenville County School to be Named a “National School to Watch”
- SC Duke TIP Scholars/SC Junior Scholars
- SC School of Excellence in the Arts 2017
- Principal wins Metropolitan Arts Council Carl R. Blair Arts Educator of the Year 2021
- 2 Top 10 Teachers of the Year in Greenville County
- Principal was Top 3 Finalist in state for SCASA Principal Award
- All-State and All-Region Orchestra Winners
- Region Band Students
- Superior Distinctions for Orchestra at Festivals and Competitions
- Superior Distinctions for Chorus at Festivals and Competitions
- Superior Distinctions for Band at Festivals and Competitions
- SC Theatre and Speech Association State Awards
- National, State and District Visual Arts Award Winners
- National, State and District PTA Reflections Contest Winners
- Arts in the Basic Curriculum Grant Recipient
- LiveWell Greenville Grant
- LiveWell Healthy School Award
- School Safety Award
- Nationally Certified Athletic Director
- American Heart Association Recognition for Starting Dodge Ball for Heart Disease Program.
- Nationally Recognized Lego Robotics Team
- National School to Watch 2011, 2015, 2017, 2020
- Multiple Donors Choose Grants for Technology

SmartARTs and Arts Integration- Magnet Academy

League Academy's magnet program began in 1995 as part of Greenville County Schools Select School initiative. At League Academy our arts infused curriculum supports the belief that the arts are an essential component to every child's education and that the arts and technology are valuable tools that connect and enrich all areas of learning. Additionally, an arts-integrated curriculum supports an increased rigorous academic and student-centered curriculum. In addition to offering courses in all of the fine arts including advanced arts courses, League offers students the opportunity to take communications courses in computer technology, TV/video production, public speaking, speech and debate, creative writing, drama, and Google Apps. Students at League Academy can earn up to 7.5 units of high school credit in Art I, Spanish I & II, Google Apps, Financial Literacy, English I, and Algebra I, Geometry, Orchestra, Chorus, Drama and Band.

League's Role in the Community

School Improvement Council

SIC's Annual Goal is to support and foster growth for the "whole child". By this, we intend to promote and support our students' emotional and social wellness in addition to the academic growth of each student at League. Students face dramatic growth in many areas during these middle-school years and need to develop not only study, organizational and time management skills to perform well in the classroom, but emotional and social skills too. Our SIC will continue to seek ways to promote social and emotional wellness with initiatives in and around League to best support its students, faculty and staff so that each person reaches his/her potential while at the school.

League's School Improvement Council meets once a month to address needs of the school. The focus of the SIC is to work with the challenges that the school community faces. behavioral needs, and creating an culture inclusive of all students and families

SIC Chairman- Larisa Gelman 2020-21

SIC

Activities for 2020-21 include continuing to support a safe, productive and no-cost after-school program sponsored by Grace Church Downtown which provides 20 more students a positive, healthy environment in which to spend the afternoon; supporting the Capturing Kids Hearts initiative which teaches and encourages healthy relationships and interpersonal skills among the entire population of the school, faculty and staff included; supporting the Mentor Upstate weekly mentoring program which provides a caring adult to encourage and support students; supporting school environmental improvements which foster student wellness. Our SIC will continue partnering with the

League PTA to achieve our objectives. Additionally, our SIC continues to serve as our Arts in the Basic Curriculum task force and steering committee.

Parent-Teacher Association

League Academy has an active PTA, who works hard for the students and staff. This year, our PTA was instrumental in raising funds to create an outdoor dining space for students and teachers. We will continue to work on beautifying our campus for our students and staff, by adding more outdoor space for students and staff to enjoy. Our PTA was also instrumental in leading our fall and spring fundraisers. We added an outdoor classroom this fall. PTA has been helpful in supporting our staff during COVID even though they were not allowed to physically come into the building.

Arts Partnerships

At League Academy it is important that we become as much a part of the arts community in Greenville as we can. We have formed partnerships with The Peace Center for the Performing Arts, The Greenville County Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Arts Council, The Fine Arts Center, and The Warehouse Theatre. These partnerships have afforded us quality arts integration professional development to enhance our instructional knowledge of arts integration into the core content areas. Additionally, they have come to League to work with our students in master classes, arts integration workshops, and seminars. Our students have also been able to take various field trips to experience performances and shows with these partners. We have created an 8th Grade Student Arts Council. The arts council has worked with a local artist this year to design and paint a mural going up our stairwell.