



# Oak Grove Elementary School

LEXINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE

479 Oak Drive • Lexington, S.C. 29073 • 803-821-0100

**Principal:** Christy M. Graham

**Assistant Principals:** Misty Johnson and Shamala Anderson

**Grades Served:** PreK–5

**Student Enrollment:** 742

**Motto:** Be Kind, Work Hard, Be Kind

**Palmetto Finest 2015**

**National Blue Ribbon School 2012**

*Empower each child to design the future.*

Our mission is to cultivate a caring community where ALL learners are extraordinary communicators, collaborators, creators and critical thinkers.

**All students, regardless of circumstances, advance on time, prepared to graduate and ready to enter college, the military or industry with certification.**

At OGES, we believe that all students will grow as learners and be empowered to be brave in their academic pursuits. We have successfully implemented the workshop model in our reading, writing, and math instruction across all grade levels. Looking at student work, writing volume has increased as students are being more descriptive and adding details to their writing. Teachers are holding writing celebrations where students are providing positive, specific feedback to help the writers grow. The schoolwide reading program we implement, RED (Read Every Day), has increased our students' reading volume and their stamina for reading.

Through Title I funds and grants, teachers have been making strategic choices to grow and diversify their classroom libraries. They want every child in their classroom to see themselves represented in books as they work to inspire a lifelong love of reading. Access to books is key, and teachers encourage students to take home books each night in order to have sufficient reading material. Our classroom library sizes have doubled over the last two years, providing additional books for all students to read their "just right" book. In addition to classroom library books, we are also using Title I funds to give away thousands of books each year to families to help increase access to texts at home. Our library collection has gone through a weeding process to make the collection up to date, adding books that readers are interested in checking out.

**Teaching and learning develop power skills in all students.**

Students strive to work hard on their academics and take risks in their personal growth. We provide strong instructional practices using the workshop model in ELA and math, but we also grow the whole child. Power skills are embedded in our daily routine for character development. Throughout the day, you can hear conversations about how students are working hard and showing accountability in meeting their personal goals. In the hallway, students are celebrated by ringing a bell when they have met their personal goals. The sound of the bell vibrates through the hallways, encouraging others to strive to achieve their best. We work together, care together and grow together to ensure we are all meeting our full potential.

We have committed to starting each morning with Morning Morning. This provides 30-minutes for students and teachers to engage in discussions and activities that helped them learn ways we can show kindness, work hard to achieve our goals, be brave by taking risks with our learning, and develop their power skills. Not only do we talk about the work, but we also talk about how it feels. Letting students explore and express their feelings and thoughts is important to building a safe and supportive learning environment. This creates the foundation for our social and emotional learning. Each classroom is equipped with a reset and return basket, supplied by our school counselors, that provides a variety of strategies for students to use if they need a 5-minute break to reset and refocus their emotions.

**Our schools are service-oriented centers of learning, committed to family and community partnerships.**

Oak Grove has intentionally been focusing on strengthening family engagement during the past three years in an effort to connect our families by building strong relationships between home and school. Some of the ways we have been doing this are by hosting events that welcome families and staff to bond outside of the general school day. Families loved coming in to Meet the Teacher Night this year and, for parent-teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring. We have hosted a Family Reading Night on the Lawn to provide another way for families to strengthen a love for learning and reading while engaging with school staff other than through the classroom setting. At the start of the school year, families were invited to a popsicle/book event to come meet both of our new assistant principals prior to school starting so that families could begin building relationships with them.

We use some of our Title I funds to fund our parent liaison position. Our Parent Liaison works to connect families to resources and the school in multiple ways. She also makes home visits to strengthen school-to-home relations and to deliver resources as needed. Our parent liaison helps coordinate a program called “Little Patriots” to help get our families’ 3 and 4-year-olds who aren’t yet enrolled at Oak Grove OGE connected with resources and activities to help strengthen pre-academic skills they will continue to use when they do enroll with us. Various staff members facilitate the activities at each meeting.

OGE engages our families in literacy-rich activities, too. We host two book fairs per year to allow students the experience of shopping for books for their homes. We also help build home libraries for families by giving students books throughout the year at various times that they can keep at home. Our school librarian implemented a program called “Read Every Day” schoolwide that allows students to log their reading in a red folder, and redeem their reading time for something from the Prize Patrol that visits their classroom weekly.

Another way our school has increased family engagement is through our PTO. OGE’s PTO has worked hard to build community partnerships. They have arranged a different business each month to host a PTO Spirit Fundraising Night (e.g.,x: Chick-f Fil-Aa, Moe’s, Menchie’s, etc.). A portion of the proceeds from these nights comes back to the school. Our families have shared that they really enjoy the monthly school nights out, and attendance is great at each one!

**Every adult will be equipped with the skills and resources necessary to advocate for and ensure the success of all students.**

All staff members at OGES will be provided ways to grow professionally to impact the instruction in the classroom. Teachers have participated and continue to participate in professional learning around Serravallo’s reading and writing hierarchy, running record analysis and goal-setting, text demands, phonemic awareness, and strategy instruction. In math, teachers are continuing their learning by implementing math workshops, creating and using formative assessments to drive small-group instruction, and implementing math fact fluency kits to improve student performance. This year, teachers are choosing an area of focus to continue growing and expanding their expertise. Through professional learning communities, teachers will read professional literature and develop action plans to carry out in their classrooms to address a specific need.