

Laurens County School District 55

301 Hillcrest Drive
Laurens, SC 29360
864-984-3568

www.laurens55.org



OUR THEME

World-Class Champions . . . every child, every chance, every day!

OUR GOALS

- Provide world-class safety and a positive school culture.
- Provide world-class, high-quality instruction to increase student achievement.
- Provide world-class communication and family engagement.

VISION STATEMENT
Empowering and Inspiring
All to be Educated and
Informed

MISSION STATEMENT
Laurens County School
District 55 prepares
students for success in
learning and careers
through engaging,
challenging, and
personalized learning
experiences. Students are
curious, confident in their
own abilities, and
competitive in the local,
national, and global
environment. Students are
safe, valued, and supported
in their learning by highly
effective staff, families,
and community.

April 17, 2023

Greetings Laurens County School District 55 Family,

As we journey through this spring season, I want to take a moment to reflect on all the hard work and dedication that has brought us to this point. Despite obstacles or challenges that we may face, our school community has continued to persevere and make progress toward our goals.

With just a few weeks left in the school year, we must remain focused and committed to finishing strong. I encourage everyone to stay motivated and engaged in their work.

As we look ahead to the summer months, there are many exciting learning opportunities and events on the horizon.

I want to thank each one of you for your continued support and dedication to our schools. Together, we have accomplished so much this year, and I am confident that we will finish strong in the weeks ahead.

LINKS

[April 19, 2023 Parent Virtual Academy at 5:30 PM](#)

[April 17-21, 2023 Ford Elementary School Scholastic Book Fair Flyer](#)

[April 22, 2023 City of Laurens Earth Day Community Clean Up Flyer](#)

[April 26, 2023 Blood Drive Flyer](#)

[May 6, 2023 Books and Blankets Laurens County Literacy Association Flyer](#)



VOLUNTEER LIAISON APPRECIATION DROP-IN

Lynne Todd, Laurens County School District 55 (LCSD 55) District Volunteer Coordinator, organized a drop-in celebration for School Volunteer Liaisons on April 17, 2023. Thanks to all our School Volunteer Liaisons!



SAFETY MADE CLEAR CAMPAIGN RECEIVES AWARD

Our district received the Golden Achievement Award by the South Carolina National School Public Relations Association for The Laurens 55: Safety Made Clear campaign.

The award is for projects that represent an aspect of the overall public relations program. Multiple professionals who work in public relations and communications judged entries. Criteria for judging includes evidence of need, planning, execution/communication, and evaluation.

An awards ceremony will take place at the Phillips Market Center in West Columbia on Friday, May 12, 2023.



CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT STUDENT FEBRUARY 2023

Savannah Owens is the Laurens County School District 55 February 2023 Champion Spotlight Student. Savannah is an eighth-grade student at Hickory Tavern School (HTS).

Savannah is a hardworking student and a joy to teach. Her love for learning is evident in her schoolwork.

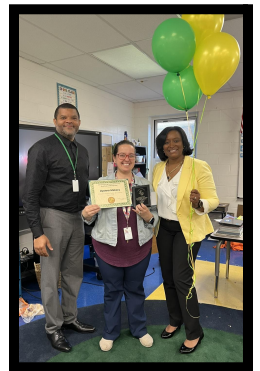
Congratulations to Savannah for being a true champion!

CHAMPION INDUCTION TEACHER OF THE MONTH MARCH 2023

Dyanna Makocy is the Laurens County School District 55 March 2023 Induction Teacher of the Month. Before earning a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of South Carolina Upstate, she served as a substitute teacher for over 2 years.

Laurens Elementary School Principal Dr. Carlos Littlejohn said, “Mrs. Makocy is an extremely dedicated, hardworking, and conscientious employee. Although it's her first year in the classroom, she has done an outstanding job and is willing to make the necessary steps to enhance her instructional practices. She has been very coachable and receptive to feedback. Her students truly enjoy being in her classroom. She's been an asset to the Laurens Elementary School community.”

Dyanna Makocy is overjoyed with the recognition. She said, “It's cliché, but I do feel very honored to be recognized. I am in this district to make sure we are making progressive and positive changes in our classrooms.”



SPIRIT OF 55 CERTIFIED STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH MARCH 2023

Mrs. Angela Abercrombie is recognized as the Laurens County School District 55 March 2023 Spirit of 55 Certified Staff Member. She teaches second grade at Waterloo Elementary School (WES). Angela Abercrombie has 24 years of experience in education and holds a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and a Master of Education.

WES Principal Kimberly Penland said, “Mrs. Abercrombie is an asset to Waterloo Elementary School. She has built positive relationships with her students, parents, and colleagues. She works cooperatively with the instructional coach to plan and implement effective lessons in the classroom, and her students have shown positive growth throughout the school year. She has taken on leadership roles throughout the school year. She serves as a cooperating teacher for a Lander University student teacher and the secretary of the WES School Improvement Council, and participated in mentor training. Mrs. Abercrombie is team-oriented, flexible, dependable, and willing to help in any way needed for the benefit of our students and school.”

Mrs. Abercrombie is thankful for the recognition and shared that she finds joy in helping students become successful learners.



APRIL IS SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH

We continue to celebrate our librarians and school libraries throughout the month of April. A big thanks to all Laurens County School District 55 school librarians! In this issue, we feature three of them. Read the previous issue featuring other school librarians.

WILMA TRIBBLE

Wilma Tribble is the school librarian at E.B. Morse Elementary School. She has served 32 years of her 33 years in education in Laurens County School District 55. She was a classroom teacher and later earned a Master of Science in Library and Information Science and a Master of Science in Student Services from the University of North Texas. As a person who grew up reading and loving books, becoming a school librarian was the easiest career decision for her.



Wilma said, “I enjoy seeing my students grow as readers from one year to the next. Librarians spend countless hours managing the library collection to ensure that every child has an opportunity to become lifelong lovers of books by making sure to include books that represent their individual needs and interests. My biggest joy as a librarian is seeing that same excitement that I felt as a first grader, in the students that visit the library when they find books they love and share them with others.”

CLAUDIA JOHN

Claudia John is the school librarian at Hickory Tavern School (HTS). Her 10 years of experience in education have all been with Laurens County School District 55.

Claudia’s love of reading was a huge part of her decision to become a school librarian. She said, “I have loved reading for as long as I can remember. Even as a child, one of my favorite parts of going on vacation was being able to read several books while riding in the car or sitting on the beach. When I became an educator, I knew my main goal for my career was to become a school librarian so that I could share my love of reading and books with as many students as possible.”



Claudia enjoys her role and finds true joy when she shares books with students. It delights her to know that students are interested in adding what she shared to their must-read lists.

MELODY SARMENTO

Melody Sarmento has been the school librarian at Waterloo Elementary School (WES) for four years. She is also the technology coach, director of the Wren Report (WES daily news show), school photographer, and maintains the school’s social media page. Mrs. Sarmento moved to Waterloo Elementary the first year the school opened and has remained there since. The school and community of Waterloo will always be very special to her. At the end of the current school year, she will have had twenty-nine years with Laurens County School District 55.



Mrs. Sarmento meets with each class once a week and loves to share new and old books with students. Every story is interactive with the four-year-olds and kindergarten, who are always eager to participate. It is a special moment for her when a student gets excited about a book and wants to tell her about it.

TEAM ECOLOGY WEEK, MARCH 27-31, 2023



Team Ecology was created in 2012 in partnership with the Laurens County Chamber of Commerce and the Laurens County Conservation District. Team Ecology is a four-day educational event for all the third-grade students in Laurens County public schools. The first program was in the Spring of 2013. This year is the 10th anniversary of this program.

The students are grouped into teams named after South Carolina state symbols. Each team rotates through 10 stations at the Joe R. Adair Outdoor Education Center. Stations were designed to address a specific ecological concern. Stations included landfills, air quality, composting, soil, watersheds, and pollinators, as well as a nature hike, puppet show, recycle relay, and lunch and learn.

The event was a hit with students, parents, partners, and volunteers. Hickory Tavern School student Cylas Clark said, "I'm happy to be here. I learned about pollinators, and how to keep the forest and the environment safe. I have to reuse and recycle things we have and I need to put out the fire when we go camping to protect the forest from fires."

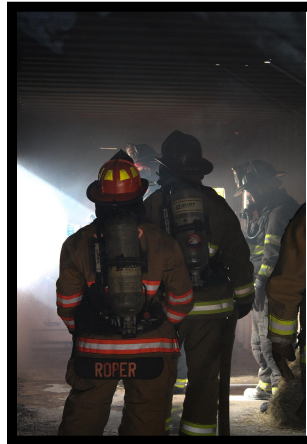
Mrs. Ashley Clark, Cylas' mother, volunteered to help monitor students. She expressed the importance of Laurens 55 students being part of Team Ecology Week, "It teaches the students more about nature and their surroundings. Also, it teaches them how nature gives us the essential things we need."

Renee Gibbs with the Laurens County Conservation District is always excited about Team Ecology Week. "We love to share good habits for students to take home to their parents and to practice the rest of their lives," said Gibbs.

This event would not be possible without the help of volunteers. It takes about 40 volunteers to make this event successful. Thank you to all the volunteers and various partners who make this a successful educational event every year! To volunteer for next year, contact Joe Adair Outdoor Education Center Director Tanya Towne at 864-501-6983.



FIRE SCIENCE PROGRAM HANDS-ON LEARNING AT LAURENS DISTRICT 55 HIGH SCHOOL (LDHS)



Laurens County School District 55 is under partnership with Piedmont Technical College in offering the Fire Science Dual Enrollment Program at LDHS. Students can earn their Fire Science Technician certificate after two semesters with 20 credit hours total.

On April 11, 2023, the Laurens County Fire Department and Laurens City Fire Department conducted a training and skills assessment with LDHS Fire Science students.

Read more about the LCSD 55 Fire Science Dual Enrollment Program in our [December 2022, A Message from Your Superintendent, issue.](#)



EARLY CHILDHOOD REGISTRATION MAY 1-5, 2023

Laurens County School District 55 will hold Early Childhood Registration from May 1-5, 2023 during school hours. Please encourage families of children aged 3-5 to visit their zoned schools to register their children. Currently enrolled LCSD 55 students do not need to register.

BOARD MEMBER BUBBA RAWL RESIGNS AS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

The Laurens County School District 55 (LCSD 55) School Board Seat 7 has been vacated by Bubba Rawl as of Monday, April 10, 2023. A Special Election will be held at Precincts fixed by law on Tuesday, July 11, 2023.

LCSD 55 is thankful for Mr. Rawl's service to the Laurens community and wishes him the best at his new position with the South Carolina Department of Education.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The next LCSD 55 Board of Trustees regular monthly meeting will be on Monday, April 24, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at Laurens District 55 High School, located at 5058 Highway 76 West, Laurens, SC 29360.

STAY IN THE KNOW



A weekly video to share school district news

[March 31, 2023](#)



A podcast of one-on-one conversations

[Michael Cade](#)



A chance to hear how L55 has positively impacted students

[Tucker McHone](#)



A chance to hear about our excellent teachers

[Madeline Crowder](#)



A chance to hear how L55 graduates achieved greatness

[Adam Taylor](#)

CLOSING

On behalf of the LCSD 55 Board of Trustees, administrators, and staff thank you for your partnership, support, and continued engagement as we work together to serve your children and our community. Your input is greatly valued and we love to hear from you. Contact me at athomas@laurens55.org, call 864-984-3568, attend our school and district events, or view our school board meetings. Have a great week!

Sincerely,

Ameca C. Thomas, Ph.D.
Proud Superintendent of
Laurens County School District 55

Laurens County School District #55 is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, age, national origin, immigrant status, English-speaking status, familial status, or disability with regard to students, employees, or applicants for admission or employment.