



NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS TO WATCH MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR'S GUIDE

East Yancey Middle School



Designated in 2005; Re-Designated 2008

East Yancey Middle School • Yancey County Schools •
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2009-10 School Statistics

(Source: 2009 NC School Report Card)

Community: Rural
Enrollment: 321
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Traditional

Student Demographics

92% White
6% Hispanic
2% African American

54% Free/Reduced Lunch
5% English Learners

2007 AYP: High Growth, School of Distinction
Met 13 of 13 performance targets

2008 AYP: High Growth, School of Distinction
Met 15 of 15 performance targets

2009 AYP: High Growth, School of Distinction
Met 17 of 17 performance targets

(Visit <http://www.ncreportcards.org> to view this school's data for prior years.)

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

East Yancey Middle School is located in Burnsville, in the western mountains of North Carolina not far from the Tennessee, South Carolina and Georgia state lines. While the school is small in number, it is BIG on student achievement, social equity, staff development, and organizational structures. With a student population of only about 325 and a staff of 22, this academic community has gone far beyond what is expected of a community school. The staff of East Yancey believes that each and every student must succeed to the best of his or her abilities, and the students rise regularly to these high expectations.

Academic Excellence

- Multiple teaching strategies revolving around higher order thinking skills
- A wide variety of assessment strategies are constantly in use
- Teachers utilize creative approaches to learning such as single-sex seminars
- High level of engagement seen in every class
- Professional development between East Yancey and the village/school in Mexico where the school's Spanish population originates

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Developmental Responsiveness

- The school environment is exceptionally warm and inviting
- The faculty genuinely celebrate the cultures represented in the school
- The staff has generated a number of clever methods to provide access to tutoring
- Soccer programs, nursing home visitations, fundraisers, and the health center provide the school with an avenue to reach their community
- Despite their small size, numerous extracurricular activities exist - Beta Club, 4-H, Talent Search, sports, chorus, band, Great Books, and Odyssey of the Mind, to name a few

Social Equity

- Fairness is a BIG concept at East Yancey, & teachers and students govern themselves by it
- Students voice their concerns to teachers and administration; the open door policy is definitely accepted here
- Full-time Spanish teacher for English speaking students and for Spanish speaking students builds bridges between the school's different communities
- Students select their own Students of the Month
- Professional development is part of the culture, and the school works with local universities and serves as a resource for other schools in the region

Organizational Support

- Research into subject areas is important to teachers and students
- Administrators are visionary leaders regarding the future needs of their student population
- Partnerships have been established between Lees-McRae and Mars Hill Colleges. These colleges provide tutors who provide one-on-one tutoring for students in all areas.
- Partnerships also exist between the local 4-H club and a therapeutic riding stable. These partners provide socialization for students after school
- School adheres to a no blame - no excuses policy