



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

## Hendersonville Middle School



### Designated in 2010

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## 2009-10 School Statistics

(Source: 2009 NC School Report Card.)

Community: Small Town  
Enrollment: 485  
Grade Levels: 6-8  
School Schedule: Traditional

### Student Demographics

67% White  
19% African American  
12% Hispanic  
2% Asian

50% Free/Reduced Lunch  
13% English Learners

2007 AYP: Expected Growth, School of Distinction  
Met 25 of 25 performance targets

2008 AYP: High Growth, School of Progress  
Met 25 of 25 performance targets

2009 AYP: High Growth, School of Distinction  
Met 23 of 23 performance targets

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

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Hendersonville Middle School is located in western North Carolina just south of Asheville. Hendersonville opened originally as a regional 1-12 "union" school from 1951-1965 and was called the Ninth Avenue School. At the time of its opening, the school was the last "union" school in Henderson County and served African-American students from Henderson, Transylvania and Polk counties. In 1965, the school became an integrated junior high school in the Hendersonville City School district. The administration of Hendersonville Middle School has created an environment where teachers enjoy coming to work and students enjoy learning. There is valuable input and buy in from stakeholders when making decisions for the school. Parents are very pleased with programs and the care/concern shown by teachers and staff.

### Academic Excellence

- High expectations are communicated by all staff members, and students buy-in to the school-wide belief that they are capable of excelling
- Students in alternative classrooms are expected to complete all assignments, including projects, at rigorous levels of performance
- Numerous instructional strategies were observed: Direct instruction, Cooperative Learning, Simulations, Project-based learning, Hands-on Learning
- Learning Focused approach is evident throughout the school

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## **Developmental Responsiveness**

- Teachers are passionate about students' well-being
- The school is well-connected to its history, and opportunities for cultural awareness (Ninth Avenue Alumni Association etc.) are rich
- Career awareness is a priority (in-house Career Center)
- Transition programs are in place for elementary to middle school and from middle to high school
- Encore classes are set up to accommodate remediation

## **Social Equity**

- Targeted Tutoring program is designed to prevent students from falling between the cracks
- Fund Raisers/Scholarships provide funds for field trips to reduce the burden on families
- Family and Community Involvement is VERY strong, and parental involvement is deep in the culture of the town
- Schedules are done by hand to ensure that students are scheduled in rigorous classes that meet their needs

## **Organizational Support**

- Survey data is regularly used to make decisions about school operation
- The principal encourages teachers to be risk-takers, and teachers feel supported
- Ongoing, job-embedded staff development is prevalent at Hendersonville
- Benchmark tests are used to gauge progress and make changes in instruction
- Teachers are reflective practitioners who are willing to make changes as needed to facilitate learning
- The staff embraces the middle school philosophy