



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

Reid Ross Classical School



Designated in 2004; Re-Designated 2007, 2010

Reid Ross Classical School • Cumberland County Schools
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2010-11 School Statistics

(Source: 2010 NC School Report Card.)

Community: Urban fringe of a small city
Enrollment: 732
Grade Levels: 6-12
School Schedule: Year-Round

Student Demographics

65% African American
20% White
7% Multi-Racial
6% Hispanic
2% Asian

44% Free/Reduced Lunch
3% English Learners

2008 AYP: School of Progress

Met 22 of 25 performance targets

2009 AYP: Expected Growth, School of Progress

Met 25 of 25 performance targets

2010 AYP: Expected Growth, School of Progress

Met 25 of 25 performance targets

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

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Reid Ross Classical School is located in the North Carolina Sandhills in the city of Fayetteville. The school of 732 students has a very diverse residential population and does not bus its students. It also has a very diverse faculty and staff with little turnover. The achievement gap has closed significantly, with the typical gap from 0 to 6 points in most tested areas. The most unusual thing about Reid Ross is that it houses separate middle and high school programs—each of which augments and supports the other.

Academic Excellence

- There is a weekly growth test for each child that is teacher created and based on the curriculum standards. Every student charts individual performance, and class performance is also charted.
- When asked about the pressure to perform, one student replied, "It's like washing your hands... it's automatic and no big deal."
- Students understand what they are being taught, and how it fits into the larger picture.
- Students have tremendous support in achieving, with students and teachers in the building from 6:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
- Having the high school staff meet regularly with the middle school staff, there is tremendous vertical and horizontal articulation.

Developmental Responsiveness

- There is an unusually civil environment and culture in action. Students are uncommonly friendly and polite to each other and to the adults in the building. There is an intense drive to succeed, but it plays out like a team where each member is exhorted by the others to be their best. At this school it is cool to be smart.
- The school has uniforms, which is an effective leveler between "haves" and "have not's," but it must be noted that the uniform requirements are sufficiently broad enough to allow for individual style. The wearing of uniforms is a complete non-issue to students.
- There is a tremendous use of the arts throughout the school. Students even perform at local weddings!
- Teachers do an exceptional job of making connections across disciplines.
- There is strong and vocal middle and high school Student Government Association, who has taken ownership of, and pride in, their school.
- Parents and the community are integral parts of the school's every day function.
- Teachers host clubs and after school programs for all students at Reid Ross Classical through the Army Youth Program in Your Neighborhood. This program is specifically for middle and high school students that offer high interest after school programs for army connected and civilian youth for a minimum of 2 hours after regular school hours and for 5 days a week.

Social Equity

- While there is an ISS, it is used in many instances as a way to allow students to re-enter their class after an in depth conference involving the student, teacher and parent. Teachers very clearly feel a need to "take care of their own," and have a long train of interventions before a child is written up and sent to the office.
- Everyone in the building, including support staff, custodians, cafeteria, etc, is committed to high achievement for EVERY student.
- The staff is very diverse, and reflects the student population.
- There is a community service requirement at each grade-increasing in hours from 9th to 12th grade. Service is part of the culture of the school.
- There is a high level of inclusion for special needs students. Gifted students also are accelerated. Honors and regular classes are taught together, with honors students having an additional project requirement.

Organizational Support

- There is a very clear sense that everyone in the building knows and articulates the vision of the school.
- The principal is a visionary leader, but does not exert control in such a manner that the school couldn't continue in his absence. He is collaborative, and his staff is fiercely loyal, as are his students and parents.
- The school is a community of practice. The staff presents regularly both within the county and state.
- The faculty is not only diverse; it is also international in scope.