



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

### Rogers-Herr Middle School



### 2009-10 School Statistics

(Source: 2009 NC School Report Card.)

Community: Urban fringe of a large city  
Enrollment: 618  
Grade Levels: 6-8  
School Schedule: Year-Round

#### Student Demographics

70% African American  
16% White  
10% Hispanic  
2% Asian

50% Free/Reduced Lunch  
<1% English Learners

2007 AYP: High growth, School of Progress  
Met 22 of 29 performance targets

2008 AYP: High growth, School of Progress  
Met 20 of 29 performance targets

2009 AYP: Expected Growth, School of Progress  
Met 29 of 29 performance targets

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

### Designated in 2008

Rogers-Herr Middle School • Durham Public Schools •  
Durham County • North Carolina • Drew Sawyer, Principal  
• 911 Cornwallis Road, Durham, NC 27707 • Phone 919-  
560-3970 • E-mail [drew.sawyer@dpsnc.net](mailto:drew.sawyer@dpsnc.net) •  
Website <http://www.rogersherr.dpsnc.net/>

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Rogers-Herr Middle School is located in Durham, North Carolina. It is a traditional year-round middle school located in a very well-kept but older facility. It is one of two year-round middle schools of choice in Durham. The vision of Rogers-Herr is to become the highest performing middle school in the Triangle area. Their mission is to provide each child with the most effective education by working and collaborating as a team, by setting high expectations, and by basing all decisions and actions on what is best for all students. They are well on the way to realizing that goal and are true to their mission. They have a 100% pass rate on the state Algebra and Geometry tests, and their scores show a long-term trend of growth for all groups of learners.

### Academic Excellence

- There is a very high level of articulation between curriculum, assessment, and the state standards. Every student we talked with could explain what was being learned, and how it fit into the larger picture.
- There was a strong use of word walls, peer-teaching, wikis, blogs, and other strategies used to incorporate academic and informational literacy into lessons.
- There was a very high level of effective instruction, and cooperative grouping and project-based learning was effectively done.

(Continued)

**Academic Excellence** *(continued)*

- A “core-plus” period allows for students to receive additional support in areas where they need acceleration or remediation. This is a creative use of scheduling that is making a real difference.

**Developmental Responsiveness**

- The school is filled with happy and polite students, and there is strong evidence of close and stable relationships among students, and between students, teachers, and administrators.
- The school and district have made a committed effort to meeting needs through Positive Behavior Support, and through *Capturing Kids’ Hearts* by Flip Flippin.
- Student art is everywhere throughout the building and the elective program is very strong.
- Teachers spend a lot of time at the beginning of the year teaching procedures, and it is evident that students understand what it is they are supposed to do.
- Interdisciplinary units are used to facilitate learning throughout the year.

**Social Equity**

- The “core-plus” program utilizes benchmark results and teacher recommendation to provide accelerated, short-term interventions for students who need it.
- There is a clear sense of “no excuses” when it comes to the expectation that all students will master the curriculum.
- The school’s population is diverse, and it is clear that all students find relevant cultural knowledge in day-to-day activities.
- There are a wide variety of student recognition activities. During our visit, one team was celebrating with a breakfast for students and parents, and another was preparing for a luncheon with take-out Chinese food.

**Organizational Support**

- There is a clear that there is a vision for success at Rogers-Herr, and that everyone on staff has bought-into it
- The school uses “Bridge to Reading” and “Academy of Reading” to strengthen students’ reading skills.
- The school utilizes partnerships with local universities and businesses, and there are a number of parent, community, and university volunteers present.
- The administration and staff do an excellent job of disaggregating data, and using it to drive changes in instruction.
- There is a strong mentoring program in place to support initially licensed teachers.