



SCHOOLS TO WATCH – ARKANSAS DIAMOND SCHOOL GREENBRIER MIDDLE SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE

Greenbrier Middle School



Named School To Watch 2017
Named in 2017

Greenbrier Middle School • Greenbrier School District • Faulkner County • Kelli Martin, Principal • 13 School Drive, Greenbrier, Arkansas 72058 • Tel (501) 679-2113 •
• Fax (501) 679-1072 •
• Webpage:

<http://www.greenbrierschools.org/o/middle-school>

• Facebook: Greenbrier Middle School
Twitter: #gmsstory

2016017 School Statistics

(Sources: 2016 ESEA Report / 2016-17 E-School Reports)

Enrollment 546
Grade Levels: 6-7
School Schedule:

Student Demographics

- 3% Hispanic
- 93.2% White
- 1.5% African American
- 0.8% Asian
- 0.2% Native American
- 39.19% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 1.9% English Learners

2014 ESEA Report

Overall School Status - Needs Improvement

(Visit ade.gov to view this school's data for prior years.)

MAP (NWEA) Test Scores

Percent of Students Who Scored at or Above the 50th Percentile on the Spring 2016 Administration of MAP Combined Population by Year and Grade Level/Cohort

		2013	2014	2015	2016
Grade 6	Reading	60.9%	55.68%	67.16%	67.8%
	Math	58.53%	54.5%	56.7%	71.2%
Grade 7	Reading	61.44%	56.818%	75.86%	71.75%
	Math	57.75%	54.16%	64.615%	67.55%

TRACK HORIZONTALLY FOR SAME GRADE PERFORMANCE (different students at the same grade)

TRACK DIAGONALLY FOR SAME COHORT PERFORMANCE (same students as they progress through subsequent grades)

Percent of Students Who Met Their Fall to Spring Growth Targets on the Spring 2016 Administration of MAP Combined Population by Year and Grade Level/Cohort

		2013	2014	2015	2016
Grade 6	Reading	50	37	54	66
	Math	56	38	60	77
Grade 7	Reading	52	41	58	56
	Math	58	47	58	59

TRACK HORIZONTALLY FOR SAME GRADE PERFORMANCE (different students at the same grade)

TRACK DIAGONALLY FOR SAME COHORT PERFORMANCE (same students as they progress through subsequent grades)

Spring 2016 MAP Mean RIT Scores for Reading and Math Combined Population by Year and Grade Level/Cohort

		2013	2014	2015	2016
Grade 6	Reading	217.1	216.6	219.6	220.3
	Math	227	225.3	226.5	230.4
Grade 7	Reading	219.5	218.4	224.3	223.5
	Math	230.5	228.8	232.2	233.6

TRACK HORIZONTALLY FOR SAME GRADE PERFORMANCE (different students at the same grade)

TRACK DIAGONALLY FOR SAME COHORT PERFORMANCE (same students as they progress through subsequent grades)

Spring 2016 MAP School Percentile Scores for Reading and Math Combined Population by Year and Grade Level/Cohort

		2013	2014	2015	2016
Grade 6	Reading	58	55	72	67
	Math	58	50	56	74
Grade 7	Reading	58	51	82	74
	Math	59	51	67	72

TRACK HORIZONTALLY FOR SAME GRADE PERFORMANCE (different students at the same grade)

TRACK DIAGONALLY FOR SAME COHORT PERFORMANCE (same students as they progress through subsequent grades)

**Schools to Watch – Arkansas Diamond School
Greenbrier Middle School – Greenbrier, Arkansas**

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

“It is the mission of Greenbrier Middle School to empower students to be successful, productive leaders in society. We are devoted to an engaging and rigorous curriculum, to a safe and student-centered environment, and to innovative teaching and learning that is built on stakeholder collaboration to educate the whole child.” These are not just words to the staff at Greenbrier Middle School, instead they are what drives us each and every day to be the best for our students and their families. We hold high expectations for teaching and learning, which is evidenced by the following practices that take place at Greenbrier Middle School.

- Teachers have collaborated and developed YAGs (Year at a Glance) documents that identify both content and literacy standards, topics/themes, texts, resources, and student projects for all units of study throughout the year. Training has been provided for teachers on identifying power standards so that emphasis can be placed on skills that will help students across the curriculum.
- LDC (Literacy by Design) modules are used in Literacy classrooms, as well as content areas of social studies and science in order to develop student’s competencies in reading research, and writing skills. MDC (Math by Design) units are utilized in all math classes to supplement the CMP curriculum with pre and post assessments that drive daily instruction.
- Based on work done by the school’s Leadership Team, an intervention period called Fast Focus, takes place 4 days a week, targeting math, literacy, and science remediation based on student needs. Once a week this period is used as student club time, and the last week of the month it is used as a student data day.

- Both grade level and content level PLC's use student data from common formative assessments to plan for re-teaching skills during a daily Fast Focus intervention time. In addition, quarterly meetings are held to review student data based on summative testing and teachers use a visual, interaction assessment wall to move students to quadrants as based on their achievement and growth patterns.'
- As evidence of our "whatever it takes" district motto, Greenbrier Middle School has developed a no zero policy, with the expectation that all students will complete every assignment. Using the Power of ICU book study and accompanying database parents are notified at the beginning of the week if students have missing work from the prior week. Working lunches for students to complete their assignments are held beginning on Wednesdays and continue each day until Friday. On Friday, our No Fail Friday time kicks in and students are pulled from elective and athletic courses to complete any work that is still not complete.
- The use of technology in instruction is an expectation for all classrooms at GMS, to include tools such as Google classroom, Smart boards, Kid blogs, Apple TV's, and many others. Teachers utilize over 10 Google Chromebook carts to ensure that students are learning how to participate in digital learning communities and develop their technology skills.
- Our EAST (Environmental and Spatial Technologies) classes are open to students in both 6th and 7th grade, who demonstrate an interest in using technology to learn problem solving skills as well as participate in project based learning, to conclude projects focused on serving the overall community.
- Students are encouraged to keep their own data notebook throughout the year, where they are able to reflect on their own individual test scores including the NWEA MAP, ACT Aspire interims and classroom assessments, grades, and work samples. Students have a data day on the last Wednesday of each month where they work on developing a SMART goal
- A variety of courses are available to students to differentiate as based on student needs including Pre-AP in all core subjects, co-teaching for math and literacy, and Learning Strategies courses to further meet student's individual learning needs and provide remediation.
- Teachers work to use a variety of instructional methods with emphasis on cooperative learning and projects.

Middle School OEP Awards

2014 Grade 7 Literacy-GMS #8 Overall in Arkansas

2014 Grade 7 Math Achievement-GMS #1 in Central Arkansas Region

2014 Top 5 Overall Middle Schools by Grade in Literacy Benchmark Achievement-GMS #2

2014 Top 3 Schools by Grade Level in Central Arkansas-Literacy Achievement-GMS #1

2015 Top 25 Schools in State based on the Science Benchmark Exam-GMS #4

2015 Top 5 Schools in the Central Region based on the Science Benchmark Exam-GMS #1

2016 Overall High Achieving ACT Aspire-GMS #6

2016 Overall High Achieving ACT Aspire Central Region-GMS #1

2016 Overall High Achieving in Math ACT Aspire 2016-GMS #8

2016 Overall High Achieving in Math ACT Aspire Central Region-GMS #2

2016 Overall High Achieving in Literacy ACT Aspire-GMS #8

2016 Overall High Achieving in Literacy ACT Aspire Central Region-#3

2016 Overall High Achieving in Science ACT Aspire-GMS #6

2016 Overall High Achieving in Science ACT Aspire Central Region-#1

Developmental Responsiveness

Greenbrier Middle School evidences high performance in the realm of being sensitive to the unique developmental challenges of early adolescents. The environment of Greenbrier Middle School is personalized in many ways. Intellectual development is supported through strategic creation of Fast Focus groups so that students receive enrichment and/or remediation based on their current levels of learning. Through these groups, each student also creates a data notebook that identified their current progress in learning through many data sets, such as through student and family input in selection of elective courses. Every GMS student has an advocate via their Fast Focus teacher. Fast Focus is a period built into the school day that incorporates relationship building, teamwork, personal and academic growth, goal setting, and more. Each teacher also identifies “claimed kids” on our assessment wall who are in need of an additional adult advocate, and writes SMART goals on how to specifically build stronger and better relationships with those identified students. Core teacher and student teams in 6th grade and math/literacy teacher and student teams in 7th grade are created for smaller communities with the goal of increasing and improving collaboration and communication to support students. Content teams with elective teacher members make up several professional learning communities throughout the school, who meet at least weekly on topics to improve teaching and learning. These PLCs created team identities based on individual strengths identified in Marcus Buckingham’s Stand Out Strengths assessment, then created charters in order to establish norms, responsibilities, and goals. The Student Intervention and multiple other teams and committees collaborate regularly to support students, families, and improvement.

Staff members participate in training on how to handle student problems prevalent for this age group,, such as the book study of AMLE’s This We Believe and connecting each school initiative and program to one of the 16 characteristics. Ruby Payne’s poverty research and materials have provided additional support for staff members, while they also receive specific professional development on suicide prevention, identifying abuse or neglect, bullying, and more. Teachers are trained in the Response to Intervention model, SIT procedures, and a wide variety of instructional strategies in order to maximize support for academic problems.

GMS offers many co-curricular activities such as the Clubnections described above, 7th grade athletics (basketball, football, volleyball, track, cross country), other clubs and student groups (books clubs, ACS, G4, student ambassadors, student council). Interests in the fine arts are also supported through many Clubnections (Drama, Art, Photography I, Photography II, Voices, Fashion with Attention to Details) as well as courses (art, band, general music, choir). Unique fitness and health opportunities exist through Clubnections such as Movin’ and Groovin’, Baton Twirling, Weight Lifting, and Lifetime Sports. The school wide fitness program increases interest of these students as well with morning courtyard fitness, brain break, Google Classroom for embedding physical activity across the curriculum, and stability balls. Through many of these groupings students are continually involved with other students with very similar interests and goals, and therefore increasing opportunities to practice effective social skills outside of the regular classroom setting with peers with whom they are comfortable. In addition to science labs taking place at least weekly, a Maker Space Classroom, Mobile Makerspaces, choice boards, Ignite 360, coding in business classes, student and teacher facilitated Digital Learning Day, and other opportunities outside of the classroom further develop interests of

students with such focuses. A goal for the VIP program is for students to understand appropriate behavior, attire, and social skills for various settings, and therefore lessons on etiquette, hygiene, ordering from menus, use of formal table setting, etc, are embedded into bi weekly VIP sessions after school.

Social Equity

Greenbrier Middle School is socially equitable, democratic, and fair, and provides every student with high-quality teachers, resources, learning opportunities, and supports. Positive options are continually open for all students. All faculty and administrators are committed to helping each student produce proficient work and master skills. Essential questions and student learning objectives communicate the learning expectations, rubrics are used across the content, students have opportunities to improve their work and re-take tests, and teachers focus on the quality of work even when turned in late because of our ICU program. Teachers specifically plan for differentiation for co-taught, regular, and pre advanced placements classes in order to help all ranges of learners reach proficiency. Other opportunities include before school Homework Club, lunch time and after school tutoring, Very Important Panther after school program, learning strategies courses for students to receive double blocks of math or literacy instruction as needed, pre advanced placement core courses, Clubnections, Destination Imagination, Quiz Bowl, Chess competitions. Protected time and teachers for accelerated, short term interventions for students with similar needs is provided through Fast Focus built into the master schedule. Math & literacy teachers facilitate small, fluid intervention groups while all other students participate in tier 1 instruction or enrichment activities with assigned teachers. All students participate in any of the services that support their learning, regardless of ethnicity, disability, language proficiency, or gifted status. Teachers include methods for differentiation for co-teaching, regular, and pre advanced placement classes in their lesson plans, including time, processes, learning products, student choices, level 2 co-teaching strategies, learning environment, etc. A wide variety of learning experiences include integrated Literacy Design Collaborative modules, science labs, interactive notebooks, extensive cooperative learning, field trips, service based learning projects, hands on activities, use of manipulatives and equipment, and a variety of digital and technology tools.

Every GMS student is recognized throughout the school year with academic, PRIDE, and/or Clubnection awards at quarterly awards assemblies based on their strengths, growth, and/or achievement. Teachers also nominate students weekly who are noticed going above and beyond in PRIDE. Conversations and collaboration about students are results oriented with the 95/5 mindset (5% problem, 95% solution). Conversations about late, missing work are directed by four common questions used by all staff that are all focused on completing the work rather than irresponsibility or organization. GMS' PRIDE matrix gives multiple positive examples of what each character word looks like in action rather than a list of "do not" rules, which is an asset in discussions about behavior and choices. Every student has an adult advocate through their Fast Focus teacher. While our assessment wall tracks achievement and growth with quantitative data, it also uniquely tracks qualitative data of relationships and connections with students. Students with minimal or no

connections with adults at school are selected by each teacher as his/her “claimed kids,” and teachers write SMART goals on how to strengthen the relationships with those students.

Organizational Support

Greenbrier Middle School has well established norms, structures, and organizational arrangements to support and sustain its trajectory toward excellence. Staff members, students, parents, and community all shared input in the process of creating the GMS mission, vision, and core beliefs. Question stems regarding what the perfect school looks like, sounds like, and feels like to each shareholder group guided the creation while the leadership team crafted the statements. The GMS Vision, “To be the turning point in teaching, leading, and learning,” describes the mindset of constantly looking down the road to how we want to be described 10 years from now. GMS strives to be the most effective turning point for middle school age students as they transition from elementary to secondary school, from childhood to teenage years, while also be the leading trend setter and model school locally to nationally. The shared mission and vision is the foundation of our culture of distributed leadership, including student leadership via student council, ambassadors, Student Leadership Team, Clubnections, and academics. The Student Leadership Team was a leading force in communicating problem areas on campus in regards to behavior and developing the PRIDE matrix.

Leadership is distributed to parents through Parent Advisory Council, PTO, and the abundance of parent input tools used. PAC has the specific goal to become more informed about aspects of GMS and tell our school story in the community, while also giving input and parent perspectives to the parent involvement facilitator.

Evidence from its impact include when PAC shared confusion between Home Access Center, Google Classroom, and ICU, which led to a technology family night to teach parents the purpose and how to use each. Community members are included in leadership through our Smile Starters program, allowing for them to serve as door greeters at school, continue the morning with learning walks through classrooms, and debrief with administrators or lead teachers about current education topics, our school or district, and any other questions they may have. Community members also share leadership as they are connections to each Clubnection. A teacher leadership team represents each grade level and content/team, including elective teachers and special education, who studied Professional Learning Communities at Work, lead PLCs, developed initiatives such as Clubnection, Walk in My Shoes Night, etc. A branch of this team is the Arkansas Leadership Academy Team, which is participating in year 2 of Team Institute for its own leadership development and to develop school improvement goals. An evidence example is this team moving GMS from a weekly intervention period to a daily intervention period built into the master schedule (Fast Focus). “Be the Turning Point” and related arrow logos are posted on newsletters, communication tools, throughout the campus, on apparel, on social media. GMS continually collects, analyzes, reflects on, and uses data to make decisions, with data sets from pre/post Measures of Academic Progress assessment, ACT Aspire assessments, behavior data, SAI and other perception surveys, ICU, IXL intervention/enrichment, Edutyping, assessment wall, relationships/connections as qualitative data, Stand Out results, interest inventories, and more. This data is used to identify areas of growth and make improvements, such as tally marks used on student assessment wall photographs to communicate which teachers have a strong relationship with each at risk student. Teachers then “claimed”

students who needed to be more connected with adults at school and wrote SMART goals to carry this out. MAP data analysis completed by all teachers helps them identify whether each of their course sections need more support in vocabulary acquisitions or informational text components. Other other data sets are used for the same purposes, to improve our school and student learning. By these constant cycles of action research taking place throughout the school, staff members continually strive to meet the mission and vision collaboratively created and determine which actions may or may not be meeting the expectation set out in core beliefs. The leadership team and family night committee facilitate Walk in My Shoes Family Night each May so that families of all entering 5th graders can tour the campus, meet and have conversations with staff members, receive important information about programs and courses, and ease the transition to secondary schools. Throughout the summer, families attend fluid, flexible registration days to better familiarize themselves with the campus, set up and practice lockers, complete paperwork, etc, and then are invited to a formal Parent Orientation to further communicate with teachers. Similar transition occurs through Career Action Planning conferences for exiting 7th graders going to GJHS.

The district supports all of the above mentioned adult learning experiences and funds ALA Team Institute, the annual retreat, PBIS, EAST, and other specific professional learning experiences. Time is allowed to visit other classrooms and even other schools as requested to broaden networks and support continual improvement. District wide focuses on RTI, power standards, curriculum development, use of assessments, and PBIS maintain solid collaboration between GMS and the district, showing GMS as an integral part of our district and educational system. GMS's extensive collaboration with the larger Greenbrier community and region is evidence through Clubnections and Smile Starters, while in the educational realm both teachers and administrators present GMS' work from regional to national levels while also hosting several other schools on campus to learn from our programs, hence striving towards our vision "to be the turning point."