



November 3, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As a parent/guardian of a student in Smith Magnet Elementary, I am writing this letter to let you know that Smith Magnet Elementary, has been designated as a Targeted Support & Improvement Additional Targeted Support (TSI-AT) school and has been designated as a low-performing school by the North Carolina State Board of Education. As stated in ESSA Section 1111(d)(2), North Carolina had to identify schools for targeted support and improvement. TSI-AT schools in North Carolina are those that have a subgroup that is under-performing. As defined in G.S. 115C-105.37: "The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing schools on an annual basis. Low-performing schools are those that earn an overall school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15." The intent of this opportunity is to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

Legislation (G.S. §115C-83.15) passed during the 2013 long session of the North Carolina General Assembly provides parents with an additional measure of school performance in the form of School Performance Grades. Beginning with the 2013–14 school year, the annual North Carolina School Report Cards display a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F for each school in the state.

The School Performance Grades are based 80 percent on our school's achievement score (student proficiency) and 20 percent on students' academic growth. At Smith Magnet, our achievement score for the 2022-2023 school year is based on how well our students performed on:

Grades 3–5 Mathematics – Grade Level Proficient = 46.5%

Grades 3–5 English Language Arts/Reading – Grade Level Proficient = 42.6%

Grades 5 Science – Grade Level Proficient = 47.5%

Smith Magnet received a School Performance Grade of D and a growth designation of *Not Met* for the 2022–2023 school year. Although we are committed to improving this score, it is important to remember that just as no one single score or grade tells the whole story of a student, neither does it tell you everything about the performance of a school or the opportunities that our school provides. As our school continues to grow academically, we are adding multiple programs and activities that make your students'



experience at Smith one that allows them to THRIVE daily. Enhancements available to your students because they attend Smith Magnet:

- **International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program**
 - Inquiry-Based instruction proven to enrich problem solving, demonstrate effective utilization of resources, and support critical thinking
 - Provide a broad worldview and allow students to investigate multiple perspectives
 - Builds research skills (reading, writing, experiments, observations, professional interviews, STEM)
 - SEL incorporated throughout the day with the IB Learner Profile
 - Focuses on student as a whole and their value as individuals
- **Daily world language: Mandarin and Spanish**
 - Increases focus and problem-solving skills
 - Improves communication and leadership skills
 - Memory improves as well as critical thinking
- **Spanish Immersion**
 - Optional program that allows students to graduate as bilingual citizens
- **Global Studies**
 - Gives students opportunities to take action in partnership with the United Nations and the Sustainable Development Goals
 - Hands-On exploration of different cultures, geography, and languages
 - Leadership building
- **AIG**
 - Provides a differentiated challenge for students who are performing above grade level
- **Active Learning Space**
 - Technology for research in multiple ways
 - Materials for STEM and Inquiry allowing student-led investigations
 - Think tank setting where students can explore, grow and learn in various styles
- **Specialized Intervention**
 - Differentiated instruction for students who are struggling to grasp a concept
 - Boosts academic growth in students below benchmark
- **Clubs - Starting soon!!**
 - Allows students to explore extracurricular interests outside of school hours
 - Focus on global studies, leadership, inquiry, STEM, arts and more
- **Tutoring Services** - Offered in the Spring for students in grades 3-5
- **Creation of a Learning Community**
 - When FAMILIES belong to the community, the student investment deepens
 - PTA
 - Multiple Family Nights
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Community partnerships



- Heroes Read Program
- **Building Upgrades**
 - Creation of collaborative spaces
 - Fresh paint at the front of the school and school-wide paint project to begin on June 14, 2024
 - Purchase of new classroom furniture and supplies
 - Technology purchases: coding tools, virtual reality, robots, laptops, and interactive learning panels

As a TSI-AT school and as a school designated as NC low-performing, Smith Magnet Elementary is required to develop a comprehensive plan that specifically addresses how the school will improve student achievement. The plan will also include how our district will support us and monitor the progress of our school. The comprehensive plan will address the following areas:

- Classroom Management
- Standards-aligned Instruction
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Instructional Leadership
- Recruitment & Retention of Effective Teachers
- Support for Grade-to-Grade Transitions
- Implementation of a Tiered Instructional System
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Student Support Services
- Family and Community Engagement

We have set the following goal(s) for Smith Magnet this year:

- *Smith Magnet ES will focus on implementing and monitoring specific, high-quality instructional strategies during differentiated core instruction throughout the school year, aimed at increasing student achievement and moving out of low-performing status. Progress will be measured through assessments and data reviews, including NC Check-Ins, mClass, NKT, Star Math, CFAs, Walkthroughs, Dreambox, and EOG tests with the goal of a 4% increase on the NC EOG assessment by June 2024.*

The following are two strategies to assist with this goal:

- Build capacity of PLC leaders and Intervention Team to create an aligned, consistent and collaborative PLC environment that are responsive to student needs, subgroup data and incorporates culturally relevant practices
- Improved/enhanced processes for supplemental and intensive academic support facilitated by the Intervention Team by implementing a "push-in" model of support

Our students need to experience higher achievement levels, but it will require hard work on the part of staff, students, and families. Here are some strategies Smith Magnet will be implementing:

- **HELPS 1-1 Program** - Volunteers serving students in grades 2-5

The goal of this program is to support students who need additional help with core instruction.

- **NC Ed Corps** - Instructional Support Specialist - Mrs. Hager – serving (K-5) students

North Carolina Education Corps is a response to the impact COVID-19 is having on schools, as the work continues to help students make up ground and get back on track.

- **HEROES Read Program** -

Volunteers read with students in the Heroes Read classroom. Students receive a book to enhance their home library.

Parent engagement is at the heart of our school improvement efforts. Here are some ways you can help:

- Make sure that both you and your student are aware of academic expectations set for your student this school year. A list of learning objectives in student-friendly language is available from your student's teacher(s).
- Call your child's teacher or the principal, Beverly L. Smith, if you have questions or concerns about your student or to set up an appointment to meet with a school staff member who will be working with your student.
 - Make sure that your student is prepared and attends school each day.
 - Monitor your student's homework.
- Monitor the progress your student is making and attend meetings with your student's teacher(s).
- Keep track of our school events from our website at <https://www.wcpss.net/smithes>
- Volunteer – Parents must register and be approved to volunteer.
- Join the (PTA) *Parent Teacher Association*.

Sounds like a lot but preparing our students so they can succeed is not easy and is a group effort. Here are some resources available to help:

- Graduation requirements: www.ncpublicschools.org/gradrequirements/
- K-12 standards in academic subjects: www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/
- State student achievement test results: www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/
- N.C. School Report Cards: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/data-reports/school-report-cards>



We're excited about this school year and are working to make it a success for your students. Already, we have:

- Given greater attention to our school vision statement to better guide our work/efforts to improve outcomes for all students and prepare students to become globally aware and productive citizens of the world.
- Enhanced our Instructional Agreements Guide for teachers that includes our academic “Fabulous Five” that include: Math instruction, Literacy instruction, PLC’s, Honoring Our School Culture, and Family and Community Engagement.

If you have questions about the content of this letter, please contact Mrs. Beverly Smith, Principal at bsmith7@wcpss.net or by phone at (919) 662-2458.

Sincerely,

Beverly L. Smith

