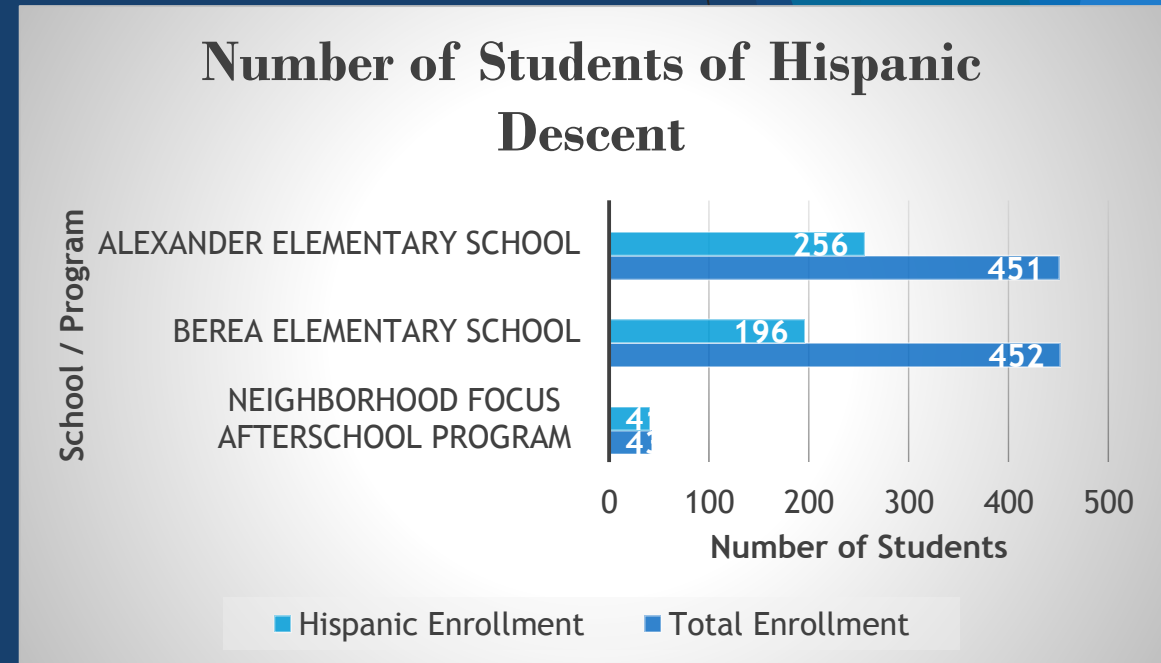


**“Serve and Empower”: How Greenville County
Schools and Programs are Reaching the Needs of
First-Generation Hispanic Immigrant Students**

**Maria Bartlett, Parker Cecil, Jose Cruz, Matt Hogg, & McKenna
Luzynski**

Demographics and Statistics: Berea Elementary School, Alexander Elementary School, Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program

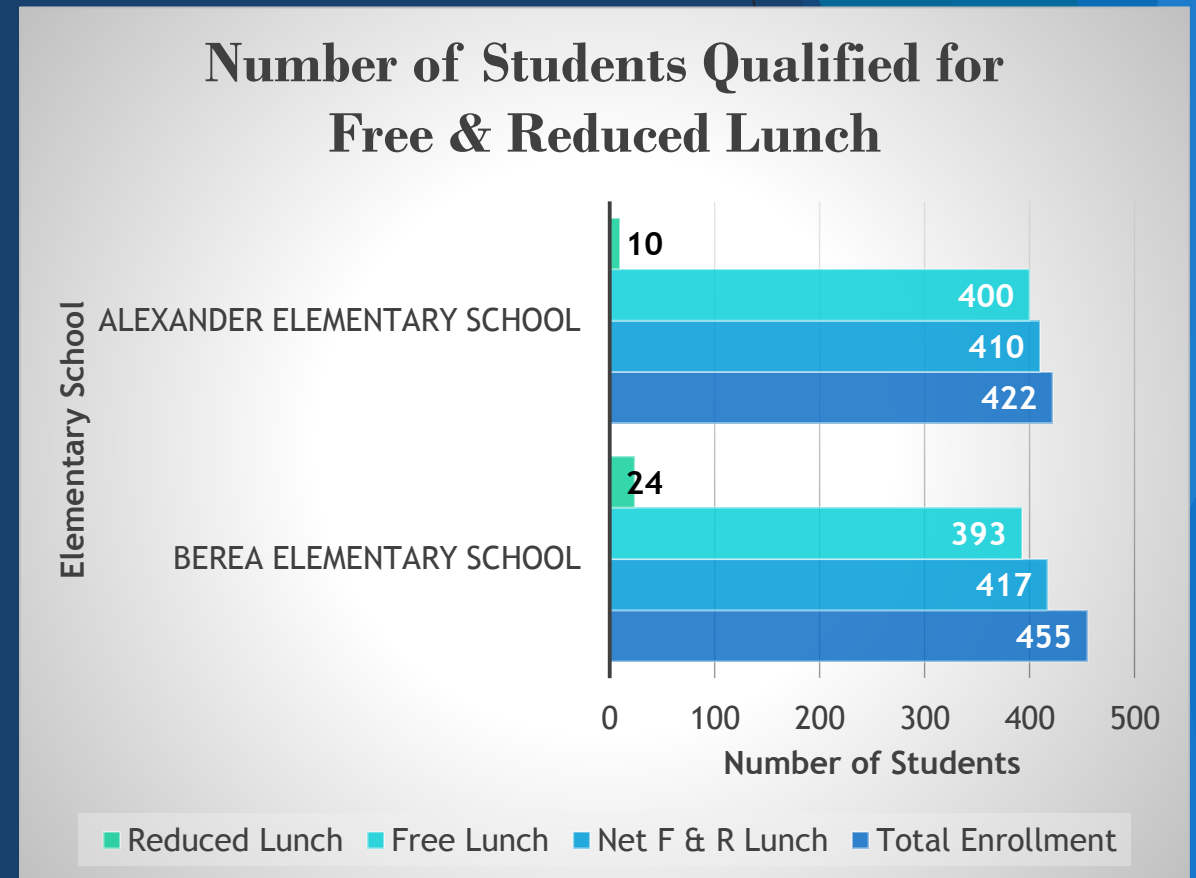
- ▶ **Portion of Students of Hispanic Descent**
 - ▶ **Greenville County Public School Enrollment (3K – Grade 5): 37,387 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students (3K – Grade 5) of Hispanic Descent: 5,662 students (15.14%)
 - ▶ **Alexander Elementary School Enrollment: 451 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students (3K – Grade 5) of Hispanic Descent: 256 (56.76%)
 - ▶ **Berea Elementary School Enrollment: 452 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students (3K – Grade 5) of Hispanic Descent: 196 (43.36%)
 - ▶ **Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program Enrollment (Elementary – High School): 43 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students (Elementary – High School) of Hispanic Descent: 41 (95.35%)



Source: The School District of Greenville County 2015-2016 Enrollment by Grade (Summary of All Grades; Enrollment by School)

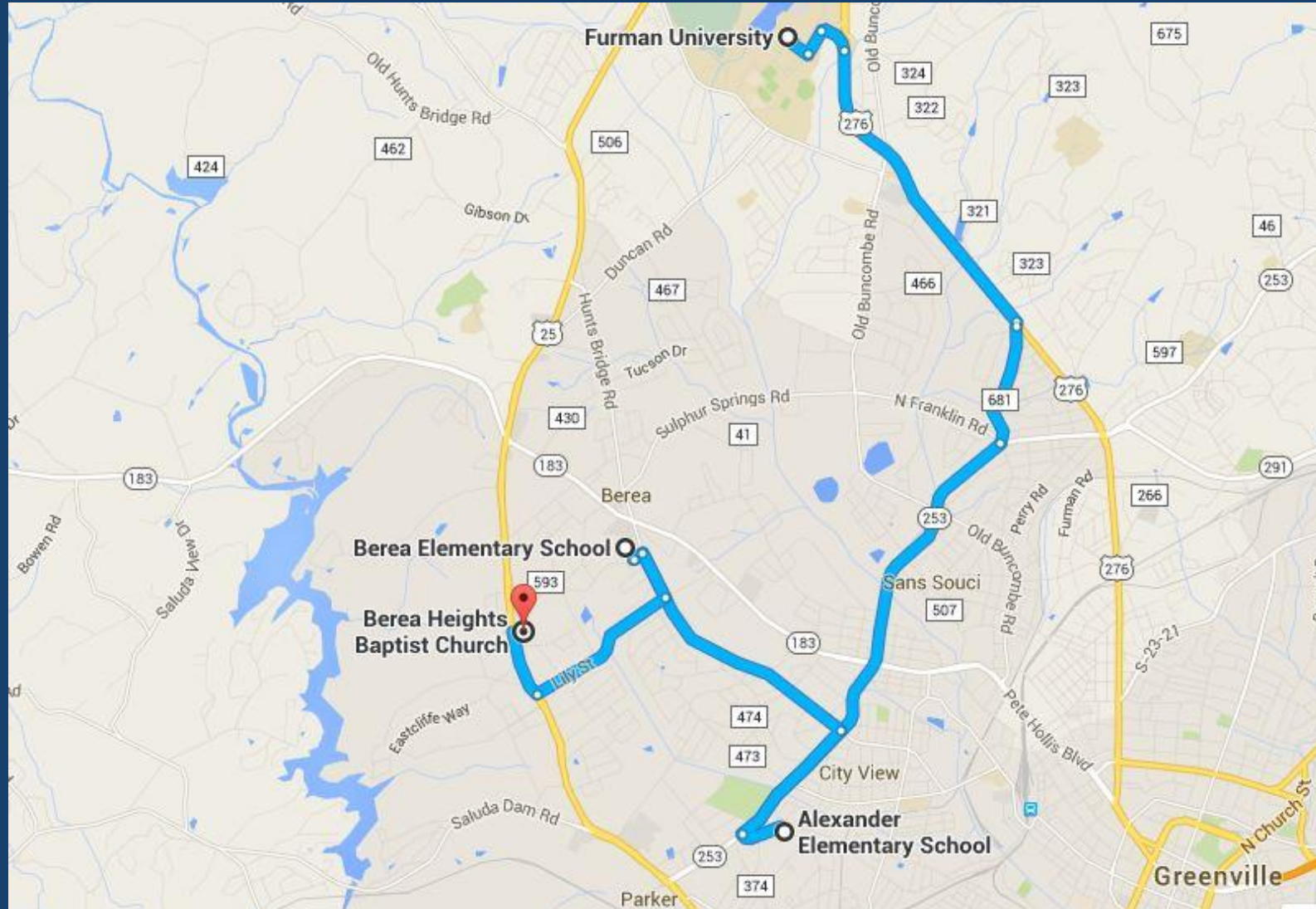
Demographics and Statistics: Berea Elementary School, Alexander Elementary School, Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program

- ▶ **Portion of Students on Free or Reduced Lunch**
 - ▶ **Greenville County Public School Enrollment (4K – Grade 5): 37,628 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students Qualified for Free Lunch: 19,174 (51%)
 - ▶ Number of Students Qualified for Reduced Lunch: 1,941 (5%)
 - ▶ Total Students Qualified for Free & Reduced Lunch: 21,115 (56%)
 - ▶ **Alexander Elementary School Enrollment (4K – Grade 5): 422 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students Qualified for Free Lunch: 400 (95%)
 - ▶ Number of Students Qualified for Reduced Lunch: 10 (2%)
 - ▶ Total Students Qualified for Free & Reduced Lunch: 410 (97%)
 - ▶ **Berea Elementary School Enrollment (4K – Grade 5): 455 students**
 - ▶ Number of Students Qualified for Free Lunch: 393 (86%)
 - ▶ Number of Students Qualified for Reduced Lunch: 24 (5%)
 - ▶ Total Students Qualified for Free & Reduced Lunch: 417 (92%)



Source: Free and Reduced Percentages for the Month Ended May 31, 2015 (Greenville County Schools – Food and Nutrition Services)

Map of Resources in Berea Community



1. **Alexander Elementary School** (1601 West Bramlett Road, Greenville, SC 29611 – 6.4 miles from Furman)
2. **Bera Elementary School** (100 Berea Drive, Greenville, SC 29617 – 4.7 miles from Furman)
3. **Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program** (Located in Bera Heights Baptist Church – 6914 White Horse Road, Greenville, SC 29611 – 5.9 miles from Furman)

Overview of Berea Elementary ESOL Program

▶ Ms. Tanya Lawless – ESOL Teacher

- ▶ Works with students in grades 3-5 (approximately 90 students in total, 99% Hispanic)
- ▶ Most common nationality of Hispanic students: American, Guatemalan, Columbian, Mexican

▶ ESOL Protocol & Schedule

- ▶ Upon enrollment at Berea, student is given a PHLOTE form (Primary Home Language other than English), and after confirmation from parents that home language is not English, the student is given a language proficiency placement test; if the student does not pass the test, they are enrolled in the ESOL program.
- ▶ ESOL students take a yearly assessment (ACCESS) to observe English language proficiency progress
- ▶ Berea ESOL program works as a pullout program, where students are taken out of class to work with Ms. Lawless and other ESOL faculty
- ▶ Program also includes classwork modification for students
- ▶ Program uses computer programs to teach language, such as Rosetta Stone

▶ Student Success in Program

- ▶ According to Ms. Lawless, success in graduating the ESOL program has a strong link with the level of the student's introduction to reading and writing in native/home language before entrance into the program.
 - ▶ Success of 3rd grade student

ESOL Program at Berea Elementary – Areas for Improvement

- ▶ Ms. Lawless articulated clear ideas about the need for improvements to the program
 - ▶ Technology funding vs. teaching funding
 - ▶ 1:1 iPad and Chromebook school
 - ▶ Lack of resources to ESOL program – use of Rosetta Stone
 - ▶ Lack of involvement and parent participation
 - ▶ Lack of exposure of students to reading and writing in the home
 - ▶ The need for greater community involvement
 - ▶ Need for churches to increase involvement
 - ▶ Appreciative of non-profit organizations that are church-led, such as Neighborhood Focus, that aid in the responsibility of helping Hispanic students assimilate

Overview of Alexander Elementary

▶ Ms. Linda Dara – ESOL Teacher

- ▶ Most common nationality of Hispanic students: Mexican & Guatemalan
- ▶ Of the 190 ESOL students, Ms. Dara works with 35 of them regularly
- ▶ Works with younger students more often
- ▶ During meeting times, there is a 10:1 student/teacher ratio

▶ ESOL Protocol and Schedule

- ▶ Students enter program based on the results of the language placement test
- ▶ Ms. Dara's daily schedule is flexible and she is able to develop her own daily schedule – “I don't have a set time for seeing students.”
- ▶ Alexander Elementary ESOL is also a pullout program.
- ▶ As Ms. Dara is able to work more autonomously, she has the ability to target specific areas of needs for each individual student and create their curriculum accordingly.
- ▶ Service/Assistance Provided Includes:
 - ▶ Introducing students to new vocabulary
 - ▶ Reading stories aloud / general reading assistance
 - ▶ Getting students to understand directions
 - ▶ Lower literacy students use a computer program and work with Ms. Dara to build English skills
 - ▶ Higher literacy students work on reading comprehension assignments

ESOL Program at Alexander Elementary

- ▶ **Other Facilitators at Alexander and in Greenville Community**
 - ▶ “.6 teachers” (assist 3 days per week)
 - ▶ Bilingual receptionists
 - ▶ Bilingual parent facilitators
 - ▶ Community programs, such as a Good News Club on Tuesdays which is organized by a church and Neighborhood Focus.
- ▶ **Student Success in Program**
 - ▶ PASS Testing Scores
 - ▶ Ms. Dara sees that the students that eventually are most successful in the ESOL program are those that have the most involved and engaged families at home.
 - ▶ In order to graduate from the program, students have to attain a score of 5 out of 6 on the assessment test, which includes questions related to listening, reading, writing, and speaking.
 - ▶ Last school year, 8 students tested out of the program; this is a vast improvement as originally the average graduation number used to be only 2 students per year.

Overview of Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program

- ▶ Directed by Mr. Will Fallaw
 - ▶ Serves 43 students, 41 of whom identify as Hispanic
 - ▶ Most of the population of students have parents who were born outside of the United States, and the most common nationalities are Mexican, Guatemalan, and Honduran.
- ▶ Philosophy of the Program: Seeks “to be a beneficial presence for the neighborhood but also for the wider Greenville community.”
 - ▶ Aims for a mutually beneficial relationship between him and the students & their families
 - ▶ Will seeks to avoid the “paternalistic and domineering” attitude that is common in “charity organizations”
 - ▶ Endeavors to meet the academic and spiritual needs of the students and families; Will emphasizes that Neighborhood Focus seeks to meet the health, nutrition, and education needs; “teaching a balanced life.”
 - ▶ “We do our homework, we take breaks, we build self-discipline, we build character with our power-up time.”
 - ▶ “It all boils down to life school.”

Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program (continued)

- ▶ **Connection between Neighborhood Focus and local elementary schools**
 - ▶ Most common elementary schools attended: Alexander, Berea, Armstrong, Monaview, Westcliffe, & Paris
 - ▶ Most common middle schools attended: Berea, Lakeview, & Sevier
 - ▶ Most common high schools attended: Berea
 - ▶ **Entering the Neighborhood Focus Program**
 - ▶ Students and parents often find out about Neighborhood Focus through word of mouth or occasionally through a Title I worker employed at a local school.
 - ▶ There is such high demand for entrance to Neighborhood Focus that there is a waiting list.
- ▶ **Assimilation Success**
 - ▶ The program currently has a student who recently immigrated to the US and came speaking no English. Will has observed that she has been able to make friends in the program, and she now feels greater comfort speaking in English because she observes her peers, who are “physically and culturally similar to her” speaking in English.
 - ▶ Ms. Dara, the ESOL teacher at Alexander Elementary School, stated in her interview that a parent facilitator had noted that one girl who had begun to attend Neighborhood Focus became more vocal in her class at school than she had been previously.
- ▶ **Will’s vision for improvement**
 - ▶ In terms of the local elementary schools, Will has observed that several in particular are very good at getting a sizeable turnout at parent meetings. He’s unsure of whether that applies to all other schools, but he views that a goal would be to have all schools obtain that level.
 - ▶ Will emphasized that Neighborhood Focus and Greenville County Schools cannot reach all the need that’s out there ; for example, Neighborhood Focus cannot provide transportation, and they have to abbreviate the length of day of their summer camp program, both of which are challenges to working parents.

Summary of Resources Offered

- ▶ Without a doubt, the ESOL programs at Berea and Alexander Elementary and the Neighborhood Focus Afterschool Program offer a variety of invaluable resources to students in need of help assimilating to the United States.
- ▶ Each teacher/leader mentioned specific needs for improvement, included but not limited to more fiscal resources and more parent/program involvement.
- ▶ The philosophy of Will Fallaw, in his words, is to “serve and empower” the community of students and families that he works with. We can all contribute to the service and empowerment of this community!

Resources

- ▶ Thanks to the following people for taking the time to be interviewed and for providing instrumental information about each program:
 - ▶ Tanya Lawless (Berea Elementary)
 - ▶ Linda Dara (Alexander Elementary)
 - ▶ Will Fallaw (Neighborhood Focus)
- ▶ Documents Referenced:
 - ▶ Free and Reduced Percentages For The Month Ended May 31, 2015 (Greenville County Schools – Food and Nutrition Services)
 - ▶ The School District of Greenville County 2015-2016 Enrollment by Grades (Summary – All Grades)
 - ▶ The School District of Greenville County 2015-2016 Enrollment by Grades (Enrollment by School)
 - ▶ (The numbers for enrollment differ slightly among the statistics for Hispanic enrollment and numbers for Free & Reduced lunch as the latter was measured on May 31, 2015 and the former was measured on January 12, 2016.)
- ▶ Websites Referenced
 - ▶ www.greenville.k12.sc.us/News/main.asp?titleid=1602access (in regards to the ACCESS test)