

***Improving Student Performance and School Climate at Stono Park: An
Analysis of the Benefits for Students and the Community by Partnering
with Orange Grove***

Section 1

School Information:

Orange Grove Charter School (OGCS)

501(c)(3)

1225 Orange Branch Road

Charleston, SC 29407

843.763.1520

Contact Person: John H. Clendaniel, Principal/CEO (john_clendaniel@orangegrovecharter.com)

Resume: **Attached**

Mission Statement:

The mission of Orange Grove Charter School is to develop students with the intellectual power to become confident, caring, and responsible life-long learners by providing an innovative, supportive learning environment that emphasizes creative and critical thinking skills while respecting individual differences.

Learner Standards:

1. Students will relate to others in a respectful and cooperative manner.
2. Students will demonstrate mathematical and scientific literacy in solving real-life problem
3. Students will develop a love for reading and appreciation for quality literature.
4. Students will demonstrate proficiency and knowledge in the use of technology and research.
5. Students will be able to comprehend and communicate ideas effectively in verbal and written form.

Philosophy:

The students at Orange Grove receive an education in an environment that nurtures and promotes self-expression, while providing appropriate challenges in the learning process.

Orange Grove's curriculum incorporates a variety of principles and methods that have been substantiated by research and proven to be effective in the process of the development of students' skills. All teachers utilize the South Carolina academic standards at each grade level. They are aware of the varied developmental levels that are present within each classroom due to the school's diverse student population. An understanding of the various learning styles of each student and the use of differentiation in the instructional process play an important role in the implementation of the standards. Instruction is sequential, explicit, and connected to real world experiences. Modeling, practice, and reinforcement are part of daily lessons. The use of manipulatives and hands-on instruction is stressed to make the transfer from concrete to abstract more meaningful. Technology enhances educational activities throughout the day and in every classroom. Learning is consistently monitored through the use of a variety of assessments. Teachers utilize the information from these assessments to modify and adjust the curriculum as needed.

Open dialogue among teachers is an important part of our success at Orange Grove. Grade levels meet weekly to discuss pacing and adjust flexible student groups. Communication between grade levels is used to ensure that prerequisite skills are mastered before moving on to higher level skills and consistency in teaching is maintained. In addition, frequent communication with parents reinforces the philosophy of a learning partnership, with the student in the middle and the teacher and parents providing support at both ends. Teacher expectations and specific information about standards and expected learner outcomes are clearly communicated to students and parents.

The importance of an interdisciplinary approach has been greatly substantiated by research and is employed school wide. It allows students to make connections among the various subject areas. The reading/writing connection is an integral part of our program. Teachers have embedded reading, writing, and research into all subjects. Special area teachers collaborate with the classroom teachers to integrate activities that are correlated with the classroom teachers' units. It allows students to be an active part of the learning process, whether individually or cooperatively, while reinforcing higher order thinking skills.

Section 2

Background:

Orange Grove Charter School currently operates a preschool-8th grade program with two campuses in West Ashley. FY 19 financial audit **attached**.

Elementary Campus – 1225 Orange Branch Road, Charleston, 29407

Enrollment: 800

Middle Campus – 505-B Arlington Drive, Charleston, 29414

Enrollment: 350

At its meeting on October 25, 2016, the CCSD Board of Trustees approved the action to (1) Permit Orange Grove Charter School to continue using the old Oakland Elementary School at no cost to CCSD until the earlier of the 2025-2026 school year or when Orange Grove Charter School has a permanent facility for a middle school; (2) To direct staff to include a project for constructing and equipping a new West Ashley Middle School on the St. Andrews campus at 721 Wappoo Road in the Phase Five sales tax program, and (3) Upon the earlier of 2025 or the West Ashley Middle School current campus is determined to be surplus, enter in to discussions to negotiate a memorandum of understanding and facilities use agreement with Orange Grove Charter School for middle school students up to their middle school capacity at no cost to CCSD.

Academic Achievement Data:

Orange Grove/Stono Park/CCSD Academic Achievement Data

Percentage of students who met/exceeded standard: A snapshot from 2008 and the present.

Year: 2008 (PASS Test) 2nd year as a charter school

	Orange Grove	Stono Park	CCSD
Math	77.5	94	77.8
Reading	89.8	92.3	87.6

Year: 2019 (SC Ready) 13th year as a charter school

	Orange Grove	Stono Park	CCSD
Math	77.3	23.9	49.3
Reading	77.6	26.4	50.2

Proven Evidence of Closing the Achievement Gap

ELA Met/Exemplary Percentage Comparison of Subgroup School to CCSD

	African American OGCS	African American CCSD
2011	95.6	71.9
2010	92.2	75.2
2009	90.2	74.8

*Data by subgroups has not been disaggregated on the State Report Card since 2011.

Math Met/Exemplary Percentage Comparison of Subgroup: School to CCSD

	African American OGCS	African American CCSD
2011	87.2	70.9
2010	89.8	68.0
2009	82.2	67.9

*Data by subgroups has not been disaggregated on the State Report Card since 2011.

Abstract:

For the past thirteen years, Orange Grove Charter School has operated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Having the ability to be autonomous and site-based managed has allowed us to grow our school and create more opportunities for children in our community. We have experienced a measured increase in student achievement across all subgroups, a measured increase in satisfaction from stakeholders and a measured increase in applications. This white paper report will analyze the benefits of Orange Grove partnering with CCSD to provide the educational and administrative management of Stono Park Elementary.

Introduction:

The Orange Grove Board of Directors granted the request of Principal John H. Clendaniel, to pursue a partnership with CCSD and Stono Park Elementary. This authorization is granted for the purpose of:

- An overall improvement in student achievement and climate at Stono Park.
- The construction of a new 800 student middle school campus on the old Middleton High School property located at 1776 William Kennerty Drive, 29407.
- A feeder system where both Orange Grove Elementary Charter and Stono Park Elementary students would attend middle school together at the newly constructed Orange Grove Charter Middle School at 1776 William Kennerty Drive 29407.
- Allowing for a greater number of course offerings, programming and support.
- Decreasing the number of students on Orange Grove's waitlist by offering a quality elementary option at Stono Park.
- Increasing diversity at both Stono Park and Orange Grove.
- A needed expansion of the middle grade programs at Orange Grove Charter School, the top performing middle school in West Ashley, in order to prepare more students for success at West Ashley High School.

Problem(s):

Stono Park is currently the lowest performing school in the West Ashley area of Charleston. As evident on the South Carolina School Report Card, students are consistently scoring below both the district and state averages in all tested subjects. Once rated in the 86th percentile of all South Carolina elementary schools in 2004, Stono Park is now rated in just the 11th percentile. Out of the 637 elementary schools in South Carolina, Stono Park Elementary is ranked 567th. Academically, Stono Park is outperforming just 70 schools in South Carolina. According to the Post and Courier, nearly 40% of students who reside within the Stono Park attendance zone choose not to attend. Of the families whose children do attend and responded to State Report Card surveys, only 62% of those parents stated that teachers and staff prevented or stopped bullying. Only 66% of teachers who responded agreed that rules for behavior were enforced at

school. Despite Stono Park's new facility and its large attendance zone, the school continues to serve a small student population.

Proposed Solution:

To address the issue of performance, preparation, climate, and enrollment, a partnership would be created between the non-profit or subsidiary of Orange Grove Charter School (OGCS) and the Charleston County School District. This partnership will authorize OGCS to provide the management and operational services for the School commencing with the 2020-2021 school year. OGCS will be responsible for all personnel hiring and all current Stono Park staff will have the opportunity to apply. OGCS will structure the academic programs and assessment practices with respect to the School in its discretion, including, without limitation: (i) curriculum and determination of curriculum materials, (ii) staffing patterns; (iii) instructional strategies; (iv) courses, course requirements and course length; (v) specialized programs and transitions; and (vi) student performance evaluation systems. For both marketing and identification purposes, the school will be renamed ***Orange Grove at Stono Park***. Orange Grove at Stono Park will require students to take all state-mandated tests in accordance with district and state policies. Orange Grove at Stono Park will not be required to follow District curriculum requirements as long as Orange Grove at Stono Park determines that the School's curriculum is at least as rigorous as that of the District. At the start of the 2026 school year or earlier if a new facility is complete, students from Orange Grove at Stono Park and Orange Grove Charter School would both have the option to attend a newly constructed middle school campus at the site of the old Middleton High School and current location of the West Ashley Middle School located at 1776 William Kennerty Drive.

Combining the two elementary programs for middle school will have numerous benefits for the students and the community. With an increased and more diverse student population, thanks to rising 6th graders from Orange Grove at Stono Park, Orange Grove Charter Middle School will be able to offer a greater number of courses and offer more programming for all students. With a larger student population, having both elementary school populations at one middle school will also relieve increasing enrollment pressure at CE Williams.

Starting in August of 2021, kindergarten students on the waiting list for Orange Grove Charter School would be offered any seats not first filled by students residing in the attendance zone for Stono Park. This will relieve the kindergarten waiting list at Orange Grove which consistently exceeds 400 students for kindergarten alone.

Conclusion:

Having the opportunity to turn around one of the lowest performing schools in the county and state is both a challenge and a privilege that we are eager to accept. The success that we have experienced at Orange Grove since becoming a charter school has been something that the whole community is proud of. The journey from an average rated school hovering around the 50th percentile to one of the highest rated schools (the 98th percentile) in the State without an entrance criterion has been some of the most rewarding work that we believe one can do. The culture at Orange Grove is absolutely amazing and is something that we feel can be replicated at Orange Grove at Stono Park. Our middle school expansion in 2013 has proven to be a huge success with students consistently outscoring district and state averages. Beyond the academic success, more than 60% of our students are participating in school sponsored extra-curricular activities and more than 75% of our rising 9th graders are now attending WAHS. This was not the case 5 years ago when only 37% of rising 6th grade students from Orange Grove attended a District 10 middle school. The lack of quality middle school options left parents looking elsewhere for middle and high school. As the region continues to experience substantial growth, the need for a larger, high performing middle school is necessary. We look forward to the opportunity of doing something now for our students that will positively impact our community and state for generations.