Sherry Cariens served as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal at Lexington Intermediate School before being appointed head of Oak Grove Elementary in 2010. Under her leadership, Oak Grove was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2012, a recognition which Cariens credits to her staff as a reflection of their hard work for overall excellence, closing the achievement gap, and consistently exceeding expectations in statewide testing. In addition, the school has received the Palmetto Gold Award for four consecutive years and was named a 2015 Palmetto's Finest Award School by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators for its excellent instruction and outstanding leaders, with strong family and community involvement. Under her direction, Oak Grove has recently implemented leadership goals based upon Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits and became a Leader in Me Lighthouse School in 2014, involving parents in the process of teaching students to become good leaders. She serves as a catalyst for interpreting data in the district, taking on a mentor role with administrative colleagues. Based on nominations from students, parents and staff, Cariens was awarded the 2014 Joseph M. Bedenbaugh Administrator of the Year Award, one of the highest honors in the Lexington County School District. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Appalachian State University and Master’s and Education Specialist degrees from the University of South Carolina.