



James Simons Montessori School

Anita Huggins
Superintendent of Schools

Jennifer Swearingen, Ph.D.
Interim Associate Superintendent of
the Elementary Learning Community

Elizabeth Dillenkoffer
Principal

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Contact:
Elizabeth Dillenkoffer, 843-724-7763

Media Release

Around the World in two hours: James Simons Montessori's multicultural night

Charleston, SC - For several weeks students at James Simons Montessori School from Pre-K to eighth grade have engaged in a deep study on the geography, culture, lifestyle, and language of various cultures around the world culminating in their Celebration of Learning at a Multicultural Night.

A variety of countries were represented such as Japan, Australia, Ireland, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Greece, France, Puerto Rico, Italy, Ukraine, India, Portugal, Venezuela, Paraguay, Mexico, Ghana, and Thailand. Classes chose which country they wanted to study.

The process of researching, creating, and collaborating lead to high levels of engagement. Students were proud of this authentic opportunity to display their high quality work and to celebrate their learning with their friends and family. Instructional coach Jen Savage was amazed at all of the ways that the standards were integrated to create a rich learning experience.

"Students studying France, India, and Mexico created original art," said Savage. "Students researching Greece chose a god or goddess in which to research and present. Students looking at Italy used fractions to create their own pizza pies. We had live musicians in Ireland and students making chai tea in Thailand. There was just an incredible amount of learning that took place."

The school's teacher-librarian Rosie Herold and music teacher Lauren Martin teamed up together to study Paraguay and teach students about building an orchestra of hope. The presentation was based on the story of a community who lived on a landfill in Paraguay and how they learned to build instruments out of trash and recycled products. Students built their own instruments out of recycled materials to simulate this story as part of their deep, integrated study.

Families lined up outside the doors of the school as they entered James Simons and upon entry, every student received a passport and as they moved through each country, they received a stamp to indicate that they visited. Students were

just as enthusiastic about these stamps as they were about the food samples that they enjoyed along the journey.

"I know these projects take an incredible amount of prep work, energy, and time, but this is why we do this work," said Principal Beth Dillenkoffer. "To see our students presenting and hear the pride in their voices when sharing what they've learned about other countries is meaningful work that they will take with them the rest of their lives."

For more information, contact Principal Beth Dillenkoffer at (843) 724-7763.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 50,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse portfolio of educational options and specialized programs delivered to the students of CCSD through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools and programs. Rich educational opportunities for students include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; military; dual credit; and many more.