

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

CCSD celebrates Read Across America

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Charleston, SC – Charleston County School District (CCSD) will be celebrating Read Across America Week March 11-15, 2024. This a district-wide celebration of literacy for all students around this year's theme, "For the Love of Reading".

All schools will join the fun with literacy-themed spirit days, curriculum and Social Emotional Learning connections, activities, virtual author visits, a special Beanstack reading challenge, and more.

"CCSD's Read Across America Week celebrates literacy and a love of reading for all our students," said CCSD's Library Media Services Coordinator and District Textbook Coordinator Christy James. "Our event is in the spirit of the National Education Association's (NEA) historical celebration, but we've put our own CCSD spin on it to ensure that all our preK-12 schools can engage with the activities and feel connected to our district-wide celebration of literacy and a love of reading. Students are the heart of our work in CCSD and literacy is at the heart of all we do in education."

A district committee was convened to develop a theme, design logos, create activities, plan guest readers, and host events. Melissa Zahler, teacher-librarian at Chicora Elementary School described the planning as a passion project for librarians and other educators who worked to broaden Read Across America Week so the activities would encompass all readers.

"We wanted to make sure all types of books were included in our suggestions so that everyone felt represented," said Zahler. "We wanted to showcase that reading is so diverse and it can really touch every single person."

Jennifer Gomez, a teacher-librarian at Charleston County School of the Arts explained that the committee wanted to expand the theme so that secondary schools could celebrate as well.

"Some very creative people came up with these ideas so they can be modified and adjusted for all grade levels," said Gomez.

Additionally, there are events for teachers, so they can get in on the fun. There are three after-hours events at local bookstores scheduled for teachers. There will be

door prizes and discounts for teachers who participate. Events for teachers celebrating the reading of students and give the teachers something special merit The themes (created using library standards) can all be found on CCSD's Read Across America [website](#). Each day has a specific content focus making it a K-12 event celebrating literacy.

Themes are:

- Monday – Explore For the Love of Reading
- Tuesday – Collaborate For the Love of Reading
- Wednesday – Create For the Love of Reading
- Thursday – Inspire For the Love of Reading
- Friday – Play for the Love of Reading

The week will be kicked off with special guest reader Octavia Mitchell, an Emmy award-winning journalist at WCBD News 2 in Charleston. Additionally, everyone can join the virtual author visits happening throughout the week. Additional information and recordings of previous author visits and other read-alouds can be found on the [Virtual Author Visits and Read Alouds page](#).

"We basically have served up Read Across America Week on a silver platter," said Gomez. "That way, if they have time to do one or two things, it is there as a resource and an inspiration. The website is a one-stop shop, designed to make it very easy. Everything a teacher will need is there, divided into sections and easy to navigate."

Throughout the entire month of March, CCSD readers can participate in the For the Love of Reading Challenge in Beanstack. Students can read and complete activities to earn badges and prizes. CCSD will be awarding two elementary, one middle, and one high school reader a special lunch delivery and bookstore gift cards (provided generously by the Charleston County Education Association). All students will be automatically registered for the challenge on March 1.

"Each year CCSD's Read Across America Week event has grown," added James. "More classes are joining the virtual author visits and taking advantage of recordings of previous author visits and local guest readers. Collections of theme-related resources and activities are available. An educator appreciation event has been added and expanded to include opportunities at three different local bookstores. Everything is intended to provide teachers and schools with the resources and flexibility to create a memorable experience for students that celebrates reading."

Read Across America Week is directly tied to and supports CCSD's Goals, Values, and Vision.

"This will be a fun week, celebrating reading, with intentional ties to curricular standards and curriculums," said Zahler. "We were very cognitive that all of the

elements used the district's pillars to help shape the outline for these events. The activities and suggested reading are inclusive and representative. Most importantly, this week will highlight the importance of reading and all that can come from it."

For more information, contact Christy James at (843) 790-3707.

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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.