

For Immediate Release

December 15, 2023

Contact:

Andy Pruitt 843-937-6583

Media Release

Office of Communications

Anita W. Huggins, M.Ed.

Acting Superintendent

Vanessa L. Denney, M.Ed.

Interim Executive Director of Communications



LaToya Smith

Principal at North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary School

North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary principal LaToya Smith to fill role permanently

Charleston, SC – Charleston County School District (CCSD) is excited to announce and welcome LaToya Smith as the permanent principal at North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary School (NCCAES). Smith has served as interim principal since July of 2023 after previously serving as the assistant principal at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School for four years.

With 23 years of experience in education, Smith began her career in 2000 as a middle school math teacher. Over the next seven years, she taught students at McNair Middle School in DeKalb County School District in Georgia and at Whale Branch Middle School in Beaufort County School District in South Carolina. In 2007, Smith took her talents to the elementary level where she served as a teacher at Shoal Creek Elementary in Georgia's Rockdale County School District before joining the district at North Charleston Elementary School.

In 2010, Smith became one of CCSD's instructional coaches. In this role, she created and implemented professional development and instructional strategies for teachers for six years at Mary Ford Elementary School, North

Charleston Elementary School, and schools in the district's former Innovation Zone Learning Community and Charleston Promise Neighborhood Learning Community. Her next role took her back into the classroom at Chicora Elementary School in 2017 as lead teacher for two years before joining CCSD's Curriculum and Instruction Department as an instructional specialist.

Smith was selected to serve as assistant principal at Ashley River Creative Arts in 2019 where she supported the daily operations of the school in collaboration with the principal and administration for its 600+ students.

"LaToya is a fantastic educator and leader," said Dr. Jennifer Swearingen, Interim Associate Superintendent of the Elementary Learning Community. "Her time as an assistant principal at Ashley River Creative Arts prepared her well to step into the principalship at North Charleston Creative Arts and I know the school will continue to grow and flourish under her leadership in the months and years to come."

Smith earned a bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Science from South Carolina State University and a master's degree in Elementary Education from Wheelock College. She also graduated from Southern Wesleyan University with a master's degree in Administration and Supervision. Smith is a Lastinger Coaching Institute certified instructional coach and a participant in the South Carolina Association of School Administrators CEEL 2022-2023 cohort and CCSD's Aspiring Principal Internship Program (APIP) 2023-2024 pilot.

For more information, contact the Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303.

###

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.