

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Huggins and Mayor-Elect Burgess announce launch of joint commission to improve student outcomes

Office of
Communications

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North Charleston, SC - North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey, Mayor-Elect Reggie Burgess, and Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Acting Superintendent Anita Huggins are proud to announce a collaborative effort between CCSD and the City of North Charleston aimed at strengthening educational outcomes and support for North Charleston students and their families.

The leaders met Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at North Charleston City Hall to plan the launch of a joint commission in January 2024, which will be composed of members selected by the City and CCSD. The work will be led by Charleston County Councilman Henry E. Darby, who represents District 4 and serves as the principal of North Charleston High School.

The commission will focus on developing strategies around critical areas integral to students' success in North Charleston. Once finalized, actions will be recommended to the City and CCSD to be implemented as soon as August 2024. The focus of the commission will center around ensuring equity in school/athletic facilities, stabilizing staffing in schools, staffing schools in ways that meet students' needs, assigning success mentors to students, developing partnerships for wraparound services, expanding school-based health clinics and mental health services, increasing familial and community support, developing strategies for addressing chronic absenteeism, and increasing workforce and college readiness. This collaboration between the City and CCSD underscores a shared commitment to the well-being and success of every student. By pooling resources and expertise, both entities aim to create a supportive and conducive educational environment.

"In 29 years as Mayor of North Charleston, this is the first time a superintendent has requested to meet with me with specific strategies to improve outcomes for our children," Summey said. "I'm hopeful about what Reggie and Anita will do together for the students of North Charleston. They have served this community for decades and have a genuine love for our children coupled with a no-nonsense leadership style. It's time for our students to have a seat at the table, and these

action-focused leaders are the right team to meet the needs of the North Charleston community.”

The Joint Commission will convene regularly to assess progress, share insights, and develop strategies for the effective implementation of priorities.

“The partnership represents a significant step towards building a stronger, more resilient community through education,” said Huggins. “I am delighted to work alongside visionary leaders like Mayor Summey, Mayor-Elect Burgess, and Mr. Darby to ensure equitable and improved outcomes for all of our children.”

“I am humbled that, as the new Mayor of the great City of North Charleston, one of my first opportunities will be to change the trajectory for its children and young adults” added Burgess. “As Chief, I’ve worked alongside Mr. Darby and Ms. Huggins for many years and am incredibly optimistic about what we can accomplish together alongside the committed folks of North Charleston. I am dedicated to supporting this Commission and the resources we will need to improve outcomes for our students and families. It is imperative that the City of North Charleston, and the CCSD consistently work together to assure that challenged communities within North Charleston receive initiatives like the award-winning [Liberty Hill K-12 STEM Initiative](#).”

For additional information, contact Andy Pruitt in CCSD's Office of Communications at andrew_pruitt@charleston.k12.sc.us or (843) 937-6583, or Ryan Johnson with the City of North Charleston at rjohnson@northcharleston.org or (843) 740-2520.

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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.