

**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact:**

Michelle Conner, 843-849-2838

# Media Release

## **Pulse of CCSD – Assistant Principal Bloomfield is a learner in all his efforts**

WHITESIDES



**Mamie P. Whitesides**  
Elementary School

**Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Anita Huggins**  
Deputy Superintendent

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

**Michelle Conner**  
Principal

**Mount Pleasant, S.C.** – Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School’s assistant principal Sheldon Bloomfield has been a student as long as he has been an educator. His passion for learning is as great as his drive to be a servant leader to his scholars and the staff at Whitesides.

“To be successful in my role, I must always ask myself, ‘How well am I taking care of the people in my charge?’” said Bloomfield. “Not only do I follow through on all requests of me, but I follow up.”

Bloomfield believes that being an educator is the most noble profession because one has a hand in the future.

“My role is to prepare kids for adulthood,” said Bloomfield. “As an educator, it is my job to teach the skills children will need to navigate through life successfully. That is literally what happened to me, which is why I am grateful to be in education and to come to work at Whitesides.”

### **Where education is intentional**

Bloomfield has been at Whitesides for six years after a career across the Charleston County School District (CCSD) in various roles and positions. He describes the culture there as a “one for all, all for one” environment.

“All adults in this building are responsible for all of the children in this building,” said Bloomfield. “The culture here is that everything we do is an intentional effort to serve our students.”

That philosophy reminds Bloomfield of his roots.

Born in Old Harbour, Jamaica, Bloomfield enjoyed an idyllic childhood playing soccer on the beach all day during the summer and playing youth soccer while attending school. His dream was to become a professional soccer player, and because of his incredible talent in the sport, he was well on his way. It never occurred to Bloomfield that he would one day become an educator (despite the fact that nine other family members chose that career path).

As in most families, his mother got the last word on his future plans and told him he needed to enroll at G.C. Foster College of Physical Education & Sport. She warned that one injury could end his professional soccer career, and he would have nothing to fall back on.

Bloomfield reluctantly enrolled and earned a Bachelor of Physical Education with a minor in Science while continuing to play soccer on the national stage.

"I broke my knee in college and had to have several surgeries," said Bloomfield. "That was it for me. My mom was right."

At 21 years old, Bloomfield returned to his high school to teach P.E., Human and Social Biology, and Integrated Science for the next ten years.

"It was strange at first because I was teaching students that I previously attended school with (the school went from 7th to 11th grade)," said Bloomfield. "I was honored to be able to provide to the next ones in line what was provided to me – a solid education that would take me successfully into adulthood."

Bloomfield explained that because Jamaica is a developing country, students take their education very seriously.

"Teaching is intentional, and learning is intentional," said Bloomfield. "A high-quality education opens doors to opportunities Jamaicans would not have otherwise."

Bloomfield said the same philosophy could be found at Whitesides, where teachers ensure every child's needs are met and every learner is shown the attention they need.

"Education is a people business," said Bloomfield. "You can teach anyone to teach, but you can't teach them to love. People who love people make up the adults in this building."

### **A love of learning**

Bloomfield and his family moved to the United States in 2005. After realizing New York's winters were far too cold, they moved to Charleston. While waiting on state approvals for his teaching degree, Bloomfield jumped into substitute teaching. In one instance, he was assigned to a second-grade class that had been deemed disruptive. Several other substitutes had refused to return, and Bloomfield gladly took the challenge.

"I was determined that they were not going to run me off," said Bloomfield. "They just needed structure, and I gave them that. This turned into a long-term substitute position."

It was during that time that Bloomfield realized he loved teaching the elementary age group. He also decided he was not done with his schooling and enrolled at the College of Charleston and began the Master of Arts in Teaching Program.

Bloomfield has held many positions within CCSD, including working as a teacher's assistant in Child Development at Memminger Elementary School and in kindergarten at Drayton Hall Elementary. He later became a teacher once his credentials were verified and was assigned to a kindergarten class at Sanders-Clyde Elementary School in 2013.

"Those were some of my happiest times in the classroom," said Bloomfield. "I took low-performing students to a whole new level. The kindergarten students scored highest among Charleston Promise Neighborhood (CPN) schools in CCSD. Some schools in CCSD were grouped as CPN schools as part of an academic partnership with neighborhood schools to co-design strategies and fund and implement initiatives, all aimed at improving academic and social outcomes for students and their families."

That was the year Bloomfield was named Teacher of the Year at Sanders-Clyde.

Bloomfield loved being in the classroom even though it meant that he wasn't a professional soccer player. He never dreamed of being an administrator until he saw an opportunity called the Aspire Cohort offered through CCSD in partnership with The Citadel. It is a two-year master's program for those seeking an educational leadership degree.

Bloomfield returned to school and moved to a new school to teach. This time, Bloomfield was placed as a Master Reading Instructor at James Simons Montessori School. He thrived there, and students saw great gains in reading. New programs were put in place that brought parents into the fold so they could learn strategies to use at home. Books were donated so families could build at-home libraries.

Bloomfield graduated in 2015 with a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from The Citadel and was awarded the Hirshey Award for Academic Excellence. The Hirshey Awards are presented each spring to both graduate and cadet students exemplifying excellence in education in honor of Dr. Charles Hirshey, the head of the military school's Department of Education from 1969 to 1979. Dr. Hirshey is a pioneer of graduate education in the Lowcountry and a founding member of what is now The Citadel Graduate College.

Bloomfield then moved to the central office to become an instructional coach, where he worked with teachers at several schools modeling lessons.

His first role as an assistant principal was a two-year stint at Mary Ford Elementary School. When the position became available at Whitesides, he was excited about the opportunity.

"He's done so much and has so much to be proud of," said Principal Michelle Conner. "He inspires all of us every day and stays focused by his motto 'keep the main thing the main thing.' He is a joyful person who makes school a fun place to be."

Bloomfield said it is his job to set the tone for the day and when school is in session. He does that on the morning news show by sharing positive thoughts, quotes, and sayings.

"The title of my position tells me what I am supposed to do," said Bloomfield. "This is a doing job. I could not be more honored to be doing things at Whitesides, where everyone I work with has become a family."

It's all about our attitudes, Bloomfield explained.

"If we all treat each other with respect and stay interdependent on each other, the students take notice and model that behavior," Bloomfield added.

Bloomfield is now back at The Citadel in the Specialist in Educational Leadership Cohort, earning his Education Specialist degree.

"The learning will never end for me," said Bloomfield. "Things fell into place for me, and I am grateful to be an educator. I love my job, so it makes it easy for me to wake up every day and head out the door."

Bloomfield lives by a quote he has known for most of his life, and it hangs in his office for all to delight in. It is his life motto.

*"Labor for learning before you grow old because knowledge is better than silver and gold. Silver and gold will vanish away, but a good education will never decay."*  
- Desmond Dekker

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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 of 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 49,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), music and other creative and performing arts, career and technical preparation programs, and military.