



Burke High School

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Superintendent of Schools

Anita Huggins
Deputy Superintendent

Jacqueline Haynes
Associate Superintendent of
Acceleration Schools

Cheryl Swinton
Executive Principal

For Immediate Release
June 2, 2023

Contact:
Cheryl Swinton 843-579-4815

Media Release

Acceleration Schools student spotlight – college courses at Burke High School encourage excellence

Charleston, S.C. - When asked about her oldest son, William Jenkins, Simone Gates described him as “an old soul who has clearly been here before.” She explained that Jenkins possesses a deep interest and knowledge of subjects that he’s had few encounters with and has knowledge beyond his teenage years.

Growing up, Jenkins sought meaningful conversations with people to learn anything and everything he could. He’s had a village of support and learned from his community throughout his lifetime. His passion for learning and exploring his interests is further supported by the advanced placement, honors, and dual enrollment classes available to him at Burke High School.

Jenkins’ teachers and principals saw his passion for learning as soon as he walked through the doors at Burke. His drive to learn, understand, and experience things outside his comfort zone was apparent to educators. When a more challenging curriculum became available, Jenkins was one of the first students the teachers recommended enrolling in the courses.

[Studies](#) show that high school students who take AP and DE courses are more likely to graduate from college in four years than those who do not. With this in mind and the goal of helping students become college or career-ready, Acceleration Schools implemented advanced placement, honors, and dual enrollment courses in schools to help prepare students for their future. These courses are designed to challenge students at a college level from the comfort of their high school.

While some may see education as a way out of their hometown to find new opportunities, Jenkins sees his education as a way to support and create better pathways for people in Charleston.

“I have the drive and want to learn so many things,” said Jenkins. “Learning new things is a great way to help people because if organizations have been

trying to do something in the same way for hundreds of years and if it doesn't work, trying something new could work to improve people's lives.

Jenkins hopes to become an agent of change and one day represent Charleston in the state legislature to help improve the community that means so much to him.

In pursuing his college education, Jenkins hopes to confront genuine problems facing his Charleston neighborhood to help ensure he's not one of just a few successful graduates from a Title 1 school. He hopes every student that enters Burke will be as equally successful as students graduating from other, higher-ranking schools. Charleston County School District's Acceleration Schools has the same end goal: to offer every student the high-quality education they deserve so they are fully prepared to thrive once they graduate high school.

The vigorous educational programs and opportunities available to Jenkins at Burke have challenged him to grow and learn new subjects and reaffirm his passions. He's been able to fuel his interest in government and politics with AP US History and Honors US History courses, push his boundaries in AP Statistics, and explore the power of words in a Whitman to Hip-Hop course. All these contribute to a high school experience that will help William pursue his intended career path in politics.

It was clear to Jenkins' teachers that he had the drive, passion, and dedication to learning, as he's often found speaking to teachers about his coursework or attending tutoring sessions after school. Jenkins planned to attend a community college in the fall, but with encouragement from his teachers, he now plans to study history and political science at College of Charleston. The introduction to vigorous AP, DE, and honors coursework during his high school years will help position William for success at College of Charleston and beyond.

###

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.