

For Immediate Release

April 7, 2023

Contact:

Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

Media Release

CCSD honors Star Principals

Office of Communications

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Superintendent of Schools

Anita Huggins
Deputy Superintendent

Vanessa L. Denney, M.Ed.
Interim Executive Director of
Communications

Charleston, SC — Charleston County School District (CCSD) recognized six Star Principals Friday, April 7, 2023. They were selected based on their leadership and work as a principal to improve student outcomes and implement strategic change. These Star Principals will be honored among their colleagues at this year's gala: *An Evening with the Stars presents Hollywood!* Saturday, May 6, 2023.

Star Principals

Melissa Brubaker - Elementary School Learning Community

Brubaker is the principal at North Charleston Elementary School where she has served since 2020. Brubaker came to CCSD from Dougherty County Schools (DCS) in Albany, GA, where she served as the principal of Alice Coachman Elementary for four years. Brubaker began her career as a guidance counselor at East Coweta High in Sharpsburg, GA in 2005, eventually advancing to director of guidance. In 2013, Brubaker moved into administration, taking on the role of assistant principal at East Coweta for a year before transitioning to DCS to serve in the same capacity at Southside Middle School for the next two years.

Brubaker's put her prior experience to use in achieving growth and gains among her scholars at North Charleston Elementary School with a focus on building confidence and happiness in students. With schoolwide processes in place, the goal is to continue building on the growth and begin seeing student achievement rise at a more significant pace.

Ryan Cumback - High School Learning Community

Cumback was appointed principal of West Ashley High School (WAHS) in 2019. Cumback has served in CCSD schools for the past 17 years. Prior to becoming West Ashley's principal, he served as the principal of Moultrie Middle for three years.

Cumback has served as the associate principal of curriculum and instruction at WAHS. While at West Ashley, Cumback was also the assistant principal over ninth and tenth grade students, the Science Department, Math Department, and the Fine Arts Department. Before becoming an assistant principal, Cumback served as an assistant administrator, truancy officer, credit recovery program coordinator, world history teacher, and CATS Advisory Board chair at WAHS.

Cumback's vision has always been to create a school that is a true community asset. His leadership team makes decisions based on this question: Will this work benefit the students? If one cannot answer these questions with confidence, then the team quickly adjusts to find a better solution. This process has proven to be successful. WAHS has seen an increase in scores on the End of Course assessments across all content areas, produced the highest percentage of students graduating with industry certification, drastically reduced the number of students being retained each year, and significantly improved school safety and discipline.

Jermaine Joyner - Star Rookie Principal

Joyner is in his first year as principal at St. John's High School. He previously served as an assistant principal and director of Wando High School's Freshman Academy for six years. A CCSD graduate from North Charleston High School, Joyner immediately returned to serve in his home school district as a student concern specialist at Morningside Middle School in 2005 after completing his student teaching at R.B. Stall High the previous spring. Shortly after, Joyner became a middle school social studies teacher at Morningside before taking the same position at the former Brentwood Middle School in 2007. He served as a lead technology teacher and teacher coach at West Ashley Middle School for two years before joining the administration at Thomas C. Cario Middle School as an assistant principal in 2010. In 2012, he took the assistant principal position at what was then Sanders-Clyde Elementary Middle School for nearly three years. Joyner was then appointed as interim principal at Sanders-Clyde for one year.

Joyner is a "Systems Leader" and his work is focused on creating and developing systems that utilize data and allow for continuous improvement. Formal processes and approvals have created a balanced school budget and helped improve the school climate as funds were now available for activities that directly impacted student culture. Joyner also created a system that set high expectations for teacher attendance which changed the culture to one where teachers understood how their attendance played a direct role in students' academic performance. The result of the impact of teacher attendance on student performance as a teacher with one of the highest attendance rates (97%) has increased the number of students earning C or higher on the course EOC exam to 68.8% as compared to 41.0% at this time last year.

Janice Malone - Acceleration School Learning Community

Malone is the Principal of Sanders-Clyde Elementary School and has served in that role since 2018. She has over 35 years of experience as an educator and administrator. She has a storied career with CCSD, having served as Principal of Matilda F. Dunston Primary School, which was recognized as a National Distinguished Title I School under her leadership. Malone also served at Mary Ford Elementary and Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary.

Faculty, staff, and scholars at Sanders-Clyde are held to high expectations of excellence every day. There must be high expectations for structure, academics,

discipline, consistency and continuity, based on data-informed decisions to guide the processes. The focus for teachers is to ensure that they understand the science of teaching, particularly in high-poverty, urban, minority schools. She believes that when processes are established, goals set, and scholars meet, or exceed those goals, everyone should celebrate their success.

Maite Porter - Middle School Learning Community

Porter is the Principal of C.E. Williams Middle School North Campus. She has held several roles in education including special education teacher, assistant principal, principal intern, elementary principal, and now a middle school principal. Porter came to the district in 2019 as the principal of the former West Ashley Middle School. Previously she served Volusia County Schools where she was the principal of Louise S. McInnis Elementary since 2016. Prior to that, Porter served as a principal intern at Silver Sands Middle School for three years, assistant principal at Heritage Middle for five years, and dean of students at Pine Ridge High for two years.

At C.E. Williams North, Porter has built teams of students who have a sense of belonging, created an environment where teachers feel empowered, and created a warm and fuzzy approach to meeting students' needs. Community and business partners play a role as well, by filling in where needed, completing the "ecosystem" that provides for and supports students and families in a wrap-around way.

Megan Williams - Elementary School Learning Community

Williams was appointed principal of Springfield Elementary School in 2018. She served in an interim capacity during the 2017-18 school year. Williams began her career in the district at Charles Pinckney Elementary School as a fifth grade teacher for eight years. In 2008, she moved to Stono Park Elementary and taught fifth grade for one year and served as lead teacher for three. Williams next transitioned to Springfield Elementary, where she was the assistant principal for five years before becoming interim principal last school year.

At Springfield, Williams works alongside teachers to establish whatever is needed to succeed. She is the staff's biggest cheerleader and works continuously to instill a collective efficacy in the building - the belief that all students can do the work and be successful.

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 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.