



For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Goodwin Elementary hosts ESOL Family Connection Walk

W.B. Goodwin Elementary School

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Superintendent of Schools

Anita Huggins
Deputy Superintendent

Jacqueline Haynes
Associate Superintendent of
Acceleration Schools

Natasha Jones
Principal

North Charleston, S.C. – W.B. Goodwin Elementary School, the Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Department of Federal Programs, and the Community Outreach Office hosted a community event called the Goodwin Multilingual Learner Community Walk on Saturday, April 1, 2023. Charleston Aquí Estamos, a local nonprofit organization, collaborated in this effort and was instrumental in inviting parents from the Goodwin ArtPot board. The goal of this effort was to cultivate family and community partnerships in Goodwin so Latinx students and their families would feel supported in and out of school.

The Goodwin Elementary Community Walk is aligned with **Pillar III: Wrap-around Services**, one of CCSD's three Pillars that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness. This event's wrap-around services included family engagement in multilingual learners' neighborhoods.

"We shared the students' report cards and received feedback on any concerns the families may have with the help of our interpreters," said Celina Anthony, Title I Bilingual Coordinator. "These concerns included academics, technology, and any other barriers to students achieving their dreams. The Goodwin Elementary Community Walk is an example of providing wrap-around services because we reached out to our students and parents beyond the classroom."

Anthony, Goodwin's Principal Natasha Jones, Tonya McIntyre, (Community Outreach director for the district), and Lydia Cotton from Charleston Aquí Estamos, were the organizers of this event. Maribel Acosta, Executive Director of ArtPot, a nonprofit organization, also collaborated with this event. Charleston Hispanic Association, a local nonprofit organization, donated food, sheets and towels to all the families residing in the neighborhood.

Anthony was grateful a diverse group of individuals volunteered including Rosa Fulmore, Title I Parent & Family Engagement Coordinator, Jackie Haynes, Associate Superintendent of Acceleration Schools, Dennis Muhammad, Director of the Family and Community Engagement Office, and Angela Rush, Director of Translation and Interpretation Services, among other district employees and bilingual community volunteers.

"I am very glad that each group had at least one bilingual volunteer to interpret for the families," Anthony said. "Families we visited were pleased to see us accompanied by several Goodwin parents," added Anthony. "It was evident that they felt very comfortable interacting with us due to their presence."

Cotton added that the walk demonstrated that it is possible to have a strong relationship between the school principal and Latinx Parents.

"The parents did recognize Principal Jones' smile and affection immediately," said Cotton. "This is very important because clearly Mrs. Jones has crossed the Spanish language barrier without speaking the language."

Along with the volunteers, organizers were able to reach out to at least 50 Latinx families and 70 students.

"It was a pleasure planning and executing this event, along with the W.B Goodwin Elementary school principal, the district's Community Outreach Office, and Charleston *Aquí Estamos*," added Anthony. "The families and students were very receptive and appreciative of this effort. I believe that the *Goodwin Multilingual Learner Community Walk* not only helped families and students feel valued but also enabled educators to be exposed to various student and family cultures present. Furthermore, interacting with diverse groups outside formal classes allows educators to become more familiar with the students they serve and it is an important component of becoming culturally competent."

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the team," said Haynes. "The chance to canvas the community, engage with parents, and build community lifted my spirits. Our work on Saturday reinforced my why and the reason we must champion our work for all students."

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

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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.