

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

CCSD announces Top Five Finalists for 2023 Teacher of the Year

Office of Communications

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Charleston, SC — Charleston County School District (CCSD) officials surprised five teachers today by announcing their selection as the Top Five Finalists for 2023 Teacher of the Year.

The finalists are Katie Bilsback (Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center), Alexis Marianiello (Burke High School), Erin McGee (Wando High School), Spencer Quinlan (Springfield Elementary School), and Chloe Spitzer (Camp Road Middle School).

CCSD Superintendent Don Kennedy presented the finalists with balloons, flowers, and a plaque. At each stop along the route, CCSD shared live announcements and updates on its social media platforms (@CCSDConnects). Photos from the day can also be found there and on ccsdschools.com.

One of the finalists will take over the reins from the district's current Teacher of the Year, Nathalie Bennett, of Northwoods Middle School.

Meet the Top Five Finalists

Katie Bilsback

Bilsback is in her third year of teaching with CCSD and teaches in the HeadStart program at Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center. She attended College of Charleston, where she earned a B.S. in Early Childhood Education.

Bilsback is a member of the Multi-Tiered Support System team at Mary Ford and is the Grade Level Chair. In 2020-2021 she was named the Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center Rookie Teacher of the Year.

Additionally, Bilsback is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society.

Alexis Marianiello

Marianiello is a social studies teacher at Burke High School who has been with CCSD for just over a year. In total, Marianiello has been an educator for five years, having taught previously in Colleton County.

Marianiello graduated from Clemson University, earned a master's degree from Binghamton University and is currently enrolled in The Citadel. She serves on the AVID Site Team at Burke.

Erin McGee

McGee is a ninth grade social studies and geography teacher at Wando High School. She is in her ninth year of teaching, seven of which have been with CCSD.

McGee graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts in History and a master's degree in Teaching, and from The Citadel with a Master of Education in Educational Leadership in School Administration (Secondary).

McGee is a member of the National Council for Geographic Education, Palmetto State Teachers Association, South Carolina Council for Social Studies, and South Carolina Geographic Alliance. She is currently the geography curriculum team leader and has previously served as an induction teacher co-leader and geography curriculum writer.

Additionally, McGee has been a Teacher of the Year (and month) nominee numerous times, as well as a Social Studies Department Member of the Semester in 2020.

Spencer Quinlan

Quinlan is a second grade teacher at Springfield Elementary School. She has been a teacher for 13 years and ten of those have been with CCSD. She received her Early Childhood Education degree from the University of South Carolina.

Quinlan is a past member of the Palmetto State Teachers Association and the 2014 Rookie Teacher of the Year at Springfield. She is currently the grade level chair for second grade, and a PBIS team member for second grade. This year Quinlan will again host College of Charleston interns for the practicum experience just as she did in 2017.

Chloe Spitzer

Spitzer is the band instructor for Camp Road Middle School and has been in this role for three years. She has seven years of experience, having previously served in Florence, Darlington, and Georgetown counties before coming to Camp Road in 2020.

Spitzer attended Converse College where she earned a bachelor's degree in K-12 Music Education (instrumental music focus) and Certification in K-12 Special Education-Teachable Mental Disabilities. She also attended the University of Southern Mississippi where she earned a master's degree in Music Education. Her professional memberships and organizations include the National Association of Music Education, South Carolina Music Educators Association, South Carolina Band

Directors Association, South Carolina Educators Association, Delta Omicron, Omicron Delta Kappa, Mortar Board, Alpha Psi Omega, Pi Lambda Theta, and Alpha Lambda Delta.

Spitzer was named Employee of the Month at Camp Road in 2020, a Grammy Music Educator Quarter-Finalist in 2019, and Brockington Elementary Magnet School Teacher of the Year Nominee in 2015.

The recognition of these Top Five Educators aligns with the district's **Pillar Two (high-quality teachers and leaders)**, which is one of three pillars that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness.

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.