

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Retired Mississippi Superintendent of Education to visit CCSD schools

Office of Communications

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North Charleston, SC – Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud to welcome Dr. Carey Wright, retired Mississippi State Superintendent of Education, to Charleston to evaluate its work in reading, math, and around college/career readiness. Dr. Wright, a visionary leader with a proven track record of systems change, will work alongside District leadership.

CCSD is committed to achieving *Vision 2027* where all students read on grade level by grade five. Dr. Wright's partnership and expertise is an integral component of CCSD's preK-12 ecosystem designed to support whole child development, educational attainment, and economic success.

During her initial two-day visit this week, Dr. Wright is set to engage with teachers, teacher coaches, principals, and central level leaders around the important literacy work taking place across the district. As part of this important collaboration, she will tour several schools and classrooms to observe core and student intervention practices in action. Early childhood education and foundational literacy skills based in the science of reading through curriculums such as EL are key to actualizing this vision and supporting the hopes and dreams of CCSD learners.

According to reports, Dr. Wright's tenure in Mississippi was longer and marked by more student gains than any State Superintendent of Education since the *Education Reform Act* of 1982. Wright, one of the longest-serving state education chiefs of the 21st century, led the state to significant improvements in student achievement. The state climbed in rank from 50th to 35th in education, with its graduation rate rising higher than the national average—from 75.5% to 88.4%.

In 2013, Mississippi fourth graders were reading more than one full grade level behind the national average on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). By 2019, Wright led a statewide increase, resulting in students scoring higher than the nation's public school average in mathematics, tied the nation in reading, and ranked No. 1 in the nation for making the largest score gains. The rapid progress of Mississippi students earned the state Quality Counts' No. 2 ranking in the nation for improvement in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

“Dr. Wright is an outstanding educator and educational leader whose expertise and transformative practices have changed the trajectory for the entire education system of Mississippi, and most importantly, the lives of the students for which it serves,” said Deputy Superintendent of Schools Anita Huggins. “We are blessed to have her work alongside us here in Charleston and look forward to our incredible partnership.”

Dr. Wright was responsible for implementing Mississippi’s first publicly funded Early Learning Collaborative programs which was only one of six states in the nation whose program met all of the National Institute for Early Education Research’s ten quality standards for early childhood education. Additionally, Dr. Wright increased literacy skills in pre-K through the grade 3, pushed student achievement on the NAEP to improve at a faster rate than most other states, and nearly doubled the Advancement Placement participation and success rate. She also strengthened teacher recruitment and retention by implementing the Mississippi Teacher Residency program. This program provides scholarships and mentors to aspiring teachers and assists Mississippi teachers with provisional licenses to become fully licensed.

For more information about CCSD’s literacy efforts, *Vision 2027*, and/or Dr. Wright’s visit, please 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.