

**For Immediate Release**

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# Media Release

## **Pulse of CCSD – Michelle Wright is called to serve the schools of CCSD**

### Office of Communications

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**Charleston, SC** — Charleston County School District (CCSD) procurement agent Michelle Wright considers every employee in CCSD a teammate. She explained that whether a person is on the front lines or behind the scenes, they're all on the same team.

Wright has been on the team for almost 17 years and enjoys her role in making sure the schools buy what they need and have the services essential to making the lives of teachers and students better.

"I am here to help," said Wright. "I am a helper."

Schools need everything from books to piano tuning to food. It is the procurement department's job to purchase those items. Wright is a Certified Buying Professional and uses her expertise to navigate the purchases of middle and high schools.

Additionally, Wright assists with donations from major business and corporate partners and funnels those to where they are most needed.

"We are the stewards of CCSD's money," said Wright. "Everything we purchase is documented and made public via transparency reports. As a taxpayer myself, I would want to know the money is being spent by the letter of the law. At CCSD, it is."

Wright is also a steward of the families of CCSD. A call came in notifying the Office of Communications that a family had been displaced and needed emergency shelter. Money was made available from the Children in Crisis Fund, which was established in 2009 as a result of generous donations from community members and businesses. The fund provides varied crisis and emergency assistance for CCSD students and their families.

Wright was notified and assisted by staying after-hours to ensure the family's hotel stay was paid for.

"Michelle is truly a servant of the families here at CCSD," said Tyesha Drayton, Communications Office Project Manager. "She offered her help immediately after learning about the situation regarding the displaced family. Her response was

'What do you need?' We truly appreciate Michelle being there to assist us when we needed her the most before our holiday break. She is truly an asset to CCSD!"

### **Behind the scenes**

Before earning the position of procurement agent in 2006, Wright had a varied career. She drove an ambulance for a non-emergency transport company for several years and was a licensed EMT. Wright held temporary jobs in food and beverage, worked at Domino's Sugar making paper bags for the products, and transitioned to a safety officer position and a purchasing agent. She held similar positions throughout the years which prepared her for her position with CCSD.

All of those positions were "behind the scenes" jobs in varying industries. However, one particular job, which she enjoys to this day, is very much on the front lines. For the last 18 years, Wright has worked at the Charleston RiverDogs as an usher.

"I love being there," said Wright. "It is so much fun with the game going on and the music in the background. I have so many stories I could tell and most of them begin with 'it was dollar beer night.'"

Wright also loves dogs. Her pet dog Jeannie, keeps her very active, motivated, and social. From her love of pets, Wright supports the SPCA shelter.

### **The job of a purchasing agent**

More goes into the job than just purchasing goods and services, according to Wright. There are often opportunities to redistribute items that can't be returned. For example, scratch and dent items may be repurposed in facilities or offices in other parts of the district.

"If an item is still usable, it is housed at the warehouse," said Wright. "We consider it internal recycling. Schools get the first choice, of course."

Wright said one of the benefits of her role is that she gets to sit in on classes and spend time with the teachers and students she serves.

"When former Horticulture teacher Katie Donohoe wanted a greenhouse for her students at Wando, I sat in on her class to get a better understanding of the need," said Wright. "I then worked with her through the entire purchase procedure and construction process. That kind of boots-on-the-ground work is why I absolutely love this job."

As required by law, all transactions, bids, and calls for bids are made public on the [district website](#). With each purchase or expense, there are strict parameters in place.

"So much money is at stake with some of our bids that we have to make sure we're transparent," said Wright. "There is no agenda, other than to spend the public's money appropriately."

Procurement Officer Robin Hamilton-McNeal said that Wright is a valuable asset to the team.

"I've labeled her my social butterfly," said Hamilton-McNeal. "She knows a lot and a lot of people. Walking with her is like being with a celebrity. They recognize her from the RiverDogs games and she is not afraid to strike up a conversation with anyone."

Hamilton-McNeal added that Wright is focused on a mission at all times.

"She likes to follow things through to the end," said Hamilton-McNeal. "This determination makes her a great buyer for the district. I'm glad to have her as a team player."

Wright said the strict checks and balances system is important so that the procurement team can properly and lawfully serve CCSD teachers.

"They are doing such meaningful work and it is my job to provide them with what they need to do that work," said Wright. "My job is to help them in any way, and that is my favorite part of my work. I am a helper."

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.