

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Kaleidoscope now accepting 4-year-old CCSD students

Office of Communications

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Charleston, SC — Charleston County School District's (CCSD) afterschool program, Kaleidoscope, has expanded its offerings by opening up slots for 4-year-old students at sites that have received required licensing. CCSD will be able to start accepting 4-year-olds in Kaleidoscope's after school and summer programs beginning January 16, 2023.

CCSD previously served 4-year-olds but a Department of Social Services state policy change required each site to be individually licensed.

Jason Sakran, Director of Expanded Learning/Kaleidoscope said it has been an arduous process but staff is working diligently to abide by state policy to become licensed.

"We are now able to open up seats at 22 schools," said Sakran. "Capacity at each school varies. There is no guarantee that every child will receive a spot."

Sakran said that a per hour increase for staff to \$17 an hour has enabled him to hire additional and more qualified staff, thus reducing waitlists. Site coordinators have already begun contacting parents on the waitlist.

The mission of Kaleidoscope is to provide high quality afterschool care in a safe, challenging environment. The programs provide age-appropriate activities which focus on the physical, social, emotional, and educational needs of students.

"The Expanded Learning Department is proud to be able to open up seats to 4-year-old students," said Sakran. "They will be provided age-appropriate activities in a safe and nurturing environment. In conjunction with Vision 2027, Kaleidoscope is integrating a literary theme in all activities that will be built upon from year to year."

Sakran is proud of not only the innovative programs offered to Kaleidoscope students but the affordability of the programming.

"If COVID-19 showed us anything, it was the need for affordable childcare," said Sakran. "Without affordable childcare, it puts a wrench in the local economy

because parents can't work and have to stay home. Affordable childcare, which is offered through Kaleidoscope, is good for the kids and the community."

Affordability increases access to high-quality programming for our students, Sakran added.

"Our system is unique to the state in that CCSD offers a sliding pay scale," added Sakran. "We offer 50 programs and roughly 25 of those generate a profit because most parents are paying a higher rate. We use that surplus to offset costs to other sites and this allows kids to participate at the reduced rate. The sliding scale allows CCSD to serve 1,500 more kids than we normally would and this is a win-win for everyone, especially some of our students and parents who need our services the most."

The Office of Expanded Learning leads CCSD's afterschool efforts (Kaleidoscope). Kaleidoscope is a fee based program that operates using an income based sliding scale for tuition. The office also manages several 21st Century Afterschool Grants, summer programs as well as after school enrichment classes such as chess, dance, art, coding, engineering, foreign language, music, and lacrosse.

To inquire about slots for your child, reach out to your school's Kaleidoscope site coordinator or visit the Expanded Learning Department [website](#). If you have general questions, please call Christy Bennett at 843-402-7817. 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.