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**Mary Ford Early Learning &
Family Center**

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Media Release

Freligh named Lowcountry Regional Librarian of the Year

North Charleston, SC – Katherine Freligh, the teacher librarian at Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center, was named the [Lowcountry Regional Librarian of the Year](#) on November 28, 2022, by the South Carolina Association of School Librarians.

Freligh has spent her professional career working with and serving underprivileged and marginalized populations. She is well-versed in the data that shows the large achievement gap between Mary Ford's students and other populations, but even more importantly, she is involved in school, faith, and community groups that aim to mend this gap through knowledge of both historical and current issues that face this population.

"At Mary Ford, we know the teacher-librarian makes lasting changes in the lives of every student and throughout our school community," said Loretta Hart, Mary Ford's principal. "Mrs. Freligh works hard to prove the value of teacher librarians by educating others on the perception of the school library and its role in education."

Freligh's welcoming library is the "Grand Central Station" of Mary Ford, constantly filling with staff looking for resources, a quick chat about improving a lesson with technology, or ideas on how to tackle access and equity issues for our students, Hart added.

Christy James, CCSD's Library Media Services Coordinator agreed.

"Mrs. Freligh has the passion and compassion needed to truly serve all students and staff and the larger school community," said James. "Each day she is making an impact on students by giving them mirrors to see themselves and their own experiences in books and learning as well as giving them windows to see others' lives and experiences. Mrs. Freligh is also a strong leader among teacher librarians at both the local and state level and we are so proud to have her representing CCSD and the Lowcountry with this award."

"I'm so thankful for the work we're doing in the Mary Ford library and to be honored in this way," said Freligh. "A library is a unique place, one that can truly open up a world of possibilities for everyone and it's a privilege to introduce our youngest readers to it."

Hart said that Freligh is always leading the school in innovative, transformational resources in the classroom.

"She is also an advocate for students, parents, teachers, and our school community," said Hart. "She is a shining light within our building, epitomizing our school motto of *Stands Tall and Aims High*."

Freligh said she was honored to be recognized.

"As a teacher-librarian, I curate books, resources, and experiences that resonate with my students and that help them visualize a world where they can make a difference," said Freligh. "My students see and read about individuals who have overcome challenges, who have explored, who have invented, who have conquered, and who have been change makers. I work with our classroom teacher as an instructional partner to help build strong academic foundations for our students. I want to be that person that helps a child feel, that there's a little bit of magic involved in the learning process."

Jennifer Thrift, teacher-librarian at Charles Pinckney Elementary School was named last year's [Lowcountry Regional Librarian](#). She said Freligh could not be more deserving of the recognition.

"Mrs. Freligh is an advocate for access to diverse books for all of her students. Winning this award will give her the opportunity to advocate for students throughout the Lowcountry," said Thrift.

Freligh is recognized as a finalist for the state award. Freligh will compete against three other regional winners for the title of 2022 South Carolina Librarian of the Year, which will be announced in March 2023 at the SCASL Annual Conference in Columbia.

"I'm excited to continue learning and growing and representing Lowcountry school libraries in this way," Freligh added.

For more information, contact Loretta Hart at (843) 745-7131.