

For Immediate Release
November 10, 2022

Contact:
Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

Media Release

CCSD, MUSC, and TTC team up to expand healthcare career opportunities for students

Communications Office

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Superintendent of Schools

Anita Huggins
Deputy Superintendent

Vanessa L. Denney, M.Ed.
Interim Executive Director of
Communications

Burke High School will launch program next school year

Charleston, SC – Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud to announce a partnership with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and Trident Technical College (TTC) that will expand opportunities for Charleston area students to explore and become certified in health sciences careers. The pathways program will start at Burke High School in the fall of 2023.

This new partnership creates career readiness pathways for students while supporting community development and workforce engagement to address shortages in a plethora of critical roles in health care, including but not limited to phlebotomists and certified nursing assistants, registered nurses, and physicians.

"This exciting partnership will be critical to building an ecosystem that supports positive student outcomes and opportunities across Charleston County," said Superintendent Don Kennedy.

According to the October 2020 *MUSC Economic Outlook Study*, healthcare is one of the economy's largest industries at the state and national levels. In South Carolina, health care is a \$14 billion industry that comprises nearly seven percent of the state's economy. The demand for healthcare-related services has increased over the early 21st century, primarily due to the aging U.S. population and the retirement of older generations from the workforce.

As a result, there is a greater need for healthcare workers across various occupations, which occupy nearly 8.5 percent of the workforce and represent almost two-thirds of the top 30 occupations projected to grow the fastest through 2026. Rising demand for services has also correlated with a rising demand in post-secondary education, which nearly 65 percent of jobs across the country require in some form, according to recent estimates. This partnership seeks to foster entry to post-secondary programs at an early level for CCSD students in the field of healthcare services. It enhances student experiences and future earning potential.

"Students will not only be able to be enrolled in dual credit courses but will also earn valuable experiences to prepare them for high-wage health care professions,"

said Deputy Superintendent Anita Huggins. "We are beyond delighted to launch this program at Burke."

In addition, interested students can transition to post-secondary educational providers with multiple pathways to associate, bachelor, and graduate-level programs.

"The partnership between these three institutions will benefit generations of CCSD students by providing unparalleled opportunities for highly skilled careers right here at home in our community," added CCSD Board Chair Rev. Dr. Eric Mack. "I couldn't be more excited about the future of education here in the Lowcountry."

According to MUSC, individuals working in healthcare-related fields make, on average, \$22,000 more than the average wage among all jobs in South Carolina.

"Health care is a highly rewarding field. In the post COVID era, we need talented and dedicated individuals in almost every dimension of health care delivery," said MUSC President David J. Cole, M.D., FACS. "This educational initiative with CCSD and TTC is an exciting opportunity. Providing the necessary guidance and experiences that today's students require to prepare for a career in health care will create significant and long-lasting positive impacts for our local communities and the entire state."

"We live in a booming area, and the health care needs of the region grow along with the population," said Trident Technical College President Mary Thornley. "This partnership will give students the chance to explore a variety of in-demand health care occupations and get a head start on preparing for a career in this highly rewarding field."

All eligible students in CCSD can apply to the program through the school choice process. The partnership will kick off in spring 2023 with a "Discover MUSC" interactive career fair. Students from middle and high schools throughout the district will participate in the field trip designed to spark curiosity and build awareness of the many professional pathways available in the local healthcare network.

"Burke High School is incredibly fortunate to engage in this transformative partnership with MUSC and TTC," explained Burke's executive principal, Cheryl Swinton. "This collaboration will expand pathways to success through our already-established Health Science program and increase related course offerings at our school. Most significantly, it ensures more students get equitable access to training that will educate and prepare future generations of healthcare workers. I look forward to continued opportunities through this experience."

For more information, call CCSD's Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303.

###

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.