

**For Immediate Release**

August 22, 2022

**Contact:**

Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

## Media Release

### **District partners with library to offer adult English language course**

Division of Strategy and  
Communications

**Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Charleston, SC** – Charleston County School District (CCSD) continues to develop innovative partnership opportunities with Charleston County Public Library (CCPL) to serve families in the community. A most recent partnership was between the district Adult Education Department and Otranto Road Library in North Charleston to serve multilingual adults and their families.

“We appreciate community partners who open their doors so our adult learners have the opportunity to improve their English language skills,” said Susan Friedrich, CCSD Adult Education director.

[CCSD Adult Education](#) offered a 75-hour English language course to improve listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The class met twice a week and included meet-ups at the library for conversation practice, library tours, and guest speakers.

The English course is intended to improve multilingual adults’ confidence and their ability to do the daily tasks. The course focused on helping adult learners and their families integrate into the Charleston community. Topics included understanding hurricanes, finding housing, filling out a job application, talking to a doctor, and communicating with school staff. For example, adult students identified their evacuation route and learned how to prepare a “go bag” for their family.

Participants practiced sending emails, learn about resources available at the library, and were able to sign up for a library card. Since most of the students are also parents, the course included field trips and scavenger hunts at the library for the entire family.

“Offering classes at the public library opens up a whole new world for adult students and their families and helps them integrate into the community,” explained Justine Autry, coordinator of CCSD’s Adult English program.

According to Donna Adams, Assistant Librarian at Otranto Road Library, adult learners love interacting with librarians in English, fostering a love of reading in their children, and improving their career and educational prospects using the library's resources.

Funding to launch this initiative was provided by Dollar General Literacy Foundation and Boeing Employees Community Fund. The donations offset staffing costs and were used to purchase five Chromebooks. Students can check out one of the Chromebooks and a Wi-Fi hotspot from the library to practice English language and digital skills at home. The students can use the Chromebooks or their phones to access online instructional resources that supplement the class materials.

This new partnership served almost 50 adults this year, all with diverse educational, professional, and cultural backgrounds.

"I am humbled every day by our adult learners who motivate and inspire us with their determination to achieve their goals," said Friedrich.

For example, Edna, from Mexico, is in Charleston with her husband and two young daughters. She was a lawyer in Mexico, and although she had studied English in college, she had never lived in an English-speaking environment. Edna wanted to improve her English skills to help her daughter with her schoolwork and actively participate in her daughter's education. She appreciated being able to connect to other students learning English and especially enjoyed learning new idioms that she could use in everyday conversations. Edna felt that she gained confidence in speaking so she was less afraid to ask for help in stores, chat informally with neighbors, and make appointments by phone.

Cesar, from Colombia, said his main goal in taking English classes was to improve his professional communication. He appreciated being able to practice speaking in every class and learning more vocabulary and grammar. This was key to his professional goals. Cesar said his colleagues and supervisors noticed an improvement as he progressed through the course. He was also able to understand more in meetings and in conversations at work. He ultimately felt confident enough to apply for and interview for higher-paying jobs with more opportunities for advancement.

"After more than 20 years teaching English as a second language, I am still amazed by peoples' stories and lives," added Kim Rodriguez, adult education instructor. "Our adult students have so much grace and grit."

For more information, contact the Division of Strategy and Communication 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.