

**For Immediate Release**  
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## Media Release



### Burke High School

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

**Erica S. Taylor, Ed. D.**  
Chief of Staff

**Jaqueline Haynes**  
Associate Superintendent of Acceleration  
Schools

**Cheryl Swinton**  
Executive Principal

## **U.S. Department of Education's Dr. Michelle Cooper to be commencement speaker at Burke graduation**

**Charleston, SC** – The commencement speaker at the Burke High School graduation on Friday, June 3, 2022 will be Dr. Michelle A. Cooper who currently serves as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Post-Secondary Education and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Higher Education at the U.S. Department of Education.

The ceremony will be held at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center at 2:30 p.m.

"Dr. Cooper's life's work is a tribute to the legacy of excellence embodied in Burke graduates," said Principal Cheryl Swinton. "In light of her tremendous schedule, we are honored that she would accept the opportunity to inspire hope in our scholars with a commencement message."

Dr. Cooper is a proud native of Charleston, South Carolina, and was educated in Charleston County Public Schools at James Simmons Elementary, Courtenay Middle School, and Burke High School (Class of 1991).

At Burke, she was an honor student and participated in the marching and concert bands, academic bowl team, Student Government, and National

Honor Society. She was crowned Miss Burke 1990-91 and graduated as a 3rd Honor Graduate with the Class of 1991.

Cooper is a senior education official within the Biden-Harris Administration and currently serves as the acting assistant secretary for postsecondary education and deputy assistant secretary for higher education programs at the U.S. Department of Education.

A recognized advocate for racial equity and social justice, experienced practitioner, and demonstrated leader, Dr. Cooper is a champion of access and success for all students in higher education.

In her work at the Department of Education, Dr. Cooper leads higher education's pandemic recovery efforts by managing \$76 billion in pandemic aid for students and colleges. She also oversees a \$3 billion grant making portfolio that supports programs and builds capacity at colleges and universities, like community colleges and Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU), and advances game-changing reforms that drive social and economic mobility for America's students. Dr. Cooper has also held leadership positions at the Institute for Higher Education Policy, Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (U.S. Department of Education), Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Council for Independent Colleges, and King's College.

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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.