



Ashley River Creative Arts  
Elementary School

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## Media Release

### Ashley River's Shivam Kolwalkar takes title at regional Spelling Bee

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.  
Interim Superintendent of Schools

Karolyn Belcher  
Chief Academic Officer

Michelle Simmons  
Associate Superintendent of  
Elementary Learning Community

Michelle Conner  
Principal

**Charleston, SC** – There is a new Spelling Bee champion in the Lowcountry: Shivam Kolwalkar of Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School. He won the 2022 Post and Courier Spellbound! on March 25, 2022, at the North Charleston Athletic Center. The fifth grader edged out a former Unicorn, Jordan Bazzle (now a sixth grader at Charleston County School of the Arts) for the title.

Kolwalkar spelled “cabaret” to lock up his spot in the Scripps National Spelling Bee; he will compete in the virtual preliminaries in May. If Kolwalkar advances through the preliminaries, he will travel to Washington, D.C. for the finals.

“Since the CCSD Spelling Bee, I studied the words for about 30 minutes every day, but sometimes longer on the weekends,” said Kolwalkar. “I was nervous when I got [to Spellbound!]. I didn’t think I was going to win, but I thought I could. When it got down to two people, I got more nervous. When I heard the announcer give me the word cabaret, I knew I was going to win!

This is the third straight year a student from Charleston County School District (CCSD) finished first in Spellbound!

The 30<sup>th</sup> edition of Spellbound! included students from CCSD, Berkeley County School District, Colleton County School District, Dorchester School District Two, Dorchester School District Four, the Catholic Diocese of Charleston, Christian Home Educators Association, and the South Carolina Independent School Association.

“We are so proud of Shivam and will be cheering him on in the next round on the way to the National Bee,” said Principal Michelle Conner.

For more information, contact Michelle Conner at [michelle\\_conner@charleston.k12.sc.us](mailto:michelle_conner@charleston.k12.sc.us).

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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.