

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

C.E. Williams' Keerthana Samuel defends CCSD Spelling Bee crown with virtual victory

Strategy and Communications
Division

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Charleston, SC – C.E. Williams Middle School's (South campus) Keerthana Samuel has been named Charleston County School's District (CCSD) Spelling Bee winner for the third year in a row.

"We are very proud of Keerthana," said Principal Kevin Smith. "Winning the CCSD Spelling Bee once is a great accomplishment. Winning it three consecutive years is almost implausible. Congratulations to her, the other winners, and everyone who participated. To have the confidence and commitment to compete is an accomplishment unto itself."

For the second year in a row, the competition was held virtually, facilitated by the online spelling platform created by Scripps National Spelling Bee. Samuel and the rest of the Top 10 spellers will be moving forward to Spellbound, the regional spelling bee hosted by the Post and Courier.

Samuels said the spelling assessment competition was easier than the other competitions because of the experience she gained in prior events.

"I did not feel as nervous as I was in my previous spelling bees," Samuels added.

Top 10 Spellers Include:

Jordan Bazzle, Charleston County School of the Arts; Claire Bidgood, Thomas C. Cario Middle School; John Graham, Moultrie Middle School; Charlotte Ham, Northwoods Middle School; Shivam Kolwalkar, Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School; Melisa Ruiz, North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary School; Keerthana Samuel, C. E. Williams Middle School (South Campus); Priyanka Sattur, Laing Middle School; Aaliyah Spencer, Jerry Zucker Middle School; and Ahmed Touma, Simmons-Pinckney Middle School.

Forty-two school bee winners, from fifth to eighth grade, participated in this year's district spelling competition. At the school level, school bee

coordinators could facilitate socially-distanced, in-person competitions or use an online format.

CCSD's online spelling bee was structured just as last year's competition. Students had 30 minutes to spell 25 words. The online format allowed the student to hear the word and then provided the origin of the word, part of speech, and a sentence that the word could be used.

Samuel was able to spell every word correctly, making her the clear winner.

"I am honored to once again represent CCSD and C.E Williams Middle School," said Samuels.

Spellbound will be held Thursday, March 24, 2022. The winner, along with the other 229 regional bee champions, will advance to the 2022 Scripps National Bee. The event will return to the Washington D.C. area on Thursday, June 2, 2022, and will be televised nationally.

For more information, contact the Division of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally-accredited school district that is 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 more than 50,000 students in 87 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.