

**For Immediate Release**  
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## Media Release

Division of Strategy and  
Communications

**Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Erica S. Taylor**  
Chief of Staff



**Mercedes L. Pinckney Reese**  
Staff Attorney

### **CCSD welcomes new staff attorney**

**Charleston, SC** – Charleston County School District (CCSD) is excited to announce and welcome Mercedes Reese as its new staff attorney. Reese joins CCSD from the United States Air Force Academy where she has served as an associate general counsel for the Secretary of the Air Force's Office of General Counsel since November 2020.

Reese began her career in law as an associate attorney with The CW Law Group, PC in Durham, NC. While with CW Law Group, Reese practiced law in a general practice law office, focusing primarily on family law and criminal law matters in North Carolina's state and federal jurisdictions. Additionally, Reese served as a truancy court judge at Shepard Magnet Middle where she appeared in an authoritative capacity before students and parents in an effort to reduce the school's number of student absences and tardies. She also collaborated with the school's principal, social worker, guidance counselor, and teachers to develop truancy action plans to support students.

In 2013, Reese took the position of assistant public defender with the New Hanover County Public Defender's Office in Wilmington, NC. Two years later, Reese relocated to Mount Pleasant, SC becoming part of the team at Motley Rice, LLC as a contract attorney responsible for submitting asbestos-related claims against manufacturing companies on behalf of individuals diagnosed with asbestos-related diseases. Within this role, Reese frequently communicated with workers' compensation boards, physicians, and medical facilities to achieve settlement resolution.

Following her time at Motley Rice, Reese stayed in the Charleston area to rejoin her alma mater, College of Charleston, as one of their two in-house counsels. As the College's assistant general counsel, Reese drafted and reviewed contracts, memoranda, college policies and procedures, as well as provided advisement on general legal matters, student and employee conduct matters, and anti-discrimination practices.

Reese next took her talents to South Carolina State University in Orangeburg where she assumed the position of general counsel in May 2017. As the university's chief legal officer, she advised the President and Board of Trustees about potential exposures and risks and advised on the implementation of preventative measures to curtail legal liability. She also oversaw and managed outside counsel and litigation and coordinated with various departments daily to improve campus relations.

Three years later, Reese traveled across the country to Colorado Springs to serve in her current position as an associate general counsel for the Secretary of the Air Force. Since beginning her assignment as associate general counsel for Academy Business Matters at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), Reese has provided legal and policy assistance to the Superintendent and headquarters staff of the USAFA on business governance, fiscal, legislative, and ethics issues. She worked alongside members of the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at USAFA providing advice and counsel to leadership and corresponded with various leadership departments within the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force at the Pentagon regarding USAFA high-risk matters.

Reese holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the College of Charleston and a Juris Doctor from the North Carolina Central University School of Law in Durham, NC. She also obtained a Master of Laws in Intercultural Human Rights from St. Thomas University School of Law in Miami Gardens, FL. She is licensed to practice law in both North and South Carolina, as well as in the U.S. Federal District Court in North Carolina's Middle District and the U.S. Federal District Court in the District of South Carolina. She is a member of both South Carolina and North Carolina's State Bar Associations and the College of Charleston's Alumni Association Board of Directors.

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), a nationally-accredited school district, is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing 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. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music

and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.