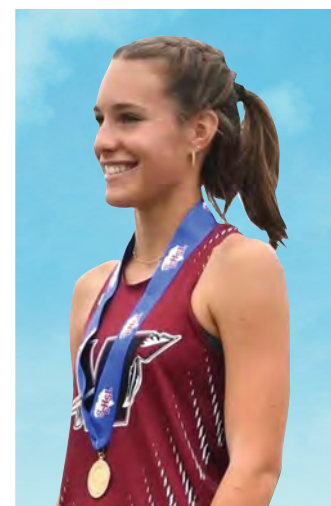


CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

# YEAR IN REVIEW

*2022-2023*





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# INTRODUCTION

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**W**e are excited to publish this celebratory document that encapsulates the spirit of Charleston County School District and highlights some of the many accomplishments and achievements of our schools, students, and staff throughout the school year.

Our students and staff have ambitious dreams for themselves and our community as they continuously work hard to make those dreams a reality. The 2022-2023 Annual Review highlights the many achievements of our students, staff, and schools that were accomplished with the passion and determination that embodies the Charleston County School District.

The CCSD Board of Trustees worked tirelessly with senior staff and administrators to develop goals and guardrails with the help of the community to be used as the path toward achieving Vision 2027 where all students will be reading on grade level by grade five, better ensuring positive outcomes for all students in CCSD.

Charleston County School District is committed to helping all students realize their dreams by knowing what they are and creating a robust pre-K-12 ecosystem of support to ensure that they become a reality. The involvement of the entire Charleston community is essential to ensuring children have the ability to make their dreams come true. CCSD is proud and excited to partner with our community dream makers to support student success.

We look forward to a wonderful year ahead. Join us in celebrating all things CCSD!

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CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

# YEAR IN REVIEW

*2022-2023*

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# CELEBRATION

## BACK TO SCHOOL



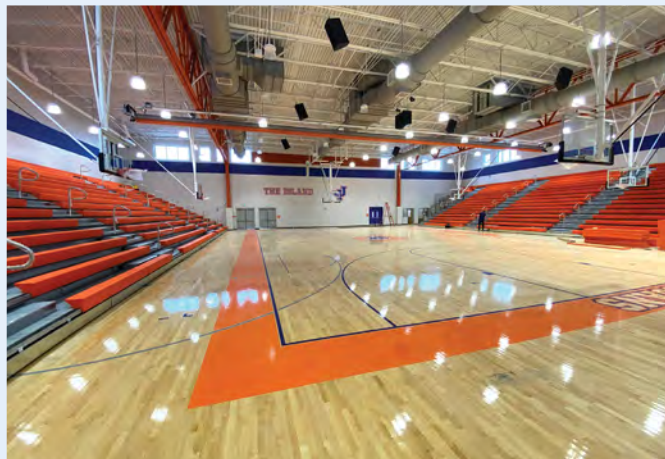
## FIRST DAY FESTIVAL



In partnership with the City of Charleston, Charleston County School District (CCSD) celebrated another successful First Day Festival on Sunday, August 7, 2022. Thousands of students and their families attended the free event. CCSD staff handed out books and back-to-school supplies.



# James Island Charter High School unveils new CTE and gym spaces



*Top: James Island Charter High School Campus; Bottom left: Culinary art; Bottom middle: gymnasium; Bottom right: weight room*

Charleston County School District (CCSD) unveiled a new Career and Technology Education (CTE) building and competition gymnasium on the James Island Charter High School Campus for the 2022-2023 school year.

The \$24.9 million project was completed by M.B. Kahn Construction. The two projects totaled 58,132 square feet and were designed by Quackenbush Architects and Clancy + Wells Architects.

“These additions will meet the needs of today’s students by providing state-of-the-art classrooms, labs, and athletic facilities that will support new and existing programs,” said Principal Timothy Thorn.

The CTE space will serve nearly three hundred students and provide areas of study in Building Construction Management, Culinary Arts, Health Sciences, Engineering, and Information Technology.

The gym, named Millie Kennedy Gymnasium, will be able to accommodate approximately 1,900 patrons. The building also has an athletic hall of fame, a school store, an additional weight room, and a Sports Medicine classroom/lab.

A project-designed sound system and jumbo JICHS Trojan graphics make this highly professional educational facility stand out, added Jasmeen Shaw, Executive Director of Capital Programs



# STALL UNVEILS PROGRAM TO HELP STUDENTS USING NAVIGATIONAL LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

R.B. Stall High School welcomed students to the Newcomer Center. The center operates as an intensive English acquisition school within the school to help scholars acclimate to Charleston County School District.

The Newcomer Center is aimed at students new to the country (or that have been here less than two years) with unique academic and social/emotional needs.

“Many of the students at Stall come from rich cultural backgrounds and we sometimes forget that language is part of that,” said Executive Principal Steve Larson. “There is a temptation to accelerate students into learning our language, yet we need to be careful when doing so to ensure that it isn’t at the expense of their culture.”

The mission of the center and the overall program is to create a safe, nurturing, and language-rich learning environment for multi-language learners new to the United States, supported by native language instruction.

“We want to provide these incoming students with the same level of care we provide our American born students,” said Larson. “Academic achievement and getting students ready for life after high school is at the center of our work, but ensuring a student feels valued and cared for is equally important.”

The program is designed to help students develop their English skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking by immersing them in meaningful language and cultural experiences. To do that, the center will provide a space to develop and foster a strong sense of community by engaging students’ families and caregivers in their education.

Students are placed in the program through a registration process. Once accepted, they attend for up to three semesters, earning six or more high school credits.



“We recognize it can be exciting and scary coming into a new experience, and into a new country,” said Larson. “If we give students access to rigorous learning in a sheltered environment that provides adequate language support, they can graduate with an uninterrupted educational experience.”

## Stoney Field renovations complete in time for 2022-2023 school year



Burke High school returned to their home stadium for their first football game of the 2022-2023 school year on August 19, 2022. The field underwent an extensive renovation thanks to a partnership between Charleston County School District (CCSD) and the City of Charleston. The stadium was originally built in 1964 and is home to Burke athletics and city recreation and club sports.

“We were thrilled to return to our home stadium and most appreciative of the City of Charleston and CCSD for the work to make this a reality,” said Executive Principal Cheryl Swinton. “I am extremely excited about the opportunity to bring our community together around a shared athletic experience. High expectations for an exceptional year in every area at Burke High School are the order of the day!”

The \$4.7 million project included the construction of a new synthetic turf field, goals, scoreboard and sound system, asphalt walking track, and new fencing.

“The one-penny sales tax has been an instrumental funding source in providing modern athletic facilities for the Burke High School’s football team and other athletic programs,” said Jasmeen Shaw, Executive Director of Capital Programs. “Stabilizing the foundation was essential to creating a beautiful turf playing field that stands out.”

Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg noted that Burke occupies a special place in the city’s heart and history.

“Stoney Field is an important part of that legacy,” added Tecklenburg. “We’re pleased that this remarkable renovation will be ready for the Bulldogs’ first home game on August 19, and would like to thank everyone who helped make this much-anticipated return to Stoney Field possible.”

Construction Management was handled by Cumming; the project manager was Joe Christian; site manager was Jack Duane; architecture was handled by Davis & Floyd; and the general contractor was Gulfstream Construction.



# DISTRICT COMPLETES CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR



Charleston County School District (CCSD) is committed to maintaining the public’s trust by being proactive in maintaining the educational facilities they own.

“The purpose of CCSD Facilities Management (FM) is to provide safe, healthy, comfortable, and pleasant facilities that work all the time and that enhance learning,” said Steve Hamer, Associate of Facilities Management. “It’s our goal to use all the resources at our disposal to ensure that happens.”

FM provides a host of facilities services including planning, managing construction projects, maintenance and repair operations, grounds maintenance, pest control, pickup and delivery services, custodial support, playgrounds maintenance. FM also provides key facilities support to other Operations departments with Security, Transportation, Information Technology, Nursing Services, and Nutrition Services

Projects are prioritized by request, need, available funding, and board direction from the CCSD Board of Trustees, Hamer explained.

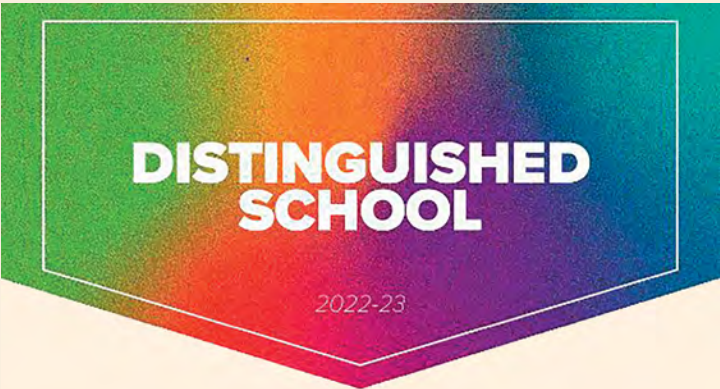
“Preventive maintenance is a key part of our effort,” added Hamer. “Having a team of experts in the field, constantly inspecting, testing, and repairing is critical to effective facility maintenance. Although we have good processes and capability for emergency corrective repairs, it’s best to make sure a corrective repair is never needed.”

While schools were out, FM was extremely busy with a host of projects, repairs, and maintenance activities. The Facilities Management Department completed over 450 projects of various sizes in the last fiscal year, ranging in cost from hundreds of dollars to several million dollars each.

## HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE

- Final phase to replace the HVAC system at North Charleston High School
- New chillers at Academic Magnet High School/Charleston County School of the Arts (Bonds Wilson campus)
- New modular classroom units at R.B. Stall High School
- New exterior doors and hardware at Belle Hall Elementary School
- New LED scoreboards at St. Johns, Baptist Hill and R.B. Stall High Schools
- Washer and dryer installations (Whirlpool Cares)
- Weight room expansion at Academic Magnet High School and West Ashley High School
- Renovation of West Ashley High School Culinary Arts space
- Final phase of restroom renovations at Minnie Hughes Elementary School
- Modular classroom relocation to Stiles Point Elementary School
- New playgrounds at Julian Mitchell Elementary School and A.C. Corcoran Elementary School
- Flooring projects at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School, Burke High School, Mt. Zion Elementary School, North Charleston Elementary School, Thomas C. Cario Middle School, Wando High School, Baptist Hill Middle High School
- Completed nearly 600 pick-ups and deliveries of furniture and equipment
- Summer clean-up of nearly 10 million square feet of buildings
- Completed 5000 service calls by shops personnel

# Buist Academy receives distinguished honor



Buist Academy was named a 2022-2023 Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Distinguished School.

This honor recognizes schools that empower students to thrive in an evolving world and achieve exemplary results from PLTW programs.

PLTW empowers millions of students across the U.S. to unlock their potential by developing the in-demand, real-world knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in life beyond the classroom.

PLTW Distinguished Program Recognition celebrates districts and schools committed to helping students own their education by increasing student access, engagement, and achievement in their PLTW programs.

# CCSD HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START CELEBRATES ANNUAL HEAD START AWARENESS MONTH

The Head Start program was announced in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson as a complete framework for providing the required health, educational, and nutritional needs of children from low-income families to pave better opportunities for them.

Since Head Start's inception, the program has served over 35 million children. Head Start has given them access to learning tools, healthcare, and more, as well as supporting their families. Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded initiatives that are crucial for preparing young children for a

life of independence and success.

While the program started in 1965, Head Start Awareness Month was initiated by President Ronald Reagan on October 22, 1982.

## Head Start District Staff



## Head Start at Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center



### Kimberly Foxworth receives proclamation

Kimberly Foxworth, Executive Director of Early Learning and Dena Davis, Head Start - Early Head Start Director received a Proclamation from the city of North Charleston in honor of Head Start Awareness month.



# GRANT HELPS MEMMINGER CREATE COLORFUL ART



Memminger Elementary School, with the help from their PTO, was able to purchase colorful cement paint and created engaging stencils using their very own Magic Cutter provided by the district. A Boeing Wellness Grant for \$300 enabled the purchase.

Art teacher Ms. Bilger, also did an amazing job painting mazes that incorporate both academic components and IB components. The playground now has a variety of games that encourage students to collaborate together.



## Midland Park Field Day

Students at Midland Park Primary School look forward to field day every year and this year was no exception. The weather was beautiful and students and staff had the opportunity to enjoy the sunshine and fun outdoor activities.

## Parent Teacher Association COLOR RUN fundraiser at Whitesides

Students at Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School raised over \$100,000 in two weeks during the fifth annual Parent Teacher Association Color Run fundraiser. To celebrate exceeding the six-digit fundraising goal, students participated in a color run on October 14, where PTA volunteers threw colorful powder on the students as they raced around a jungle-themed field.





# CCSD HOSTS EARLY LEARNING KINDERGARTEN READINESS SYMPOSIUM



Charleston County School District (CCSD) held an Early Learning Kindergarten Readiness Symposium on November 30, 2022 to expand collaboration among agencies. Local childcare providers and municipal partners joined Kim Foxworth, the district's Executive Director of Early Learning Readiness Programs, and her team to engage and collaborate on the important topic of early learning and kindergarten readiness. The focus was to collectively identify and define the academic and social-emotional skills of a Kindergarten-ready child.

The day-long symposium featured multiple breakout sessions led by state agency leaders and local childcare providers. Sessions focused on readiness resources, common expectations, and building collaborative networks. Dr. Jill Dent, Bureau Director of Early Childhood for the Mississippi Department of Education

was the keynote speaker. CCSD offers early childhood education from birth to five years old beginning with Early Head Start (0-2 years old), Head Start (3-year-olds), and Child Development (4K). The mission of CCSD's Early Learning community is to provide rigorous, developmentally appropriate instruction that incorporates social-emotional learning in a safe and nurturing environment. "Convening all of our early childhood education practitioners and stakeholders is crucial to ensuring we have common identifiers of readiness, as well as the resources, supports, and training available to help get students kindergarten ready," said Foxworth. Under the leadership of Foxworth, staff has begun to implement strategies to address the gaps to ensure all children that enter

CCSD system are Kindergarten-ready. "The expansion of seats in our early learning program is just one input into the early learning component of the K-12 ecosystem as access, opportunities, and engagement [or enrollment] must all occur in tandem to support successful outcomes of readiness," Foxworth explained. The symposium is CCSD's first-ever gathering of local public and private childcare providers, state agencies, higher education institutions, elected officials, and municipal partners. "Center-based, school district, and family home child care providers from the Charleston community will build ties that ensure continued partnership in readying all children for Kindergarten, positioning our community to remove barriers to access for early learning opportunities," explained Foxworth.



Division of Operations



Honorary Commander Induction Ceremony



North Charleston High



James B. Edwards Elementary



Laurel Hill Primary





# CCSD HOMECOMING 2022



Academic Magnet High School



Baptist Hill Middle High School



St John's High School



Burke High School



Wando High School



Lucy Garrett Beckham High School



# CCSD celebrates school bus drivers on BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION DAY

Charleston County School District (CCSD) in partnership with CCSD's Transportation Services and First Student, Inc. celebrate and appreciate bus drivers every day, but especially on National School Bus Drivers' Appreciation Day, Thursday, February 22, 2023.

First Student, Inc. makes safety a top priority and so do the drivers who serve CCSD students. Three individuals, who have a total of almost 100 years of service to students between them, are recognized on this special day for exceeding safety expectations.

Sandra Brantley (North Charleston route), Demetrica George (Mount Pleasant route), and Jackie Washington (Johns Island route) achieved a 5 Star rating for safety with First Student, Inc.

Drivers are judged using a metric system that measures speeding, rapid acceleration, hard breaking, idling and more according to Gary Reese, Sr. Senior Location Manager with First Student, Inc.

"They will all receive their 5 Star pin, along with many other colleagues, for being model drivers that our staff all strive to be," said Reese. "On School Bus Driver Appreciation Day we'll be providing an appreciation lunch to all the drivers and monitors."

First Student, Inc. is contracted to secure experienced drivers and essential staff for all bus operations and 365 bus routes for CCSD.

"Our entire team puts student safety first," said Reese. "These three women are not only some of our top drivers but are compassionate and truly have a heart for children. "You really have to care for children in this industry. If you don't, you're in the wrong business."

## Sandra Brantley

Brantley adores children. She has been driving routes in North Charleston for over 40 years and is now driving the children of the children she originally transported.

Although she has just turned 72, she has no plans to slow down.

"As long as I am physically able to do it, I am going to keep going," said Brantley. "Their safety is a top priority to me. I always make sure my students in wheelchairs are secured, locked down, and strapped in correctly. I've created special bonds with the children over the years."

Brantley drives students ranging in age from three years old to high school. She enjoys all of their stories and antics.

"I am especially proud that families in North Charleston specifically request me," said Brantley. "These parents know I am going to take good care of their babies. They know the kids are in safe hands."

## Jacqueline Washington

The Johns Island native has 24 years of experience driving



Demetrica and Christopher George



Sandra Brantley, Demetria George and Jacqueline Washington

CCSD students. Like her colleagues, she puts safety first.

As a bench driver, which is a substitute driver, Washington is able to fill in for drivers all over the area. She also gets to transport students of all ages. As a result, she knows all the routes by heart, is familiar with so many of the families, and is considered a true team player by her peers.

"The drivers on Johns Island know they can count on me to fill in when things come up," said Washington. "We are here to help each other out in any way because the end result is servicing our children in the safest way possible."

For Washington, safety has more to do with just driving. Safety also means proper shoes, a visible safety vest, and vehicle pre-checks.

"I always say to new drivers, use your mirror, it will be your best friend," Washington said. "It's almost as good as having eyes in the back of your head."

Washington's favorite aspect of the job is the joy that the children give her.

"They always bring my spirits up," Washington said.

## Demetrica George

George has been a driver in the East Cooper area for over 20 years, serving students from McClellanville, Awendaw, and Mount Pleasant. She serves special needs students, elementary school students, and high school students.

"I had a lot of fun being a student on the bus so when the opportunity presented itself for me to apply, I jumped at the chance," said George. "I wanted a flexible job so I could be there for my kids and it was a great decision."

George's route is unique in that some of the stops are in business

parking lots, unlike the traditional neighborhood stops. The stops are in strategic geographic areas so that magnet school students can receive bus transportation. A great deal of caution must be taken to ensure student safety.

"These business areas can be very busy," said George. "I scan the lot, I won't let the kids off the bus until they see their parent. I'll even come down the bus stairs to make sure I see the parents for myself and that my babies are getting into the right car. They can't just go off with anybody."

The students and the families appreciate George and have developed tight bonds with each other. So much so that if she ever has to take a day off, George hears about it from the students.

"We're so much a part of each other's lives that I am more than just a bus driver to them," said George. "I am a mentor and a trusting adult when they need one."

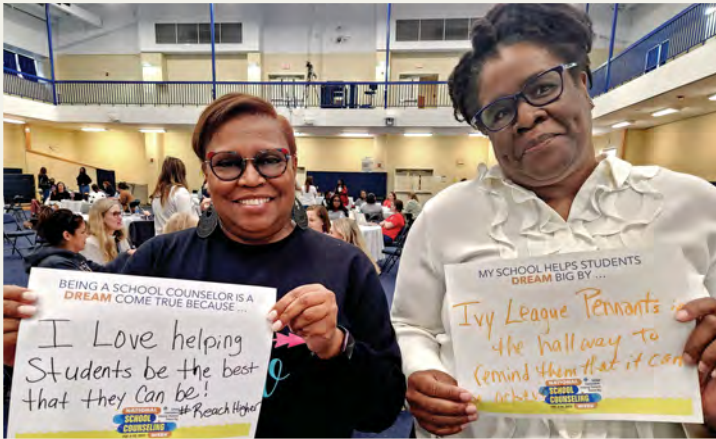
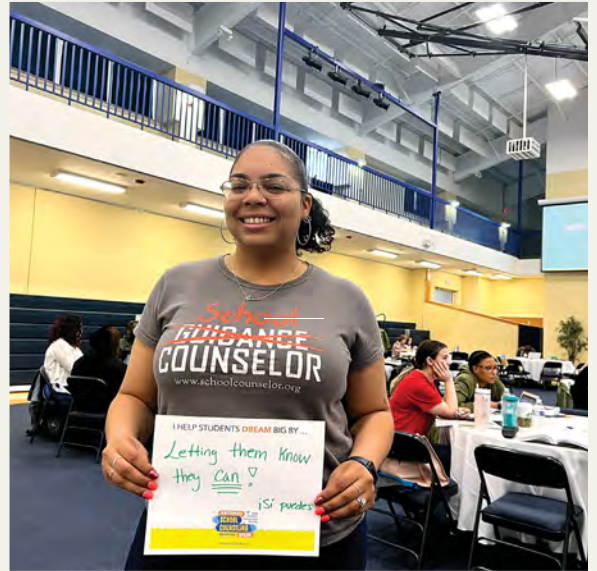
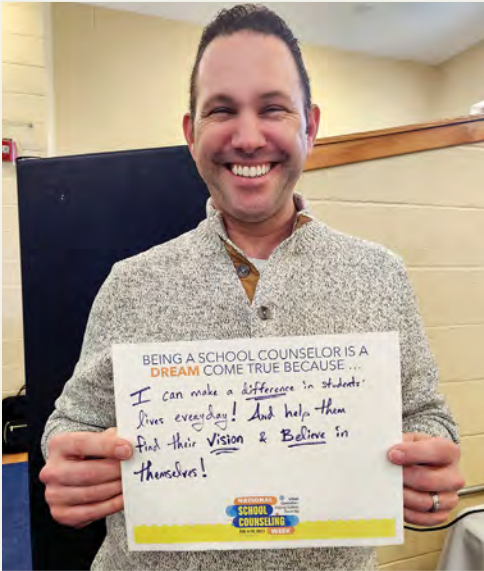
## Bus driver appreciation

Reese is proud of his entire team and praises the attention to safety each driver is committed to. He came to the industry by way of law enforcement. He was brought in to teach the importance of safety to a group of bus drivers. His natural ability to connect with the drivers and educate them on the reasoning behind proper procedure sent him on an entirely different career path. Today as the First Student, Inc. leader of the CCSD teams, he is honored to be able to continue to serve and protect.

Much has changed since student transportation was first introduced to public education systems across the country. What does remain a constant is the color of the bus and the friendly faces of the drivers as they transport CCSD's precious cargo.



# National School Counselor Week 2023



Charleston County School District joined schools to celebrate National School Counselor Week in early February! The celebration is designed to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors. National School Counseling Week, highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.



# Jennie Moore SIC named to State Honor Roll

Jennie Moore Elementary School's (JME) School Improvement Council (SIC) was named one of six South Carolina public schools to the SC School Improvement Council's (SC-SIC) 2023 Honor Roll for their significant efforts to foster civic engagement in public education.

These Honor Roll SICs will continue in the running for SC-SIC's annual Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence.

"When everything shut down for COVID-19, the JME SIC rose to the occasion," said Principal Karen Felder. "We had a lot of new members and they took full advantage of Zoom meetings and worked together remotely to plan and create activities and options for parents, students, and teachers at JME."

Now in its 22nd year, the award is named for the former U.S. Secretary of Education and South Carolina Governor and his late wife, and recognizes the vital contributions made by more than 1,100 local SICs and their 11,000-plus SIC members across the state.

"I knew from the moment I met this council that they were going to make a huge difference," said Chrissy Hilfiger, JME SIC Co-Chair. "Each and every member on the council has greatly contributed to our success. It's been so inspiring. We were able to assist the teachers at JME as well as keep the JME students and families engaged in learning especially during the Pandemic."

Megan Ryzski, who serves as a co-chair said it has been wonderful to be a part of the JME SIC.

"I am so proud of the work that we have done to support the JME community during the pandemic," said Ryzski. "With creativity and flexibility we were able to provide



school-wide events that brought the school community together for fun and educational virtual activities."

JME joins Belvedere Elementary School SIC (Aiken County Public Schools), Greer High School SIC (Greenville County Schools), Hilton Head Island High School SIC (Beaufort County School District), Piney Woods Elementary School SIC (District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties), and Wilder Elementary School SIC (Sumter School District) in being recognized.

"The School Improvement Councils named to this year's Honor Roll have demonstrated their support of their schools' success," said SC-SIC Board of Trustees Chair Stewart Cooner. "We congratulate them on this distinction

and thank them – and all SICs across South Carolina – for the impact they make every day for their schools, families, and students."

Five finalists from this year's list of Honor Roll SICs will be selected in March, with one to be announced as the winner of the annual Riley Award for SIC Excellence later in the spring.

SICs were established in state law 45 years ago. A founding partner of the Center for Educational Partnerships within the University Of South Carolina College Of Education, the SC School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) provides the member training, technical assistance, statutory accountability, and other operational resources necessary for the continued success of the community-based SICs in each of South Carolina's K-12 public schools.



## TERRIFIC KIDS Ceremony at Pepperhill

Parents at Pepperhill Elementary School were ecstatic about attending the Terrific Kids ceremony in person this year! Students were recognized for their leadership skills, efforts in academic work, and social-emotional skills.



# LET'S GET GLOWING!

Students at Simmons-Pinckney Middle School who met their iReady minute goal celebrated with a glow dance party! Students were rewarded with light-up glasses, glow sticks and flashy rings to dance their way into the afternoon.



## Sullivan's Island Elementary Jump Rope Contest and Hula Hoop Games

Congratulations to the Sullivan's Island Elementary School winners of the jump rope contest and the hula hoop game!





# EDUCATORS

## CCSD ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR 2023 Teacher of the Year

Charleston County School District's (CCSD) officials surprised five teachers by announcing their selection as the Top Five Finalists for 2023 Teacher of the Year.

The finalists were Katie Bilback (Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center), Lexy Marianiello (Burke High School), Erin McGee (Wando High School), Spencer Quinlan - named Teacher of the Year (Springfield Elementary School), and Chloe Spitzer (Camp Road Middle School).

CCSD Superintendent Don Kennedy presented the finalists with balloons, flowers, and a plaque.

### Katie Bilback

Bilback is in her third year of teaching with CCSD and teaches in the Head Start program at Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center. She attended College of Charleston, where she earned a B.S. in Early Childhood Education.

Bilback is a member of the Multi-Tiered Support System team at Mary Ford and is the Grade Level Chair. In 2020-2021 she was named the Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center Rookie Teacher of the Year.

Additionally, Bilback is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society.



### Lexy Marianiello

Marianiello is a social studies teacher at Burke High School who has been with CCSD for just over a year. In total, Marianiello has been an educator for five years, having taught previously in Colleton County.

Marianiello graduated from Clemson University, earned a master's degree from Binghamton University and is currently enrolled in The Citadel. She serves on the AVID Site Team at Burke.



### Erin McGee

McGee is a ninth grade social studies and geography teacher at Wando High School. She is in her ninth year of teaching, seven of which have been with CCSD.

McGee graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts in History and a master's degree in Teaching, and from The Citadel with a Master of Education in Educational Leadership in School Administration (Secondary).

McGee is a member of the National Council for Geographic Education, Palmetto State Teachers Association, South Carolina Council for Social Studies, and South Carolina Geographic Alliance. She is currently the geography curriculum team leader and has previously served as an induction teacher co-leader and geography curriculum writer.

Additionally, McGee has been a Teacher of the Year (and month) nominee numerous times, as well as a Social Studies Department Member of the Semester in 2020.

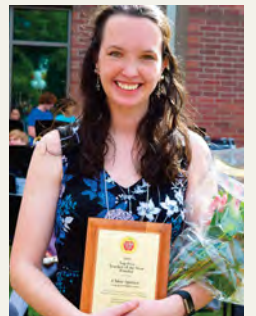


### Chloe Spitzer

Spitzer is the band instructor for Camp Road Middle School and has been in this role for three years. She has seven years of experience, having previously served in Florence, Darlington, and Georgetown counties before coming to Camp Road in 2020.

Spitzer attended Converse College where she earned a bachelor's degree in K-12 Music Education (instrumental music focus) and Certification in K-12 Special Education-Teachable Mental Disabilities. She also attended the University of Southern Mississippi where she earned a master's degree in Music Education. Her professional memberships and organizations include the National Association of Music Education, South Carolina Music Educators Association, South Carolina Band Directors Association, South Carolina Educators Association, Delta Omicron, Omicron Delta Kappa, Mortar Board, Alpha Psi Omega, Pi Lambda Theta, and Alpha Lambda Delta.

Spitzer was named Employee of the Month at Camp Road in 2020, a Grammy Music Educator Quarter-Finalist in 2019, and Brockington Elementary Magnet School Teacher of the Year Nominee in 2015.





# Springfield's Spencer Quinlan named 2023 CCSD Teacher of the Year

*Lexy Marianiello named runner-up*



Spencer Quinlan surprised at the 2023 CCSD Teacher of the Year Ceremony



Spencer Quinlan with Superintendent Donald Kennedy



Springfield Elementary students celebrate Quinlan's honor

Charleston County School District (CCSD) staff members surprised Springfield Elementary School teacher Spencer Quinlan with the announcement that she had been chosen as the 2023 CCSD Teacher of the Year.

Lexy Marianiello of Burke High School was named runner-up.

Quinlan is a second-grade teacher at Springfield Elementary School where she has taught for 11 years. It has brought her a tremendous amount of joy to work with a team of colleagues that she considers family.

"We are so proud of Spencer for this outstanding honor and recognition," said Principal Megan Williams. "She is an integral part of our Mustang family and is reliable, patient, and hard-working. She shows up for work each and every day and gives 100 percent to her students and fellow staff members. Her work ethic and belief that all students can be successful are evident in her attitude each and every day. We are so fortunate to have Spencer Quinlan as a part of our Springfield staff."

Quinlan received her Early Childhood Education degree from the University of South Carolina. She is a past member of the Palmetto State Teachers Association and the 2014 Rookie Teacher of the Year at Springfield. She is

currently the grade level chair for second grade, and a PBIS team member. Quinlan will host College of Charleston interns for the practicum experience this year just as she did in 2017.

Quinlan hopes to use the Teacher of the Year platform to connect families with community resources to meet basic needs.

"We have to fight for our kids," said Quinlan. "As Teacher of the Year, I will use this platform to continue to communicate with families and work hard to build a bridge of trust and respect between home and school."

Quinlan hopes to build an ecosystem around supporting students by donating alarm clocks to combat absenteeism and hopes to host tutoring or homework nights at schools across the district and provide free community resources as needed. The school's parent advocate is an amazing resource, Quinlan explained and she wants to help further her efforts.

"There are so many problems that our children are dealing with or are exposed to that we can't see on the surface," said Quinlan. "We have to get families and students to confide in us their vulnerabilities so that we can help them. I know I speak for my colleagues when I say we come from

a place of wanting to help, never a place of judgment."

## MARIANIELLO

Lexy Marianiello, a Burke High School social studies teacher, is in her sixth year as an educator. Marianiello graduated from Clemson University, earned a master's degree from Binghamton University, and is currently enrolled in The Citadel. She serves on the AVID Site Team at Burke.



Lexy Marianiello, Burke High School



# CCSD honors Rookie Teachers of the Year



Erin Jones  
*Jerry Zucker Middle School*



Vincent Muleka  
*Septima P. Clark Academy*



Sarah Vicary  
*Edith L. Frierson Elementary School*



Amelia Williams  
*Sanders-Clyde Elementary School*

Charleston County School District (CCSD) honored four first-year teachers Friday, May 19, 2023, by surprising them with Rookie Teacher of the Year awards.

Erin Jones (Jerry Zucker Middle School), Vincent Muleka (Septima Clark Academy), Sarah Vicary (Edith L. Frierson Elementary School), and Amelia Williams (Sanders-Clyde Elementary School) were all honored with a surprise visit from Superintendent Donald Kennedy and district staff.

The CCSD 2023 Rookie Teachers of the Year represent the top first-year teachers at the early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school levels. Each teacher was nominated by their principal for embracing the district's vision for teachers who truly exemplify the best in their school.

After being selected by the schools, the rookies wrote essays in which they described the ways that they meet the needs of their students and their families. These applications were rated by a team of veteran educators who had the difficult job of

finding the top Rookie Teachers of the Year.

"To be recognized as an outstanding first-year teacher is quite an honor," said Terri Nichols, Interim Executive Associate Superintendent for Literacy and Leadership. "These wonderful 'rookie' teachers are an asset to our district and to the teaching profession."

This year CCSD recognized 46 Rookie Teachers of the Year.

"In our work in the Induction and Mentoring Program, it is always gratifying to see beginning teachers grow into outstanding educators and leaders," said Shannon Krisak, Interim Director of Evaluation and Mentoring. "I could not be more proud to honor the four recipients of the Rookie Teacher of the Year award. Beginning teachers are navigating so many challenges and it is a privilege to be able to recognize their success. We look forward to the continuous impact that they will make throughout the district as they grow in the profession."

*"In our work in the Induction and Mentoring Program, it is always gratifying to see beginning teachers grow into outstanding educators and leaders. I could not be more proud to honor the four recipients of the Rookie Teacher of the Year award. Beginning teachers are navigating so many challenges and it is a privilege to be able to recognize their success. We look forward to the continuous impact that they will make throughout the district as they grow in the profession."*

SHANNON KRISAK, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF EVALUATION AND MENTORING



# CHARLESTON GAILLARD CENTER CELEBRATES ENGAGING 100K STUDENTS AND HONORS STAR TEACHER OF THE YEAR



In honor of National Arts in Education Week, the Charleston Gaillard Center announced that in the spring of 2022, its Education & Community Program welcomed its 100,000th student to the Gaillard Center. The Gaillard Center also announced the 2021-2022 Star Teacher of the Year, presenting Erin Bianco, a third-grade teacher at Mount Zion Elementary School on Johns Island, with the award for her dedication to integrating the arts into her classroom, even during the challenges presented during the pandemic.

Since reopening in 2015, the Gaillard Center has served as the community's largest classroom, providing access for Lowcountry students to experience world-class artists and performances without financial barriers.

## STAR TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

This past school year, educators were faced with many challenges as the global pandemic continued to interrupt traditional classroom learning. Bianco worked diligently to plan a mini-arts residency for her students and colleagues. Ms. Bianco organized field trips to the Charleston Gaillard Center so her students would have the opportunity to experience the live performing arts. She also served as a liaison, modeling and encouraging her teammates to invite the arts into their own classrooms.

Bianco organized workshops for all of the grades at Mount Zion to ensure that all students had the opportunity for an arts-enriched workshop. When you enter her classroom, it is evident that her students participate in hands-on experiments and are not afraid to try new things. Her students constantly want to share their creations and learnings with her.





## GREAT TEACHERS, GREAT LEADERS

Charleston County School District (CCSD) welcomed its newest teachers with a two-day event this week that featured keynote speaker, Byron Garrett. Supports and resources are highlighted at the event so that teachers can easily access what they need to be successful.



Charleston >excellence is our standard  
County SCHOOL DISTRICT





# HORTICULTURE PROGRAM COMES FULL CIRCLE

*Now taught by  
former student*

Thirteen years ago, a brand new teacher set up shop in a classroom cottage, Trailer 11, on Wando High School's campus. Katie Donohoe was tasked with starting the school's first-ever horticulture class.

The course was designed as a feeder program for Trident Technical College and four-year colleges that offer horticulture or agriculture or for students interested in beginning their careers immediately upon graduation.

Through the years, the program grew in popularity. Some students took Donohoe's courses as an elective, others chose the program as a major.

"Sparking an interest in those students about horticulture and agriculture is what it was all about," said Donohoe.

Many of her students have enjoyed successful careers in the industry. One student's career path went in an unsuspecting direction. Paul Millar, who took Donohoe's class in 2015, is now teaching the course.

The course has evolved and is now included in the East Cooper Center for Advanced Studies (ECCAS) Program of Studies as a full pathway. Using Donohoe's same hand-crafted curriculum, 'Seed to Seed' (a seed is planted and rooted and then planted in a garden until it flowers and seeds again), Millar is teaching the next generation about sustainable resources, hydroponics, forestry, turf management, and more.

## The spark

In 2015, Millar was just like every other high school student trying to meet their electives requirement. He chose horticulture class not having any idea it would be his future career.

"I thought to myself, 'how hard can it be,'" said Millar. "I fell in love with it and was inspired to install my own hydroponic tower garden at my house. Horticulture was my favorite class and I began to envision it being a career that I would truly love."

Millar was a completer of the program that eventually grew to such popularity that a second



Donohoe at trailer



ECCAS students enjoy a field trip to Growing Minds Educational Farm



Paul Millar and Katie Donohoe

teacher was hired.

Millar graduated from Clemson University in just three years and earned his Master's Degree in Plant and Environmental Science. His next stop was at the Clemson Extension office in Charleston as a vegetable breeder.

"I loved it," said Millar. "I can't say enough good things."

As fate would have it, Millar was alerted to a Charleston County School District job posting, and within a week of interviewing for the position for the new instructor for the ECCAS horticulture program, he was hired.

Millar is just 23 years old and now calls his former teachers colleagues. It seems a bit surreal, especially when he considers whose shoes he has to fill.

"I try to channel Mrs. Donohoe because she always had such great energy," said Millar. "She was very engaging so I try to bring that big energy to my class. I am somewhat reserved so I ramp it up to 100 so I can reach those kids like me."

Donohoe doesn't necessarily agree that Millar is reserved. She is confident he brought a certain energy to the classroom when he was a student. She recalls many energetic instances when Millar took center stage in class.

"He was such a fun student and I can only imagine his delivery to his students," said Donohoe. "I am confident he will be successful and get very many students hooked on this path where they too are bitten by the horticulture bug."

## Career opportunities

Outside of teaching horticulture, there are many career opportunities for students interested in the profession.

The major is comprised of four courses: Introduction to Horticulture, Landscape Technology, Nursery Greenhouse and Garden Center, and Turf Lawn Management.

"There are so many paths a person can go down with horticulture," said Millar. "Even if a student doesn't pursue it, you'll know how to keep a plant alive, grow your own food, and have a deeper appreciation for where your food comes from. You'll be more equipped for life."

Donohoe, an award-winning teacher, retired after seeing her vision for the horticulture wing at ECCAS come to fruition. She had done everything she set out to "grow" at Wando.

Donohoe went on to develop Growing Minds, which is a STEM-based learning program focused on educating and empowering youth to grow food anywhere and everywhere.

Donohoe works with schools across the district to utilize school gardens to their maximum potential. She also hosts groups of all ages (year-round) at her non-profit Growing Minds Farm, which opened to the public in 2018. Growing Minds helped to preserve the rich agricultural history of a nearly five-acre farm in the historic Phillips Community. It was transformed from bare land into an educational demonstration farm showcasing sustainable agriculture techniques. Therefore, this educational farm not only teaches the principles of sustainable agriculture but it preserves a piece of history as

well. She's giving students something purposeful to be passionate about, she explained.

Just recently Millar took his students on a field trip there where they got to see the sustainable practices in use at the farm.

## Full circle

Millar is in the driver's seat of the ECCAS horticulture program. Donohoe hires her former students to do work around her farm, and students in Millar's class are starting their own businesses while still in high school. It's more than either could have asked for.

"Seeing the kids leaning into it and loving the class is amazing to me," said Millar. "I love it when they want to take on more and begin to take ownership of things they've planted."

Donohoe agreed and explained that what these students are learning is something they can take with them regardless of their career choice.

"Knowing Paul is at the lead means that all the hard work that goes into starting a program from scratch was not for nothing," said Donohoe. "It's like leaving you're your child unattended and hoping someone will come along and take care of it. It is such a relief to me that someone who learned from me is now teaching the next group. It makes my heart feel real good."

All that remains of Trailer 11 are the two Crape Myrtle trees Donohoe's students planted, but the Seed to Seed program has flourished, growing into something bigger and better than Donohoe could have ever imagined.





# Godfrey-Jackson named State CTE School Counselor of the Year

The South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education and Student Intervention Services announced that Shirley Godfrey-Jackson is the 2023 recipient of the South Carolina CTE School Counselor of the Year.

Godfrey-Jackson is the ninth African-American female graduate from the Citadel's Corps of Cadets. She has spent her entire career with Charleston County School District. For the past three years, she has served as the Career Counselor at Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies.

Quality career guidance is critical to the total educational experience of the 21st century student. This award recognizes Godfrey-Jackson's sincere interest in career guidance while understanding the value of career and technical education programs in educational institutions. Godfrey-Jackson will be recognized at the 2023 South Carolina Education and Business Summit later this month.

"Every student deserves to have opportunities presented to them," said Godfrey-Jackson. "Watching students maximize opportunities is almost magical and makes my career choice a dream come true."

Rich Gordon, Charleston County School District's Executive Director of Career Technology Education said that Godfrey-Jackson is the model for professional school counselor standards and competencies that not just meet but exceed the rigorous demands

of 21st century scholars.

"Shirley is a tireless professional who ensures that faculty, staff, and students are receiving the academic, career planning, and social/development support that they need," said Gordon. "Her knowledge, attitude, and skills are second to none; it shows in the achievement and success of the students she serves."

Cooper River CAS Principal Vanessa Brown has worked with Godfrey-Jackson in several roles over the past 15 years.

"She is a person of excellence and works diligently to ensure her students achieve success," said Brown. "When I was offered my first principalship, I knew I wanted Mrs. Godfrey-Jackson to serve as my Guidance Director because my students would be well cared for by a knowledgeable counselor who has their shared experiences."

The school counselor's role is vital in delivering a quality career guidance program by assisting each student with educational pathway decisions while providing each a seamless transition into the world of work.

"Shirley truly believes that every student can succeed, every student should have access to a high-quality education, and every student should graduate prepared for postsecondary success," added Gordon. "We are so fortunate to have her on our team."



# SOA MUSIC EDUCATORS AWARDED AT STATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Two Charleston County School of the Arts (SOA) music educators were recognized by the South Carolina Music Educators Association (SCMEA) at the February professional development conference in Columbia.

Dr. Christopher Selby was named to the SCMEA Hall of Fame and Kenneth Turner was awarded the National Band Association's "Citation of Excellence" Award.

Selby directs SOA's high school orchestras and Turner is the high school band director.

Under his direction, Selby's orchestra students performed at the 2019 Midwest Clinic, and they won the 2016 ASTA National Orchestra Festival's top award of Grand Champion in the competitive public school division.

In addition to teaching and conducting, Selby is a published author and served two separate terms as the President of the state's Orchestra Division, and president of SCMEA from 2011-2013. He is currently the chair of the American String Teachers Association K-12 Committee.

"It was such a surprise and honor to be inducted into the Hall of Fame for the South Carolina Music Education Association," said Selby. "I have loved serving the SC music educators in this organization over the past 22 years, and it is also a wonderful feeling to be recognized for that work."

Under Turner's direction, the SOA Wind Ensemble was a featured performing ensemble at the 2022 SCMEA In-Service Conference, and both of his SOA Jazz Bands received a Superior with Distinction at the SCBDA State Jazz Performance Assessment. The Jazz Band at SOA also recently placed more students in the SC All-State Jazz Band than any other school in the state.

"The SCMEA Conference is an opportunity for music teachers from across the state to share ideas, network, and support each other," said Dr. Denisse Santos, Director of Visual & Performing Arts for CCSD. "The various workshops and sessions provide opportunities for inspiration and learning of new ideas that teachers can take back with them and implement in their own classrooms. There is also an opportunity to listen to performances from the top performance groups in the state."

Several CCSD music educators hosted conference sessions for attendees including Selby and Turner. Others include Margaret Selby, Laing Middle School Orchestra teacher; and Santos. Suzanne Reed, middle school band director at SOA, guest conducted a piece at the concert as well.

"This year, we had the opportunity to hear two extremely talented groups of students from SOA that were featured at the conference," added Santos. "I am so proud of the students and teachers from both groups from SOA, and extend my congratulations. This year's conference was truly an uplifting experience."



SCMEA conference attendees



Dr. Christopher Selby



Kenneth Turner



# ANGEL OAK ELEMENTARY EARNS CERTIFICATION FROM ARTS IN BASIC CURRICULUM

The arts are an integral part of the Angel Oak Elementary School experience; students not only take part in extensive art-related classes that promote collaboration through whole-child learning but they also experience arts-integrated instruction within their core classes.

Arts-integrated instruction supports the teaching of standards in both the arts genres and core content areas to promote student engagement and boost student achievement. That commitment led to the school recently earning its certification with the state's Arts in Basic Curriculum (ABC) Institute. The Owls are one of three schools to earn this distinction this school year, one of just 69 in the state overall. According to the South Carolina Arts Commission, research conducted within ABC Schools has repeatedly provided evidence of the value of arts education in a student's life.

Data collected in 2018 from Gallup Organization research confirmed that South Carolina students who had access to the arts in their curriculum were more hopeful and more engaged than students who didn't. "We are very proud to have earned our ABC certification and to continue to support our students in our arts-integrated school model," said Principal Judith Condon. "This certification allows us to continue to expand arts opportunities for our students and to reinforce the arts as a powerful tool for learning."

Angel Oak Elementary earned additional distinctions as part of its commitment to the arts in the past few years. Condon was named the 2021 Palmetto State Arts Education Arts Administrator of the Year Award, and in October 2022, the school was recognized as an ArtsNow Leadership School.



THE ARTS AT ANGEL OAK: *Top right and left, drama performances; bottom left, artist in residency; bottom right, dance*

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*"We are very proud to have earned our ABC certification and to continue to support our students in our arts-integrated school model. This certification allows us to continue to expand arts opportunities for our students and to reinforce the arts as a powerful tool for learning."* — JUDITH CONDON, principal | Angel Oak Elementary School

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# CCSD honors Star Principals



Melissa Brubaker



Ryan Cumback



Jermaine Joyner

Charleston County School District (CCSD) recognized six Star Principals Friday, April 7, 2023. They were selected based on their leadership and work as a principal to improve student outcomes and implement strategic change.

## STAR PRINCIPALS

**Melissa Brubaker**, *Elementary School Learning Community* – Brubaker is the principal at North Charleston Elementary School where she has served since 2020. Brubaker came to CCSD from Dougherty County Schools (DCS) in Albany, GA, where she served as the principal of Alice Coachman Elementary for four years. Brubaker began her career as a guidance counselor at East Coweta High in Sharpsburg, GA in 2005, eventually advancing to director of guidance. In 2013, Brubaker moved into administration, taking on the role of assistant principal at East Coweta for a year before transitioning to DCS to serve in the same capacity at Southside Middle School for the next two years.

**Ryan Cumback**, *High School Learning Community* – Cumback was appointed principal of West Ashley High School (WAHS) in 2019. Cumback has served in CCSD schools for the past 17 years. Prior to becoming West Ashley's principal, he served as the principal of Moultrie Middle for three years. Cumback has served as the associate principal of curriculum and instruction at WAHS. While at West Ashley, Cumback was also the assistant principal over ninth and tenth grade students, the Science Department, Math Department, and the Fine Arts Department.

**Jermaine Joyner**, *Star Rookie Principal* – Joyner is in his first year as principal at St. John's High School. He previously served as an assistant principal and director of Wando High School's Freshman Academy for six years. A CCSD graduate from North Charleston High School, Joyner immediately returned to serve in his home school district as a student concern specialist at Morningside Middle School in 2005 after completing his student teaching at R.B. Stall High the previous spring. Shortly after, Joyner became a middle school social studies teacher at Morningside before taking the same position at the former Brentwood Middle School in 2007. In 2012, he took the assistant principal position at what was then Sanders-Clyde Elementary Middle School for nearly three years. Joyner was then appointed as interim principal at Sanders-Clyde for one year.

**Janice Malone**, *Acceleration School Learning Community* – Malone is the Principal of Sanders-Clyde Elementary School and has served in that role since 2018. She has over 35 years of experience as an educator and administrator. She has a storied career with CCSD, having served as Principal of Matilda F. Dunston Primary School, Mary Ford Elementary, and Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary.

**Maite Porter**, *Middle School Learning Community* – Porter is the Principal of C.E. Williams Middle School North Campus. She has held several roles in education including special education teacher, assistant principal, principal intern, elementary principal, and now a middle school principal. Porter came to the district in 2019 as the principal of the former West Ashley Middle School.

**Megan Williams**, *Elementary School Learning Community* – Williams was appointed principal of Springfield Elementary School in 2018. She served in an interim capacity during the 2017-18 school year. Williams began her career in the district at Charles Pinckney Elementary School as a fifth grade teacher for eight years. In 2008, she moved to Stono Park Elementary and taught fifth grade for one year and served as lead teacher for three. Williams next transitioned to Springfield Elementary, where she was the assistant principal for five years before becoming interim principal last school year.



Janice Malone



Maite Porter



Megan Williams



# ATHLETICS

## THREE-PEAT COMPLETE: MILITARY MAGNET ROLLS TO A THIRD STRAIGHT STATE TITLE

Thanks to a stifling defense and a big second quarter in the South Carolina High School League A state finals, Military Magnet Academy (25-6) cemented its legacy as a dynasty in girls' basketball. The Eagles took down Denmark-Olar, 54-41, in the South Carolina High School League Class A state finals on March 4, 2023, in Aiken, SC, to claim their third state championship in a row. They are the first basketball program (boys or girls) in Charleston County School District history to win three consecutive state titles.

The Eagles used a 20-4 run in the second quarter to take command; they forced 37 turnovers and made 17 steals in the victory.

Senior Chazmin Bradley led Military Magnet with 17 points, and sophomore De'Jamari Pugh added 13 points and eight rebounds.

Military Magnet defeated the Vikings in the state finals last year as well.

The Eagles set another district record by making the Class A title game; they are the first CCSD school to reach the finals four years in a row.





## Individual/Relay State Championships

### FALL

#### Individual Winner (AAA)

Name: Kyle Hertwig  
School: Academic Magnet  
Year in school: Senior  
Sport: Boys' Swimming  
Events: 50-yard freestyle (20.76) and 100-yard butterfly (50.99)  
Name: Jack Troy  
School: Academic Magnet  
Year in school: Sophomore  
Sport: Boys' Swimming  
Event: 100-yard freestyle (50.23)

#### Individual Winner (AAAA)

Name: Wells Cloud  
School: James Island Charter  
Year in school: Sophomore  
Sport: Boys' Swimming  
Events: 200-yard freestyle (1:41.24) and 100-yard butterfly (49.93)  
Name: Adair Shaw  
School: Lucy Beckham  
Year in school: Sophomore  
Sport: Girls' Swimming  
Event: 100-yard butterfly (57.22)

#### Individual Winner (AAAAA)

Name: Jake Liebert  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Junior  
Sport: Boys' Cross Country  
Information: Won with a time of 15:13  
Members: Charlie Green, Jacob Hills, Mason Camp, Chase Healey  
School: Wando  
Sport: Boys' Swimming  
Event: 200-yard medley relay (1:36.41)  
Members: Charlie Green, Luke Green, Mason Camp, Chase Healey  
School: Wando  
Sport: Boys' Swimming  
Event: 400-yard freestyle relay (3:13.15)  
Name: Charlie Green  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Junior  
Sport: Boys' Swimming  
Event: 500-yard freestyle (4:35.97)

### WINTER

#### Individual Winner (AAAAA)

Name: Pierce Carpenter Kydd  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Senior  
Sport: Boys' Wrestling  
Event: 170 pounds

### SPRING

#### Individual Winner (AA)

Name: Jack Millet  
School: Academic Magnet  
Year in school: Junior  
Sport: Boys' Track and Field  
Event: Pole vault (14'0")  
Name: Quinn Swanton  
School: Academic Magnet  
Year in school: Sophomore  
Sport: Boys' Track and Field  
Event: 3,200-meter run (9:44.69)

#### Individual Winner (AAAA)

Members: M.K. Huddleston, Alex LaRue, Avery Belk, Alice Taylor  
School: James Island Charter  
Sport: Girls' track and Field  
Event: 4 x 800m (9:28.02)  
Name: Henry Goldsmith  
School: Lucy Beckham  
Year in school: Junior  
Sport: Boys' Track and Field  
Event: 400-meter race (56.11)

Name: Julia Goldman  
School: Lucy Beckham  
Year in school: 8th grade  
Sport: Girls' Track and Field  
Event: 800-meter race (2:13.52)

Name: Nicola Visser  
School: Lucy Beckham  
Year in school: Freshman  
Sport: Girls' Track and Field  
Event: Pole Vault (11'0")

#### Individual Winner (AAAAA)

Name: Josue Salazar  
School: R.B. Stall  
Year in school: Senior  
Sport: Boys' Track and Field  
Event: 400-meter hurdles (52.66)  
Name: Troy Cocco  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Senior  
Sport: Boys' Track and Field  
Events: 3,200-meter run (9:05.95) and 1,600-meter run (4:11.04)

Name: Jake Liebert  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Junior  
Sport: Boys' Track and Field  
Events: 3,200-meter run (9:05.95) and 1,600-meter run (4:11.04)  
Name: Julia Galbally  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Senior  
Sport: Girls' Track and Field  
Event: 100-meter dash (11.91)

Name: Hannah Togami  
School: Wando  
Year in school: Senior  
Sport: Girls' Track and Field  
Event: Pole Vault (13'2" - state record)

## Team State Championships

### FALL

#### AAAAA

**Wando Boys' Cross Country**  
ROSTER:  
Jack Butler  
Brendan Gomez  
Brennan Harp  
Tanner Jelliff  
Jake Liebert  
John Teachman  
Zach Teachman  
Gansen York  
Head Coach: Bret Davis  
Assistant Coaches: Bradley Ross and Jennifer Emerson

#### Wando Boys' Swimming

ROSTER:  
Mason Camp  
Jackson Carter  
Luke Chapman  
Charlie Green  
Luke Green  
Roman Haecherl  
Gavin Hall  
Wyatt Harbin  
Chase Healy  
Jacob Hills  
Evan Hoffman  
Sam Jerauld  
Brody Johnson  
James Kravchuk  
Brayden Labor  
George Minister  
Samuel Rees  
Co-head coaches:  
Nicolette Gibbons and Elissa Manchester  
Assistant coach: Kyle Weston

### WINTER

#### A

#### Military Magnet Girls' Basketball

Season Record: 25-6  
Defeated Denmark-Olar, 54-41, in state finals  
ROSTER:  
Chazmin Bradley  
Jataya Brown  
RyKia Jakes  
Kaelin Davis  
Morgan Richardson  
Jada Davis  
Sabri Mitchell  
De'Jamari Pugh  
Dream Watson  
JaNiha Brown  
Da'Nariyah Williams  
Destinee Wilson  
Head Coach:  
Nathaniel "Danny" Taylor, Jr.  
Assistant Coaches: Courtney Reed, Melvin Cooper, Perry Smalls, and Sheldon Reed

### SPRING

#### AAAA

**Lucy Beckham Boys' Lacrosse**  
Season Record: 13-4  
Defeated Christ Church, 20-13, in state finals  
ROSTER:  
Wyatt Atkins  
Chalmers Ballard  
Luke Barrett  
Colton Bennett  
Griffin Berry  
Henry Brosey  
Charlie Broucqsault  
Nick Buggie  
Grant Bushey  
Austin Constable  
Wyatt Coombs  
Garrett Coombs  
Connor Coombs  
Brendan Dick  
Jacob Doig  
Davis Evans  
Grant Gallo  
Will Hagberg  
D Harrison "Bear" Hankins  
Baker Hollingsworth  
Evan Johnson  
Ellis Keith  
Seabrook Kellett  
AJ Kut  
Brooks Leland  
John "Jake" Leland  
Sam Lucas  
Jonah Mack  
Ryan McCarthy  
Evan Newman  
Owen Newman  
Web Perry  
Bryce Rothwell  
Cole Rountree  
Connor Simmons  
Austin Walton  
Chad Weis  
Ryan Weis  
Flynn Wilson

Head coach: Parker Ferriga

#### AAAAA

#### Lucy Beckham Girls' Lacrosse

Season Record: 16-3  
Defeated J.L. Mann, 15-14, in state finals  
ROSTER:  
Kesley Bennett  
Lauren Hamblin  
Delaney Harrison  
Sophia Berg  
Bella Donofrio  
Katie Fasanaro  
Chrissy Mallon

Maggie Parkin  
Bridge Pritchard  
Virginia Cook  
Sophia Euthon  
Marin Fuller  
Brooke Gentry  
Emma Healey  
Izzy Simons  
Lainey Cormack  
Simone Nihalani  
Winni Pribanic  
Ella Troy  
Hannah Zeroski  
Head Coach:  
Ed Reckdenwald  
Assistant Coaches:  
Chelsea Lopez,  
Andrew "AJ" Johnson,  
Kelsey Lemke, and  
Karly Ripple

#### Wando Girls' Soccer

Season Record: 23-2-1  
Defeated J.L. Mann, 5-4 in Penalty Kicks, in state finals  
(1-1 after regulation and overtime)  
ROSTER:  
Tory Cole  
Lennon Leithauser  
LeighAnn Siehl  
Kendall Smith  
Kylie Cino  
Ella Grace "EG" Dillard  
Ansley Douty  
Ashton Douty  
Finley Dybik  
Caroline Graham  
Hannah Hall  
Tatum Leach  
Joy Slimmer  
Caroline Blackburn  
Sarah Diminico  
Macey Dumin  
Reese Funke  
Natalie Gullo  
Keira Jefferies  
Marlie Nagle  
Head coach:  
Shannon Champ  
Assistant coach:  
Alexa Alchesky

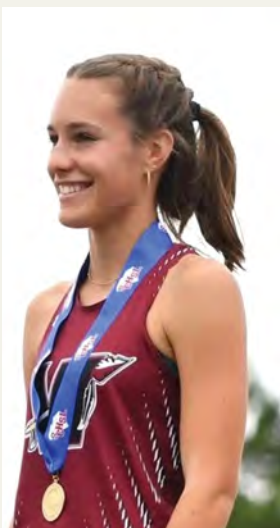


# ATHLETIC STATE CHAMPIONS

## CCSD TRACK AND FIELD STANDOUTS COLLECT STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Charleston County School District student-athletes won several state titles at the 2023 South Carolina High School League state track and field championship on May 21 and 22 at Spring Valley High School.

AAAAA



Wando High School's Hannah Togami became a three-time state champion in the girls' pole vault; the senior broke her own state record by clearing 13'2". She won the event by more than two feet.



Julia Galbally won the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.91.



On the boys' side, Wando's Jake Liebert (pictured on the left) repeated as a state champion in the 3,200-meter run with a 9:05.95 (close to 14 seconds faster than the second-place runner). Liebert also collected gold in the 1,600-meter run with a time of 4:11.04.



Fellow Warrior Troy Cocco (pictured in the middle) set the state record in the javelin with a throw of 196'6", winning the event by close to 18 feet.



R.B. Stall High School's Josue Salazar won the 400 hurdles with a time of 52.66 - close to a second and a half faster than second place. He is the first Warrior to capture a state championship in track and field since 2002. Salazar was the runner-up in the 110 hurdles as well.



# TRACK AND FIELD STATE CHAMPIONS – *continued*

## AAAA



James Island Charter High School's girls' 4x800 girls' relay team won the state title for the third year in a row; Alex LaRue, Alice Taylor, M.K. Huddleston, and Avery Belk captured gold with a time of 9:28.02 - close to two seconds faster than second place, and more than 18 seconds faster than their championship time from last year.



Freshman Nicola Visser of Lucy Beckham High School repeated as state champion in the girls' pole vault state championship with a height of 11'0".



The Bengals also earned a state title in the girls' 800 meters thanks to Julia Goldman and her time of 2:13.52.



Lucy Beckham's boys' team picked up a state title in the 400-meter race; Henry Goldsmith won with a time of 56.11.

## AA



Academic Magnet High School's Quinn Swanton took home the gold in the boys' 3,200-meter run; the sophomore recorded a time of 9:44.69



Fellow Raptor Jack Millet captured the state title in the pole vault; the junior cleared 14'0" and won the event by close to a foot and a half.



# ATHLETIC STATE CHAMPIONS – *continued*

## LACROSSE

### Lucy Beckham repeats as state champs in boys' lacrosse

Lucy Beckham High School remains the top boys' lacrosse program in South Carolina. The Bengals (13-4) won their second straight South Carolina High School League AAAA state title with a 20-13 victory over Christ Church on April 29, 2023, in Irmo.

Beckham scored three goals in less than a minute in the second quarter to go in front for good at 7-6. Austin Constable led the team with six goals, and Ryan McCarthy found the back of the net four times for LBHS. In addition, Flynn Wilson went over 500 career faceoff wins, and Ryan Weis broke the 400-career-save mark during the state finals.

The program is now 43-8 overall in three years of existence (including a pair of SCHSL AAAA state titles). The Bengals did not lose to a single in-state opponent this year (they beat all the other teams that appeared in the state finals this year) and had wins over nationally-ranked opponents Episcopal School of Dallas (TX) and Ponte Vedra (FL).



Lucy Beckham Boys Lacrosse State Champs

### Last-minute goal propels Wando to another state championship in girls' lacrosse

Wando High School survived a back-and-forth contest to win the South Carolina High School League AAAAA state title, 15-14, over J.L. Mann. Cassie Frye scored with 28 seconds left in the game to lift the Warriors to the championship, their second straight state crown, and third overall as a program.

Frye finished the contest with a team-high five goals, with Chrissy Mallon and Kelsey Bennett each scoring three times. Neither team led by more than two goals during the game.

The Warriors finished the season at 16-3.



Wando Girls Lacrosse State Champs



# ATHLETIC STATE CHAMPIONS – *continued*

## SWIMMING

### CCSD swimmers collect individual state titles in swimming; Academic Magnet's Hertwig pulls off three-peat

Four student-athletes from Charleston County School District won individual state championships at the South Carolina High School League AAAA state meets on October 7-8, 2022, at the University of South Carolina

#### AAAA BOYS



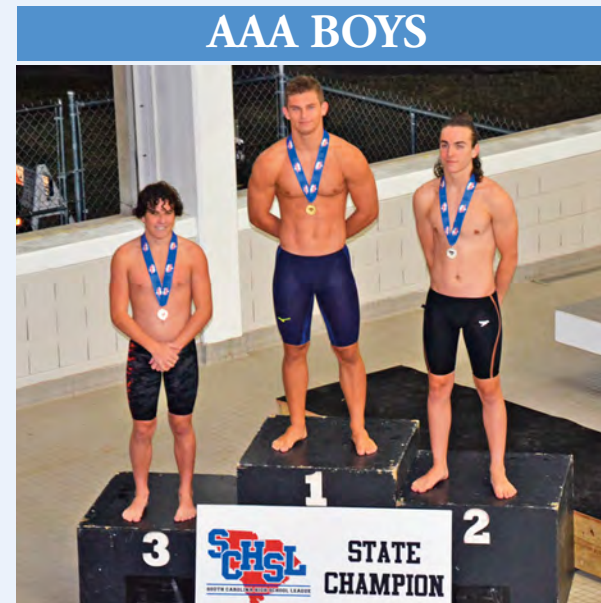
James Island Charter's Wells Cloud won a pair of gold medals - the 200-yard freestyle (1:41.24) and the 100-yard butterfly (49.93 seconds).

#### AAAA GIRLS



Adair Shaw of Lucy Beckham recorded a time of 57.22 seconds in the 100-yard butterfly to win the championship in that event. She helped the Bengals finish second in the team standings.

#### AAA BOYS



Academic Magnet's Kyle Hertwig won the state championship in the 50-yard freestyle for the third year in a row; he won the race with a time of 20.76 seconds. Hertwig also captured the crown in the 100-yard butterfly with a time of 50.99 seconds. Another Raptor, Jack Troy, won the title in the 100-yard backstroke with a time of 50.23 seconds.



### WANDO BOYS' SWIMMING TEAM WINS AAAAA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Wando's boys' swimming team won the South Carolina High School League AAAAA state championship on October 8, 2022, at the University of South Carolina. The Warriors finished first in the standings with 327 points, 14.5 points better than second-place Fort Mill.

In addition to the team title, Wando recorded one individual gold medal and a pair of championships in relay events.

Charlie Green captured the 500-yard freestyle with a time of 4:35.97. Green teamed up with Jacob Hills, Mason Camp, and Chase Healy to win the 200-yard medley relay with a time of 1:36.41. Green, Camp, Healy, and Luke Green also won the gold in the 400-yard freestyle relay with a time of 3:13.15.

This is the program's first team state title since 2018, and their eighth state championship overall.



# ATHLETIC STATE CHAMPIONS – *continued*

## SOCCER



Wando High School Girls' Soccer Team State Champs

## THREE-PEAT COMPLETE Wando takes girls' soccer state title in penalty kicks

Wando High School remains the top girls' soccer program in the state. In fact, the Warriors are in the dynasty phase now that they have won three straight South Carolina High School League AAAAA state championships. But once again, it was a nail-biter. Wando edged J.L. Mann, 5-4 in penalty kicks, to win the title in Irmo on May 12, 2023. They finished regulation and four overtime periods tied, 1-1. Wando won the AAAAA championship in overtime last year.

Kylie Cino, who scored the game-winner in the finals last year, scored the equalizer in the second half of this year's state championship match. Ansley Douty, Cino, Ella Grace Dillard, Marlie Nagle, and Ashton Douty all scored during penalty kicks.

The Warriors have won nine state titles in 18 years with Shannon Champ in charge of the girls' soccer program, and 13 state titles overall in school history. Wando finished the season with a 23-2-1 record.

## CROSS COUNTRY

## WANDO WINS STATE TITLE IN BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY



Wando's Jake Liebert

## Liebert repeats as individual state champ

Wando High School's boys' cross country team won its third South Carolina High School League team state title, and first since 2015, with a convincing performance at the AAAAA state meet in Columbia on November 10, 2022. Led by Jake Liebert, the Warriors captured the championship by 38 points over runner-up Fort Mill.

Liebert won the race with a time of 15:13 to repeat as the individual SCHSL AAAAA gold medalist (he shaved 28 seconds off his winning time from last year). Teammates, Brendan Gomez and Tanner Jelliff ended up third and fourth overall, respectively. Both earned all-state honors as well as teammate John Teachman who finished 13th. The Warriors actually had five runners finish in the top 20.

## WRESTLING



Wando's Pierce Carpenter Kydd

Pierce Carpenter Kydd is the first wrestler from Wando High School to win a state championship since 2012

Kydd defeated Chapin's Matthew Gummere with a 12-7 decision in the 170-pound finals on February 25, 2023, in Anderson. Kydd finished the season with a 40-2 record.



# INAUGURAL CCSD FOOTBALL JAMBOREE



After canceling last year due to COVID-19 and facing a tough weather forecast this year (including a 30-minute lightning delay), 12 teams still competed in the inaugural CCSD Football Jamboree at the District 2 Regional Stadium/Robert E. Hayes Field on Friday, August 12, 2022.

Lucy Beckham High School, playing in its first full varsity season, kicked off the event with a matchup against Burke High School. It was one of six 20-minute exhibition contests. The Bengals won the matchup, 27-0, and LBHS senior A.J. Kut scored the first touchdown in CCSD Football Jamboree history.

The district thanks the staff at Wando High School for hosting the event and to all the athletic directors, coaches, players, and fans for supporting this new tradition.

## Additional results:

North Charleston 8, Academic Magnet 0  
R.B. Stall 6, Military Magnet 0  
West Ashley 7, St. John's 0  
Bishop England 2, Baptist Hill 0  
James Island Charter 7, Wando 0





Girls on the Run at Stiles Point Elementary

# GIRLS ON THE RUN

The Girls on the Run program at Stiles Point Elementary School finished out their season with a 5K at Riverfront Park in North Charleston on Saturday, November 12, 2022. All girls run with a running buddy, usually a family member, or volunteer from the community.



Girls on the Run at Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary

There were two teams of girls (40 total) that took part in the program and 5k, along with eight teacher-coaches from the school. All coaches volunteer their time to work with the third, fourth, and fifth grade athletes. The program takes place every year from

August to November and culminates with the anticipated 5K.

Whitesides Elementary School also participated. Coached by Ms. Seebold and Ms. Steele the girls worked very hard over the last several months to prepare.

## NORTHWOODS MIDDLE RECEIVES OUTRIDE GRANT Riding For Focus

Research says that students who exercise and remain physically active throughout the day are more motivated and engaged. They tend to do better in the classroom, too.

Educators at Northwoods Middle School are ensuring that their students have every opportunity to do just that. Northwoods received a fleet of 35 mountain bikes from The Outride cycling program.

Outride is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of youth through cycling. Through research, school-based cycling programs, and matching community grants, Outride harnesses the benefits of cycling for the cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical well-being of youth while also helping to cultivate inclusive cycling communities.

Northwoods implemented the curriculum in the Spring 2023 semester. This three year partnership will be used in the physical



education courses. In addition, Northwoods has a vision of starting an afterschool cycling program.

“We are excited to see the growth in our students both physically and from a social emotional perspective,” said Meg Reilly, physical education instructor. “We have partnered with Main Street bike shop in Summerville who will assist in assembling the bikes and regular maintenance.”

In addition to the mental and academic benefits, the curriculum teaches the students basic bike safety. The students are responsible

for making sure their bike is safe to ride by conducting the basic ABC bike check (air, brakes, chain, and cranks). They each have their own helmet and they’re learning how to reach their target heart rate and how to check it.

Daily lessons send students peddling through various obstacle courses. There are days when the lessons center on riding etiquette, decision-making, and best practices. The students are learning about eye contact with vehicular drivers and who might have the right-of-way. What started as beginner lessons inside the gymnasium, to riding around the parking lot and then on the nearby trails, will culminate into a final lesson on road readiness. At the end of each school year, local law enforcement will join students on their final trek. The bikes are built to last five or more years. Reilly plans to add to the fleet annually so as to increase the number of students she can reach through the program.

## Speedy Sharks Running Club

The Julian Mitchell Elementary School “Speedy Sharks Running Club” spent time this year working toward the goal of completing a 5k race. On day one the scholars already showed encouragement for one another and determination! By June the scholars had done it. They completed the River Dogs 5k!





# CCSD celebrates 45 student-athletes on NATIONAL SIGNING DAY

Charleston County School District (CCSD) recognized the student-athletes from the Class of 2023 who signed National Letters of Intent on National Signing Day.

**THE FOLLOWING 45 CCSD STUDENT-ATHLETES REPRESENTING SIX CCSD SCHOOLS  
AND TEN SPORTS COMMITTED TO PLAY AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL:**



## Academic Magnet

Turner Orvin – Johns Hopkins University – Soccer



## Charleston County School of the Arts

Maile Merklein – USC-Lancaster – Soccer



## James Island Charter

Marcus Adams – Limestone College - Football  
Gemoi Brown – Wingate University - Football  
Tangela “Monic” Green – Wofford College – Track & Field  
Jonah Haller – Columbia College – Tennis  
Robert “Keillor” Osbon – Newberry College - Baseball  
Hayden Rape – Appalachian State University – Soccer  
Walker Woodall – Limestone College – Football



## Lucy Beckham High School

Allison Kammer – USC-Upstate – Track & Field  
A.J. Kut – The Citadel – Football  
Tierell Milligan – St. Andrews University – Football  
Sam Siefert – The Citadel – Track & Field  
Jack Weil – The Citadel – Football



## Wando

Kelsey Bennett – Florida Southern University - Lacrosse  
Alyssa Boris – Brevard College – Softball  
Samantha Bumgarner – Lander University – Softball  
Johnathan Coleman – Anderson University – Soccer  
Ava Crawford – Southern Wesleyan University – Softball  
Julia Galbally – Clemson University – Track & Field  
Brendan Gomez – University of Tennessee – Cross Country/Track & Field  
Delany Harrison – Newberry College – Lacrosse  
Caroline Holmes – Coker College – Softball  
Lennon Leithauser – City College of New York – Soccer  
Ryan Manale – Coastal Carolina University – Baseball  
Garrett Mayer – Rhodes College - Lacrosse  
Stokes McConnell – Sewanee University – Soccer  
Jacob Pelbath – Liberty University – Wrestling  
Mikey Rosa – The Citadel – Football  
Emma Sanders – Wentworth Institute of Technology – Volleyball  
Hannah Togami – University of South Carolina – Track & Field



## West Ashley

Connor Allen – USC-Lancaster – Soccer  
Ryan Bozard – Francis Marion University – Golf  
Kinzly Cohen – Columbia College – Soccer  
Dylan Denton – North Greenville University – Baseball  
John Frost – USC-Lancaster – Soccer  
Lilly Lupton – USC-Lancaster – Soccer  
Amy McLamb – Salem College – Softball  
DaLon Ramsey – Virginia University-Lynchburg – Football  
DaShawn Ramsey – Virginia University-Lynchburg – Football  
Hadley Scherer – USC-Lancaster – Soccer  
Kathleen Sears – Anderson University – Soccer  
Mary Kathryn Smoak – Brevard College – Soccer  
Brandon Vick – Anderson University – Football  
David Woolwine – USC-Lancaster – Soccer



# COMMUNITY AND PHILANTHROPY



## Matilda F. Dunston Elementary students receive free bikes

Students at Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School are “going places” thanks to former CCSD teacher Katie Blomquist, her non-profit Going Places, local businesses, and volunteers from the community. On Monday, November 14, 2022, every student (448) found out they received a brand-new bike. Students, staff, and families met outside and then watched as dozens of volunteers hoisted large tarps to reveal hundreds of bicycles with the name “The Reason” on them.

Blomquist and Going Places arranged for new bikes to be donated to every student at ten CCSD schools: Pepperhill Elementary (2017), Mount Zion Elementary (2018),

Sanders-Clyde Elementary (2019), Edith L. Frierson Elementary (2019), Stono Park Elementary (2020), Jane Edwards Elementary (2020), Lambs Elementary (2021), and Matilda F. Dunston Elementary (2022), Charleston Development Academy (2022), and Charleston Progressive Academy (2023). Several more schools have received bikes through mini-reveals as well.

Charleston County School District is thankful for Ms. Blomquist’s commitment to spreading joy in the CCSD community, and for the work done by Going Places, local businesses, and volunteers.

## BAPTIST HILL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM SOUTHEASTERN CONSTRUCTION

Baptist Hill Middle High School (BHMHS) students in Darrin Moore’s Construction Technology class received a welcomed surprise in October. Darryl Thornton, of Graycor Southern Inc., arrived carrying a giant check for \$5,500. Principal Michael De Jong was on hand to receive the generous investment.

Thornton serves as a member of the Southeastern Construction Owners and Associates Roundtable (SCOAR). This support from SCOAR will be used to supplement the BHMHS construction program’s materials expenses as well as provide two \$500 scholarships for post-secondary education and training for completers of Moore’s program of studies.

The students were excited to hear about this support for their program and Thornton was able to speak one on one with several students about local career opportunities during his visit.

“We are so thankful to have business partners such as SCOAR and Graycor Southern that provide Baptist Hill and our students with opportunities in and out of the classroom,” said De Jong. “A special thanks to Darryl Thornton, of Graycor Southern for visiting us and providing us with this monetary donation.”

This welcomed partnership provided opportunities for field trips for students in the

construction program to see first-hand how the valuable skills they are learning in their classroom provide them with a strategic and timely competitive advantage as they transition to post-secondary opportunities.





# CITADEL VISITS CCSD SCHOOLS

October 19, 2022 was The Citadel's annual Leadership Day, where every cadet participated in a leadership and/or service activity. The entire freshman class (over 700 cadets) participated in the school's SHARE Program along with approximately 150 sophomore team leaders where teams of cadets visited elementary classrooms to lead a heroism-themed activity and help students make cards for their personal and community heroes.



Charleston Progressive Academy



Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School



James Island Elementary School



Springfield Elementary School



## Students receive visit from North Charleston Police Department

The school year came to an exciting end at Meeting Street Brentwood and at Malcom C. Hursey Montessori School this year when officers from the North Charleston Police Department stopped in to visit students as part of Career Day. As you can see a good time was had by all, including their therapy K-9, Hope.





# CCSD expands service to community with FOCUS ON FAMILIES EXPO



Charleston County School District (CCSD) staff are committed to engage the community and providing support for students and their families, inside and outside the school walls. CCSD's Department of School Support (DoSS), in collaboration with the district's McKinney-Vento Title One Office, Office of Family and Community Engagement, and Department of Student Services, partnered with Boykin Real Estate to host the first Focus on Families Expo at Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies in February.

"DoSS exists to assist schools and families in overcoming obstacles that inhibit their scholars from entering school

prepared and excited about learning," explained Dr. Shavonna Coakley, CCSD's Director of School Support. "To do this, we must build stronger communities and family relationships that will outlast difficult times. Saturday was a true success and DoSS believes what was done on this day can become a reality across our district as we continue to build generational success within our CCSD communities."

More than 100 people attended the free event, which was focused on housing and education. In addition, nearly 40 volunteers from 22 local organizations and non-profit groups provided information on financial planning, home

stabilization, money management, and landlord-tenant laws. District staff members and the volunteers also helped a few families secure financial assistance on-site.

"Cross-system collaboration has become far more common with the increased needs of homeless families and decreased availability of resources," added CCSD's Title 1 Programs Compliance Administrator Sonya Jones. Developing good working relationships with programs like the Department of School Support increases the likelihood that homeless children, youth, and families will be identified and assisted in obtaining essential services."

## FRIERSON UNVEILS OUTDOOR LEARNING PAVILION



Staff from Edith L. Frierson Elementary School hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the school's opening of a new outdoor learning pavilion on April 26, 2023. The project was a collaboration between the school, community members, Charleston County School District, Clemson University's Architecture+CommunityBUILD certificate program (Clemson Design Center in Charleston, SC), Kiawah Cares, and the Kiawah Island Club.

The structure will serve as an outdoor classroom and gardening center. The project combines two covered pavilion areas that join at the corners to accommodate separated activities but are arranged toward a shared focal point, giving the space versatility for multiple uses.

Part outdoor classroom and part gardening center, the project combines two covered pavilion areas that join at the corners. The covered pavilions are arranged to be able to accommodate separate activities, but they are also arranged toward a shared focal point, giving the space versatility for multiple uses.

The structure is a study in the effective use of angles. Both of the pavilions are trapezoidal, slanted 15 degrees. The "floating" roofs of each pavilion are also arranged at irregular angles to maximize shade and manage water runoff. Accomplishing each angle requires hours of careful craftsmanship completed by Clemson architecture students—and a lot of materials.



# Students collect flip flops to support children in Liberia

Students in Charleston County School District (CCSD) once again supported an annual effort to collect flip flops for children and families in Liberia.

Dr. Helen Frazier, who has previously served on both the CCSD Board of Trustees, and District 23 Constituent Board, coordinated with principals at Baptist Hill Middle High School, E.B. Ellington Elementary School, and Jane Edwards Elementary School to host the drive which resulted in the donation of several hundred flip flops.

Dr. Frazier made a return trip to Liberia in January; she has visited Gbarnga in Bong County in previous years with her sister to support a non-profit organization that works to change the lives of less-fortunate children through providing necessary physical items (food, clothes, and sanitation products) and education. The Flip Flop campaign is in cooperation with “It Takes A Village,” a 501©3 charitable organization with a mission of providing educational and humanitarian outreach activities to individuals and communities here and abroad.

Dr. Frazier noticed large numbers of kids walking around barefoot. Since part of all three schools vision is to serve the community, all three schools were eager to participate.

“My wife and I have always believed that there are givers and takers in the world,” said Dallas. “We all know what it feels like to receive; however, how many of us have experienced the joy of giving. Participating in the flip flop campaign allowed our students to step outside of themselves to do for others; to do for those in great need. Our hope is that they recognize that the more they give, the more they will receive.”

De Jong said that Baptist Hill students, families and staff are fortunate to have the ability to support this yearly event.

“We have surpassed our last events numbers by 120 sets of flip flops and want to increase next year’s total number to 600 pairs,” said De Jong. “Thank you Dr. Frazier for the continued support of our school and for allowing us here at Baptist Hill to participate in such a worthy cause.”

Principal Logan said the loving and caring children at Jane Edwards Elementary were excited about

the Flip Flop campaign.

“Our Social and Emotional Learning curriculum begins with lessons focused on empathy and the Flip Flop campaign has allowed students to reflect on empathy in action,” said Logan. “We are thankful for the opportunity to participate in this worthy cause. Showing kindness will always be emphasized at Jane Edwards.”



## FUN-Raiser at Belle Hall

Belle Hall Elementary School students and staff donated or raised money, wore gold and yellow, and even sported banana costumes for the school’s annual FUN-Raiser! Belle Hall raised \$709.87, all of which will be donated to MUSC Children’s Health Cancer Care in honor of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.



## T-shirt and sweatshirt donations

Rick Hendrick of Charleston once again partnered with C.E. Williams Middle School North campus and donated school t-shirts and sweatshirts to over 400 students. This is part of their annual partnership campaign with schools across Charleston County.



## Field trip to Water Missions

Gifted and Talented students from Chicora Elementary School went on a field trip to Water Missions International. Students were able to participate in activities and had tons of fun learning thanks to Gifted and Talented teacher, Rachel Adams who planned this experience for the students.



# CCSD schools receive grants from TangerKids

*One teacher earns “Top Five” honor by Tanger Outlets*



Chicora Elementary



Harbor View Elementary



Sullivan's Island Elementary

Tanger Outlets Charleston presented three Charleston County School District (CCSD) school-based programs with TangerKids grants. Chicora Elementary School's Tools for Talent Development, Sullivan's Island Elementary School's Social/Emotional Learning Center, and Harbor View Elementary School's Courtyard and Garden Beautification Shade Project are all 2022 recipients.

In addition, for the first time, TangerClub members were invited to vote on the winning projects in a nationwide Member Choice poll this year. Through this new program update, the CCSD Gifted and Talented program at Chicora, Matilda F. Dunston Elementary, and Charleston Progressive Academy, led by Gifted and Talented teacher Rachel Adams finished in the top five and received an additional \$1,000. The program highlights the district's initiative to increase critical reasoning opportunities for students who demonstrate significant academic potential but are frequently under-represented by traditional gifted identification measures.

"Being awarded the TangerKids grant means the students I serve will have access to tools which will support development of their reasoning and critical thinking skills," explained Adams. "These talents are an important component of the profile of a Gifted and Talented student in CCSD. I am grateful for this funding and to be able to offer access to learning opportunities that will stretch the thinking and talents of those students I serve."

Chicora Principal Monica Smalls added that the resources would expand access and foster student growth.

"Our Chicora family is delighted to receive the \$2,500 grant from Tanger Outlets," said Smalls. "With a focus on academic accomplishment, social development, and future success, the Gifted and Talented Program empowers children to realize their full potential. Our children will access resources that will help them develop their strengths and talents in critical thinking and reasoning skills as more pupils get the chance to receive

enrichment. We at Chicora are delighted that our children are being acknowledged and given this fantastic opportunity."

Tanger Outlets funded \$160,000 in classroom investments across the country through the TangerKids Grants program. More than half of grant funding is allocated to teacher-led initiatives designed to support more inclusive classroom environments for underserved schools and student populations.

The annual program is open to public and private schools. This year's winners were chosen from numerous applicants within the Charleston (tri-county) area.

"Creating opportunity for all is a top priority at Tanger," said Tanger Outlets Marketing Director Andrea Gervacio. "It's humbling to see the impact of these grants, which were requested directly by Charleston area teachers for projects that enhance learning environments and support students' success both in and out of the classroom."



## PINEHURST ELEMENTARY STUDENTS VISIT BEE CITY

University School of the Lowcountry hosted Pinehurst Elementary School students on a field trip to Bee City. University Schools is a long-time partner with Pinehurst, and this includes joint projects for the Trident United Way's Day of Caring every November. This also entails the school's ongoing collaboration and support of students and families in neighborhoods in North Charleston that are zoned to Pinehurst and its sister schools.



# SLOW DOWN FOR STUDENTS:

## James Simons parents push for pedestrian safety

James Simons Montessori School parents, guardians, and students, along with other downtown school parents, were encouraged to walk to school in November, to advocate for traffic safety awareness, especially in the downtown area. Students and their families walked with signs that said “Slow Down for Students.” One parent dressed up as a turtle and stood at the intersection as students and families crossed the intersection of Rutledge and Moultrie Street on their way to school.

The event was organized by Andrea Grabman and other James Simons parents. Grabman reached out to members of the Friends of James Simons (FOJS) board, who are also parents, and together, they put their idea into action.

Families who didn't live close enough to walk were encouraged to ride their bike. If they didn't live close enough to ride their bike, they were encouraged to park at the Hampton Park and walk from there.



# Cario students benefit from new STEM curriculum

Thomas C. Cario Middle School Interim Principal Bryan Coleman and teacher Torie Hargis (Cario's Teacher of the Year) are grateful for a donation by Charleston Steel and Metal (CSM). The company contributed to the purchase of JASON Learning curriculum to use in eighth grade science classes.

CSM has been giving back to the Lowcountry since its inception in 1893 and prides itself on being deeply invested in municipal, business, and charitable organizations.

Barry Wolff, Executive Vice President, and General Manager said that CSM partnered with JASON Learning which is a hands-on K-12 STEM curriculum that connects students with real-world experiences. The curriculum is also designed to create equity and help bridge the gap between students, careers, and the community.

The JASON Project gets its name from the Greek myth of the Argonauts, a group of adventurers who traveled with a hero named Jason to explore the far reaches of the ancient world in a ship called the Argo. Dr. Robert Ballard, JASON's founder and a famous modern-day explorer, gave the organization its name when he dreamed of creating an educational program to spark the imaginations

of students with real-life science.

"The Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) partnered with JASON Learning in 2013," said Wolff who is President of the Southeast Region. "This partnership presents a unique curriculum to not only spread the recycling message to youth, but also to inspire America's students to think about careers in the scrap and recycling industry, and give them the scientific and technical background that such jobs require."

Dr. Matt Sieloff, Vice President of Implementation and Development of JASON Learning said that JASON Learning and ISRI have been partners for 10 years.

"The focus has been on teaching the benefits of recycling to our environment and our economy," said Sieloff. "Last fall, Mrs. Hargis reached out for access to JASON's library of STEM articles and activities, while Mr. Wolff from Charleston Steel and Metal had reached out in the hopes of sponsoring a teacher or school in their local Charleston City community. It was a perfect match!"

Due to COVID-19 Hargis said she had to change her whole style of teaching science. She researched several online platforms and found that Jason Learning offered free, online

simulations that could not be replicated in the classroom.

"It worked perfectly when we were learning and teaching remotely," said Hargis. "When we returned to the classroom, I realized that the online activities were more in-depth and truer to life than anything we could set up at school."

Hargis wanted to expand on what she was offering her students and asked Principal Coleman for permission to purchase additional JASON Learning resources.

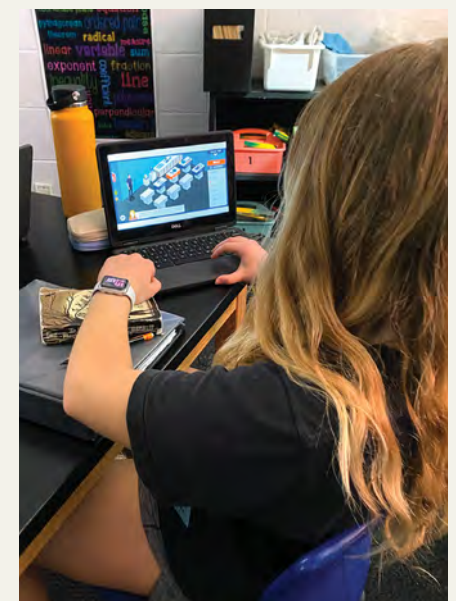
"I trust my teachers to know what they need to support their students and I gave her the permission to pursue the purchase," said Coleman. "We then learned that CSM was looking to donate this curriculum to a CCSD school. We are overwhelmed by the generosity of Charleston Steel and Metal. This is an invaluable donation to our students and the students that come after them."

"We are so excited to support Ms. Hargis and CCSD students learning about real-world STEM careers and opportunities to build their future with businesses in their community," added Sieloff.

Hargis has received positive feedback from her students. They were especially motivated to

complete a recycling project and activity through the JASON Learning curriculum that resulted in extra credit.

"Recycling is bigger than the blue bin we have at home," added Wolff. "That's part of what they're learning in these activities."





# Goodwin Elementary hosts ESOL Family Connection Walk



W.B. Goodwin Elementary School, the Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Department of Federal Programs, and the Community Outreach Office hosted a community event called the Goodwin Multilingual Learner Community Walk on Saturday, April 1, 2023. Charleston Aquí Estamos, a local nonprofit organization, collaborated in this effort and was instrumental in inviting parents from the Goodwin ArtPot board. The goal of this effort was to cultivate family and community partnerships in Goodwin so Latinx students and their families would feel supported in and out of school.

The Goodwin Elementary Community Walk is aligned with Pillar III: Wrap-around Services, one of CCSD's three Pillars that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness. This event's wrap-around services included family engagement in multilingual learners' neighborhoods.

"We shared the students' report cards and received feedback on any concerns the families may have with the help of our interpreters," said Celina Anthony, Title I Bilingual Coordinator. "These concerns included academics, technology, and any other barriers to students achieving their dreams. The Goodwin Elementary Community Walk is an example of providing wrap-around services because we reached out to our students and parents beyond the classroom."

Anthony, Goodwin's Principal Natasha Jones, Tonya McIntyre, (Community Outreach director for the district), and Lydia Cotton from Charleston Aquí Estamos, were the organizers of this event. Maribel Acosta, Executive Director of ArtPot, a nonprofit organization, also collaborated with this event. Charleston Hispanic Association, a local nonprofit organization, donated food, sheets and towels to all the families residing in the neighborhood.

Anthony was grateful a diverse group of individuals volunteered including Rosa Fulmore, Title I Parent & Family Engagement Coordinator, Jackie Haynes, Associate Superintendent of Acceleration Schools, Dennis Muhammad, Director of the Family and Community Engagement Office, and Angela Rush, Director of Translation and Interpretation Services, among other district employees and bilingual community volunteers.

"I am very glad that each group had at least one bilingual volunteer to interpret for the families," Anthony said. "Families we visited were pleased to see us accompanied by several Goodwin parents," added Anthony. "It was evident that they felt very comfortable interacting with us due to their presence."

Cotton added that the walk demonstrated that it is possible to have a strong relationship between the school principal and Latinx Parents.

"The parents did recognize Principal Jones' smile and affection immediately," said Cotton. "This is very important because clearly Mrs. Jones has crossed the Spanish language barrier without speaking the language."

Along with the volunteers, organizers were able to reach out to at least 50 Latinx families and 70 students.

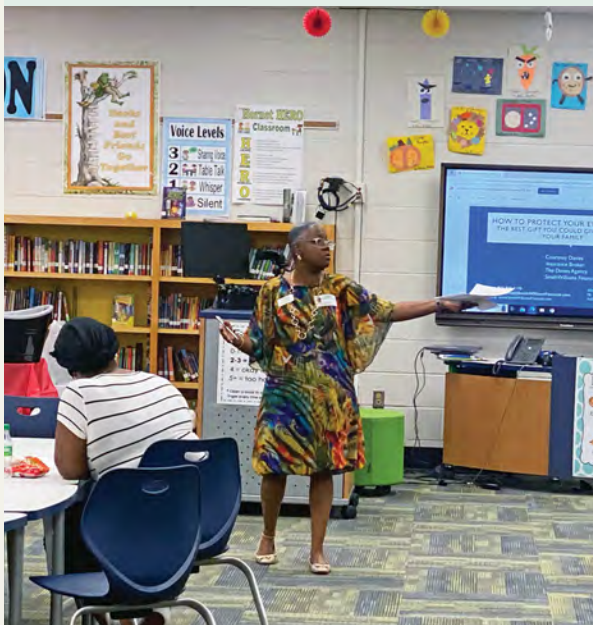
## COLLEGE AND CAREER DAY AT MILITARY MAGNET



Military Magnet Academy hosted a College/Career/Military Fair Wednesday, April 19, 2023 with over 60 vendors in attendance. The entire school participated in this event and were able to speak with professionals and recruiters about potential careers and higher education.



# Financial literacy event at St. James Santee Elementary-Middle



In conjunction with the Office of Family and Community Engagement, St. James Santee Elementary-Middle School held a financial literacy event, "Money Talks: Do Your Dollars Make Cents?"

Parents and community members were invited to attend the event, which was held at the school. Participants learned from field experts about financial basics, life insurance, and heirs' property.

Dorothea Bernique, Executive Director of Increasing Hope Financial Training Center, Courtney Davies, Insurance Broker for The Davies Agency, and Attorney George E Graham delivered 30-minute presentations in their field, followed by a short question and answer session. Refreshments were provided, and childcare was offered for participants.

After identifying the needs specific to their community, Principal McMillian and her team requested the presentation and topics. FACE and the St. James Santee staff hope the event provided parents with a needed resource that will aid families and lead to overall betterment yielding academic success.

# ANNUAL CCSD GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES MORE THAN \$30,000 in scholarships



On Monday, October 3, 2022, 126 golfers played in the 20th Annual Mark Cobb Memorial/Ron McWhirt Scholarship Golf Tournament at the Charleston Municipal Golf Course. Charleston County School District appreciates the generosity and participation of businesses and individuals, which led to \$31,600 in scholarship money for several seniors in CCSD high schools.

The tournament has now raised almost \$253,000 since it started two decades ago.





# Office of Expanded Learning receives \$25,000 from Denny and Mark's Pro-Am Jam



Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Office of Expanded Learning (Kaleidoscope) was selected as the recipient of funds raised through the Denny and Mark's Pro-Am Jam's "Call to Give." The 10th anniversary of the event started by NASCAR star Denny Hamlin and Hootie & the Blowfish's lead guitarist Mark Bryan raised \$25,000 for Stono Park Elementary School's Kaleidoscope program and the Baptist Hill Middle High School band. The funding will be used to provide students with enriching opportunities through music.

Bryan and Hamlin (a three-time NASCAR Daytona 500 champion) started the Pro-Am Jam in 2012 and have donated nearly \$2.4 million.

The Baptist Hill band, led by director Jared Sutphin, was selected by the Office of Expanded Learning to be the opening act for Nelly at this year's Pro-Am Jam, which is a mash-up of rock and roll, racing, golf, and charity. Students witnessed first-hand the opportunities and exposure that music can provide. These students were able to interact with Bryan, Smokey Robinson, and

other well-known celebrities.

Ashley Peters, Program Officer with the Office of Expanded Learning, explained that the funds will allow the department to provide a variety of musical enrichment opportunities to the students.

"Studies have shown students who participate in music perform better academically, and the more they study music, the better they perform academically," said Peters. "Ultimately, we want to provide as much exposure to the world of music and all the opportunities it can provide, and we're so grateful for the support of Mark and Denny in providing these opportunities for our students."

Shelia Grier, also a Program Officer with the Office of Expanded Learning said the funding also allowed the Kaleidoscope program to offer music to students who attend Stono Park Kaleidoscope after-school program and to support resources for Baptist Hill Middle High's band.

## CE WILLIAMS SOUTH HOSTS ONE WEST ASHLEY FAMILY FESTIVAL



Charleston County School District hosted the inaugural One West Ashley Family Festival in April at the CE Williams Middle School (South Campus). West Ashley students and their families were invited to join administrators and area dignitaries for a day of fellowship, food trucks, egg hunts and games, music and performances, and family fun!



# Liberty Place Hilton deliver donation of school supplies

Liberty Place Hilton, neighbors of the Charleston County School District's main office in downtown Charleston, delivered a generous donation of school supplies on August 31, 2022. Staff from the Hilton came together and held a supply drive in support of students and community.



## Hunley Park Elementary students receive school supplies donation

Pinnacle Financial Partners provided school supplies for Hunley Park Elementary students this year. Parents were able to get items that they needed at Hunley Park's Meet the Teacher event held in August. This initiative is just one of many the financial group has organized the benefit the scholars at Hunley Park.

## SEPTIMA CLARK GIRLS WITH P.E.A.R.L.S. AWARDED \$1,000 BY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) and Charleston County Education Association (CCEA) honored Septima P. Clark Academy in September with a \$1,000 for the Girls with P.E.A.R.L.S mentoring program. Students were on hand to receive the award. Additionally, the CCEA recognized the school with the Community Service Award. This award was originally presented to Septima P. Clark in 1976. A plaque with the original historical document from that time was recreated and presented to Principal Nakeam Binyard to commemorate the school's namesake and history.





# ARTS

## Gibbes Museum hosts eighth graders from Murray-LaSaine



Thank you to the Gibbes Museum for hosting eighth graders from Murray-LaSaine. In addition to seeing Beverly McIver's amazing "Full Circle" exhibition, they got to have lunch and speak with the artist!



# DISTRICT CELEBRATES NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK BY HIGHLIGHTING DANCE PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES



*Left to right:* North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary dance class; Dance students at Burke High; Ballet program at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary

Charleston County School District (CCSD) prides itself on offering an in-depth menu of creative arts choices for students. CCSD boasts a diverse student population, and as such, the arts programs offered in all 87 schools and programs are plentiful. According to CCSD Grants Officer Alicia Kokkinos, each year, over 20 CCSD schools apply for grants to support visual and performing arts opportunities. The grant funds provide over \$200,000 in additional arts resources for students.

In celebration of National Arts in Education Week September 11-17, 2022 CCSD recognized the various dance programs in which students participate.

According to Dr. Denisse Santos, Assistant Director of Visual and Performing Arts, CCSD dance programs offer students comprehensive experiences in creativity and movement.

CCSD schools offer a variety of dance styles ranging from ballet to hip hop and modern dance.

The ballet program at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School began in 1984 when the school opened. It originated as a program offered by Robert Ivey through a state grant. In 2010 it became a certified district position/program. In the early 1980s Rose Maree Myers presented CCSD with the idea to create an arts magnet program that would include classical violin and ballet disciplines. Once Ashley River was established, Myers went on to open School of The Arts as their principal.

Santos said that some CCSD schools offer dance programs at a very young age and students have the opportunity for group instruction to explore a variety of styles.

All students at Ashley River that are in CD, Kindergarten, and special needs attend Movement Class with instructor Brooke McMurray. This class utilizes the South Carolina Dance Curriculum and National Elementary Dance Standards through creative movement. Students in grades first through third may register for classical ballet. Fourth grade students are taught contemporary, and fifth grade students learn classical jazz.

"Students leave with exposure to several styles," explained McMurray. "Fourth and fifth graders also focus on student composition."

Kimberly Majewski has taught in numerous CCSD elementary schools since 2009 and is currently the full-time dance instructor at North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary School.

The program at NCCAES, which serves the north area of Charleston County, began in Fall 2011 as a program serving grade K-1. It was expanded to the entire elementary school serving Grade CD – 5 with the goal of developing a child-centered, developmentally appropriate atmosphere centered around arts integration and enriching experiences in the arts.

Majewski began dancing at the age of three, and the introduction to the art

at such a young age inspired her to pursue a dance education.

"It is important to introduce students to dance arts at a young age so they have the basic building blocks to build upon as they matriculate up to middle and high school," said Majewski. "At this age, they get to experience something they may later become passionate about, but more importantly it gives them the tools to be self-confident, self-aware, and team players."

Her classes are structured around fun so that both girls and boys feel comfortable and willing to show off their talents and participate fully in the class.

McMurray has taught dance at ARCAES for the last 13 years and teaches everything from classical ballet to contemporary and classical jazz. She also explained that dance helps students learn spatial awareness, discipline, artistic expression, and aesthetics in terms of an audience.

"It is important for students to be exposed to all art forms at a young age so they can develop an appreciation for all that it encompasses," said McMurray. "We want children to see different forms of art and be able to really think about what they are seeing."

Majewski added that dance arts help young children learn about themselves so that they become well-rounded people. She teaches dance to all grade levels. The instruction goes beyond stylized dance and is integrated with art and classroom standards, adding an additional way for students to be exposed to core content.

"I always wanted to teach dance to elementary age students," said Majewski. "It is amazing to watch their eyes light up and their self-confidence increase," said Majewski. "I love witnessing those moments when they truly enjoy working together to create and express themselves."

At Burke High School, dance students are not only learning generational dances and music, but choreography as well. Instructor Kenyetta Bailey has created a well-rounded dance curriculum that includes social dance, cultural dance, and classical dance.

"Most kids like to dance and this class gives them some formal structure and an opportunity to choreograph and create their own routines," said Bailey. "It is also an opportunity for students to learn about the multiple career opportunities available to them should they decide to pursue that route."

Santos said that students enrolled in CCSD dance programs have the opportunity to explore a variety of options and express themselves through movement and music.

"As students get older, they have the opportunity to participate in more focused instruction on particular dance styles," explained Santos. "Some of our students go on to explore dance instruction in higher education, participate and teach in dance studios, become performers, and explore other

options in professional careers."

Bailey is an example of that and relays to her students the path she took.

"I started dance in high school and went on to earn a bachelor in arts management," said Bailey. "My background is in choreography in the private studio sector. I eventually went on to earn my Masters in Dance Education from New York University so that I could be an instructor."

Tenth grade student Ja'Chia James loves to dance and enjoys Bailey's class.

"At home, I dance and have fun with my friends and we make up our own dances for Tik Tok," said James. "What I am learning in this class is totally different than that. It's new music and new moves. I enjoy learning about things I didn't know before."

Traditionally a performance or recital is held at the end of the year or semester for students to showcase what they have learned. Students in McMurray's class perform for parents and their peers at West Ashley High School in a recital that features full choreography, costume, lighting, and sound.

"It is a culmination of their hard work throughout the year," said McMurray. "It is when my students can walk away and say, 'I am a dancer,' or 'I am an artist'."

Bailey agreed and said the added component is that a student had fun in the class and enjoyed creating.

"If my students had fun, then I have more than met my goal," said Bailey.

McMurray said the hope is that students learn how to process and identify what they are seeing, hearing, and feeling, and put into words their thoughts.

"In the dance program, we use this tool when deciding ways to present our ideas and create work for audiences," said McMurray. "This is how we design and create movement in a way that communicates our intention to people who may be watching."

Santos said CCSD is very fortunate to have world-class dance instructors that can provide this type of instruction for students.

"We believe that creativity and movement are an essential part of a student's arts education, and we are committed to continuing to offer this opportunity for our students," added Santos.

This is the first time in several years that Burke students were offered dance class as an elective. Bailey is working on building the program at Burke and anticipates an increase as the word spreads.

"At the beginning of the year I was told that there is talent among our students when it comes to dancing," said Bailey. "That was accurate. That talent showed up and I could not be more proud to watch them grow and improve."



# Whitesides student wins state art contest



*Left:* State Librarian Leesa Aiken, David O'Reilly, Jessica O'Reilly, Sarah O'Reilly, and Whitesides art teacher Jennifer Goodall hold Sarah's two awards at the TBS Student Art Awards Ceremony April 27, 2023.

*Right:* Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary kindergarten student Sarah O'Reilly created her winning ceramic piece using objects she found in the classroom to make her textural art, Coastal Flounder. She worked with her art teacher, Jennifer Goodall, to create her art.

Sarah O'Reilly, a kindergarten student at Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School, won first place for her age group (6-10) in the Talking Book Services Student Art Gallery Contest and the highest honor of the program among all age groups, the State Librarian Award, from the South Carolina State Library. As the State Librarian Award winner, her work, Coastal Flounder, will be in the permanent collection at the State Library.

O'Reilly worked on the ceramic project with Whitesides art teacher Jennifer Goodall, who submitted the project. O'Reilly created the piece using found objects for texture and glazed it with a crystal glaze giving it a unique appearance.

"I am grateful that our State Library encourages and celebrates art created by students who are blind or visually impaired," said Goodall. "Sarah's Coastal Flounder is a fantastic example of surpassing limitations to enjoy and experience the powerful process of creating."

O'Reilly and her parents received the award at a ceremony and reception at the South Carolina State Library in April.

"We are so proud of Sarah," added Principal Michelle Conner. "Her light shines bright in our school. She is always smiling, and her positivity is contagious. We are grateful for our art teacher, Mrs. Jennifer Goodall, and for the South Carolina State Library, for providing the opportunity for Sarah to participate in this contest and receive this award."

Twenty-two schools and 57 students submitted artwork for the contest this year. The Talking Book Services Student Art Gallery is a yearly competition open to South Carolina students who are blind or visually impaired. Winners are selected in three age groups in addition to the State Librarian Award.

Talking Book Services (TBS) is a free library service from the State Library for anyone who has a visual, physical, or print disability that prevents them from holding or reading normal print books. This free library program brings reading materials in digital audio and braille formats to the homes of patrons from preschoolers to centenarians.

## Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary first graders perform in a musical theater residency



Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School first graders participated in a musical theater residency with the Charleston Stage Company that integrated first grade science standards. Arts in Basic Curriculum Institute funded this learning experience for students.



# Angel Oak Elementary earns certification from Arts in Basic Curriculum



The arts are an integral part of the Angel Oak Elementary School experience; students not only take part in extensive art-related classes that promote collaboration through whole-child learning but they also experience arts-integrated instruction within their core classes. Arts integrated instruction supports the teaching of standards in both the arts genres and core content areas to promote student engagement and boost student achievement. That commitment led to the school recently earning their certification with the state's Arts in Basic Curriculum (ABC) Institute. The Owls are one of three schools to earn this distinction this school year, one of just 69 in the state overall.

According to the South Carolina Arts Commission, research conducted within ABC Schools have repeatedly provided evidence to the value of arts education in a student's life. Data collected in 2018 from Gallup Organization research confirmed that South

Carolina students who had access to the arts in their curriculum were more hopeful and more engaged than students who didn't.

"We are very proud to have earned our ABC certification and to continue to support our students in our arts-integrated school model," said Principal Judith Condon. "This certification allows us to continue to expand arts opportunities for our students and to reinforce the arts as a powerful tool for learning."

Angel Oak Elementary earned additional distinctions as part of its commitment to the arts in the past few years. Condon was named the 2021 Palmetto State Arts Education Arts Administrator of the Year Award, and in October 2022, the school was recognized as an ArtsNow Leadership School.

## Visual artist and poet visits Daniel Jenkins Academy

Ms. Kit Loney, visual artist and poet, visited Daniel Jenkins Academy in March. She guided and encouraged students during a two-part weaving project. Students had an amazing time using their hands and basic supplies to create dolls.

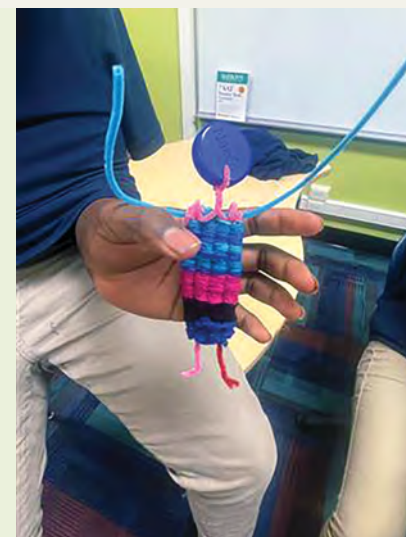
Loney is a former educator. She loves enriching the lives of our youth through the arts.

In 1978, upon receiving her BFA in sculpture from UMass, Loney began career working as a puppet maker's assistant, and then shifted to weaving which she came to do for a living. When she learned hand papermaking at Penland, she combined this with her tapestries. In 1991, she received an MFA in Fiber Arts from USC, Columbia, SC.

Loney then became interested in teaching, began traveling around South Carolina as an Artist-in-Residence, and taught adjunct classes at the College of Charleston and Trident Tech. In 1997, she began teaching art full-time at Fort Johnson Middle School on James Island. She retired from this position in 2017.

In 2005, she began writing poetry, which has become an important strand of her artistic life. In 2012, she received the Carrie McCray Nickens Poetry Fellowship from the SC Academy of Authors.

For the past 22 years, making books has been a consistent practice in her studio and in her teaching. Ms. Loney had an installation of handmade books at Artfields in 2017.





# CULTURE

## CCSD SCHOOLS CELEBRATE HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH



Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies



Pepperhill Elementary School



Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School



Northwoods Middle School



E.B. Ellington Elementary School



R. B. Stall High School



## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH – *continued*



Students at Sanders-Clyde Elementary School were treated to an entire day of activities in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. Students were immersed in dance performances, live musical performances, arts and crafts, and more.

## North Charleston Elementary celebrates BETTER WORLD DAY

North Charleston Elementary School (NCES) was one of many schools across the district to celebrate EL Better World Day on Friday, May 5, 2023. At NCES students in kindergarten and third grade celebrated in the library by presenting the videos, stories, and projects they have been working on. This year's challenge was for schools to see what kind of impact students and staff can have on the world they live in.

Throughout the year students have been working on a larger project. Students participated in a Story Walk where they visited the community, learned about different types of businesses, and discovered the tools businesses use to be successful.

"We kicked off this project by collaborating with our reading partners at North Charleston High School to walk the neighborhood and invite local businesses to participate," explained Ryan Stone, NCES Lead Teacher. "Our intent is to continue to build these partnerships within our community and create ways

for our students to have a positive impact on our world."

Stone explained how the EL curriculum studies tools used to reach an outcome of success. The local businesses that students stopped into shared the tools they use so students could gain an understanding of how certain businesses operate.

"Our North Charleston High School mentors have really made a connection with our students and I think this project has helped everyone involved find their voice," added Stone.

EL Better World Day is designed to show students that there is no limit to the difference that a group of dedicated, determined students can make in the world around them when given the tools and opportunities to become active contributors to a better world.







# CCSD'S BLACK EDUCATORS AFFINITY GROUP CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL TWO YEARS

Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Black Educators Affinity Group (BEAG) kicked off in Spring 2021. BEAG has been instrumental in connecting CCSD's Black educators in a space where they can be celebrated and provided the support they need. As CCSD commemorates Black History Month this year, the district celebrates the growth of its BEAG.

An affinity group is a collection of individuals with a common identity characteristic. The unifying characteristic is traditionally underrepresented, which makes convening that much more important. At its core, an affinity group exists to build community between people with shared identities and interests.

The BEAG was established at the request of Superintendent Don Kennedy in an effort to represent and advocate for the 2,000 black staff members within CCSD. Tasha Joyner, CCSD's Project Prevent Program Officer, led the initial charge in 2021, along with colleagues Jameshia Coleman, Dr. Kala Goodwine, Farrakhan James, and Ricardo Robinson.

The initial focus areas of the affinity group were leadership development, advocacy and policy, and student voice. As the BEAG evolved and leaders gathered feedback, mental health and wellness became a focus area, and student voices became embedded into all aspects of their work.

"The affinity group's purpose is to connect, support, and celebrate," said Brandi Blake, CCSD's Executive Director for Intercultural Development. "The BEAG also exists as a critical leveraging tool for the retention of educators in our district."

## Connect

Leader Tasha Joyner wanted the group to be inclusive of all educators.

"As we built this group, we thought of all CCSD staff, not just classroom teachers or school-based staff," said Joyner. "This included our facilities and finance departments. An educator is anyone in the business of educating children. The BEAG is about true wrap-around support of our scholars and each other."

According to Blake, in just a few short years, the BEAG has made lasting impacts on CCSD's Black educators which she says can be attributed to the resiliency of those who came before them.

"This group is standing on the shoulders of giants," said Blake. "CCSD's historical Black educators were all about advocacy and positive change, not only regarding leadership opportunities but progress towards equity for all children."

Nikki Wilson is a CCSD school climate coach and a member of CCSD's BEAG.

During Wilson's time at Laing Middle School, there were

options for students where they were paired with students of similar attributes. She said the students were nurtured in what was considered a safe space and encouraged to take what they learned out into the real world.

"The concept was a success so I was excited to do that with adults," said Wilson. "There has been a core group that has participated in all of the offerings of the BEAG. From Zooms to book clubs to participating with student groups, our members are showing up in various forms to support the group as a whole and each other."

Jameshia Coleman, a school psychologist at North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary School, has been a member of the BEAG core team from the beginning.

"I have been colleagues and friends with Tasha Joyner for years," said Coleman. "We both have a common passion for supporting Black educators and the retention of Black educators. It was a no-brainer for me to be involved when Tasha reached out."

Coleman said research proves that all students benefit from having a Black teacher.

"Especially in a large district such as CCSD, where there is a great disparity rate, retention of Black educators is crucial," said Coleman. "One piece of that is providing a place where we can connect to other Black educators and feel supported and celebrated. The BEAG provides a place where you can be yourself."

The group is still growing and evolving so large-scale quantifying measurables is a work in progress. However, the core team sends a survey to all members at the end of the year requesting feedback. Last year, the majority of BEAG survey takers noted the purpose of the group was clear and participants enjoyed the in-person meetups and events the most.

The communication loop that has been created by the BEAG is a point of pride for Joyner.

Any CCSD employee who identifies as Black is considered a member and receives a monthly newsletter, and access to the padlet (an interactive electronic bulletin board) was created to promote community engagement, encourage feedback, and provide a way for members to stay connected despite being spread across the district.

BEAG members are invited and encouraged to participate in events monthly such as an annual kickoff, Mental Health and Wellness sessions with licensed therapists, HBCU college fairs, book clubs, SC Alliance of Black School Educators Winter Conference and Leadership Institute, various meet-ups, social hours, and the end of the year Juneteenth celebrations.

The most important offerings to Joyner are those that feed the body, mind, and soul.

## Support

"We support our members by providing presentations on things that matter and things they need to know," said Joyner. "For example, employee rights are a matter of great interest. Mental health and self-care sessions are held featuring renowned guest speakers. Black leaders are often brought in to present. Everything we do is to ensure our members stay informed and connected."

The BEAG is important to CCSD as a whole as well. Blake explained that school districts across the country are struggling to recruit and retain employees of color.

"There is an even greater crisis to recruit and retain Black educators," said Blake. The BEAG is unique because you traditionally see affinity groups in large corporations. This affinity group at CCSD is the only one for staff in the state. That's a selling point for our district when recruiting. Connecting existing black employees with the group and using it as a recruiting tool is very important."

Students' voices are vital to Joyner, and she is proud to see students forming Black Student Unions and similar groups that allow them to connect with their peers.

"Connection was part of the mission and the vision behind starting this affinity group," said Joyner. "It started for adults and staff, and now we are seeing a reflection of it in our scholars."

Joyner knows the need, at the student level, first-hand. Her own child feels isolated because she is one of the very few Black students in the Advanced Placement courses she is taking.

"Opportunities to connect with her Black peers, through affinity-type organizations, are just as important to her as it is to the adults," explained Joyner.

"Representation matters. Students want to see teachers that look like them," said Joyner. "We hope the presence of the BEAG will attract Black educators, whether just graduating or veterans of the industry. We hope the existence of the BEAG is an attraction to applicants."

## Celebrate

Those individuals who had a profound effect on CCSD include:

- **Liz Alston** -former Chairwoman of the Charleston County School District, a former Principal of St. John's High School and a lifetime educator and historian for Mother Emanuel A.M.E. Church.

- **Septima P. Clark** - A pioneer in grassroots citizenship education, Septima Clark was called the "Mother of the Movement." The daughter of a laundry woman and a former slave, Clark was born May 3, 1898 in Charleston. In 1916 she graduated from secondary school and, after

passing her teacher's exam, taught at a black school on Johns Island. For more than 30 years, she taught throughout South Carolina, including 18 years in Columbia and nine in Charleston.

- **Dr. Millicent Brown** - On August 23, 1963, Judge Martin handed down the decision that Charleston County schools must desegregate. Dr. Brown was one the first Black children to integrate SC schools and "Millicent Brown, et al v. School District 20" (Charleston, SC, 1963) was the landmark case for school desegregation in the state. Her personal experiences afford her the perspective of "activist-historian" for her "Somebody Had to Do It" research project.

- **Dr. Barbara Dilligard** - a retired CCSD Deputy Superintendent. She began her career in education as a mathematics and computer science teacher in 1968. She served as Ombudsman, Deputy Superintendent for Personnel, Interim Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent for Personnel and Administration, and Deputy Superintendent.

- **Harvey Gantt** was born in Charleston, South Carolina to Wilhelminia and Christopher C. Gantt, a shipyard worker. He participated in civil rights activism at Burke High School. In 1963, he was the first African American to be admitted to Clemson University in South Carolina. He received a degree in architecture with Honors from Clemson and a Master's degree in City Planning from MIT.

- **Mamie Garvin Fields** - He was one of the first African American teachers to be hired in a Charleston County public school. She was a persistent advocate for the education of African American students in the face of a two-tiered system of education in Charleston. During the 1920s and 1930s, she strove to help economically impoverished African American families on James Island to change their futures through education. During those years she was the administrator, a teacher, and counselor at Society Corner, a rural Black school on James Island that like most Black schools in South Carolina, lacked basic instructional equipment and supplies.

- **Dr. Maria Goodloe-Johnson** (1957-2012) was the first African American and first female superintendent of Charleston County School District. She served as superintendent from 2003 to 2007. A trailblazer from the start, she began her career as a special education teacher in Colorado and quickly became the youngest African American female principal in the state. Under her leadership in CCSD, the district saw improved SAT scores and created and implemented the Charleston Plan for Excellence strategic plan which increased academic achievement in our schools.



# CCSD Black Educators Affinity Groups sponsors BLACK WALL STREET

Charleston County School District (CCSD) Black Educators Affinity Group (BEAG) hosted its first-ever Black Wall Street Vendor Fair in February 25, 2023 at Burke High School.

Modeled after the Black Wall Street USA Movement, established by founder Dr. Michael Carter, Sr. in 1998, the event featured local Black-owned businesses and student entrepreneurs. It was a day full of student performances, guest speakers, financial seminars, and business-focused workshops. A variety of food trucks were on hand and the day ended with a special performance by The Black Diamond Band.

“The Black Wall Street Vendor Fair came from a discussion on ways to provide a space for businesses listed in our BEAG Entrepreneurship Directory (est. February 2022) to share their goods and services with the public,” said Tasha Joyner, CCSD’s Project Prevent Program Officer and president of the BEAG. “We decided to add student entrepreneurs as a form of modeling and mentorship. We plan to make this an annual event and potentially add a date in the fall for holiday shopping.”

Black Wall Street districts are established around the globe in the spirit of the original Black Wall Street district of Tulsa, OK, also known as Greenwood.

Black Wall Street districts can be recognized as an urban area that is a thriving center of the right spirit, business, industry, and culture and is a commercial strip that has 50 to 70 percent or more businesses owned by African-Americans.



## Ellington students and their families celebrate a culture of community

Students and their families joined E.B. Ellington Elementary School Principal James Dallas for a Fellowship with Families event on March 17, 2023. The morning consisted of student performances, motivational speeches, a hearty breakfast, and student and school performance updates. Dallas and his staff have created a culture of community within the school where students and their families are welcomed and encouraged to attend regular open door events.





# QUEST IN RECOVERY

## visits West Ashley



Psychology Students Talk w/Quest in Recovery Founder (2022) WA



Psychology Students Talk w/Quest in Recovery Founder (2022) WA



Psychology Students Talk w/Quest in Recovery Founder (2022) WA

West Ashley High School students in Ms. Wierenga and Ms. Tempest's Psychology classes met with Quest in Recovery founder and director (and Class of 2014 Wildcat alum) Luke Shirley to discuss the importance of mental health and to view

the organization's premiere film, *The Gift of Recovery*.

Quest in Recovery's mission is "to create a peer-supported community for young adults to develop positive coping skills and to stress resiliency and meaningful connections to reduce

the stigma and maladaptive behaviors associated with the challenges of mental health."

Storytelling is at the heart of their mission and the reason for their tagline: Find your why, tell it, and never stop pursuing it.

## CAMP ROAD MIDDLE CELEBRATES COUGAR COMMUNITY DAY



Students and staff at Camp Road Middle School participated in Cougar Community Day – a day-long celebration acknowledging and including ALL students while fostering school-wide community and connections. Students attended their session of choice during their designated grade-level time. Their 45-minute sessions had bingo, dance lessons, volleyball lessons, lacrosse clinics, time in a Wellness room, a movie room, computer games, arts and crafts, football, basketball, dodgeball, LEGO creation, and kickball. The community partners for the event were the school's PTO, Dance Moves of Charleston, and James Island Charter High School's lacrosse, football, and volleyball teams (including more than 20 high school student-athletes). The school's PBIS facilitates Cougar Community Day (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) team.



# Ladson hosts Donuts and Dreams for students and their dads

Ladson Elementary School held its annual Donuts and Dreams with Deputies and Dads in February. Over 80 dads, grandpas, uncles, and other special male adults were in attendance. Family Advocate Vanessa Smith organized the event.

“Family time means a lot and for quite some time, it has been my goal/vision to have dads and important male figures here at the school,” said Smith. “This is just the beginning, and I will continue this journey by encouraging the fathers to get or become more engaged in their children’s education and school environment.”

This was a meet and greet event, which included listening to and gaining knowledge and encouragement from deputies from the Charleston County Sheriff’s Office (CCSO), Sean Wilson (Executive Director of Father to Father, Inc.), and Ladson Elementary Dads. They all focused on the importance of being involved in their children’s lives and the impacts that it causes.

The fathers appreciated the presentations, messages, and most of all, spending time with their children. CCSO Lt. Alan Ali spoke about the importance of fathers being dedicated to their children and maintaining a good relationship as they grow up. Ali reminded the audience that the Sheriff’s Office would always be there for them throughout this

important journey.

“If there’s anything law enforcement can do to help them along the way, we are all in,” said Ali. “One way we’re achieving this is through community engagement.”

CCSO Detective Barry Goldstein encouraged the fathers to plan for their future and save for retirement. After the program, some of the fathers went to Detective Goldstein for more information about retirement and routes to take for future plans.



Sean Wilson (Executive Director of Father to Father, Inc.) motivated and inspired the fathers about the importance of building relationships with their children and making a difference in their lives. He also offered his contact information and resources about child support, fathers' rights, expungement, employment, and men's health.

“It’s the parents and children finding out what’s available in the community,” said Sgt. Delmer Powell. “It’s finding a way to get their kids out of the house and doing positive things. It’s better overall for the community and for families.”

## Jerry Zucker Middle’s DONUTS FOR DAD

Fathers, father-figures, mothers, grandparents, other family members, and mentors gathered in the cafeteria for Jerry Zucker Middle School’s annual Donuts for Dad event on Thursday, November 10, 2022. North Charleston Police Chief Reggie Burgess and North Charleston Assistant Fire Chief Christian Rainey were the guest speakers for the event. The morning’s festivities also included a tie-dying contest and games with prizes. Krispy Kreme and Food Lion were the food sponsors. The event was organized by Zucker Parent Advocate Dwayne Crankfield and the PTO.





# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

## 2023 NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

*CCSD has a total of 40 semifinalists and 25 scholarship winners in the 68th annual National Merit Scholarship Program*

### COLLEGE-SPONSORED SCHOLARSHIPS

#### ACADEMIC MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL



**Joseph J. Benich IV**  
*National Merit Clemson University Scholarship*



**Elena S. Graham**  
*National Merit University of South Carolina Scholarship*



**Henry A. Hughes**  
*National Merit Clemson University Scholarship*



**Sampson P. Kennedy**  
*National Merit University of South Carolina Scholarship*



**Irene Y. Liu**  
*National Merit University of South Carolina Scholarship*



**Elizabeth A. Murray**  
*National Merit Clemson University Scholarship*



**Finlay G. Palmer**  
*National Merit University of South Carolina Scholarship*



**Lilly Skinner**  
*National Merit Fordham University Scholarship*



**Elliott Yarborough**  
*Academic Magnet - National Merit University of South Carolina Scholarship*

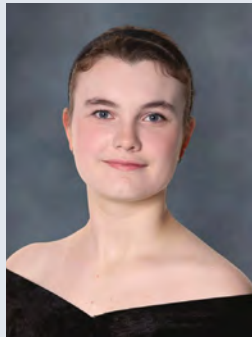


**Alan Zhang**  
*National Merit Clemson University Scholarship*

#### CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS



**Ryan R. Dickerson**  
*National Merit West Virginia University Foundation, Inc. Scholarship*



**Aurora L. Drye**  
*National Merit Furman University Scholarship*

#### ABOUT NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

To become a Finalist, each Semifinalist had to complete a detailed scholarship application, which included writing an essay, describing leadership positions and contributions in school and community activities, showing an outstanding academic record, and being endorsed and recommended by a high school official. Semifinalists also had to take the SAT® or ACT® and earn scores that confirmed their performance on the initial qualifying test. From the Semifinalist group, about 15,000 attained Finalist standing, and about half of the Finalists were

chosen to receive National Merit Scholarships. NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program. The majority of National Merit Scholarships offered each year are underwritten by some 400 independent corporate and college sponsors that support NMSC's efforts to honor the nation's scholastically talented youth and encourage academic excellence at all levels of education.



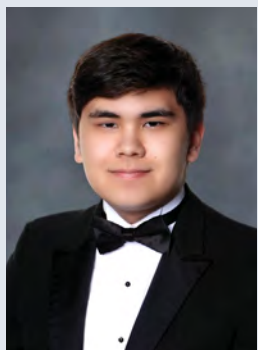
# COLLEGE-SPONSORED SCHOLARSHIPS

## LUCY BECKHAM HIGH SCHOOL



**Thomas W. Collins**  
*National Merit University of Alabama Scholarship*

## WANDO HIGH SCHOOL



**Alexander L. Fister**  
*National Merit  
Clemson University  
Scholarship*



**Rowan W. Johnson**  
*National Merit  
University of South Carolina  
Scholarship*



**Sydney Emma Lewis**  
*National Merit  
University of South Carolina  
Scholarship*

# CORPORATE-SPONSORED SCHOLARSHIPS

## ACADEMIC MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL



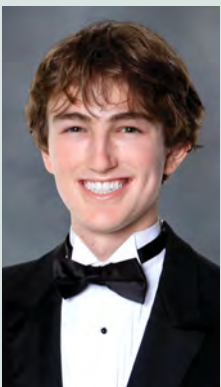
**Lily K. Coulter**  
*National Merit Aon  
Scholarship*



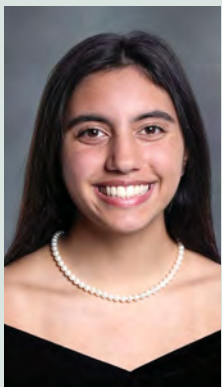
**Jeffrey Song**  
*National Merit Gaylord and  
Dorothy Donnelley Memorial  
Scholarship*

# \$2,500 SCHOLARSHIPS

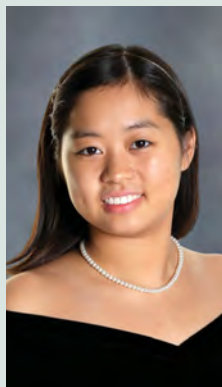
## ACADEMIC MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL



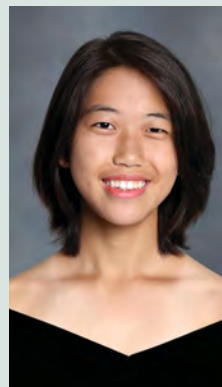
**Spence D. Cox**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*



**Summer D. DeSouza**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*

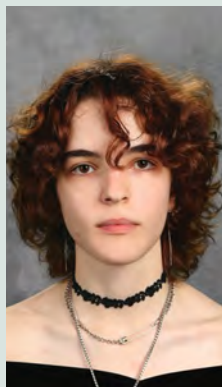


**Angela Mei**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*

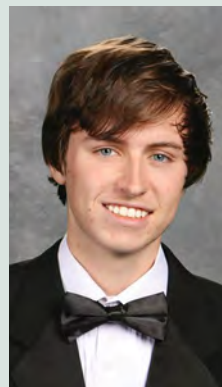


**Moyu C. Yamaguchi**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*

## LUCY BECKHAM HIGH SCHOOL



**Mila K. Ganaway**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*



**Peyton C. Matheson**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*

## WANDO HIGH SCHOOL



**Inna Voloshchuk**  
*\$2,500 National Merit  
Scholarship*



# *Congratulations to our 2023 CCSD Valedictorians!*



**Angela Mei**  
*Academic Magnet High*



**Lucas Gilbert**  
*Allegro Charter School  
of Music*



**Litzy Ramirez Martinez**  
*Baptist Hill Middle High*



**Indya Elizabeth Lee**  
*Burke High*



**Christina Rose McNeish**  
*Charleston Charter School  
for Math and Science*



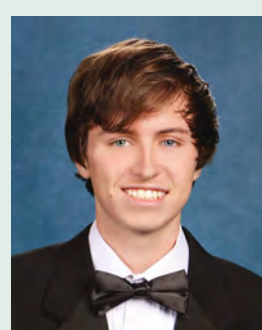
**Abigail Lila Short**  
*Charleston County School  
of the Arts*



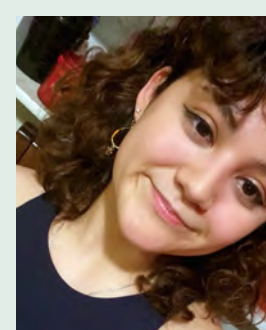
**D'Marous Markeim Wall**  
*Greg Mathis Charter High*



**Hannah Grace Parker**  
*James Island Charter High*



**Peyton Matheson**  
*Lucy Garrett Beckham High*



**Emily Barragan**  
*Military Magnet Academy*



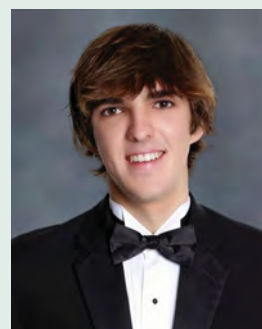
**Dorian Jamaar Townsend**  
*North Charleston High*



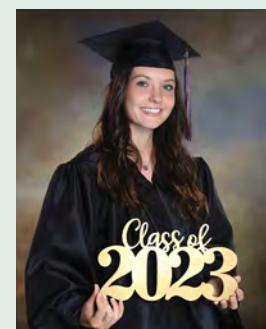
**Anastazia Marie Mendones**  
*R.B. Stall High*



**Katherine Ellen Pasibe**  
*St. John's High*



**Rowan Willis Johnson**  
*Wando High*



**Riley McKay Alexander**  
*West Ashley High*



# PEYTON MATHESON NAMED BECKHAM'S FIRST VALEDICTORIAN

Lucy Garrett Beckham High School celebrated the Class of 2023 as its first-ever graduating class (335 students). Peyton Matheson is the school's first valedictorian.

Matheson is headed to the University of South Carolina's Honors College but not before a trip through Europe, which he sees as an opportunity to learn and experience new things.

Matheson grew up in Mount Pleasant and attended Charleston County School of the Arts, where he developed his skills on the piano. He attended Wando his freshman year where he continued piano in the Jazz Band. Matheson transferred to Beckham for his sophomore year as a virtual student at the height of COVID 19.

Matheson was part of a class of students that mastered the pivot when it came to learning. He also took advantage of the flexibility virtual learning gave him and started a small landscaping business.

"It was a great learning opportunity for me to see the business side of landscaping," said Matheson. "I am going to be an applied math major and love business and entrepreneurship, so the business

went along with my true passions. I love to learn new things."

It's not lost on Principal Anna Dassing that every student in this graduating class started high school elsewhere, as part of the staggered grade levels implemented when opening Beckham.

"They were new to the school and had to transition in the middle of COVID-19," said Dassing. "Beckham's Class of 2023 embodies resilience. They adapted beautifully and continued on to graduation successfully."

Dassing is especially proud of Matheson who applied himself and took advantage of everything Beckham had to offer.

"He was a wonderful role model to his classmates," said Dassing. "He is a perfect first valedictorian."

The mission of Beckham is to foster intelligence, challenge students to live with integrity, and promote civic involvement through a bold and innovative culture. Those are referred to as the three "Is" of the Tiger. Dassing said that Matheson personifies those traits.

"Lucy Beckham, who spearheaded the addition of a second high school in Mount Pleasant, was my mentor and a fellow principal," said Dassing. "Knowing that her vision came to life through Peyton makes me proud. I know she is smiling." Matheson said learning new things keeps him motivated.

"Attending school is a part of life, and my philosophy is that if I must do something in this life, I must do the best I can," said Matheson. "This school is exceptional. The flex hours we had in our day allowed us to go to any teacher for additional help and mentoring, which sets all

students up for success."

Matheson is honored to be in the school's first graduating class.

"I've heard nothing but good things about Ms. Beckham and this school lives up to her name," said Matheson. "It's unique in what it offers, especially the freedom it offers students. It's been an amazing experience and I am fortunate to have watched the school grow into what it is today."

According to Matheson, intelligence is not a measure of one's intellect; instead, it is an attribute of those who apply themselves effectively and meaningfully in their endeavors.

"For me, it was about finding and recognizing my strengths and then cultivating those into passions," said Matheson. "If you use what you know strategically, you can pave the way to a successful future."

That passion will surely guide him as he plans for a future in analytics in the financial sector.

Matheson is very thankful to the teachers and administrators who helped him learn and grow as a student and as a person.

"So many worked with me to help me navigate the challenges I faced, and I am extremely grateful," said Matheson.

Dr. Patty Tate was one of those teachers. She is in her first year at Beckham and is a seasoned educator, having been named State Teacher of the Year in 2012, and is a current Education Oversight Committee member. Tate was an AP English teacher this year and immediately noticed a stand-out student in her fifth-period class.

"There was this young man who was engaged, inquisitive, and asked a lot of questions," said Tate. "That student was Peyton and I knew he



Peyton Matheson

would be a special student. I've watched him grow as a writer. He is a learner and it is important to him to understand and grow as a student."

Tate said that Matheson embodies how students learn at Beckham. "I've taught for 36 years and Peyton is one of the best students I have ever encountered," added Tate. "He has intelligence, compassion, gentleness, kindness, and is a friend to all. Everyone who knows him respects him and he respects everyone in return. We are all very proud of him. He joins a very special class of Seniors."



Peyton Matheson and Ana Dassing

## Mary Ford Elementary parent achieves academic milestone

Zyarie Orum is the parent of two students at Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center and the first GED completer of the Adult Education program. She worked for over three months to study and prepare for the test, oftentimes by going right up to the Adult Education room after dropping off her children in the carline. She was assisted throughout the process by Adult Education Coordinator, Diana Ruttonsha.





# Bank of America student leaders participate in local summer internships

Bank of America selected two Charleston-area high schoolers as Student Leaders® (#BofAStudentLeaders), to participate in an eight-week summer internship providing students with first-hand experience in serving their communities. These students are participating in a paid internship experience of workforce skills, leadership, and civic engagement with local nonprofits, including Charleston Promise Neighborhood and Tri-county Cradle to Career Collaborative. As part of the program, they earn \$17 per hour and receive a Chromebook. The Class of 2022 Charleston Bank of America Student Leaders were selected for their leadership, background, passion, and commitment to the community.

Michell Cordova-Huerta (Early College High School, 12th grader) is an honors student inspired by other women to pursue leadership opportunities. Cordova-Huerta has a passion for volunteerism, serving children at the Ronald McDonald House and elder adults.

William Jenkins (Burke High School, 12th grader) is a leader in academic and extracurricular programs, like Student Government and JROTC. Jenkins aims to improve local communities by promoting racial equality and preparing the next generation to lead.

Without access to career skills-building opportunities like the Student Leaders program, many young people may be left behind in a fast-changing job market, leading to higher rates of youth unemployment. Along with the Student Leaders program, Bank of America is partnering with other nonprofit organizations to fund paid jobs and internships across the

Lowcountry region as part of the bank's overall commitment to youth employment and workforce development as a pathway to economic mobility.

"Bank of America remains committed to supporting young adults by connecting them to jobs, community engagement opportunities, and leadership development," said Mark Munn, president, Bank of America Charleston/Hilton Head. "We recognize young adults are the future of the Lowcountry, which is why programs like Student Leaders are one way we can provide paid opportunities for students to gain job experience while developing a diverse pipeline of talent as they enter the local workforce."

Started in 2004, the Student Leaders program recognizes 300 community-focused juniors and seniors from across the U.S. annually. The Charleston Student Leaders are participating in programming that includes collaborative, mentor-focused projects with Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative (Cordova-Huerta) and Charleston Promise Neighborhood (Jenkins).

Michell's internship with Tri-County Cradle to Career is composed of rotations with team leaders to flesh out the nonprofit's fund development and impact work across the continuum of programs. Diversity, equity, and inclusion work is also a focus of the internship, such as partnering on events like computer giveaways to support the Eastside Community within the school feeder pattern.

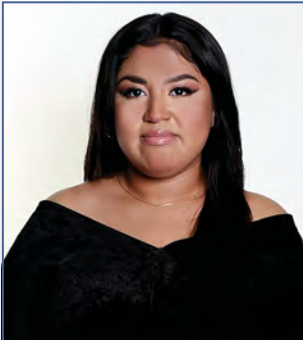
"Michell has an innovative, vibrant perspective and brings a broad set of competencies to the work," said Tri-County

Cradle to Career CEO, Phyllis Martin. "Our staff has been amazed and inspired by Michell's view of the world and desire to learn about the programs impacting underserved communities in the Charleston area."

Charleston Promise Neighborhood is providing William an opportunity to shadow leaders focused on three program pillars and wrap-around services – health & wellness, community & family engagement, and education. William is also spending valuable time in the field and getting an introduction to things happening in the community that Charleston Promise Neighborhood serves, such as educational programs to prevent learning loss and public community meetings.

"William has a unique seat at the table, having attended a Promise Neighborhood elementary school and participating in the programs firsthand," said Charleston Promise Neighborhood Director of Marketing and Philanthropy, Djuanna Brockington. "That lived experience allows William to participate in a new way that benefits the students and families we serve."

Bank of America Student Leaders also participated in a virtual Leadership Summit, delivered in partnership with the Close Up Foundation. The Summit included opportunities to engage with congressional leaders, hear from leaders in civil and human rights and participate in the Stanford University Young Democracy at Home program which encourages conversation about current issues facing young people today.



Michell Cordova-Huerta



William Jenkins

# Pair of Burke scholars honored for performance in college courses



Janiya Gowans



Leyna Stock

Burke High School announced Janiya Gowans and Leyna Stock were named to the Honor Society of the National Educational Equity Lab (also known as the Ed Equity Lab), which is a nonprofit that works to bridge the gap between high school and college for students from low-income communities. Gowans and Stock, both juniors, finished in the top 20 percent (academically) of all scholars nationwide taking dual credit Ed Equity Lab courses from prestigious colleges and universities throughout the country.

Burke's partnership with the Ed Equity Lab began in the fall of the current school year; Burke is the only school in Charleston County School District with this opportunity. Burke's first semester began with two courses, Poetry in America (Arizona State University/Harvard University) and Cloud Foundations (Arizona State University). A total of 32 students were enrolled in the courses and, according to Executive Principal Cheryl Swinton, had tremendous success.

"This recognition affirms the academic capacity of our scholars when given opportunity and access," said Swinton. "We couldn't be more thrilled to partner with the National Education Equity Lab and we look forward to expanding this opportunity to more of our scholars next year."

Stock received recognition for being in the top 15 percent of

scholars nationwide and Gowans received recognition for being in the top 20 percent of scholars nationwide. They were honored at a virtual ceremony on January 31, 2023. The event featured university professors, high school teachers and administrators, district leaders, National Ed Equity Lab board members, and CEO Leslie Cornfeld.

"These scholars' success in rigorous college courses reinforces the fact that talent is evenly distributed, opportunity is not," explained Cornfeld. "We aim to change that. Talented students from under-resourced high schools belong in the best-matched schools for them, including our nation's top universities. Together with our high school and university partners, we're empowering thousands of talented students around the country to show what they're capable of, and to build the skills, credentials, and confidence to succeed in higher education and beyond."

Former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, an Ed Equity Lab board member, called this effort "game-changing" for students.

"Democratizing access to higher education in our nation has never been more critical," added Duncan. "Efforts like this help us do just that."

Students at Burke are participating in more classes through the Ed Equity Lab this semester: Western Way of War from Princeton University and Education of a Black Girl from Spelman College.





NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

## One application. Infinite possibilities.

Help colleges recognize your hard work and accomplishments.

# FIFTY CCSD STUDENTS HONORED BY THE COLLEGE BOARD'S NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Fifty Charleston County School District (CCSD) students, from a combined eight high schools, earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Programs this fall. These National Recognition Programs grant underrepresented students with academic honors that can be included on college and scholarship applications and connect students with colleges and universities across the country in a meaningful way during the application process. Colleges and scholarship programs identify students as National African American, Hispanic, Indigenous and/or Rural/Small Town Recognition through College Board's Student Search Service.

The CCSD scholars (listed at right) received the National African American Recognition Award (NAARA), National Hispanic Recognition Award (NHRA), National Indigenous Award (NIA), or the National Rural and Small Town Award (NRSTA).

Students who may be eligible have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher and have excelled on the PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10, or earned a score of 3 or higher on two or more AP Exams; and are African American or Black, Hispanic American or Latinx, Indigenous, and/or attend school in a rural area or small town.

Eligible students will be invited to apply during their sophomore or junior year and will be awarded at the beginning of the next school year. Students will receive their awards in time to include them on their college and scholarship applications.

### Academic Magnet

Jacob Burke (NAARA)  
Keren Collins (NAARA)  
Tsemaye Erenshey (NAARA)  
Connor Junevicius (NRSTA)  
Jackson Millet (NAARA)  
Sebastian Najera (NHRA)  
Elliot Romero (NHRA)

### Charleston Charter School for Math and Science

Allen-Michael Gadson (NAARA)  
Christina McNeish (NAARA)  
Jordan Middleton (NAARA)  
Toluwalase Olalare (NAARA)  
Semilore Olalare (NAARA)

### Charleston County School of the Arts

Lydia Plante (NHRA)  
Pagelyn Smalls (NAARA)

### Early College High School

Cincere Evans (NAARA)  
Anastazia Mendones (NAARA)  
Sy'mone Miles (NAARA)

Ja'Nia Ruffin (NAARA)

### James Island Charter High School

Enamali Edwards (NAARA)  
Levn Masindet (NAARA)  
Carter Pena (NHRA)  
Marley Walker (NAARA)

### Lucy Beckham High School

Alyssa Almaguer (NHRA)  
Emilia Guerard (NHRA)

### Wando High School

Eva Andrus (NRSTA)  
Ethan Arthur (NRSTA)  
Sierra Beerer (NRSTA)  
Riley Bumgardner (NRSTA)  
Sophia Camps (NHRA)  
Alexander Fister (NRSTA)  
Julia Fragile (NRSTA)  
Jacob Hills (NRSTA)  
Lauren Johnson (NAARA)  
Alice Li (NRSTA)  
Kathryn MacDonald (NRSTA)  
Mary MacDonald (NRSTA)  
Madinabonu Madaminova (NRSTA)  
Garrett Mayer (NRSTA)  
Alena Merrifield (NRSTA)  
Margaret Potter (NRSTA)  
Santiago Rivero (NHRA)  
Remy Rogers (NRSTA)  
Evan Shatz (NRSTA)  
Kathryn Sullivan (NRSTA)  
Anna Terry (NRSTA)

### West Ashley High School

Geraldo Barbosa (NAARA)  
Ashlyn Malloy (NAARA)  
Anna Mosqueda (NHRA)  
Elianna Navarro (NHRA)  
Otisha Robbins (NAARA)



# CHARLES PINCKNEY ELEMENTARY WINS 13<sup>TH</sup> CHESS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP



*Left to right: Aaron Wang and EC Setser, Pinckney Chess team with Coach Stuart Chagrin, and Amelia Wallace*

Charles Pinckney Elementary School's chess team continues to add to its legacy in chess. The Pirates won another state title at the South Carolina State Scholastic Championship in Greenville, SC, in the K-5 (Kindergarten through fifth grade) division. The third-grade team was not far behind, with a second-place trophy in the K-3 division.

This is the third year in a row the Pirates won the K-5 state title, and the school now has 13 championships combined in this state-wide chess tournament.

A total of 250 students in four divisions, K-3, K-5, K-8, and K-12, participated in the event sponsored by the Greenville Chess Club on March 4, 2023.

Aaron Wang led Pinckney with four wins and a draw to earn a three-way

tie for first place overall. He finished third in the state after computer tiebreaks. Nico Stamos led the third-grade team with four wins and one loss, tying for second overall in the state and finishing fourth on tiebreaks. In the third-grade division, Theodore Constantino tied for 10th place with three wins, finishing 17th in the state after tiebreaks.

Stuart Chagrin coaches the Pinckney chess team; he serves on the United States Chess Trust Board and is the former President of the Marshall Chess Club.

"I am so proud of the performance by all of the students," said Chagrin. "For many of them, this was their first chess tournament ever. They exceeded all of my expectations."

The Pinckney team is organized by Gifted and Talented teacher E.C.

Setser; she has been involved with this group since 2010.

"It was inspiring to watch kids fiercely compete at the boards, shake hands, and become great friends," added Setser. "They were playing basketball between rounds or hanging out with new friends brought together by this amazing game."

Pinckney now has nine titles in the K-5 Division and four championships at the K-3 level, all since 2010.

Other team members include Liam Blonshine, Ramy Borey, Silas Dewey, Declan Flannery, Katie George, Garrett Hamm, Graeme Kearney, Parker Leong, Finley Martin, Tanner Patterson, Owen Patterson, Carter Piazza, Barrett Thoren, Amelia Wallace, Claire Wang.



*Left to right: James Island Elementary School, Harbor View Elementary School, and Orange Grove Charter Middle School*

James Island Elementary art teacher Suzanne Baranoski said a collaborative effort between their team of fourth and fifth graders and a teacher assistant led to their idea for the greeting card.

"We were brainstorming ideas for something fun and related to the theme 'There's no place like home for the holidays,'" said Baranoski. "One of our Kindergarten assistants (Lynn Shepard) had the idea of a campground theme and 'home is wherever you are' since so many of us have been to the campground at James Island County Park. Our students were so excited for their art expressions to be rewarded in this way. Thank you, James Island County Park, for another awesome year!"

Student groups compete in the elementary, middle, or high school division. The winners are selected by the Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission. The top three schools in each division receive a plaque and cash award for use in their school arts program.

## Three CCSD schools earn awards in annual Holiday Festival of Lights greeting card competition

James Island Elementary School finished in first place in the Elementary School Division for the 2022 Holiday Festival of Lights Giant Greeting Card Competition. Harbor View Elementary School came in second in the same division, and Orange Grove Charter Middle School took second in the Middle School Division.

This year, 38 specially-designed cards from student groups in Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester counties are on display in Santa's Village at James Island County Park.



# SOA senior named as National Student Poet

Winslow Hastie, Jr. a senior at Charleston County School of the Arts (SOA) was one of five students chosen as a National Student Poet by the The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

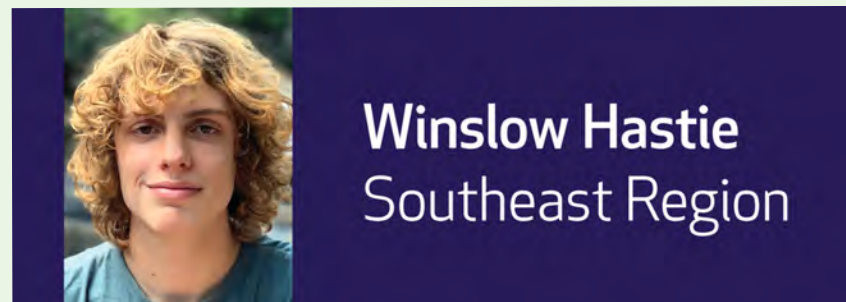
The Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers partner to present the National Student Poets Program (NSPP), the country's highest honor for youth poets presenting original work.

The five outstanding high school poets whose work exhibits exceptional creativity, dedication to craft, and promise are selected annually for a year of service as national poetry ambassadors.

"Charleston County School of the Arts is thrilled to celebrate the accomplishments of this gifted writer," said Principal Dr. Shannon Cook. "We look forward to seeing this opportunity unfold and the contributions he will make through this platform."

National Student Poets are chosen from the National Medalists in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards with input from a jury of established poets and leaders in education and the arts. Throughout their year of service, the Poets will serve as literary ambassadors and will share their passion for poetry, literacy, and the literary arts with their communities and throughout their regions. Engagement includes service projects, workshops, and public readings. In addition, each Poet will receive a \$5,000 academic award.

Hastie is in the Creative Writing program at SOA. He began writing poetry in elementary school and has continued in middle and high school through at SOA. Living in Charleston for most of his life, he has learned to love and appreciate the outdoors and finds inspiration in the landscape and wildlife around him in the Lowcountry. Hastie frequently uses nature



and the outdoors as common themes throughout his poetry and short stories. He enjoys using poetry as a medium to articulate and convey imagery, in particular, to recreate vivid images from the natural world.

"Mr. Hammes, Ms. DeTiberus, and I could not be more proud of Winslow," added Beth Webb Hart, SOA Creative Writing teacher. "He came into our program in sixth grade with a distinct voice, a keen eye for detail, and a deep-seated love for the natural wonders of the Lowcountry. Through the years, he has – with genuine ardor – steadfastly honed these gifts to become not only a stellar wordsmith, but also, an encourager to his classmates, whom he challenges and uplifts on a daily basis in our writing workshop. He's going to be an exceptional poetry ambassador."

# Hunter Graham named CCSD's 2023 Spelling Bee Champion



Hunter Graham

The 2023 Charleston County School District (CCSD) Spelling Bee returned to an in-person event this year. It was held on Thursday, January 19, 2023, at Burke High School where Hunter Graham was declared the winner. CCSD has hosted its annual spelling bee contest online over the past few years, due to COVID restrictions.

Graham is a rising eighth grader at Moultrie Middle School. Graham progressed to the championship round by correctly spelling "harbinger." Hunter then correctly spelled the word, "rejuvenate" to secure his victory.

Spellers from elementary and middle schools across the district competed to become the 2023 CCSD Spelling Bee Champion. The Top 10 spellers advanced to the regional bee, sponsored by the Post & Courier in March.

Fifth graders from each elementary school and sixth, seventh, and eighth graders competed to earn the opportunity to participate in the CCSD competition.

The competition was composed of 43 spellers and lasted 12 total rounds.



## THE CCSD TOP 10

Hunter Graham of Moultrie Middle School  
Grant Baker of Camp Road Middle School  
Machaela Black of Morningside Middle School  
Tallulah Branton of Drayton Hall Elementary School  
Audrey Cen of Charleston County School of Arts  
Sam Noonan of Orange Grove Charter School  
Mark Sutton of Jerry Zucker Middle School  
Zachery Teachman of Thomas Carlo Middle School  
Aubrey Thompson of St. James-Santee Elementary Middle School





## Wando's marching band places second in Bands of America regional competition

Members of the Wando Marching Band once again raised the bar by delivering an award-winning performance at the 2022 Bands of America Regional Championships at Camping World Stadium in Orlando, Florida on Saturday, October 22. The Warriors earned second place overall and won the Class 4A award for Outstanding Visual Effect during the day-long event with their show "Ascension." The show represents all the challenges the band overcame since the 2020 COVID-19 shutdown.

"I am beyond proud of how we performed as a band," explained Brendan Breen, Wando High School's senior drum major. "Our band showed up ready to prove that obstacles from our previous years would not defeat us.

The countless hours of rehearsal paid off, and we returned a stronger and more united Wando."

Earlier in the day, Wando competed in the preliminaries with 28 other bands from as far away as Texas and Mississippi. The Wando Marching Band advanced to finals where, in front of a primetime audience with thousands of spectators in person and online, they delivered a stellar performance with a score of 87.525. This was Wando's second appearance at Bands of America Orlando.

Kim Wilson, Wando's interim principal, attended the competition. He was extremely proud of their performance.

"The members of our Wando Band and Color Guard are to be commended for their performance at the Bands of America Competition," said Wilson. "Hard work, long hours on the practice field, determination, and perseverance was the key to their success. Our band directors and staff made sure that our students were well prepared for the challenges of such a grueling competition. I want to personally thank our parent volunteers for the many hours they devoted to ensure that our performance went off without a hitch. Also, I appreciate the hundreds of band parents who made the trip to Orlando to cheer on their children. You truly made a difference. I was honored and proud to be the principal of one of the best bands in America."



## WANDO'S MARCHING BAND WINS 14TH STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

On Saturday, November 5, 2022, the Wando Marching Band captured their 14th South Carolina 5A state title, sweeping all captions including Outstanding Music, Outstanding Visuals, and Outstanding General Effect with a score of 96.45.

The Warriors have competed in the state marching band competition 14 times since 2005 and won the championship each time. The 14th win sets a new South Carolina state marching band record for most wins of any program in the state, breaking the Warriors' previous record of 13 state championships.

"It doesn't matter how many times we've won the state championship," said Bobby Lambert, Wando Band Director. "Each title is incredibly

special as the challenges and hurdles around us seem to raise each year. From illness to pouring rain during finals, these kids have continued to face every challenge and rise above them beautifully."

Wando's show this year, Ascension, signifies the rise above all the obstacles facing our world since the pandemic.

"The show is a three-part work of performance art that explores the mystery of the unknown, yet the drive to explore," explained show designer Michael Gray. "The revelation of finding your 'personal' mountain and conquering it. Lastly, we explore the victory of overcoming, the power, jubilation, and joy of realizing that each performer in the Wando band is a survivor on the field and in life."

The show features the musical selections, Rest by Frank Ticheli, Canyon by Phillip Glass, and Survivor, arranged by Jay Bocook and Vince Oliver.

The championship comes two weeks after Wando finished second in the Bands of America Regional Championships in Orlando.

The Bands of Wando are under the direction of Lambert, Lanie Radecke, and Jeff Handel. Michael Gray is the Program Coordinator for the Wando Marching Band, and Brian Winn is the Director of Color Guard.

The Bands of Wando thank the community, the Charleston County School District, the Town of Mount Pleasant, its Harmony Sponsors, the Bands of Wando Foundation, parents, and alumni for their continued support. For more information visit [WandoBands.org](http://WandoBands.org).



# Wando's yearbook staff makes history with national award



Wando yearbook staff

For the first time in school history, Wando High School's yearbook, *Legend*, has been recognized as the top yearbook in the nation by Quill & Scroll. Wando's 2022 edition, "Something Within Us," earned the international scholastic journalism organization's Blue and Gold Award for Staff Excellence in the Class A Division (schools with 1,000 students or more). Only one school in each class nationwide received this honor.

"This honor is a monumental achievement for our program and these students," said Phillip Caston, Wando's yearbook adviser (and English teacher). "It's gratifying to be ranked among some of the top yearbook programs and to be named the recipient of the top honor in the contest. The 2022 yearbook continues to stay on pace to be our most award-winning volume in school history."

*Legend* also picked up three more Blue and Gold Awards – first place in Writing, second place for Design, and third place for Photography.

"Our yearbook staff and editors are some of the most talented and gifted students in the school," said Kim Wilson, Wando's interim principal. "To be recognized as the best yearbook in the United States among the Class A Division high schools is the pinnacle of success. We are proud of our yearbook staff and congratulate them on a well-deserved honor."

Earlier this fall, Wando's yearbook staff earned South Carolina Scholastic Press Association's Best Yearbook in the state honor for the second consecutive year (also a first for Wando), and their former co-editor in chief, Clara Barresi, was named a Top 10 finalist for Designer of the Year by the National Scholastic Press Association.

"I'm extraordinarily proud of how hard these young women and men work to bring such accolades and prestige to their high school," added Caston. "The pride they take in their work is incredible."

Members of the *Legend* staff collected 16 individual awards from Quill & Scroll this year as well, setting a new Wando yearbook record. The following students were honored:

First Place, Academics Spread – Graduate Harper Duffy  
First Place, Student Life Photo – Graduate Sarah Cote  
First Place, Photo Illustration – Graduate Abigail McLeod  
First Place, Clubs or Organizations Writing – Senior Evie Whitesell  
First Place, Academics Writing – Senior Ainsley Doyle  
First Place, Sports Feature Writing – Junior Grayson Sams  
Second Place, Clubs or Organizations Spread – Senior Sam Bumgarner  
Second Place, People Spread – Senior Katie Brown  
Second Place, Personality Profile – Graduate Lily Higgins  
Second Place, Academic Writing – Senior Ainsley Doyle  
Second Place, Clubs or Organizations Writing – Senior Evie Whitesell  
Second Place, Academic Photo – Graduate Abigail McLeod  
Third Place, Clubs or Organizations Spread – Junior Jordan Condie  
Third Place, Academics Writing – Senior Sydney Lewis  
Third Place, Clubs or Organizations Writing – Caroline Bierman  
Honorable Mention, Student Life Spread – Senior Brooke Tribolet



Clara Barresi

## Finalist for National Designer of the Year

Former *Legend* yearbook co-editor in chief, Clara Barresi, has been named a Top 10 finalist for Designer of the Year by the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA). She was chosen among yearbook, newspaper, and magazine designers across the nation after submitting a portfolio of her best yearbook design work.

Barresi is the tenth NSPA individual awards finalist in *Legend* history, and she has won more design awards than any past yearbook student, including winning the Southern Interscholastic Press Association's Design Portfolio Contest an unprecedented three years in a row.

## Wando's Nicole Breen honored as 2023 SC Scholastic Journalist of the Year

Wando High School is proud to announce Nicole Breen, co-editor in chief of the school's award-winning yearbook *Legend*, was recently named the 2023 South Carolina Scholastic Journalist of the Year by the South Carolina Scholastic Press Association (SCSPA).

Breen is the eighth student from Wando to earn this honor. The senior is also the sixth Warrior to receive this award in the past seven years and the fifth yearbook student to achieve this recognition during that span. It is the highest honor a high school journalist can receive in the state.

"It's incredible to see our talented students continue the tradition of excellence and dominance in this award," said Wando English teacher and yearbook adviser Phillip Caston. "Nicole is such an outstanding leader, dedicated student, and talented young journalist. This award is a fitting accolade for her as she finishes her stellar high school career."

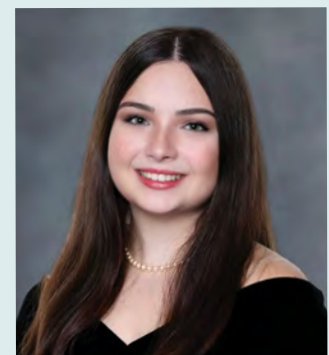
Breen completed an online portfolio of work ranging from writing,

photography, design, editing, and entrepreneurship, as well as several letters of recommendation and a personal essay.

"I am absolutely honored to be named SCSPA's Journalist of the Year," Breen said. "Being a part of my school's yearbook has gifted me in so many ways and to be named Journalist of the Year is truly the cherry on top."

Breen was honored along with the other 49 state winners at the National Scholastic Press Association in San Francisco on April 22, 2023.

"Nicole exhibits astounding work ethic, compassionate and selfless leadership skills, and full dedication to the craft," added Caston. "Her attitude is always positive regardless of any adversity she faces, and she inspires her peers to follow paths of excellence as well. Nicole helps set our standard for a competitive yet familial environment in Wando yearbook."



Nicole Breen



# EMPLOYEE ACHIEVEMENT AND RECOGNITION



Jennie Moore Project ADAM



Moultrie Project ADAM

## CCSD announces graduation of 12th and 13th Aspire cohorts

For the last nine years, 111 employees from Charleston County School District (CCSD), in partnership with The Citadel, have gone through the Aspire cohort which is a two years master's program for those seeking an education leadership degree.

The Citadel offers a 25 percent discount and waives the registration fee and CCSD provides a 25 percent match, allowing candidates to receive their master's degree for half the price.

The 12th cohort graduated in June and the 13th cohort graduated in August. Information sessions are being planned for the 15th cohort of students which will begin in the fall.

This opportunity is yet another effort to align with CCSD's Pillar Two (high-quality teachers and leaders) which is one of the three Pillars that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness.

According to Gayle Morris, the Interim Director of Leadership Pipeline, the district is committed to providing high-quality, rigorous instruction to staff so that they may better serve

students.

"The benefit is that they go through the courses with their CCSD colleagues," said Morris. "The networking and the bonds they create with one another is also a benefit. They move through the cohort together and can lean on each other for help and guidance."

The cohort is made up of CCSD employees from all grade levels across the district. Upon graduation they can test to receive certification as a principal.

Terri H. Nichols, Interim Executive Associate Superintendent, said that it is a very selective process.

"The candidates that get selected are really ambitious, organized, excited educators that want to continue to give to the profession and are willing to take on new challenges and responsibilities," said Nichols. "They are still doing their full-time job teaching, all while juggling graduate courses, and while others are enjoying summer break, and they're taking two courses because the program is year-round. It is not easy."

The cohort has evolved through the years but the mission is the same, according to Morris.

"It is building the pipeline," said Morris. "This is helping to grow our own and give our own staff opportunities for advancement. The reduced cost is a huge driver but we also have a very great partnership with The Citadel. When they graduate, they are ready to step into the positions they aspire to."

Lakevia Mills, CCSD's 2020 Teacher of the Year started the cohort in August 2022 and will graduate next summer. She was an honors science teacher at St. John's High School before becoming a Teacher Effectiveness Specialist at the district level.

Mills is earning her second master's degree and said the cohort model is what attracted her to the idea.

Sheldon Bloomfield is the Assistant Principal at Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School and said the opportunity was one of the best things to happen to his professional career.

"I never thought I would be an administrator, but when the opportunity arose I wasn't going to pass it up."



# CCSD recognized for grounds maintenance excellence

The Professional Grounds Management Society® (PGMS®) recognized Charleston County School District (CCSD) with an Honor Award in the Society's 2022 Green Star Awards® competition. The award was given in the Educational Institution School Grounds (K-12, Technical Schools, and Community Colleges) category for exceptional grounds maintenance.

Winners were honored during the Society's 2022 Awards Celebration held last month, in conjunction with the School of Grounds Management Annual Conference & Equip Exposition in Louisville, KY, October 18 – 21, 2022.

Dennis Burgess (Plant Operations Officer) and Michael Dellinger (Grounds Manager) were in attendance to receive this award on behalf of CCSD.

The Green Star Awards program brings national recognition to grounds maintained with a high degree of excellence, complimenting other national landscape award programs that recognize outstanding landscape design and construction. Overall, PGMS presented nine Grand Awards, its highest honor, as well as 19 Honor Awards, and one Merit Award.



## CCSD OPERATIONS DIVISION CELEBRATES EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

Employees across the Charleston County School District (CCSD) are celebrated every day, and annually the best of the best are recognized as Employees of the Year. The Operations Division announced their nominees, Thursday, September 1, 2022. Five employees were recognized by department and one individual was chosen as the overall Operations Division Employee of the Year (EOY).

Shanikqua Johnson-Smith was named EOY for the Capital Programs Department and is this year's awardee for the entire division.

Also recognized were Tom Gribben, (Security and Emergency Management), Sonya Jones (Transportation), Mary Wakefield (Facilities Management), and Terris Wilson (Nutrition Services).

Johnson-Smith supports both Capital Programs and the entire Operations Division. As the "information hub" for the division, she routinely coordinates actions and directs customers across the enterprise with her exceptional communication and interpersonal skills. Additionally, she is the District 4 Constituent Board Advisor.

### Additional finalists

- Gribben is a campus safety manager. He was hired as the district's first manager of the Search and Safety Team in 2018. Gribben has built the program from the ground up which includes random searches in high schools, a comprehensive security assessment program of all schools, and providing security staffing support for unusual occurrences throughout the year.
- Jones is a quality assurance manager with Transportation. She has worked with the state, First Student, and Durham Transportation. Jones' efforts have resulted in significant cost savings for the District and safe and efficient bus routes for all CCSD students.
- Wakefield is a playground coordinator with Facilities Management she works to provide safe and enjoyable play areas for CCSD students. She is always looking for ways to improve playgrounds, both for safety and inclusion of ADA students.
- Wilson is a Nutrition Services Manager. During the pandemic, he traveled all over the district covering for managers in area of the county. Wilson was asked to take over Meeting Street at Brentwood this past year and exceeded the standards set by Nutrition Services. Additionally, he managed the summer school meal program at North Charleston Creative Arts.





# CCSD classified employees graduate from the University of South Carolina

CCSD's inaugural cohort of employees working towards a Master's in Elementary Education graduated from the University of South Carolina on May 6th, 2023.

These classified employees will be classroom teachers in the 2023-2024 school year.

Left to right: Sonya Williams North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary, Corenthia Walker Sanders-Clyde Elementary School, Stephanie Schmidt Laurel Hill Primary, Ashley Richardson Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center, Alicia Ferris St. Andrews School of Math and Science, and Melissa Runey Mount Pleasant Academy.

## Sims selected to serve on NAEYC Council



Jason Sims

Jason Sims, now the Principal of Laurel Hill Primary School, was selected to serve on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Council for Early Learning Program Accreditation. He was appointed this year while serving as the school's assistant principal. The council is comprised of nine members. Sims will start a three-year term this month.

NAEYC is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. In 2003, NAEYC's Governing Board established the Council for NAEYC Accreditation as an independent body to ensure the equity, integrity, and accountability of NAEYC Accreditation of Early Learning Program.

"NAEYC is an organization that is committed to ensuring that all young learners have the opportunity for high quality, developmentally appropriate instruction," said Sims. "I look forward to my work with the council and for the advancement of early childhood programs across the country."

Laurel Hill is accredited by NAEYC.





# CCSD WORK-BASED LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR EARNS NATIONAL RECOGNITION



educators working to empower our students to maximize the amazing opportunities that await them in the Charleston region, and beyond,” said Vail.

The award recognizes the work-based learning (WBL) professional that has demonstrated overall contributions to student success through community engagement, leadership roles, student organizations, WBL classroom innovations, and WBL advocacy.

Vail has led the WBL program in CCSD for over 10 years. He recently served a three-year term on the South Carolina Career Development Professionals Board of Directors (SCCDP), including board president in 2021. SCCDP is a division of South Carolina’s statewide ACTE chapter.

Vail’s passion for education, specifically college and career readiness, comes from his time operating small businesses. Vail, along with his family, owned, operated, and successfully sold several businesses in the Charleston region, including three pretzel bakeries, a neighborhood deli, a coffee and ice cream store, and an early childhood development center.

“What sets Chad Vail apart from other professional educators is his extraordinary and unrelenting commitment to authentic career exploration opportunities for each and every scholar,” said Richard Gordon, executive director of CTE for CCSD.

Vail was an enthusiastic contributor on the initial planning team for the Charleston Regional Youth Apprenticeship program, which has become a national model. He remains active on the advisory committee for the program that now places more than 200 youth apprentices annually.

Vail has also been a leader on a team of area stakeholders in the planning and execution of a regional Career Awareness fair that over 2000 students attend annually. The event now includes a Hiring Fair targeting seniors not yet confirmed with a postsecondary destination.

Vail is actively involved in numerous community organizations and business/education collaboratives, including Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, Tri-County Cradle to Career, Charleston County Economic Development, South Carolina Maritime Association, and South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance. Vail has been a Rotarian for 21 years, serving as the 2014–15 President of the Rotary Club of Daniel Island and as an Assistant District Governor in Rotary District 7770 from 2018–2020. Vail has served on the boards of many other organizations in the Charleston region including Down Syndrome Association of the Lowcountry, Charleston Mayor’s Office for Children, Youth & Families, and Be A Mentor, and has volunteered as a youth soccer coach. Vail was president of Junior Achievement of Coastal SC for three years.

Vail served on the state delegation that visited Capitol Hill in support of WBL and CTE in 2013 and 2019. He also volunteered in November of 2020 with the initial ACTE committee Kelli Diemer formed in support of a new Work-based Learning sub-division and national conference focused on Work-Based Learning. This unique aspect of Vail demands multiple lines of effort as he accomplishes what seems to be his life’s purpose.

Gordon said that on a daily basis, Vail is recruiting business partners, coordinating extended learning opportunities for students, and collaborating with district leadership and school counselors to maximize student potential. Vail has also spearheaded Individualized Graduation Plan and College and Career Readiness initiatives across multiple grade levels district-wide, in an attempt to create “Future Ready” students with competitive advantages. He has also led multiple teams and committees that coordinate internship and apprenticeship programs with dozens of business and post-secondary partners - always recruiting, supporting, and celebrating students along the way.

“This is a well-deserved recognition for a special person who devotes his life to service and sacrifice for his community,” added Gordon. “The award declaration speaks for itself. CCSD is so fortunate to have him as our work-based learning partnership champion. Due to his efforts, entire family trees will be impacted for generations to come.”



Chadwick L. Vail



# LITERACY



## Mayor Tecklenburg's Book Club and CCSD launch Mayor's Lending Libraries

Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg's Book Club, and the Charleston County School District launched a new initiative called The Mayor's Lending Libraries. This effort provides the donation of 20 children's books to all 49 Pre-K classrooms in the public schools in the city of Charleston. In an effort to encourage early reading development and family literacy, students will be able to check-out books to take home, read and return to the classroom. Additionally, books will be provided to the Charleston County School District's Expanded Learning Program. The books were donated by Charleston-based United Parcel Service stores.

The mayor was joined by Charleston County School District Superintendent Donald Kennedy and Charleston County School District Director of Expanded Learning and Charleston City Councilmember Jason Sakran.

## Four CCSD schools awarded grants from Laura Bush Foundation

Springfield Elementary School, Pepperhill Elementary School, Burke High School, and R.B. Stall High School were each awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries. A total of 300 schools from 44 states received a grant. No more than four schools per district received a grant; Charleston County School District (CCSD) is one of the

few districts with four grant awards.

The Laura Bush Foundation provides funding to schools with the greatest needs to focus on their library collection. The foundation has provided over \$19.5 million to 3,300 schools in the last 20 years.



Springfield Elementary School



Burke High School



Pepperhill Elementary School



R.B. Stall High School



# Freligh named Lowcountry Regional Librarian of the Year



Katherine Freligh, the teacher librarian at Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center, was named the Lowcountry Regional Librarian of the Year on November 28, 2022, by the South Carolina Association of School Librarians.

Freligh has spent her professional career working with and serving underprivileged and marginalized populations. She is well-versed in the data that shows the large achievement gap between Mary Ford's students and other populations, but even more importantly, she is involved in school, faith, and community groups that aim to mend

this gap through knowledge of both historical and current issues that face this population.

"At Mary Ford, we know the teacher librarian makes lasting changes in the lives of every student and throughout our school community," said Hart. "Mrs. Freligh works hard to prove the value of teacher librarians by educating others on the perception of the school library and its role in education."

Freligh's welcoming library is the Grand Central Station of Mary

Ford, constantly filling with staff looking for resources, a quick chat about improving a lesson with technology, or ideas on how to tackle access and equity issues for our students, Hart added.

Harts said that Freligh is always leading the school in innovative transformational resources in the classroom.

"She is also an advocate for students, parents, teachers, and our school community. She is a shining light within our building, epitomizing our school motto, she Stands Tall and Aims High."

## CAROLINA PARK WINS CCSD'S FOURTH ANNUAL BOOK BATTLE

Students at Carolina Park Elementary School won the fourth annual Charleston County School District (CCSD) Book Battle. They competed against 16 other teams. Teams competed in a literary quiz bowl, answering questions from 20 books on the 2022-2023 South Carolina Children's Book Awards nominee list.

Coached by Kristen Smith, the Carolina Park team, called the Pink Carrots, competed in the finals against Buist Academy's Page Turners.

The Charleston County Book Battle is a program offered for fourth and fifth grade students. The purpose is to encourage students to read good books and have fun while competing with peers.

Christy James, CCSD's Library & Media Services Specialist, was the emcee for the district championship. The crowd included over 150 family and community members there to support their readers. James explained that the championship is held as a kick off for the district's Read Across America Week, celebrated this year March 6-10, 2023.



"This is the fourth year that CCSD elementary schools have competed in a district battle that even includes its traveling trophy," said James. "The energy is electric and it is so exciting to have an auditorium filled with supporters around students' love of reading."

Leslie Cooper, the librarian at Stiles Point Elementary School, organizes the event but said it takes an entire team to make it happen.

Teams were made up of five members, and they completed a reading list of 20 books by January. Teams competed against each other at the school level, and the top team from each school competed in the district event.

In addition to promoting reading, the competition promotes leadership, cooperation, and a sense of accountability.



# APRIL IS SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH

## How librarians support literacy, student achievement, and a love of reading

Charleston County School District (CCSD) celebrates libraries every day, especially during National School Library Month, which runs through the month of April. Libraries play an important role in our lives and have long been considered a strong influence on children's learning and development. National Library Week 2023 is celebrated with the theme "There's More to the Story" and CCSD adapted this theme to "Connecting All Our Stories." Libraries are full of stories in a variety of formats from picture books to large print, audiobooks to ebooks, and more.

"Our school libraries not only provide foundational literacy skills and access to stories, but they also provide connections between classroom content and deeper learning and exploration opportunities," said Christy James, Library and Media Services Coordinator for the district. "The work that takes place in our library facilities aligns with achieving Vision 2027 where all students reading on grade level by fifth grade."

The month-long celebration also supports all of the District's three "pillars" that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness, rigorous grade-level instruction, and high-quality teachers and leaders - Pillar 1- rigorous grade-level instruction, Pillar 2 - high-quality teachers and leaders, and Pillar 3 wrap-around services.

**Elementary school**

Shelley Ward has been the teacher-librarian at Belle Hall Elementary School for the last four years and relies heavily on the American Association of School Librarians' standards when creating enriching experiences for



Shelley Ward



Sean Muzzy



Stephanie Edwards

students.

"Increasing engagement is important to me," said Ward. "At the elementary level, you want to make learning, and especially reading, fun. I work hard to meet students where they are when creating new and unique activities." Her students love room transformations because they're unexpected and fun. In the fall, she decorates the library to look like a campground and students enjoy flashlight reading. Ward selects books about camping, the wilderness, and survival. During "Dinovember" the room is transformed yet again and features interactive displays, such as an active volcano.

As a teacher-librarian, Ward also serves as a reading advisor. She often helps students choose books that are a good fit. She learns what series children like and is constantly on the lookout for new series that children will enjoy.

**Middle school**

Sean Muzzy, the teacher-librarian at Northwoods Middle School, prides himself on creating a library environment

where there is something for everyone.

"We have a welcoming environment where we build relationships with our students so that we can tailor our books, activities, and learning materials to their interests," said Muzzy. "We carry a diverse collection of books that feature an array of characters so my students can see themselves in what they read and learn about others."

Muzzy works with teachers so that the library serves as an extension of the classroom. As one might expect, his library has more than just books. Students have access to 3D printers, different manipulatives, and maker space activities. Muzzy said that breakout boxes are popular and promote collaboration and critical thinking.

At the middle school library, hours are flexible, allowing for individuals or entire classes to come in on an as-needed basis.

**High school**

Stephanie Edwards is a teacher-librarian at Baptist Hill Middle High School. She has to think outside the box when it comes to engaging students since she serves a

wide range of ages. She relies heavily on decorative displays that promote her diverse collection and draw students in the door.

"The most important thing to me is to have books that feature characters that look like our students," said Edwards. "These stories need to have experiences in them that our students can relate to and subject matters they want to read about and talk about."

Edwards hosts a book club for students and that has proven to be quite popular. By using the donation platform Donors Choose, Edwards is able to purchase new books and enough for each book club member.

In a twist, Edwards has students that prefer a one-on-one book club. Edwards and the student will read the same book and then discuss it together as they progress through the chapters.

"These three teacher-librarians highlight what is so wonderful about all our school libraries in CCSD," said James. "Our libraries are providing vital support to our students and teachers. Connecting all our stories really is what our teacher librarians do all year long."

# BOOK CHARACTER DAY AT J.B. EDWARDS

Cara Dolan's second grade class at James B. Edwards Elementary School participated in Book Character Day. The students chose a character from a book they loved and then dress up as that character. The students then parade around the school to show off their costumes. The students shared traits about their characters and shared with the class how their character fits into the story.





# Schools Across Charleston County celebrated READ ACROSS AMERICA WEEK!



St. Andrew's School of Math and Science



Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary



Jane Edwards Elementary



James Island Elementary Kaleidoscope



Carolina Park Elementary



Belle Hall Elementary



Stono Park Elementary



Stiles Point Elementary



E.B. Ellington Elementary



Springfield Elementary



Harbor View Elementary





## 2022 MOJA Arts Festival

Leaders across the district participated in the MOJA Arts Festival read-out featuring *A Day for Rememberin'* the selected title for the 2022 MOJA Arts Festival



## Latino Family Literacy Project

Charleston County School District celebrated Latino Family Literacy Project with a graduation event at Otranto Library. This was an eight-week Family Literacy program held in Spanish for A.C. Corcoran Elementary School parents with children in CD through first grade. A morning session was offered in person and an evening session via zoom. Each week participants read an age-appropriate bilingual book and shared strategies to make reading a fun, engaging family activity. Seven of the 14 graduates were able to attend the graduation.

## Author/illustrators visit students at Charleston Progressive

Charleston Progressive Academy (CPA) students received a visit this year from children's author/illustrator duo Matthew Swanson and Robbi Behr during their nationwide "Busload of Books Tour." CPA was the only school in South Carolina to host the pair on this inaugural tour.

The couple crisscrossed the United States in a school bus/home with their four children for the 2022-2023 school year. They visited Title I elementary schools in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., and by the end of the journey, they gifted 25,000 hardcover books to students and teachers.

"The enthusiasm that this book tour instilled in our students was truly amazing," said teacher-librarian Jennie Richter. "After they got to meet and talk to Matthew and Robbi they made deeper connections to the books. Students were buzzing about the books all week and were so excited to take them home and share them with their families."

During their visit, the couple demonstrated their work, read with the students and participated in literacy activities. "This sparked an interest in reading that transcended the walls of our classrooms. I am so grateful that CPA was selected for this incredible opportunity," added Richter.



## DISTRICT LAUNCHES NEW ONLINE READING PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF



Charleston County School District (CCSD) implemented an online reading platform called Beanstack with teachers and students. The

tool allows users to log their reading and compete in district and school-based reading challenges. The launch corresponded with International Literacy Day, Thursday, September 8, 2022.

Beanstack makes it easy for students to earn virtual badges, tickets for drawings, and prizes by logging their reading. Readers can also post book reviews and keep track of activities they complete along the way. In an effort to grow a reading culture and celebrate all students as readers, CCSD kicked off a year-long, district-wide challenge called the 15,000,000 Minute Challenge. Each school had a community goal based on the number of staff and students, and each reader had

an individual goal to contribute toward the 15,000,000 minutes. According to Christy James, CCSD Library Media Services Coordinator and District Textbook Coordinator, Beanstack offered an exciting opportunity for all students and staff to make the commitment to reading and literacy visible. CCSD also has challenges set up for K-8 for the new EL curriculum modules (new ELA curriculum) and launched South Carolina Book Award challenges after Labor Day. Additionally, the Charleston County Public Library system added Beanstack, creating the ability to have community challenges.



# ONE OF CCSD'S OWN DEBUTS CHILDREN'S BOOKS TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Dr. Melvin Middleton, Jr., Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Interim Director of Pathways to Teaching traveled across the district reading to elementary-aged students this year.

Middleton is the author of "Jameel's Valentines" – illustrated by Milan Ristic'. He introduced this book to CCSD students. Although centered on Valentine's Day cards, the message to students is to stand up for their friends, be unique, kind, and show up for those that are important to you.

Middleton's second book is called "Our Teacher is a Doctor" – illustrated by Milan Ristic'. This story is about being a doctor of education and a continual learner.

Born in Southfield, Michigan, and raised in Charleston, Middleton is a graduate of Florida A&M University, Nova Southeastern University, and Florida State University. He has worked with learners of all ages as a mentor, teacher, program director, school administrator, and college administrator.

Middleton is a product of CCSD, having attended the former St. Andrew's High School. Middleton served in various roles in CCSD and other districts before returning in January.

Middleton was inspired to write his books after completing his dissertation. He said he thought to himself, 'what do I do next?'



## Acclaimed author inspires St. John's High School students

Rashaad Jennings visited St. John's High School after students there read his book, *The If in Life*. He came to talk with students about the choices they make and how their lives will be forever affected by those choices.

The former NFL player and Season 24 Winner of *Dancing with the Stars*, spoke with the students about some of those lessons and the importance of education, hard work, being prepared, and taking advantage of opportunities when they are presented.

In 93 NFL games, Jennings rushed for 3,772 yards and 23 touchdowns.

## Minnie Hughes students enjoy book picnic

Minnie Hughes Elementary School third grade students and their families had a wonderful time at James Island County Park celebrating their reading endeavors for the year with a book picnic! Students got to spend time with their classmates, take in the lovely weather, and even got to go home with some books! It was a great time filled with family engagement and fun.





# STEM



## Ninety CCSD educators receive STEM grants

Charleston County School District (CCSD) announced that 90 teachers were 2023 winners of a Bosch Eco and STEM Teacher (BEST) Grant. The combined value of the grants is over \$160,000. The BEST grants advance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and sustainability education in ways that inspire, excite, and engage students.

CCSD teachers have consistently garnered the largest share of grants each year, far outpacing larger school districts.

"We are pleased to award the BEST grants to Charleston County School District as they share Bosch's commitment to support teachers' passion to provide high quality, hands-on

STEM learning," said Kathleen Owsley, President of the Bosch Community Fund. "This partnership supports exceptional education in the Charleston area."

One of the funded projects was Memminger Elementary School's Inquiry-Based Art Studio, led by Schai Bilger. Students from ages 3 to 11 years old are challenged to be inquirers, risk takers, thinkers, and communicators to explore and expand their knowledge through an open-ended art classroom. Students will use the art classroom to discover, question, elaborate, and reflect on the art and design processes in order to execute their creativity through two and three-

dimensional works of art.

Another project on this year's list is Casey Marlowe's Think Globally, Act Locally which will take place in the media center at St. James-Santee Elementary-Middle School. Students will explore the human impact on the environment as they read, "One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia" by Miranda Paul. The book illustrates how one woman created ways to reuse items and eliminate plastic waste in her community. Marlowe hopes students will consider items they use in their daily lives that could be redesigned to eliminate waste and minimize human impact on the environment.



Biomedical Science



Computer Science



Early childhood Education



Mechatronics

## CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY MONTH

February was national Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month. Charleston County School District (CCSD) recognizes and celebrates CTE Month to raise awareness of CTE's role in preparing students for careers and college. CCSD recognized various career and technological opportunities across the district each week in February that honor the 2023 theme of "Celebrate Today, Own Tomorrow."



# STEM studies picking up STEAM in CCSD

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is at the forefront when it comes to offering students STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) experiences and educational opportunities. In recognition of National STEM Day, November 8, 2022, CCSD highlighted the various programs offered across the district.

STEM curriculum is specifically designed to prepare and inspire generations of learners to meet the challenges of our 21st-century society by fostering technological literacy, academic achievement, innovation, collaboration, and creative problem-solving.

“From McClellanville to Edisto, all students throughout CCSD have access to academically rigorous and relevant Project Lead The Way (PLTW) STEM instruction that prepares students for the high-skill, high-demand, and high-wage occupations of the 21st-century global economy,” said Rich Gordon, Executive Director of Career and Technology Education. “Students learn how to problem-solve, think strategically, and work in teams, all the while building determination and grit.”

STEM and STEAM instruction is available to all elementary through high school students in various ways.

For example, fifth grade students at Julian Mitchell Elementary School participate in a STEAM leadership group. Under the guidance of Margeaux Coyne, science lab teacher, students are learning about sustainable garden projects thanks to a BOSCH grant. Some of those funds were used to kick-start culinary activities as well.

Mitchell is a constituent magnet where math and science are infused into all curricula.

“These activities bring real-world opportunities to our students,” explained Coyne. “This year, I am writing another Bosch grant to continue the work we have started called Farm to Table Cooks Up Leaders.”

Coyne’s science lab is also full of hands-on activities. This month

students are preparing to plant an urban garden. Students will design their own crop plan, start plants from seed, harvest, compost, and cook their own recipes.

At A.C. Corcoran Elementary School, Susan Farmer is teaching her students about aeronautics. A representative from Trident Technical College presented an overview and virtual tour of their new S.C. Aeronautical Training Center and discussed programs that they offer with a focus on the connection to STEM and a brief exploration of those careers. The students were treated to hands-on STEM activities as a result.

Laing Middle School’s STEM approach is a whole-school initiative that focuses on improved academic performance, 21st century career skills, and information on STEM professions.

Analyn Haynes is the pre-engineering instructor at Laing Middle school. Her classes are all project-based.

“Students are given a problem to solve,” said Haynes. “They use their engineering design processes to come up with solutions that they have tested and retested. Students show their understanding of the skills taught to them through their builds and make sure to present their research and solutions to the class at the end of their projects.”

According to Chad Vail, CCSD’s Work-based Learning Partnerships Coordinator, the district is fortunate to have excellent business partnerships that support STEM career awareness, exploration, and experiences for students from throughout the district.

“Examples of partnerships with local champions for STEM education include Naval Information Warfare Center’s support for robotics teams and cyber security summer career camps, Medical University of South Carolina’s Career Discovery Day held on their campus annually, and Boeing South Carolina’s high school internships, apprenticeships, and long-standing DreamLearners program,” said Vail.

Students are also exposed early to local industry professionals, learning about pathways and requirements for success in STEM-related careers.



## Deer Park Middle students visit Cooper River CAS

Sixth-grade students from Deer Park Middle School had a great time on their field trip to Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies this year. They enjoyed touring the facility and learning about the programs available there. Deer Park is a feeder to school for the CAS where students could potentially attend a program of study.



# Boeing Black Employee Association Partners with North Charleston High School's Family and Community Center

In September, Boeing Black Employee Association came to tour the facilities of North Charleston High School's Family and Community Center. Boeing Black Employee Association announced a partnership with the Family and Community Center to develop a career cohort to help parents and students enter the workforce.

The purpose is to increase STEM outreach, workforce readiness, and college preparation within the Liberty Hill community in North Charleston, SC (specifically at North Charleston High School and Morningside Middle School).

One of the purposes of the Family and Community Center is to partner with their feeder schools and provide opportunities to their families and surrounding communities.



*Above Left:* Boeing Black Employee Association (BBEA) representatives, BBEA President Karriema Colhoun, Henry Darby (NCHS Principal), Abria Pryor (Family Advocate), Whitely Richardson (Family Advocate), and Brittney Smalls (Charleston County School District Social Worker).

*Above Right:* Ieshia Fludd is a parent at NCHS who filled out the first application for the career cohort. She is utilizing the I-pads provided by the Project Prevent Grant. Project Prevent Program Officer, Tasha Joyner has supplied over 30 I-pads to parents to help complete resumes and job applications.



## Frog dissection at Moultrie Middle

*Not for the squeamish!*

Moultrie Middle School seventh graders were either hesitant or excited to participate in the famous frog dissection this year.

## Fiddlers and frogs

Third graders at Oakland Elementary School jumped right into their animal unit by creating habitats for fiddler crabs and Dwarf African frogs. They observed them for several weeks and collected information about their behaviors, adaptations, and life cycles. These kids were definitely not "crabby" about this science unit.





# Laing hosts afterschool STEM Club

Laing Middle School students enjoyed the school's first-ever afterschool STEM Club, which featured Boeing's DreamLearners programming. The club hosted 25 sixth-grade students over the course of 16 sessions, sponsored by science teacher Dr. Leea Power.

Frank Hatten, Boeing Education Relations Specialist, and a team of volunteers from Boeing helped lead the students on various STEM-related projects. Boeing team members included Giumaa Milad, Carol Colshan, Caitlin E Reidel, and Bretton B Tabler.

According to Mr. Hatten, the Laing Stem Club was the club first hosted in Charleston County School District (CCSD) in partnership with Boeing. Others have spun off this initiative from the Liberty Hill STEM Initiative and a club at Sanders-Clyde Elementary School.

Principal Jay Whitehair is appreciative of the effort that went into facilitating the club.

"I would like to thank Ms. Power, Mr. Hatten, and the Boeing team for providing this amazing opportunity for our students," said Whitehair. "The skills taught in our STEM club are so valuable to the long-term success of our students."



## Live 5 News visits Haut Gap Middle

Bill Walsh from Live 5 News visited sixth graders at Haut Gap Middle School this year bringing the station's Live 5 News WeatherClass with him. The program is designed around STEM learning



## WOMEN IN SCIENCE NIGHT

James Island Elementary School students celebrated Women in Science Night where students and their families celebrated the impact and knowledge women have in science. It was an opportunity to interact with female scientists and see what doors of inspiration could be opened.



# SUSTAINABILITY AND WELLNESS



Murray LaSaine Montessori, first place



Stono Park Elementary, Rookie School of the Year

## MUSC Boeing Center and CCSD partnership improving the district's wellness culture

What started as a programmatic health initiative at Burke High School 16 years ago, has turned into a district-wide wellness commitment within Charleston County School District (CCSD).

The MUSC Boeing Center for Children's Wellness (BCCW) was developed as a partnership between MUSC and CCSD in 2007. The program was initially located at Burke and only reached a handful of schools.

The MUSC BCCW in partnership with CCSD celebrated 49 schools and their wellness efforts last month. The first-place winner was Murray LaSaine Montessori. The second and third-place winners were James Island Elementary and CE Williams Middle School North-Campus respectively. Rookie School of the Year was Stono Park Elementary. The top-scoring high school was West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies and the top-scoring middle school was CE Williams North Middle.

Since 2010, the MUSC BCCW has supported schools in creating healthy learning environments through participation in the school-based Wellness Initiative. The Initiative works with schools to create a culture of wellness by providing direct

support and motivation for K-12 schools and districts as they implement evidence-based policy, system, and environmental strategies targeting improved nutrition, increased physical activity, and enhanced social-emotional wellness for both students and staff.

Participating schools that meet the minimum requirements receive a wellness award that can be used to help grow and sustain their wellness initiatives. In total, \$31,450 was awarded to CCSD schools for the 2022-2023 school year. The first-place winner Murray LaSaine Montessori earned \$2,000.

CCSD's Instructional Specialist for Health and PE, Holly Kut explained that once everyone at the school is on board to start making those changes, the students begin to see that they should care about their health as well.

"If we can change it within the school system then we can take these initiatives home, and it becomes a community involvement. The health index focuses on the whole person and is referred to as a health triangle," said Kut. "The physical, social, and mental health of each individual is important because when one goes up, the others do too."

## GRANTS HELP CCSD CELEBRATE EARTH DAY YEAR-ROUND

All year long, not just on Earth Day, Charleston County School District (CCSD) students learn about respecting and preserving our natural environment. Students learn in school gardens, in natural spaces on school campuses, and through field experiences across the Lowcountry.

Each school year, CCSD schools receive over \$100,000 in grants for environmental education projects. This year, three CCSD schools received a Dominion Environmental Education & Stewardship Grant. Teachers are awarded grants from corporations such as Bosch and Dominion Energy, local groups such as Seabrook Island Natural History Group, and many other philanthropic organizations.

Over 30 CCSD schools have outdoor classrooms. Students learn about history, culture, and science by growing local crops and native plants. CCSD students participate in outdoor field experiences in partnership with local nonprofits such as the South Carolina Aquarium, Charleston County Parks & Recreation Commission, and

Keep Charleston Beautiful.

Lucy Beckham High School's environmental science teacher Jessica Herbert received a \$3,484 grant to build a pollinator garden and composting program.

Malcolm C. Hursey Montessori School's garden teacher, Shella Moritz, and teacher librarian, Kaitlin Torres, received a \$2,365 grant to combine garden education with literacy. Students enjoy story time in the media center while sipping smoothies incorporating vegetables from the school garden.

Charleston Charter School for Math and Science high school science teacher Christina Rutter received a \$4,500 grant for the school's science club to clean local beaches. After the beach sweeps, the students analyzed the type of trash at each beach and recommended a remediation plan specific to that location to prevent future litter. Students presented their research findings at the Lowcountry Regional Science & Engineering Fair at the end of March.



Malcolm C. Hursey Montessori School's garden



# Community Outreach at Drayton Hall Elementary School

At Drayton Hall Elementary School, the teachers and staff not only put their students first but also their community members. The Bobcat Community Pantry box, located by the car rider loop and walking path next to the school allows family members to take what they need as well as donate items they can. Tim Cox, husband of Darlinda Cox (a teacher at Drayton Hall) volunteered to install the pantry box.

Lowe's grocery store has been a business partner and has been donating food for several years. The amount of support the school has received has been tremendous. The school also has a "Backpack Buddies" program for students to take bagged lunches and snacks home over the weekends and breaks. Thanksgiving boxes and winter break boxes were also distributed.

The Student Council at Drayton Hall Elementary School is also involved in community outreach. The students led a drive to donate items to the Lowcountry Orphan Relief in October. In January, the service project for the Student Council was collecting donations for the MUSC Children's Center. The wellness committee sponsored the Bobcat Buddy Blanket Drive in which 103 blankets were donated to Brookdale Assisted Living, One80 Place Homeless Shelter, Charleston Youth and Development Center, Jenkins Youth and Family, and the Lowcountry Orphan Relief.



Tim Cox installing pantry box

## CCSD STUDENTS ARE LEARNING THAT RECYCLING IS MORE THAN SORTING TRASH

Charleston County School District (CCSD) students celebrate the Earth every day, not just on Earth Day.

Twelve CCSD schools recently received Recycling Education Grants from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). The \$1,500 grants are available to schools to promote awareness of the need to reduce the solid waste generated and to recycle whenever possible. Students and educators are recycling today for a better tomorrow in CCSD.

These grants align with Pillar Two (high-quality teachers and leaders), and Pillar Three (wrap-around services), two of the three Pillars that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness. Stefanie Vandiver, DHEC environmental manager who coordinates the grant program, said she was impressed with the applications they received.

"CCSD schools' hard work is not only inspiring to other schools throughout the state but also boosts our recycling rates in South Carolina," said Vandiver.

Welieides La Porte, a parent advocate at Pinehurst Elementary School will use their \$1,500 grant as an example of CCSD's pillar three: Wraparound Services to provide clothing racks, hangers, fabric paint, letter stencils, and reusable bags as supplies for their school-wide clothing swap. Families will be able to donate and shop for used clothing while also learning



about how to be more sustainable at home, work, and school.

Bree Jackson, Chicora Elementary School's Physical Education teacher started a student club this year called the Chicora Changers. The group, another example of wraparound services supporting positive learning environments will do a Folly Beach cleanup/sweep along the shore with the South Carolina Aquarium this spring.

Military Magnet Academy math teacher Simona Spinner will use a \$1,500 grant to start recycling wood chips for the school's new pollinator garden. Spinner explained that the pollinator garden is the next step in their outdoor garden.

Danisha Nelson, human geography teacher at Burke High School, will use their grant to take her students on a field trip to Charleston County's composting center in West Ashley. Following the field trip, students will have the hands-on experience of charting campus compost.

Paul Millar, a horticulture teacher at East Cooper Center For Advanced Studies will use the \$1,500 to buy composting supplies for the school's horticulture class. The school's program plans to use the compost for their rooftop garden and greenhouse. The vegetables from the gardens will then be donated to their food pantry, which provides for underprivileged students.



# EXPANDED LEARNING



Harold Sanders

## Expanded Learning (Kaleidoscope) Officer graduates from prestigious Riley Institute program

Harold Sanders, a 21st Century program officer for Charleston County School District (CCSD), completed the South Carolina Afterschool Leaders Empowered (SCALE) Fellowship as an inaugural participant.

The Riley Institute at Furman and the South Carolina Department of Education have partnered to offer SCALE, a new program that prepares individuals across the state to be strong leaders in the field of afterschool and expanded learning.

Sanders had the opportunity to connect with and hear from other afterschool and summer learning professionals in a structured, well-designed curriculum.

Sanders was one of only 20 applicants chosen for this inaugural year. Each year for the next three years, SCALE will convene additional diverse cohorts of emerging summer and afterschool learning leaders, providing them with the resources they need to build strong partnerships, secure funding and design and scale effective programming. Ideal participants are leaders who work in the school district or are partners with school districts to provide evidence-based after-school and summer learning programs. Participants receive continuing education credits for their participation.

## KALEIDOSCOPE NOW ACCEPTING 4-YEAR-OLD CCSD STUDENTS



Charleston County School District's (CCSD) afterschool program, Kaleidoscope, expanded its offerings by opening up slots for 4-year-old students at sites that have received required licensing. CCSD started accepting 4-year-olds in Kaleidoscope's after-school and summer programs in January 2023.

CCSD previously served 4-year-olds but a Department of Social Services state policy change required each site to be individually licensed.

Jason Sakran, Director of Expanded Learning/Kaleidoscope said it was an arduous process to abide by state policy to become licensed.

Sakran said that a per hour increase for staff to \$17 enabled him to hire additional and more qualified staff, thus reducing waitlists.

The mission of Kaleidoscope is to provide high-quality afterschool care in a safe, challenging environment. The programs provide age-appropriate activities which focus on the physical, social, emotional, and educational needs of students.

Affordability increases access to high-quality programming for our students, Sakran added.

The Office of Expanded Learning leads CCSD's afterschool efforts (Kaleidoscope). Kaleidoscope is a fee based program that operates using an income based sliding scale for tuition. The office also manages several 21st Century Afterschool Grants, summer programs as well as after school enrichment classes such as chess, dance, art, coding, engineering, foreign language, music, and lacrosse.



Jason Sakran  
Director of  
Expanded Learning/Kaleidoscope



# CCSD EXPANDED LEARNING INCREASING LITERACY ACTIVITIES IN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Office of Expanded Learning has created and implemented a literacy guide that embeds literacy-focused efforts in all after-school activities.

Jason Sakran, Director of Expanded Learning (Kaleidoscope), said that afterschool programs within CCSD continue to improve and offer more robust learning opportunities for students.

The effort supports the three "pillars" that uphold the district's mission of educating and supporting every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness (rigorous grade-level instruction, high-quality teachers and leaders, and wrap-around services).

The literacy guide contains program goals, measures efficacy, and provides instructors with an abundance of actual content and activities.

"The Office of Expanded Learning and its afterschool programs (Kaleidoscope and 21st Century) is in a unique and purposeful position to build upon our success and our foundation and utilize its programs as a wraparound service with high-quality leaders serving students from birth through fifth grade," added Sakran.

Examples of activities include reading corners, read-alouds, vocabulary/word walls, and journal writing. An expansion of those approaches might include book clubs, skits, plays and a reader's theater, poetry or music production clubs, and a media production club. The activities are all age appropriate with an emphasis on fun.

CCSD afterschool programs have transitioned from being childcare and playtime centered to an extension of the school day.

"The evidence is clear," said Sakran. "We have a tremendous opportunity to better leverage the after-school hours and deliver a high-quality learning experience for our students. It can be a game changer."

Lisa Fryar, the 21st Century Director at E.B. Ellington Elementary School agreed. The program there truly is an extension of the classroom. Students arrive at 6:30 a.m. for the morning component which allows for additional time to complete homework and catch up on IReady with instructional support on-hand.

21st Century is a very dynamic instructional program, led by certified teachers. The program provides wrap-around services to students from academics to basic needs.

The afternoon program looks similar. Certified teachers are assigned to specific age groups and work with students on homework, reading and reading instruction, and IReady, but there is also an instructional component in which students are learning additional pieces of the curriculum being taught in their classroom.

"The constant communication and collaboration with teachers make this possible," said Fryar. "Communication is the key, even with our administration. We attend their planning meetings, and schedule face-to-face time with our educators so we can adjust 21st Century instructional time."



E.B. Ellington Elementary School



Charles Pinckney Elementary School

Lakeris Wine is the 21st Century lead teacher for second and third grade. She explained that the program requires students to sit for a certain amount of instructional time. That is offset by enrichment time, which consists of African Drumming demonstrations, karate lessons, Sweetgrass Basket sewing lessons, soccer, chess, dance, and more.

Laura Strickland, the Site Coordinator at Drayton Hall Elementary said an example of their literacy activities include K-Scope News where students write scripts and record the news show. Others include read-alouds between students and staff members.

"The kids really enjoy the chapter books," said Strickland. "Also entertaining is a Reader's Theater that we've created where the students pick out a book (the reading center boasts over 300 titles) and we create

a set where they perform a mini play based on the book."

Trina Noonan has been the site coordinator at Charles Pinckney Elementary School for six years and served there for a total of 14 years. She said the program has always included activities focused on STEM learning, and adding the literacy component to those activities has increased learning opportunities for students.

"A favorite activity among students is learning and creating recipes," said Noonan. "As a result, Trail Mix Tuesdays was implemented and a different student's recipe is the featured snack of the day each week."

Like other sites, her program features a book club. Noonan paired it with a treat and named it Lemonade and Literacy. It was an activity no one wanted to turn down because of the lemonade component.



# DISTRICT NEWS

## DLI cohort partners with CCSD to focus on Career Readiness

Charleston County School District's (CCSD) former Director of General Counsel Investigations, Oscar Douglas (currently the district's Interim Executive Director of Employee Relations and Human Resources Compliance) completed the South Carolina Diversity Leaders Initiative (DLI), hosted by The Riley Institute at Furman.

The DLI equips leaders with the tools and perspectives needed to leverage diversity as a way to improve organizational outcomes and drive social and economic progress in South Carolina. As a part of the experience, participants form small groups and complete targeted community action projects in their local area, combining their individual talents to develop real solutions for real issues in the state.

Douglas' group focused on career readiness for high school seniors. In collaboration with CCSD's Career and Technology Education Department (CTE), the group branded their initiative "CATalyst for Career Readiness," and 15 soon-to-be graduates from North Charleston High School (NCHS) were identified in collaboration with school counselors and other educators.

With the ultimate goal of confirmed employment or college acceptance prior to graduation, the seniors completed self-discovery activities and employability lessons. In addition, students and their DLI mentors attended a variety of field trips, visiting local colleges, worksites, and offices aligned with their career interests. These visits included MUSC, South Carolina Ports Authority, Trident Technical College's culinary training program, and more.



## CCSD earns first ever Partnership District Award



Charleston County School District (CCSD) earned a 2022 Partnership District Award from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University. This is the first time CCSD has received the award. The district was recognized for making excellent progress in strengthening its leadership on partnerships and for guiding schools to develop goal-linked programs of family and community engagement.

"The professional development series for Title I Parent Advisory Council board members and parent leaders presented information that increased parents' knowledge of their own learning style as well as how to best support their students academically, behaviorally, and socio-emotionally,"

said Rosa Fulmore, Title I Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, NNPS District Facilitator. "They also learned about Robert's Rules of Order, Title I guidelines, Parents' Right to Know, family engagement policies, and advocating for their children."

CCSD, a member of NNPS since 2017, described specific leadership structures, processes, and activities that help schools organize more effective and equitable programs of family and community engagement for student success in school. NNPS requires evidence of key program components including teamwork, clear goals, well-designed and well-implemented plans, direct facilitation of school-based Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs), evaluation of progress, and network connections.

"Charleston County School District is conducting evidence-based strategies to help schools become welcoming places that engage all parents and the community in ways that improve

student attendance, behavior, achievement, health, graduation rates, postsecondary plans, and other outcomes," said Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, Director of NNPS. "Even during the COVID-19 crisis, CCSD continued to work with schools on communicating with all students' families in productive ways."

CCSD's district-level family engagement activity "Learning & Growing Through Professional Development" emphasized the district's belief that parents are essential partners in supporting the overall well-being of students and the ongoing connection between home and school.

Additionally, Chicora Elementary School and Ladson Elementary School earned Partnership School Awards. These award-winning programs and others, including North Charleston Elementary School, C.E. Williams Middle School – North Campus, and Morningside Middle School, have activities in Promising Partnership Practices 2022.



# CCSD's McKinney-Vento Program provides FIRST ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER TO FAMILIES

Charleston County School District (CCSD) has more than 220 students that meet the McKinney-Vento Program criteria. McKinney-Vento is a program that helps children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Under the leadership of Sonya Jones, CCSD's Title I Program Compliance Administrator, Abria Pryor and Kimberly Grant (CCSD McKinney-Vento Parent Advocates) hosted a Thanksgiving dinner at Royal Baptist Family Life and Banquet Center. Due to the families living in inadequate living situations and lacking resources like a refrigerator and stoves, the consensus was to have a dinner for these families and create an atmosphere of home.

The following organizations came together and donated their time and resources for displaced families, Carolina Teen Center, North Charleston Community Resource Center, Chef Kendric, North Charleston Police Department, Soul Harvesters Outreach, Royal Baptist Missionary Church (Foundation), SC Conference Branch Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal District, The Tywanza Sanders Legacy Foundation, and Trident Technical College. In addition, the organizations gave away cleaning products, gift cards, groceries, hygiene kits, clothing, and two students each received a tablet. CCSD's McKinney-Vento program would like to thank all the organizations that came together to make this event successful.

The McKinney-Vento program is partnering with external agencies and several of CCSD's internal departments to connect displaced families with needed resources so that students can focus on academic success while fulfilling CCSD's goal of students reading on grade level by grade five.



## CCSD has host of mental health supports to benefit students and staff



National Suicide Prevention Week was recognized this year from September 4 – 10, 2022. In recognition of that Charleston County School District (CCSD) reminded students, staff, and families of the

many mental health supports in place.

According to CCSD Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator, Marques Johnson, it is important to note that the mental health supports in place in CCSD should be considered a continuum of supports.

"CCSD anchors the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework, which aligns with the continuum concept," said Johnson. "MTSS allows for targeted support for students. Mental health supports in our schools are tiered in order to be more effective and to meet student needs."

Fronde Stille, CCSD Director of School Counseling Services said that society has developed a better awareness of need and maybe less of a stigma around seeking and providing mental health support.

"CCSD has a renewed commitment to making sure that those supports are equitably distributed and accessible," said Stille. "Starting with the adults, we have allocated funds for wellness initiatives

including trauma-informed educator training, self-care strategies, and calming rooms in schools. For our students, we have increased our number of mental health professionals in schools such as clinical counselors, school psychologists, and social workers, to support students not only at school but also help families connect to resources outside of school when the need arises."

These professionals not only provide direct support to students at school, but they are also available to help families connect to resources outside of school when the need arises. CCSD has also invested in additional wellness curriculum options for middle and high schools.

While the departments typically involved in student support like counseling services, psychological services, alternative programs and services, and special education have taken the lead in this work, other departments such as the Office of Family and Community Engagement, curriculum and instruction, early learning, nursing, and school leadership teams also actively engage in mental wellness initiatives.



# Governor Henry McMaster signs legislation TO HELP PROVIDE EYE GLASSES TO STUDENTS IN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES



Governor Henry McMaster celebrated the work of Vision To Learn at a bill signing ceremony at North Charleston Elementary School, in Charleston County School District at the start of the school year.

Vision To Learn is a nonprofit charity that provides children at schools in low-income communities with free vision screenings, eye exams, and glasses. The program brings licensed optometrists to school sites, eliminating barriers to care that would otherwise prevent many students from getting the glasses they need to succeed in school and in life. Vision To Learn began service last school year in Charleston County on a pilot basis. Through this legislation, the program now can expand operations to low-income communities across the state.

Governor McMaster signed the new legislation, House Bill 4837, allowing Vision To Learn's mobile vision clinics to offer services at Title I schools throughout the state.

"Our work in Charleston this past year identified a clear need and demonstrated a cost-effective solution," said Austin Beutner, Vision To Learn

Founder. "This law will allow us to help many thousands of children in low-income communities across South Carolina in the months and years to come. Every child, every school, everywhere in the country should have the glasses they need to succeed in school and in life"

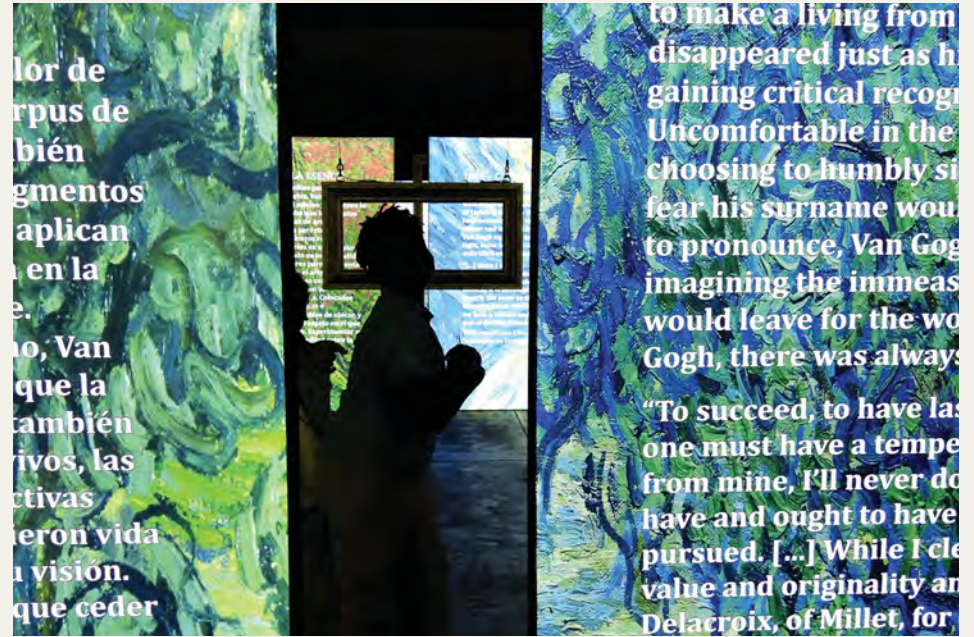
Estimates are more than 100,000 children in schools across South Carolina go to school every day without the glasses they need to see the board, read a book, or participate in class. About one in four children, whether from a family with means or a family struggling to get by, will naturally need glasses. Children who need glasses and don't have them are more likely to be misdiagnosed with behavioral issues in kindergarten, be considered "slow" learners by 5th grade, and drop out of high school. Unfortunately, in low-income urban and rural communities, most children who need glasses don't have them due to financial constraints, language barriers, unresponsive health bureaucracies, or the simple fact there are no eye care professionals in their neighborhood. This program solves the problem by bringing the glasses

to the kids where they are almost every day—their local neighborhood school.

"The district's Vision 2027 is for all students to read on grade level by grade five," said Don Kennedy, Superintendent of Schools. "We know one of the very first steps to being able to read is being able to see properly. The signing of this bill not only ensures that our students will receive access to eye care where it may otherwise be unavailable, but will also ensure that our students are able to make strides toward this most important and fundamental goal of reading proficiency that will provide pathways of success for them in life."







# D20PCP initiative off to a successful start

Five principals from the Constituent District 20 schools, located in downtown Charleston, formed a collaboration to strengthen and direct the academic progress of students served in its feeder system of elementary, middle, and high schools. The derivative of this collaboration is now called the District 20 Principal Collaboration Program (D20PCP).

District 20 principals Janice Malone (Sanders-Clyde Elementary School), Amber Sainz (Julian Mitchell Elementary School), Wanda Sheats (Charleston Progressive Academy), Stephanie Spann (Simmons-Pinckney Middle School), and Cheryl Swinton (Burke High School) collectively agreed that addressing the most pressing needs that permeate D20's student population was crucial. Their efforts will not only address the Vision 2027 goal of all students in Charleston County School District (CCSD) reading on grade level by fifth grade but will also engage students in real-world experiences, broadening horizons, and removing barriers to success.

The D20PCP principals identified areas of need that they describe as "the most pressing needs that permeate our student bodies," including academic performance, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, discipline, engaging families, mental and physical health, access to youth-centered activities, and developing positive self-esteem. Another important focus of the collaboration is attracting and retaining excellent teachers and staff to support D20 schools.

In the spirit of collaboration, this partnership has resulted in numerous community and civic organization partnerships. The City of Charleston Recreation Center enabled 18 students to successfully complete a swimming summer camp. The Burke High School Foundation, Inc. purchased school uniforms and other items for D20PCP students. School supplies were donated at two community Back-to-School events (Eastside and Westside parks), and a collaboration was established with the Preservation Society of

Charleston to share historical projects on African American contributions to the Charleston area through the D20PCP Heritage School of Knowledge. The Lowcountry Period Project was re-established to provide feminine hygiene products for girls at Simmons-Pinckney and Burke.

One tenet of the collaboration, embedded in the multifaceted work, is that the collaboration will provide students with opportunities and experiences with cultural activities that stretch students' minds and promote social growth.





# Mission, Values & Commitments



STUDENTS ARE  
THE HEART  
OF OUR WORK!



## Our Mission

To educate and support every child in achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness

## Our Vision

CCSD is a premier school system in which

- every child is supported in and out of school,
- every child succeeds academically,
- every child graduates from high school prepared for employment in the modern workforce or credential completion or postsecondary degree, and
- every student, teacher, principal, and staff member is valued and respected with the opportunity to learn every day.

## Our Values

- SERVICE - We are selfless in support of our students and each other.
- INTEGRITY - We honor truthfulness, fairness, consistency, and transparency.
- INCLUSIVENESS - We treat each other with dignity and mutual respect.
- EQUITY - We target resources, support, and attention where the need is greatest.
- COLLABORATION - We are stronger when we work together on behalf of every child.
- EXCELLENCE - We make decisions that are student-centered, data-informed, and evidence-based.



# Charleston County School District

## DISTRICT PROFILE



22-23 Enrollment

50,155



22-23 Pupils in Poverty

47.6%



Multilingual Learners

10.7%



SC Ready ELA

53.2%



SC Ready Math

48.9%



SCPASS Science

53.2%



EOCEP Algebra I

57.0%



EOCEP Biology

50.2%



EOCEP English II

71.4%



EOCEP US History

48.9%



myIGDIs Sound Identification

58.4%



myIGDIs Quantity Comparison

76.2%



Graduation Rate

84.6%



# Charleston County School District

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CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Congratulates*

ALL FACULTY, STAFF,  
STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND  
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

WHO MADE THE  
2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR  
A HUGE SUCCESS

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*Thank you!*



