

**For Immediate Release**

June 26, 2024

**Contact:**

Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

## Media Release

### **CCSD exceeds performance marks on district-wide accreditation renewal**

*Leading international education accrediting agency renews CCSD's accreditation with marks far above network scores*

#### Office of Communications

---

**Anita W. Huggins, M.Ed.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Vanessa L. Denney, M.Ed.**  
Interim Executive Director of Communications

**Charleston, SC** – Charleston County School District (CCSD) recently earned a five-year, system-wide reaccreditation from [Cognia](#), the widely recognized international educational accrediting agency. Cognia's Regional Accreditation Evaluator and Lead International Evaluator, Holly Wingard, delivered a report at the CCSD Board of Trustees meeting on June 24, 2024. The report highlighted the district's commitment to continuous improvement and stellar performance which met and surpassed many of the goals and objectives set after it earned accreditation [for the first time in September 2018](#) through AdvancED (now Cognia).

Accreditation from Cognia is an international distinction that signifies the completion of a rigorous process, recognizing exemplary service to learners, teachers, and leaders.

The accreditation verifies preparation and good standing with the [South Carolina Commission on Higher Education](#) and increases student eligibility for federal loans, grants, and private scholarships.

"This is a significant accomplishment for Charleston County School District," said Superintendent of Schools Anita Huggins. "Renewing our accreditation through Cognia for five more years with such strong ratings affirms the work of our staff members throughout the district. CCSD has made impressive gains recently, and these ratings signal continued growth and improvement for the district which will benefit all of its students."

#### **CCSD earns an impressive score**

During her report on June 24, Wingard said CCSD's Index of Education Quality (IEQ) score exceeded Cognia's expectations for accreditation. The IEQ is the organization's measure of overall performance. The district made significant gains from the initial accreditation process in 2018, increasing from 25 points below Cognia's international average for IEQ to 77 points above the network/international average.

Cognia awarded CCSD a perfect score of four (4) out of four possible points on seven (7) required institutional analyses (stakeholder feedback, student performance, learning environment, culture, leadership, engagement, and growth), exceeding the network average scores. Cognia identified the following “noteworthy practices” that contributed to the district’s high score:

- District leaders effectively use data from a wide variety of sources to guide decision-making and leverage improvement in student learning and well-being;
- District leaders engage professional staff members in a formalized, data-informed, continuous improvement process.

“I want to thank the CCSD team who led the accreditation process,” added Huggins. “From coordinating nearly 100 interviews to verifying documents and data, the team leading the process worked tirelessly to showcase every aspect of CCSD’s service to students; I am extremely grateful. Thanks to their effort, our entire district can take pride in this accomplishment and continue to serve students with the knowledge that our accrediting agency sees the excellence that I see in classrooms across the County daily.”

Cognia is a global, nonprofit improvement organization dedicated to helping institutions and other education providers grow learners, teachers, and leaders. It offers accreditation and certification, assessment, and professional development services within a framework of continuous improvement. Serving 40,000 public and private institutions from early learning through high school in 90+ countries, Cognia brings a global perspective to advancing teaching and learning.

For more information, contact CCSD’s Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303.

###

#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 50,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.