

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

Media Release

Laura Bush Foundation gives \$30,000 to CCSD school libraries

Office of Communications

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

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

Charleston, SC – Angel Oak Elementary School, C.E. Williams Middle School South Campus, Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School, Memminger Elementary School, Pinehurst Elementary School, and Simmons-Pinckney Middle School, were among 200 schools from 40 states to receive a \$5,000 grant through the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries.

The foundation is dedicated to helping school libraries expand, diversify, and update their collections. As a former school librarian, Laura Bush knows that library resources are often less prioritized for funding.

"Students across the country turn to books to discover the world around them, and we know that opening a new book opens the door to new opportunities and learning," Mrs. Laura Bush said.

The six CCSD schools will use their grants to update school library collections to reflect students' reading interests and backgrounds.

"Angel Oak Elementary will utilize the Laura Bush Grant to expand access to popular book titles in different languages and provide additional award-winning and authentic texts that celebrate our unique student population," said Principal Judith Condon. "We are excited about this opportunity and thank our wonderful teacher librarian, Ms. Church, for her hard work in attaining this grant for our school. We are proud WISE Owl readers."

There is a need for additional books to help launch student inquiry at C.E. Williams South, according to teacher-librarian Camellia Harris.

"Our faculty has recognized the need to have accessible foundational information and the library can help teachers meet that need," said Harris. "Picture books are a great way to teach middle school curriculum in all social studies, science, and language arts classes. These books help middle school students focus on specific concepts."

Catherine Mortensen, the teacher-librarian at Dunston, said the school library is in desperate need of revitalization.

"A dated library cannot adequately cater to the diverse learning needs of our students," said Mortensen. "Up-to-date books are necessary to support a 21st-century education that engages and inspires students from various cultural backgrounds."

Mortensen added that investment in new books and reading programs will encourage students to explore their interests, improve their literacy skills, and excel academically.

"With this grant, I will purchase more books where our students can dive deeper into other cultures and diverse representations with new *Everybody* picture books and fiction chapter books," said teacher-librarian Caroline Mixon. "Not only will these new books create windows into diverse cultures, but the books will be mirrors for our students to see examples of their own culture and identities."

Elizabeth Whalen, teacher-librarian at Pinehurst, plans to use the funds to build the library's book collection with texts in Spanish and other languages served.

"It is important to our collection to not only update these titles but to add new titles to series or replace missing books within a series," said Whalen. "Books need to focus on providing the mirrors and windows that represent our student population. This grant will update the collection to reflect the needs and interests of our students, as well as support the love of reading with quality non-fiction and fiction titles."

Jennifer Phillips is the teacher-librarian at Simmons-Pinckney and saw an urgent need to address the age and relevance of the school's medical, technical, and computer science sections in the non-fiction section of the collection.

"At Simmons-Pinckney, we focus on providing college and career-ready information to our students so they can make informed decisions about their high school and college paths," said Phillips. "We need to offer our students information to make the right decisions for their future. We can accomplish this by developing these sections of our library."

The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries supports school libraries with the greatest needs with the goal of encouraging all students to develop a love of reading and learning. Check out this year's summer reading list [here](#). Visit www.BushCenter.org to learn more.

For more information on these grants and CCSD schools that have previously been awarded this grant, contact the Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all 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 portfolio of educational options and specialized programs delivered to the students of CCSD through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools and programs. Rich educational opportunities for students include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; military; dual credit; and many more.