



Murray-LaSaine Montessori
School

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

Luke Clamp, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent

Jennifer Swearingen, Ph.D.
Associate Superintendent of the
Elementary Learning Community

Meredith Wallace
Principal

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Contact:
Meredith Wallace, 843-762-2765

Media Release

Murray-LaSaine's Meredith Wallace celebrated for enriching children's lives during National Principals' Month

Charleston, S.C. – At Murray-LaSaine Montessori School, Principal Meredith Wallace has created a culture where teachers give it their all and students strive to make her proud. In her ninth year at the school, Wallace has been instrumental in leading the transition from a traditional elementary school to a full Montessori program, serving students from 3 years old through grade 8 (primary through adolescents), where James Island families are proud to send their scholars.

Wallace describes Murray-LaSaine as a sweet school where she pours everything into it.

"As the years have unfolded, I have realized this was right where I was supposed to be," said Wallace. "This school and this community feel like home."

Wallace said that working with her staff, families, and stakeholders is a joy, bringing her back to her commitment to educating students.

Wallace said she was a child who loved school and was lucky to have administrators and teachers who were excellent role models. She is determined to leave that same mark at Murray-LaSaine and in the hearts of her students.

According to music teacher Lindsay Linderman, Wallace ensures every student feels valued.

"She knows every student by name; she is always visible and interacts," said Linderman. "She attends their sporting events and extracurricular activities. That is meaningful because the kids know she will be there and they look for her in the stands and in the audience."

Colleague Bill Carson, a literacy interventionist, has spent over a decade at Murray-LaSaine, partly because of Wallace's leadership.

"She inspires me to continue investing in our scholars and this school," said Carson. "She sets a great example of how to take responsibility."

A unique learning environment

Children as young as three years old through eighth grade can attend Murray-LaSaine. Wallace gets to watch these children grow in all aspects of their lives.

"At Murray-LaSaine, we foster an environment where students can grow into who they are and who they are meant to be," said Wallace. "My children attended Murray-LaSaine, so I truly believe in this."

Linderman said that Wallace promotes and supports her students' musical performances.

"She is very intentional in ensuring student accomplishments are celebrated," said Linderman.

Another vital approach to Wallace is exposing students to a well-rounded educational experience.

"When we take chances, we better ourselves," said Wallace. "I encourage our staff to expand the activities they are using to teach the curriculum. We have to try new things. School might be the only place they can see and experience things outside of their everyday life. Dynamic experiences are what the kids will remember when they look back on their time here."

"Her value of the work we do inspires all of the educators in this building to go above and beyond," said Linderman. "Ms. Wallace supports our ideas outside the general unit. I am always met with a positive response to a new idea and a critical eye in how she can help."

Linderman added that knowing she has that kind of support is reassuring.

"Our ultimate goal is to enrich the lives of our students, and we do that through experiences," said Linderman.

Making a connection

"Education and Montessori are about community," explained Wallace. "None of us exist alone. We keep returning to things we love when we have support. I know first-hand that making bonds with the students, results in high-level academic results. Year after year, we've seen academic success and that is why we intentionally form deep connections with our students and each other."

Wallace does many things to thank supporters, and one of those is her "Thank the Mentor" program. She asks her staff to name one person who greatly supports and inspires them. Throughout the year, Wallace reaches out to those people identified by her staff and thanks them for being mentors, confidants, and leaders.

"None of us get to where we are and stay healthy in that place without someone loving us and helping us," Wallace said.

The support within the building is also essential. Wallace believes the work can't get done without her trusted team.

"I connect with my colleagues personally and professionally," said Wallace. "We have to have fun and laugh, but we also challenge each other to grow and do new things. We do a lot of that through teamwork."

Wallace is a visible leader to students and families, too. Carson believes her visibility contributes to student outcomes.

"The kids know her, and it helps them to feel like they belong here," said Carson. "They feel like they are seen and belong to a community. Most importantly, Ms. Wallace sees that the whole child's needs are met, not just the academics. That's essential to Montessori education. That kind of 'out-in-front' leadership assures everyone that Ms. Wallace has everyone's best interest at heart."

Elyssa Logan has been a student at Murray-LaSaine since she was three years old. She has come to know Principal Wallace as someone she trusts and can go to with anything.

"If I ask her for help, she will have the academic and emotional resources," said Logan. "She connected with my parents years ago and knows me and my family. We're all lucky that she has made Murray-LaSaine into a healthy and happy environment so that we can be the best we can be."

Linderman believes Wallace's behind-the-scenes leadership and support should not go unnoticed.

"While she doesn't boast about anything she does, Ms. Wallace takes the time and goes out of her way to support others without any fanfare," added Linderman. "There is no limit to her generosity or her kindness."

Carson added that Wallace encourages staff to prioritize taking care of themselves and the ones they love to care for their students better.

"It's humbling and reminds me of my purpose and meaning," added Carson. "Ms. Wallace reminds me of the impact I can make."

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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.