

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

CCSD adopts Mitchell County schools as part of district's hurricane relief efforts

Office of Communications

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Charleston, SC - In the tragic aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Charleston County School District (CCSD) has held Western North Carolina (WNC) in its heart as its residents and families recover and rebuild their communities following the devastation. With students at the heart of CCSD's work, the district has decided to adopt Mitchell County Schools in Bakersville, NC, home to CCSD's Executive Director of Exceptional Children, Sherry Bell.

Mitchell County Schools are currently sending students home weekly with activity kits to complete while they wait to restart school. In support of their students and families, CCSD is collecting school supplies to help students of all ages in their seven schools. Donation boxes have been placed at the front of each school and district office. So far, the effort has resulted in thousands of donations, including pencils, crayons, notebooks, loose-leaf paper, folders, erasers, glue, and more.

Bell and her husband, a teacher and coach at Wando, are both from that area and were deeply saddened by the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene. She shared a video of the destruction on her social media platform and CCSD officials, who were already collaborating on how to best assist with relief efforts, took notice of Bell's connection to Mitchell County.

Bell said that it is so meaningful to her that CCSD would want to help out the school district she is a product of and one where she worked and served for 16 years.

"In that area, residents don't have flood insurance," said Bell. "The threat of a hurricane is not something most would consider. No one was prepared for this. Our little town is having to rebuild completely. My family and the other residents there have been truly touched by the relief efforts and thankful to everyone there trying to help."

Bell said the care and compassion for Mitchell County Schools, shown by CCSD and its families was deeply touching.

"It made me cry when I learned that CCSD was sponsoring our school district," said Bell. "The fact that Mitchell County was even considered means a lot because

so many other districts or counties could have been chosen. It touched our hearts. These donations from CCSD will greatly impact the students of Mitchell County.”

Many businesses still have not reopened, so there is limited access to supplies that students may need. Additionally, internet access has not been fully restored.

“Just having access to fundamentals is exactly what they need to be able to go back to school rather than starting with absolutely nothing,” explained Bell. “These donations will make a tangible difference as our friends and family work to rebuild. This will take so much stress off everyone, from the principals and teachers to the families. They now do not have to worry about extra costs. So many families are struggling right now to make ends meet because they lost jobs and actual businesses. This is just a blessing. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you.”

Donations are being accepted at all CCSD schools and offices through November 8, 2024.

For more information, 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.