



**For Immediate Release**  
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## Media Release

Thomas C. Cario Middle School

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

**Luke Clamp**  
Deputy Superintendent

**Joseph Williams, Ph.D.**  
Associate Superintendent of  
Middle Schools

**Bryan Coleman**  
Principal

### **D 2025 Teacher of the Year Finalist Profile** **- Cario's Scheaffer believes that middle** **school years are the best three years in a** **scholar's life**

**Mount Pleasant** - Katie Scheaffer is a science teacher at Thomas C. Cario Middle School, where she has taught for over four years. In her teaching experience, Scheaffer has had the privilege of working in two middle schools with drastically differing student demographics. Yet within the walls of each of these schools, she has witnessed excellence from both teachers and students.

"As educators, we must continually elevate our field both individually and collectively," said Scheaffer. "If selected to serve as District Teacher of the Year, I would want to spotlight student and teacher excellence and 'speak life' or elevate this profession, which is often surrounded by noise. Every educator must choose to speak positively about all aspects of teaching, including those we encounter: our students, colleagues, and the broader community. I would specifically like to shift the perception of middle school away from the 'dreaded three years' to instead highlighting it as the best three most enriching years."

Guided by CCSD's motto, "Students are the heart of our work," as District Teacher of the Year, Scheaffer said she would collaborate with teachers across the district to develop strategies that draw students into the classroom each day.

"The teacher is in the best position to unlock countless possibilities for students, including their most extraordinary superpower, a love of learning," said Scheaffer. "Collectively, with other teachers in CCSD, I want to ensure that our classroom seats are filled with the students who may one day be the ones who make significant contributions to our world."

"With the incredible amount of change that happens within an adolescent child, middle school can be a constant," continued Scheaffer. "Students encounter newfound freedoms and the opportunity to make choices both in and outside of instruction. Middle school gives students an opportunity to dive deeper into

content, often allowing them to explore areas of interest. Cognitively, students are able to think more critically and creatively about topics, which can foster meaningful conversations.”

Scheaffer said that outside the school walls, she will advocate for education in local communities and spheres of influence.

“I often hear the phrase, 'bless your heart,' in reference to the demands placed on teachers,” Scheaffer said. “Yet, it is our professional responsibility to shift the conversation and highlight the incredible opportunities available in our field. With students at the center of our mission, we educators have a unique opportunity and platform to speak life into them, positively impacting not only them but also shaping future generations.”

Scheaffer is an educator who hopes her students leave her class more curious and more knowledgeable. She also believes that students should feel valued and happy, and that is a social and emotional benchmark she strives for daily.

“Twenty-four years later, I still love what I do,” added Scheaffer. “The rewards far outweigh the challenges. I am grateful for how far I have come. As a Top Five Finalist, I am looking forward to connecting with the abundant talent found across the district.”

For more information, contact Principal Coleman at (843) 856-4595.

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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.