

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Charleston County School District Passes FY2026 Budget with Historic Investments in Students and Staff

Office of Communications

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Charleston, SC – The Charleston County School District (CCSD) Board of Trustees has officially adopted the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 (FY26) budget, totaling \$1.76 billion, at their regularly scheduled May 19, 2025, Board Meeting. Approved a month earlier than last year, this timely budget reflects the district’s unwavering commitment to investing in student achievement, staff support, and long-term financial sustainability without increasing the local millage rate.

This year’s budget represents a \$65 million increase over FY25, with landmark investments in [Weighted Student Funding \(WSF\)](#), educator and staff compensation, and strategic expansions to student services. The budget was developed in alignment with CCSD’s Vision 2027 goal of ensuring all students read on grade level by fifth grade.

“This budget is historic once again,” said Board Chair Keith Grybowski. “With no tax increase, we’ve expanded our investment in our most vulnerable students and made good on our promise to provide competitive pay for teachers and support staff. We are proud to adopt this budget earlier than last year, ensuring schools and departments have the resources they need to prepare for a strong start to the 2025–26 school year.”

“This budget was a successful, collaborative effort - from the Board members, to the Audit and Finance Committee members, to our district and school-based staff,” added Leah Whatley, Board of Trustees member and Chair of the CCSD Audit and Finance Committee. “The process was thorough and transparent, and led to a budget we believe will improve student outcomes while continuing to make Charleston County School District the best district to work in.”

For the second consecutive year, the district has implemented market-based salary adjustments to improve recruitment and retention. The FY26 budget builds on that momentum:

- \$4,000 raise for all teachers across the salary schedule, plus step increases and a new entry-level salary of \$64,782
- Three (3) percent salary increase for all non-teaching staff, plus step increases

- Expanded WSF funding to \$36 million, supporting students in poverty, multilingual learners, and those with disabilities
- 42.5 new positions across various student-centered roles
- Expanded employee daycare and reduced after-school employee Kaleidoscope costs by 50 percent
- No increase to the operating millage rate

“This budget is more than a financial plan; it is a values statement,” said Superintendent Anita Huggins. “We are investing in excellence and access for every child while supporting the adults who make learning possible. I’m grateful to the Board and our financial team for their leadership and vision.”

“Through disciplined financial stewardship and forecasting, we are implementing this ambitious budget historically early, with all-hands support from the district’s finance team,” said Chief Financial Officer Daniel Prentice. “We’ve preserved a healthy fund balance while delivering increased support to schools, staff, and students.”

The preliminary FY26 budget book is available to the public and can be accessed on the [district's website](#).

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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.