



Charleston County School District
Office of Communications
75 Calhoun St.,
Charleston, SC 29401
(843) 937-6300

Media Release

CCSD Sees Significant Increase in Enrollment at District Centers for Advanced Studies

Charleston, SC (August 15, 2025) - Charleston County School District is proud to announce a significant increase in enrollment at the district's three Centers for Advanced Studies (Cooper River, East Cooper, and West Ashley Centers for Advanced Studies). The Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at each center provide rigorous and relevant academic, technical, and employability training in a wide variety of high-skill, high-demand, and high-wage career clusters. Areas of study include building construction, welding technology, automotive technology, mechatronics, information technology, health sciences, engineering, media technology, and more. CCSD CTE programs of study are aligned with our local talent needs and provide seamless pathways for all students to become "Future Ready" for college, career, military, and citizenship.

According to Dr. Rich Gordon, CCSD's Executive Director of Career and Technical Education, course enrollments have increased between 45 and 50 percent at both the West Ashley and Cooper River Centers for Advanced Studies, as well as 15 percent at the East Cooper campus. "The West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies has approximately 700 students enrolled in over 1,100 CTE courses," Gordon said. "At the Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies, over 500 students are enrolled in approximately 1,150 courses."

The largest number of students participating in CTE courses is at the East Cooper Center for Advanced Studies, where over 1,800 students from both Wando and Lucy Beckham High Schools are enrolled in over 2,800 courses.

Gordon said the CTE course enrollment expansion is the result of a system-wide focus to increase CAS participation rates, which he believes is a high-leverage strategy to increase the number of students who graduate college and career-ready.

"These regional centers provide access and opportunity to all of our scholars across the school district, regardless of zip code," said Gordon. "CTE courses prepare students for whatever their next steps may be - college, career, military, or all of the above. CTE students are academically successful, more likely to graduate on time, earn thousands of dollars in scholarships, and are more likely to persist in their post-secondary placements. On the flip side, CTE students are less likely to drop out of high school, less likely to be truant, and less likely to have discipline referrals. CTE is truly a student success strategy."

For more information, please 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.