



Charleston County School District
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Media Release

Lowcountry Literacy Project and Charleston County School District Partner to Expand Literacy Support in Title 1 Elevation Schools

Charleston, SC (August 28, 2025) - The Lowcountry Literacy Project and Charleston County School District (CCSD) are proud to announce a joint initiative expanding literacy support into Title 1 schools. The partnership will bring Orton-Gillingham training and yearlong coaching support to two of CCSD's Elevation Schools during the 2025–2026 academic year: Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School and Ladson Elementary School. Last school year, the Lowcountry Literacy Project supported 45 classrooms; this fall, the organization will add 31 new classrooms, bringing the total to 76 classrooms receiving support.

This expansion marks a milestone in the organization's mission. The partnership will provide educators across both schools with Orton-Gillingham (OG) professional development and embedded coaching as one of several strategies CCSD is using to strengthen Tier 1 instruction and targeted interventions.

A multi-year implementation plan has been designed for each school in collaboration with leadership, aligning with CCSD's ELA curriculum and tailored to readiness levels. Training will begin in August for all Tier 1 classroom teachers, reading interventionists, and special education staff, ensuring a consistent, schoolwide approach to literacy instruction.

"Our goal has always been to transform literacy outcomes by equipping teachers with the tools they need," said Lindsey Ballenger, Executive Director of the Lowcountry Literacy Project. "This partnership represents an important step forward - working alongside CCSD's broader literacy efforts to support the students who need it most."

Both Dunston Elementary and Ladson Elementary were selected for their strong commitment to this initiative. Each will participate in a two to three-year phased implementation process, ensuring teachers receive ongoing support to translate training into measurable gains for students.

The partnership builds on results from James B. Edwards Elementary School, Jennie Moore Elementary School, and St. Andrew's School of Math and Science, where OG-trained educators have seen improvements in decoding, comprehension, and student confidence. At these schools, data show that classrooms led by OG-trained teachers achieved twice as much overall growth on iReady compared to other classrooms in the same school. Just as importantly, as more teachers were trained over a three-year period, long-standing achievement gaps began to close - shrinking by nearly 40 percent for vulnerable student populations.

"This partnership complements CCSD's existing literacy initiatives by adding another powerful tool to our comprehensive strategy for reading success, and we are excited to work with the

Lowcountry Literacy Project to bring this training to our Elevation Schools,” said Anita Huggins, Superintendent of CCSD.

In addition to CCSD’s investment, the Lowcountry Literacy Project is actively raising philanthropic funds to supplement the initiative, ensuring high-fidelity implementation with ongoing coaching and specialized support—costs covered by generous community partners. The Lowcountry Literacy Project is a Charleston-based nonprofit that partners with schools, districts, and teachers to close opportunity gaps and improve reading outcomes - one classroom at a time.

For more information or to support this initiative, visit www.LowcountryLiteracyProject.org. 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.