



St. John's High School
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Media Release

Future Teacher Highlight – Malekai Colt Stum

Charleston, SC (September 12, 2025) - Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud of the work being done to build an internal teacher pipeline. Elevate Charleston is one such program where CCSD works with high school students interested in becoming teachers. Those students go through an internship process during their junior and senior years to get real-world experience in the classroom. The end result is a commitment to become a CCSD teacher once they graduate from college.

CCSD is excited to feature our amazing future educators through a special Future Teacher Highlight series. This spotlight will celebrate high school students currently serving as classroom interns and planning to pursue a career in teaching.

Meet Malekai Colt Stum. He is in twelfth Grade at St. John's High School. Stum is participating in an internship teaching general music (various grades) and third grade at John's Island Elementary School.

Getting to Know You

- What inspired you to want to become a teacher?

For having so many teachers from elementary up to high school, every single one has had an impact on me. I look up to my great teachers and want to make others achieve success as they helped me do. I hope that if I do my best, the students will go out and do the same.

- Do you remember a specific teacher or classroom moment that helped shape your decision to pursue teaching? Please describe it.

Doing my first full lesson by myself was the moment that solidified my choice to become a teacher. It was hard and stressful at times, but it was also really fun, and the students seemed to enjoy it as well.

- What subject or grade level do you hope to teach in the future, and why?

My particular subject of interest is music. I play multiple instruments, collect CDs and records, and even create some music of my own. I want to teach music because I want to combine two things I am truly passionate about. I would like to teach elementary music because I love working with younger students, and I can make an impact early on.

Classroom Experience

- What has been the most meaningful part of your internship experience so far?

The most meaningful parts of my internship are when a student is having some trouble with a specific task and I help them figure out the solution. The lightbulb moment is such a wonderful moment to witness.

- What is one thing you've learned during your internship that surprised or inspired you?

Working with younger students is very draining. But even though I could sleep until next winter every day, I still kept going because I enjoyed being there, and I saw the students enjoying it as well.

- How has working with students changed or strengthened your desire to become a teacher?

Working with students and being in a classroom has made me realize that becoming a teacher is what I truly want to do. I started looking forward to being in the classroom because I enjoy being there.

Looking Ahead

- What are your plans after high school (college, major, career goals)?

I would like to attend the University of South Carolina and major in K-12 music education.

- How do you hope to make a difference as a future educator?

I hope to inspire students to become the best version of themselves they can be. I want to make my classes fun and engaging while passing along as much information as possible.

- In your own words, why is teaching important?

Teaching is one of the most important professions because the next generation depends on them to get them ready for the world. If young students do not have a good role model, they will have a hard time growing up and learning.

Optional Extras

- Is there a quote, motto, or message you live by or that reflects your passion for teaching?

“You are not a fool if you make mistakes, you are only a fool if you do not learn from them.”

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.