



James Simons Montessori School
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Media Release

James Simons Unveils Commemorative School Sign

Charleston, SC (September 29, 2025) - James Simons Montessori School unveiled the installation of a new school sign in the front office on Monday, September 29, 2025. Throughout a two-year process, the sign was designed by Montessori graduate, Isabel Beeson, and adopted to celebrate the school's 100-year anniversary in 2019. It represents the original gates of James Simons Montessori and honors the rich history of Charleston, particularly the significance of ironwork as a tribute to Phillip Simmons.

"Not only does the design pay tribute to our city's ironwork history, but it also centers our historical entrance from the original school building in 1919, and also integrates our school's motto of peace, passion, and purpose," said Principal Beth Dillenkoffer.

Talented blacksmith Liam Wheless, a graduate of West Ashley High School and son of Principal Dillenkoffer, and a craftsman at Robert Thomas Iron Design, helped create the sign.

"With the unveiling of our sign, we are excited and hopeful for our future, as this sign symbolizes our community's values, acknowledges multiple educational pathways, and honors our history as we proudly enter our 106th school year," added Dillenkoffer.

This project was made possible through the support of the school's LOCAL (Linking Opportunities to Classrooms and Learners) [partner](#), Robert Thomas Iron Design, whose commitment to James Simons Montessori reflects the power of community partnerships in enriching student experiences and preserving the school's historic legacy.

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.

