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Media Release

Charleston County School District's 2025 Report Cards Show Strong Gains

Elementary schools drive districtwide improvement; Sanders-Clyde Elementary earns "Good" rating for first time in school history.

Charleston, SC (November 3, 2025) - he 2025 South Carolina School Report Cards released today by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) show Charleston County School District (CCSD) continuing a steady upward trajectory in performance, with notable gains at the elementary level and continued progress across all grade spans.

More than 60 percent of CCSD schools earned "Good" or "Excellent" ratings this year, outpacing the state average of 49 percent. In total, 57 district schools and programs achieved these top two rating levels, an increase from 38 schools since 2019.

"Our students and educators continue to show what steady, focused effort can achieve," said Superintendent of Schools Anita Huggins. "This year's report card results demonstrate that the systems we've put in place, learner-centered, data-driven decision making, strong school leaders and teachers, and collaborative professional learning, are making a difference. We are encouraged, but we're not done. Our commitment is to keep pushing forward until all schools in Charleston County reach the highest levels of performance."

The district's most consistent and broad-based improvement occurred at the elementary level. Of the 22 schools that improved one or more rating levels, the majority were elementary schools. The number of elementary schools rated "Excellent" has increased each of the past three years, reflecting the impact of early-grade reforms such as phonics-based reading instruction, the use of formative assessment, and expanded literacy and math interventions. Improvement spans all poverty levels from Stiles Point (14.9 percent) and Drayton Hall (36.4 percent) to Sanders-Clyde Elementary, where 97.3 percent of students live in poverty.

At the heart of Charleston County's progress is Sanders-Clyde Creative Arts Elementary, a school that embodies the district's belief that when we invest in need, we invest in potential. Once one of CCSD's most challenged campuses, Sanders-Clyde has transformed under the leadership of Executive Principal Janice Hamilton Malone. When Ms. Malone arrived, math proficiency stood at just 17.7 percent and English Language Arts at 20.8 percent. Through her relentless focus on high-quality instruction, teacher stability, and a schoolwide culture of care and accountability, those numbers have more than doubled: math proficiency now exceeds 41 percent, ELA nearly 46 percent, and the school's overall state rating has climbed from Below Average to Good, marking the first time in its history that Sanders-Clyde has reached that level of success.

But Sanders-Clyde's story is about more than data; it's about belonging and belief. Each day, Ms. Malone and her dedicated staff create a culture where every scholar feels known, supported, and accountable. They greet students by name, celebrate attendance, and connect personally with families to remove barriers to learning. These simple but powerful actions have rebuilt trust and pride in a school where nearly every child faces economic hardship. Now serving as an Executive Principal, Ms. Malone continues to mentor leaders across the district, sharing strategies that have proven effective in high-poverty settings. Sanders-Clyde stands today as one of Charleston County's greatest turnaround stories, a testament to what can happen when leadership, teamwork, and high expectations converge.

Middle schools also show encouraging progress, with "Below Average" and "Unsatisfactory" schools reduced by nearly half since 2019. Improvement is visible across diverse settings, including St. James-Santee and Military Magnet Academy, showing that gains are not confined to advantaged communities.

At the high school level, nearly 80 percent of CCSD schools are rated "Average" or better, with the highest-ever share earning "Excellent." Among the most notable improvements this year is West Ashley High School, which advanced to an "Excellent" rating for the first time, reflecting years of sustained effort to strengthen instruction, expand career pathways, and elevate student performance.

CCSD high schools overall continue to outperform the state in College and Career Readiness, with record participation and success in dual credit, Advanced Placement, and industry certification programs. The gap between the highest- and lowest-performing high schools has narrowed significantly since 2019, driven by focused supports in historically under-resourced communities such as Stall, Burke, Military Magnet, and North Charleston High.

While three CCSD schools received "Unsatisfactory" ratings this year (one of which is a charter school), the district remains deeply committed to supporting its lowest-performing schools through targeted interventions. These schools are part of the district's Elevation Zone, which provides intensive coaching and leadership development, 90-day plans with real-time data reviews, and expanded literacy and math support. The district also continues to address chronic absenteeism and other barriers to learning through wraparound services and attendance initiatives designed to increase student engagement and access.

"These systems, from 90-day plans to our early literacy framework, are not just improving test scores; they're changing school cultures," said Deputy Superintendent Dr. Luke Clamp. "We're seeing what happens when instructional coherence, leadership, and equity align."

Charleston County outperforms the state in the percentage of schools rated "Good" or "Excellent" (62 percent vs. 49 percent statewide), and equity gains are becoming evident across poverty levels. Elementary schools lead districtwide improvement, middle schools show stability and sustained growth, and high schools continue to excel in College and Career Readiness. Together, these results position CCSD among the top-performing large districts in South Carolina.

From phonics-based reading instruction and early literacy interventionists to professional learning communities and Weighted Student Funding, CCSD's systems are showing measurable impact. Still, leaders emphasize that the district's mission is not yet complete. "Our progress is real, and it's widespread, but it's not yet universal," said Huggins. "We are

committed to ensuring that every child in every Charleston County school has access to the high-quality teaching and learning they deserve."

To view the school report cards, visit the SCDE website. For additional information about CCSD schools, contact the Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303 or communications@charlestoncountyschools.gov.

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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 51,000 students in 90 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.