



Charleston County School District
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Media Release

Charleston County School District Awarded \$5.39 Million Federal Grant to Expand School-Based Mental Health Services

Charleston, SC (December 15, 2025) - Charleston County School District (CCSD) has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education to receive a four-year, \$5.39 million School-Based Mental Health Grant, a major investment that will expand mental health support for students across the district. The award includes \$1,306,769 for the first budget year, with continued funding anticipated through 2029.

The highly competitive School-Based Mental Health Grant Program provides resources to help school districts hire and retain qualified mental health professionals, addressing growing national shortages and increasing student need. CCSD's grant, titled Charleston SERVES (Supporting Educators and Students by Recruiting and Retaining Vital Educational Psychologists), will strengthen and grow the district's school psychology team while improving long-term retention.

Through this grant, CCSD will implement a comprehensive, multi-year strategy designed to attract, support, and retain credentialed school psychologists. Key components of the initiative include:

- Hiring five new school psychologists in Year 1, expanding CCSD's capacity to provide high-quality psychological services to students.
- Providing telehealth services during the summer to improve continuity of care for students.
- Establishing a mentoring program, a career-advancement pathway to mentor certification, and professional learning communities to strengthen the school psychology profession within CCSD.
- Supporting ongoing licensure and professional growth through micro-credentials, renewal credits, and targeted professional development in partnership with local higher education institutions
- Creating paid graduate student internships to build a long-term pipeline of future school psychologists.

Superintendent Anita Huggins noted that this investment represents a critical step in meeting the mental health needs of CCSD students.

"This investment allows us to strengthen the mental health supports available to our students and to build a sustainable pipeline of highly trained school psychologists," Huggins explained. "Meeting our students' academic needs begins with meeting their emotional and developmental

needs, and this grant positions CCSD to further support our current mental health and expand the services our students rely on.”

“The Board is deeply grateful for this federal partnership and proud of the work our Student Support Services and Finance teams have done to secure this highly competitive grant,” Board Chair Pam McKinney added. “Expanding access to mental health services is one of the most important commitments we can make to our students and families.”

For additional information, 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.