



Thomas C. Cario Middle School
Bryan Coleman, Principal
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Media Release

Cario's Bryan Coleman Named South Carolina Council for Exceptional Children Principal of the Year

Mount Pleasant, SC (February 11, 2026) – Bryan Coleman, principal of Thomas C. Cario Middle School, has been selected as the recipient of the prestigious South Carolina Council for Exceptional Children Principal of the Year Award. The honor recognizes Coleman's outstanding contributions to advancing opportunities and outcomes for exceptional children and youth.

Under Coleman's leadership, Thomas C. Cario Middle School has achieved remarkable progress in supporting students with special needs. Over the past three years, the school has more than doubled its proficiency scores (according to the SC READY assessment) in English Language Arts for special education students and nearly doubled proficiency in Math - gains that exceed both district and state averages for this population.

"I am incredibly honored and humbled to be named South Carolina Principal of the Year for Exceptional Education, but this recognition truly belongs to our entire school community," said Coleman. "Exceptional education is never the work of one person; it is the result of an outstanding team of educators, dedicated support staff, resilient students, and supportive families who believe in one another. At our school, we don't try to fit children into a program or a box; we start by understanding each child's strengths, needs, and potential, and then we build the supports around them. When we focus on the whole child and work together with purpose and heart, exceptional things happen."

Coleman believes in innovative approaches to inclusive education, which is why he encouraged staff to receive co-teaching training and helped establish the school's Reverse Club. This after-school program pairs mainstream students with exceptional children through activities such as games and arts and crafts, fostering meaningful connections and breaking down barriers between the two student populations.

"Bryan Coleman exemplifies what it means to be an advocate for all learners," said Dr. Joe Williams, Associate Superintendent of Middle Schools in Charleston County School District. "He is an outstanding leader who, along with his team, creates an environment where all scholars feel welcome and take part in top-notch educational experiences. His vision and dedication have transformed the educational experience for exceptional children at Thomas C. Cario Middle School."

The South Carolina Council for Exceptional Children will honor Coleman at an awards luncheon on Friday, February 27, 2026, in Myrtle Beach. Colleagues, students, families, and community members are invited to attend and celebrate this outstanding achievement.

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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.

