



Charleston County School District
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Media Release

CCSD Announces Nearly \$1 Million Investment to Strengthen Student Mental Health Through THRIVE

Charleston, SC (March 2, 2026) - Charleston County School District (CCSD) announces a significant investment of \$984,910 to expand school-based mental health and behavioral supports for students across Charleston County.

At the center of this effort is the launch of a school-based day treatment program: **Teaching Healthy Regulation Independence and Vital Engagement (THRIVE)**, a structured model that will provide academic instruction alongside embedded therapeutic supports for students in Pre-K through 8th grade who need more intensive services to succeed in a traditional school environment. The program will be housed at Liberty Hill Academy and is designed as a short-term, high-impact model focused on stabilization, skill-building, and successful transition back to a student's home school.

In addition to launching THRIVE, CCSD is advancing a broader systemwide expansion totaling 39.0 full-time positions at an investment of \$3.2 million. This includes 9.0 LI/LIAU teachers, 26.0 special education teaching assistants, and 4.0 Registered Behavior Technicians. These positions will sustain classrooms created this year and provide greater flexibility across the district to respond to student needs. The district is also working to expand Medicaid billing to help offset the cost of specialized roles and strengthen long-term sustainability.

Superintendent Anita Huggins said the initiative reflects the district's commitment to supporting the whole child.

"Our students cannot reach their full academic potential if their mental health needs go unmet," said Huggins. "This investment is about meeting students where they are, strengthening our support systems, and ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive. By expanding our internal capacity and deepening our commitment to early intervention, we are building a more responsive system that keeps students connected to learning and to their school community."

"Our responsibility as a Board is to ensure that every student has access to the supports they need to succeed," said Board Chair Pam McKinney. "This investment reflects our commitment to strengthening both academic achievement and student well-being. By expanding targeted mental health services and instructional supports, we are building a stronger foundation for long-term student success across Charleston County."

The THRIVE program is expected to be staffed and ready in 2026, with enrollment beginning during the 2026–27 school year. Through this expansion, CCSD is strengthening a system of care that prioritizes early intervention, coordinated support, and long-term student success for every child we serve.

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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.