



Charleston County School District
Office of Communications
 75 Calhoun St.,
 Charleston, SC 29401
 (843) 937-6300

Media Release



Jacob Perlmutter
 Principal of Burke High School

Nationally Recognized Leader Jacob Perlmutter **Named Next Principal of Burke High School**

Charleston, SC (March 30, 2026) - Charleston County School District (CCSD) announced today that Jacob “Jake” Perlmutter, current principal of Academic Magnet High School, has been named the next principal of Burke High School, effective July 1, 2026.

As a student at Academic Magnet High School when it was located on the Burke campus, Perlmutter earned a Burke High School diploma, walking the same halls where he will now lead. He returns to one of Charleston’s most historic and culturally significant schools as its principal, bringing with him a nationally recognized record of excellence, innovation, and transformational leadership.

“Jake is an exceptional leader whose experience and vision make him an outstanding choice for Burke High School,” said Superintendent Anita Huggins. “He is not only one of the most accomplished school leaders in our state, but he is also someone who personally understands the significance of this campus and this community. Jake has a remarkable ability to build authentic, trusting relationships with students, families, staff, and community partners, an essential quality for sustained success. We are incredibly fortunate to have a principal of his caliber stepping into this role, and I am confident that under his leadership, Burke High School will continue to build on its strong foundation and expand opportunities for every student.”

Since 2021, Perlmutter has served as principal of Academic Magnet High School, consistently ranked among the top public high schools in the nation and recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School, most recently earning the prestigious designation in 2024. Under his leadership, the school has maintained extraordinary student outcomes from its graduation rate to its

passing rate on End-of-Course and AP exams, and recognized dozens of National Merit Semifinalists each year. During his tenure, he also expanded academic opportunities by adding new Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, and honors coursework; increased student enrollment while broadening access; and strengthened systems that support both academic excellence and student well-being and belonging.

However, his leadership extended beyond academics. Perlmutter oversaw significant capital improvements, including major facility upgrades, significant athletic program enhancements, increased campus safety measures, and the creation of innovative learning spaces- from a comprehensive College and Career Center to an outdoor classroom to a fully equipped maker-space and athletic weightroom. He also strengthened school culture through student-centered supports, including the addition of multiple student support personnel, the creation of a calming room, and a schoolwide focus on connection and belonging.

He has been equally engaged in the community and prioritized relationships with the Liberty Hill neighborhood, the International African American Museum (IAAM), and personally led an annual post-secondary trip to expose AMHS students to the leading regional colleges and universities.

“As a proud Burke alumna, I know the strength and legacy of this school and the opportunities it creates for students,” said Chief Academic Officer Michelle Simmons. “Jake is a fantastic leader with a proven record of academic excellence and innovation. I am confident his leadership will build on Burke’s foundation while expanding opportunities and outcomes for every student.”

Prior to Academic Magnet, Perlmutter served for a decade as principal of Jerry Zucker Middle School of Science, where he built a high-performing, relationship-driven school culture and earned consecutive National Showcase School awards from Capturing Kids Hearts for excellence in student engagement and social-emotional development. His leadership has been recognized at every level, including being named Charleston County School District Secondary Principal of the Year multiple times and a national finalist for the Escalante-Gradillas Best in Education Award.

Perlmutter’s appointment comes at a pivotal time as CCSD advances the Peninsula Promise, a focused effort to strengthen neighborhood schools and expand access to high-quality academic and career pathways for students in downtown Charleston.

At Burke, that work will include expanding advanced coursework, strengthening career and technical education pathways, and deepening partnerships with local organizations, higher education institutions, and the broader Charleston community. Perlmutter’s proven ability to build partnerships, including collaborations with the International African American Museum and local community organizations, positions him to lead this work with both purpose and impact.

“I am honored and humbled to return to Burke High School,” said Perlmutter. “This school has a powerful legacy and a community that cares deeply about its future. To come back in this role is incredibly meaningful to me. I look forward to working alongside our students, staff, families, and community to build on Burke’s strengths and create extraordinary opportunities for Burke students.”

Perlmutter began his career as a teacher and coach at Harry S. Truman High School in New York City, where he was a member of the New York City Teaching Fellows Program before joining CCSD. In Charleston, he has served as a teacher, instructional leader, assistant

principal, and principal. He has also served as an adjunct professor at the College of Charleston, preparing the next generation of educators.

He holds degrees from the College of Charleston, Fordham University, and The Citadel, and is a graduate of multiple prestigious leadership programs, including the Riley Institute Diversity Leadership Initiative and the Center for Creative Leadership. He is deeply community-minded and serves on advisory boards at the College of Charleston and in the regional Jewish community, and is actively supportive of local causes from medical research to environmental advocacy.

As Burke High School continues to build on its historic legacy, Perlmutter's leadership marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter that will expand opportunity, deepen community connection, and advance a bold vision for student success.

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.