



**Charleston County School District**  
**Office of Communications**  
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## Media Release

### **Harbor View Elementary Recognized as 2026** **Palmetto's Finest School**

*Sailboats join Lucy Beckham High School and Laurel Hill Primary as finalists for state honor*

**Charleston, SC (April 23, 2026)** - Harbor View Elementary School made history for Charleston County School District (CCSD) on April 23, 2026. The Sailboats were recognized as a Palmetto's Finest School by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA). This is the second year in a row that at least one CCSD school was recognized. Laurel Hill Primary School and Lucy Beckham High School joined Harbor View as finalists in this year's competition. This prestigious award goes to schools that offer the best in innovative, effective educational programs.

"At the heart of our school is a deep belief in community and family, and in building strong relationships with our students and the broader community," explained Harbor View Elementary School Principal Stacey Dickinson. "Through these connections, we support the growth of the whole child, academically, socially, and emotionally. It's a great day to be a Sailboat."

Harbor View Elementary is the first school on James Island to earn this honor, it is the first CCSD elementary school to be named Palmetto's Finest in 24 years, and this is the first time in district history that CCSD schools have won this award in consecutive school years.

Students and staff on all three campuses watched a live stream showing representatives from SCASA making the announcement. Harbor View joins Carver Elementary Magnet School—Florence School District 1, Waccamaw Middle School—Georgetown County Schools, Blue Ridge High School—Greenville County Schools, and HCS Scholars Academy High School—Horry County Schools as winners from across the state.

Principal Dickinson cited several factors that made the Harbor View Sailboats a strong candidate for this honor.

"What makes Harbor View a special place is our commitment to data-driven instruction and innovative practices like our WIN (What I Need) schedule," added Dickinson. "Through programs like SAIL and our Stretch or Support model, every student is challenged and supported, while our STEAM Lab, PBIS framework, and strong Professional Learning Communities ensure engaging, high-quality learning across all grade levels. Earning an Excellent school report card is a testament to this work, but what truly sets us apart is our strong sense of community, where we honor cherished traditions like family picnics, literacy and math nights, talent shows, and our school musical, while also embracing new opportunities like chess



club and mini-mahjong. Together, these experiences allow us to support and celebrate the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally.”

Earlier in this school year, 30 South Carolina schools submitted a 27-page application, followed by an on-site examination visit from a review committee. From that group, SCASA selected 13 finalists, who then underwent a second on-site evaluation.

Harbor View is the seventh CCSD school to earn this recognition. Past district winners include the following: Thomas C. Cario Middle School - 2024-2025; Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School - 2001-2002; West Ashley (formerly Drayton Hall) Middle School - 1996-1997; Orange Grove Elementary School - 1993-1994; Ladson Elementary School - 1989-1990; Memminger Elementary School - 1981-1982.

“Having multiple schools recognized at this level speaks volumes about the strength of our district, the dedication of our educators, and the support of our families and community,” said Superintendent Anita Huggins. “Both Laurel Hill and Lucy Beckham are certainly deserving of this distinction. Notably, we had not had a Palmetto’s Finest award winner in 20 years, and now we have had two in just the past two years. This is a significant milestone for CCSD and a testament to the focused, intentional work happening across our schools. I am so proud of our teachers and leaders!”

The Palmetto’s Finest Award is celebrating its 46th year and is one of the most coveted and respected awards among educators in the state.

For additional information, 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 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.