ORANGEBURG COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
We Are One
102 Founders Court • Orangeburg, SC 29118
Phone: (803) 534-5454

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **Friday April 24, 2026**

Contact: Dr. Erica S. Taylor
Assistant Superintendent for Communications and
Business and Community Partnerships
erica.taylor@ocsdsc.org



Orangeburg County School District Celebrates Statewide Recognition Through Palmetto Gold & Silver Awards

ORANGEBURG, S.C. — Orangeburg County School District (OCSD) proudly joins school districts across the state in celebrating educational excellence as part of the 2024–2025 Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards, announced by the South Carolina Department of Education. A total of 378 schools across South Carolina earned this distinguished recognition, highlighting strong academic performance and continued progress in student achievement.

The Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program, established under the Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998, honors schools that demonstrate high levels of academic achievement, significant student growth, and meaningful progress in closing achievement gaps among student groups. These awards remain a cornerstone of South Carolina's accountability system, recognizing schools that are committed to excellence and continuous improvement.

Within Orangeburg County School District, the following schools were recognized:

Palmetto Gold Schools
Branchville High School

Palmetto Silver Schools
Lockett Elementary School
North Middle/High School
St. James-Gaillard Elementary School

"This recognition reflects the intentional work happening across our district to ensure that every student has access to high-quality instruction and meaningful opportunities for success," said Superintendent Dr. Shawn D. Foster. "In Orangeburg County School District, we remain steadfast in our mission of ensuring all students discover and develop their person, purpose, and platform. These honors affirm that our focus on academics, strategic supports, and student-centered practices is making a measurable difference."

For elementary and middle schools, the awards are based on two key indicators: Academic Achievement and Student Progress. Schools earning Palmetto Gold demonstrated excellence in both categories or a combination of excellent and good ratings. Palmetto Silver schools showed strong performance through a combination of average, good, and excellent ratings.

At the high school level, where growth measures are not included, the awards are determined by performance across four indicators: Academic Achievement, Preparing for Success, Graduation Rate, and College and Career Readiness. Schools recognized with Palmetto Gold or Silver have demonstrated consistent, high-quality outcomes across these measures.

"Earning the Palmetto Gold Award is a proud moment for our entire Branchville High School community," said Principal Charles Gregory. "This recognition reflects the high expectations we set, the dedication of our teachers and staff, and the hard work of our students. Achieving Palmetto Gold affirms our commitment to excellence in academic achievement and college and career readiness. We will continue to build on this success and ensure every student is prepared to thrive beyond graduation."

With continued investments in instructional quality, facility modernization, and community partnerships, the district is strengthening outcomes and expanding opportunities for all learners. For more information about the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards, visit the South Carolina Department of Education website.

"These awards are a testament to the dedication of our educators, the perseverance of our students, and the unwavering support of our families and community partners," Dr. Foster added. "We are proud of the progress our schools are making and remain committed to building capacity and sustaining success across Orangeburg County."

Orangeburg County School District

The mission of Orangeburg County School District, the catalyst of innovation and excellence, is to ensure all students discover and develop their person, purpose, and platform through high-quality educational experiences distinguished by a culture of collaboration, equity, and inclusion; a creative learning environment with inspiring opportunities; a commitment to nurture the academic, physical, social and emotional well-being of all. Visit us online at ocsdsc.org

###