



Charleston County School District
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Media Release

Sorensen is proud to give back to the students and community of her hometown

North Charleston, SC (May 1, 2026) - [Julie Sorensen](#) strengthens and improves the teaching profession through her commitment to students, her reflective instructional practices, and her leadership within the school community. At Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School, where she is a third grade reading teacher, Sorensen consistently models what high-quality teaching looks like by creating a classroom environment rooted in trust, respect, and meaningful relationships. Students feel valued, known, and supported, which allows them to take academic risks and engage fully in learning.

"There is not a day that passes that I don't want to come to work and start a new day," said Sorensen. "I love pouring into these children in North Charleston who are growing up in the same place I did."

Sorensen's colleagues describe her as someone who does what is right, advocates for students, and continuously deepens instruction. Besides being someone that her peers, coaches, and administrators can count on to pitch in and do whatever it takes to help students succeed, Sorensen knows that life outside of the four walls of the classroom also contributes to a child's success, which is why she makes an effort to attend their games after school and on the weekends. Her appearance speaks volumes to the child's family, showing them that she values their children's accomplishments and that these accomplishments directly impact the school and the community.

"I try not to be doubtful about my seat at the table, knowing that I have only been teaching for four years," said Sorensen. "There are so many amazing teachers across the district, but I walk in faith knowing that I will never be put in a room that I don't belong in. I am just really excited to work alongside these other finalists and learn about education from a completely different lens."

Through intentional relationship-building, restorative practices, and high expectations, Sorensen strives to create a classroom where students believe in both their worth and their potential. Despite the challenges students face outside of school, Sorensen's classroom consistently remains a place of structure, joy, and high academic expectations, where students demonstrate measurable growth and a strong sense of belonging.

"I have the opportunity each day to impact my students' lives by inspiring them to see education as powerful and purposeful," Sorensen explained. "This responsibility is one I hold dearly, and it is what makes this work both effective and deeply rewarding."



Sorensen said she contributes to strengthening the teaching profession by choosing to embrace the full reality of it - the challenges and triumphs - and by continuing to move forward with pride.

“Teaching has ripped my heart open in the best way,” said Sorensen. “From day to day, every morning I am given new mercy, and children deserve that too. So, when they mess up, I think, ‘school is the best place to do that’. This is the safest place to get it wrong, and they can learn from it and move on. That will teach them how to get it right. We all grow from those moments.”

Sorensen believes that education should help students imagine and pursue lives that are true, meaningful, and full of possibility - and that it is an educator’s collective responsibility to create the conditions that make that possible. As a Top Five Finalist for Charleston County School District’s 2026 Teacher of the Year honor, Sorensen hopes to use the platform as an opportunity to advocate for partnerships that benefit schools and students.

“When everyone is connected, and everyone values education as high as it should be valued, we can do big things in North Charleston,” added Sorensen. “Our students are descendants of a dreaming generation - families who hoped for more and worked hard to give them access to opportunity. They are remarkably resilient, and I am honored to be one of many educators committed to helping them grow into the future they deserve.”

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 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.