



Barnwell County School District

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770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell South Carolina 29812 - 803-541-1300 - www.bcsd.net

Barnwell County School District Honors Outstanding Educators at Annual Teacher and Support Staff of the Year Banquet

Barnwell County School District recognized the exceptional dedication and achievements of its educators during the annual Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year Banquet held on June 1, 2026. The event celebrated each school's Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year while announcing the district's top honorees.

District administrators, school administrators, members of the Barnwell County School District Board of Trustees, colleagues, family members, and guests gathered to recognize the individuals who make a lasting impact on students and schools across the district.

The evening's highest honors were presented to April Smith of Barnwell Primary School, who was named the 2026 Barnwell County School District Teacher of the Year, and Tonya Coleman of Blackville-Hilda High School, who was named the 2026 Barnwell County School District Support Staff of the Year.

Smith, a kindergarten teacher with 24 years of experience, is recognized for her passion for early literacy and her commitment to ensuring every child builds a strong educational foundation. A National Board Certified educator, she has served as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, mentor, and grade-level leader throughout her career. Her dedication to the Science of Reading, early intervention, and lifelong learning has inspired both students and fellow educators.

Barnwell Primary School Principal, Jared Thrasher said, "What truly sets April apart is the depth of her care and dedication to her students and her fellow staff members. She has an impressive knowledge of our school and its policies, and she consistently uses that knowledge to be a strong advocate for every student in her care. April is making a lasting difference in the lives of the students here at Barnwell Primary School, and I have no doubt that her impact reaches far beyond our school's walls. She embodies everything we value in an outstanding educator, and I am proud to call her one of our own."

Coleman serves as Blackville-Hilda High School's In-School Suspension teacher while also coaching and mentoring students in numerous capacities as the Assistant Athletic Director. Known for her willingness to step in wherever she is needed, she creates a positive and supportive environment where students feel valued and encouraged to succeed. Through her



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leadership, creativity, and servant's heart, Coleman has made a lasting impact on school culture and the lives of countless students.

“Ms. Coleman is the definition of dedication,” stated Christina Snider, Blackville-Hilda High School’s Principal. “She consistently goes above and beyond for our students, staff, and families, always offering a helping hand, creative solutions, and unwavering support. She is truly an invaluable asset to our school community.”

In addition to recognizing the district winners, the banquet honored each school's Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year for their outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to excellence in education.

As the 2026 District Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year, Smith and Coleman will serve as ambassadors for Barnwell County School District throughout the coming year, representing the excellence, dedication, and commitment demonstrated by educators and staff across the district.

2026 School-Level Honorees

Teachers of the Year

- Barnwell County Career Center - Louis Fulmer
- Barnwell Elementary School – Lisa Richberg
- Barnwell High School – Meredith Wilson
- Barnwell Primary School – April Smith
- Blackville-Hilda High School – David Edwards
- Guinyard-Butler Middle School – Betty Glover
- Kelly Edwards Elementary School – Monique Dawson
- Macedonia Elementary-Middle School – Julie Parker
- Williston-Elko High School – Gina Jameson
- Williston-Elko Middle School – Katina Brown

Support Staff of the Year

- Barnwell County Career Center - Felicia Williams
- Barnwell Elementary School – Kenneth Creech
- Barnwell High School – Lisa Valentine



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- Barnwell Primary School – Teresa Sanders
- Blackville-Hilda High School – Tonya Coleman
- Guinyard-Butler Middle School – Kimberly Pridgen
- Kelly Edwards Elementary School – Mae Reed
- Macedonia Elementary-Middle School – Rhonda Brown
- Williston-Elko High School – Patti Nix
- Williston-Elko Middle School – Benita Wiggins

Barnwell County School District congratulates all of this year's honorees and thanks them for their unwavering dedication to ensuring that Every Student Matters. Every Moment Counts.

