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Media Release

CCSD Partners with Palmetto Excel to Expand Pathways to High School Diplomas for Adult Learners

CHARLESTON, S.C. (August 12, 2026) – Charleston County School District (CCSD) is partnering with Palmetto Excel to expand opportunities for adult learners to earn a high school diploma and prepare for their next steps in college, career, and life.

At the August 10, 2026, Special Called Meeting, the CCSD Board of Trustees approved (5-4) a Memorandum of Understanding with Palmetto Excel, an adult education program serving individuals age 21 and older who have not yet earned a high school diploma. Under the agreement, CCSD will recognize eligible coursework completed through Palmetto Excel and issue South Carolina high school diplomas to students who successfully meet graduation requirements.

Palmetto Excel is designed specifically for adults whose work, family responsibilities, or other circumstances may have previously prevented them from completing high school. The program provides a flexible learning environment and support intended to help students overcome those barriers while working toward a diploma.

“This partnership is about creating another pathway for people in our community to achieve something that can truly change the trajectory of their lives,” said CCSD Superintendent Anita Huggins. “There are many reasons someone may not have finished high school, but the door to a diploma should never be permanently closed. We are proud to support Palmetto Excel and the adults who are taking this important step for themselves and their families.”

In addition to academic coursework, Palmetto Excel provides students with success coaching, college and career navigation, career-readiness services, and academic intervention support. The program is designed to ensure students leave prepared for what comes next. As part of their graduation requirements, every Palmetto Excel student earns either an industry-recognized certification or dual-enrollment college credit, equipping graduates with valuable credentials and experience for their next steps in college or a careerThe partnership also establishes clear academic and accountability measures to ensure students meet South Carolina graduation requirements while maintaining alignment with CCSD’s academic standards and expectations. .

“Education opens doors at every age,” Huggins said. “We want every person in Charleston County to know that it is never too late to keep learning, pursue a goal, and build a stronger future.”

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district dedicated to ensuring every student has access to a high-quality education and the support needed to thrive. As South Carolina's second-largest school system, CCSD serves more than 50,000 students across 91 schools and specialized programs throughout 1,300 square miles of coastal communities, representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools.

Under the leadership of Superintendent Anita Huggins, CCSD is focused on accelerating student achievement, expanding opportunities, and preparing every student for success in college, career, and life. Recent district accomplishments include record-high academic performance on state assessments, increasing graduation rates, and significant gains in college and career readiness, reflecting the district's commitment to continuous improvement and educational excellence. Through the Peninsula Promise, CCSD is also expanding access to early learning, college and career pathways, arts, and family support services to create seamless opportunities for students living on the historic Charleston Peninsula.

CCSD offers a diverse and expanding portfolio of educational choices, including neighborhood, magnet, charter, Montessori, and International Baccalaureate (IB) schools and programs. Students have access to rich learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); visual and performing arts; world languages; military and leadership programs; career and technical education; dual enrollment and early college opportunities; and other innovative pathways designed to meet a wide range of interests and aspirations.

Working in partnership with families, community organizations, higher education institutions, and industry leaders, CCSD remains committed to creating equitable opportunities, fostering student success, and ensuring that every graduate is prepared to contribute and compete in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.