



Charleston County School District
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Media Release

Northwoods Middle and Stono Park Elementary **Named One of America's Healthiest Schools**

2026 National award recognizes leaders in whole child health policy and practice change

Charleston, S.C. (August 24, 2026) – A national children's health organization, *Alliance for a Healthier Generation*, unveiled its 2026 list of America's Healthiest Schools this month, celebrating 1,376 K–12 schools nationwide for their commitment to advancing whole child health, including Northwoods Middle School and Stono Park Elementary.

Supported by Del Monte Foods, Kaiser Permanente, and Kohl's Cares, Healthier Generation's annual award program recognizes schools for implementing evidence-based policies and practices to support academic success and lifelong well-being. Schools are recognized in nine health-related topic areas. Northwoods was awarded in Strengthening Social-Emotional Health & Learning, Cultivating Staff Well-Being, Increasing Family & Community Engagement, Improving Nutrition & Food Access, Implementing Local School Wellness Policy, Bolstering Physical Education & Activity, Enriching Health Education, Promoting Tobacco-Free Schools, and Supporting School Health Services. Stono Park was awarded in Strengthening Social-Emotional Health & Learning, Increasing Family & Community Engagement, Improving Nutrition & Food Access, and Bolstering Physical Education & Activity.

"Being recognized as one of America's Healthiest Schools has helped open the eyes of our staff and faculty to the importance of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle," said Stono Park Principal Ashley Dorsey. "Since then, they've become more open and enthusiastic about embracing the health initiatives and challenges I introduce."

Northwoods Principal Bentli Lewis has seen positive improvements in the health initiatives at her school as well.

"Being named one of America's Healthiest Schools is a reflection of the intentional work our entire school community does to support the whole child," said Lewis. "From social-emotional wellness and physical activity to nutrition, health education and family engagement, we want our students and staff to have the tools and support they need to thrive. This recognition is a wonderful affirmation of the work happening at Northwoods every day, and we are proud to continue building a culture where health and well-being are a priority."



Charleston County
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Anita W. Huggins, M.Ed., Superintendent of Schools
 Sully Witte, Public Information Officer

See the full list of recognized schools at healthiergeneration.org/AHS.

For more 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 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.