



Charleston County School District
Office of Communications
 75 Calhoun St.,
 Charleston, SC 29401
 (843) 937-6300

Media Release

CCSD Earns 11 Spots Among South Carolina's Top 10 Elementary and Middle Schools in U.S. News Rankings

Ten CCSD schools recognized statewide, with Buist Academy ranking in both elementary and middle school categories

CHARLESTON, S.C. (October 22, 2026) - Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud to announce that 10 schools have earned a combined 11 spots among South Carolina's Top 10 elementary and middle schools in the 2026–2027 U.S. News & World Report Best K–8 Schools rankings.

Leading the elementary school rankings, Buist Academy earned the #1 spot in South Carolina, followed by Belle Hall Elementary at #2 and Mt. Pleasant Academy at #9. CCSD also secured seven of the state's Top 10 middle school rankings, with Buist Academy and Charleston County School of the Arts earning the #2 and #3 spots, respectively.

CCSD schools recognized in this year's state rankings include:

Elementary Schools

Buist Academy — #1 in South Carolina
 Belle Hall Elementary — #2 in South Carolina
 Mt. Pleasant Academy — #9 in South Carolina

Middle Schools

Buist Academy — #2 in South Carolina
 Charleston County School of the Arts — #3 in South Carolina
 Moultrie Middle School — #6 in South Carolina
 Thomas C. Cario Middle School — #7 in South Carolina
 Laing Middle School — #8 in South Carolina
 Montessori Community School — #9 in South Carolina
 Orange Grove Charter — #10 in South Carolina



Charleston County
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

“These rankings are a tremendous recognition of the hard work happening in our classrooms every day,” said CCSD Superintendent Anita Huggins. “Having 10 of our schools represented among the state's best, including seven of the Top 10 middle schools, reflects the dedication of our exceptional educators, the commitment of our students and families, and the high expectations we hold for student success. We are incredibly proud of these school communities and remain focused on ensuring every child, in every school, has access to the excellent instruction, support, and opportunities they deserve.”

The U.S. News & World Report Best K–8 Schools rankings recognize public elementary and middle schools based on student performance on state assessments, with consideration given to student achievement and performance in the context of socioeconomic demographics.

These latest recognitions add to CCSD's strong showing in the 2026–2027 U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools rankings, which placed four CCSD high schools among South Carolina's Top 10. Academic Magnet High School also earned national distinction, ranking #23 in the United States.

Together, these achievements highlight the strength of teaching and learning across CCSD and the district's continued commitment to accelerating student achievement and expanding opportunities for all students.

For more information, please contact the Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303.

###

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.