Exercise can improve brain function and thinking skills. It increases your heart rate, which boosts the flow of blood and oxygen to your brain. It can also enhance the production of hormones that can enhance the growth of brain cells.

Wendy Reilly, Physical Education teacher at North Charleston Elementary School, Megan Bullitt and Alex Moses, established a specialized class, called Advanced PE.

There are currently 21 high school students who participate. Each student is provided a uniform, a heart rate monitor, a specialized fitness watch, a water bottle, and a gym bag. They have a locker room and laundry facilities to ensure clean uniforms every day and a safe place to store their belongings without having to carry them back and forth.

Their watches are set to their height, weight, and gender. The students are tracked and monitored daily by the PE teacher. Additionally, many of their peers have seen improvements not only in behavior but academics as well due to their habits.

Two students learned about the class and asked to be enrolled, not because they needed to earn points to improve their behavior or academics scores, but because of personal goals they wanted to accomplish, in the area of weight loss and wellness.

The results of the Advanced PE Class are astounding. The students in the Advanced PE program have soared to the challenge as much as four other students are wanting to enroll in the class,” said Reilly. “As for the students currently enrolled, their behavior and grades are tracked and monitored daily by the PE teacher. Additionally, many of their peers have seen improvements not only in behavior but academics as well due to their habits."

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“Students are the Heart of Our Work. This particular student improved 10 points in math,” he said. “I am working hard to make better grades.”

Even more remarkable was that student's improvement academically. This particular student improved 10 points in math.

― continued on page 2

High school students from North Charleston
High School partnered with elementary
students as mentors. They are unofficial mentors
completed with goals for the students. They are unofficial mentors encouraging goal setting and achievement.

“My students discussed ways of giving back
to their community while at the same time
focusing on instruction and curriculum.
After brainstorming, they created this pen pal program complete with goals for the students. They are unofficial mentors encouraging goal setting and achievement.”

Melt McMillis.

North Charleston Elementary English Teacher

Advances PE is like an exercise boot camp.

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Focus on CCSD

Three CCSD Schools Named Capturing Kids’ Hearts Showcase Schools

"We congratulate and thank you for all you do for the students and staff of Charleston County School District. Your tireless commitment to improving schools for generations to come is to be commended."

Fair-Flippen Founder and Chairman of Fair-Flippen Group

"We’re proud to get the national recognition from CKH for a second year," said Fair-Flippen principal Jerri Peterson. "Our faculty and staff has worked hard to create a great school climate at C.E. Williams Middle School. Like other schools, we focus on consistency and character traits and kindness but we are also focused on developing every day, every student, and our instructional level is very strong. We’ve learned how to create a place that we enjoy working in, a place where our students enjoy working too."

Memminger Elementary School Principal Miguel Woods said the implementation at Capturing Kids Hearts at Memminger has helped create a positive, productive learning environment. "At Memminger, we’ve embraced this resource in order to fully support our students’ growth both academically and socially," said Woods.

R.J. Spaul High School Principal Jamey Carrol added that Capturing Kids’ Hearts has been the fundamental component in the development of a positive school culture. "We are honored to be one of six schools across the nation that have received this distinction of a National Showcase School since 2018," said Carrol. "In alignment with Capturing Kids’ Hearts, we strive to develop strong, healthy relationships between all stakeholders in order to make sure students know their full potential."

Through these National Showcase Schools events, the Flippen Group celebrates all the commitments that get the entire school staff to build an environment where students and staff feel safe and supported. "We congratulate and thank you for all you do for the students and staff of Charleston County School District," said the Flippen founder and chairman of Flippen Group. "Your tireless commitment to improving schools for generations to come is to be commended."

These campuses will be leveraged and celebrated throughout the upcoming year at Capturing Kids’ Hearts National Showcase Schools. In addition to public recognition, the campus have a chance to proudly display their achievement.

District Hosts Topping Off Ceremony for New C.E. Williams Middle School

"This is a milestone in the school’s long history and a well-deserved upgrade for the students and the community."

Dr. Gerrietta Postlewait Superintendent Charleston County School District

Weightless, behavior improvement and improved academic scores are all goals of those participating in Advanced PE.

One of those students lost 7 lbs. in two weeks and has now lost 11 lbs. She said lifting weights, quickly turning fat into muscle. She can also run a mile in under 15 minutes.

"I feel so much better about myself," she said. "The hardest part about the class is to keep going when I want to give up. I push myself to keep going because this helps me. I plan to keep on working over the summer, as well." An additional student has lost 17 lbs. so far.

"I really like the class and find everything to be real easy," he said. "My favorite part is lifting weights."

To further motivate these 21 students, teachers from their other classes often join them to get in their own workout. In addition, a morning PE class has been added for those students who need to start their day off with a little physical activity.

Coach Matos said that exercise works the same way in his own life. "If I need to study or be more focused to do my daily routine, I exercise. We can do it in a little under 15 minutes."

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As a team, we were trying to determine how to bring this project to the community. The students’ artwork hung on the same walls as the professional artists and brought to life these people and their struggles and their impact on Charleston.”

La’Sheia Oubre – Education and Community Engagement Coordinator for the Gullah Society

**CCSD Students Exhibit Works in Anson Street Burial Ground Community Art**

**Burns Student Accepted into Gifted and Talented Strings Program**

**Patricia Johnson**

Edmund A. Burns Elementary School fifth-grade student Patricia Johnson is the first student in the history of the school to be accepted into the Charleston County School District (CCSD) Gifted and Talented Strings Program as a violinist, making her eligible to advance to the Preparatory District Orchestra. This is her first year at Burns, but she is not new to the district’s strings program.

**Learning about ancestry**

According to JoAnna Gillett, Director of Research and Exhibits and the Gullah Society, Broadening and increasing the Gullah Society’s interest in genetics and how this can help us understand who we are is what we are trying to do.

“New genetic research is being done on the Gullah-Geechee people from the diaspora. One of the keys is to understand what the DNA means and what the DNA is. We are trying to understand that in order to really understand our culture and to understand who we are.”

In May 2015, a team from the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Theodore Schultz and Rachel Fiskes, collected bone samples from 36 individuals that were interred in the Anson Street Burial Ground. The results of this study of modern DNA indicate the ancestral picture of these individuals from Charleston that can be compared with what was obtained from the Anson Street burial and allows community members to learn about their genetic past.

“During the school year, we held a workshop to share information on the 36 individuals. We held a meeting at the school if the Gullah Society could name the ancestors.”

The answer was yes and an important step was to且red ouring the importance of these ancestral individuals,” said Dr. Johnson. “The remains are in each individual provided significant insight into the important characteristics of these humans. The study of these remains helped to provide the invaluable knowledge that has been able to access these remains.

“Now, they are proud of their ancestors in the project and how they helped us to remember them individuals here in Charleston,” said Dr. Gillett. “The Gullah Society was so incredibly overwhelmed by the amazing work produced by these students.”

BURNS STUDENT ACCEPTED INTO GIFTED AND TALENTED STRINGS PROGRAM

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Johnston fell in love with the world while at Malcolm C. Disney Elementary School last year under the instruction of strings teacher Samantha Clark.

“She was always excited to play by herself and show off new skills,” said Clark. “She is always ready to learn and has a positive attitude. I was so happy to hear that she made into district orchestra.”

The 11-year-old said she enjoys music and felt a natural connection to the violin.

“I love playing because I get to learn new things while doing something,” said Johnston. “I really would like to become a professional musician. I want to play to entertain around the world.”

Shaune Patrus-Buck, M.A., M.D., is Johnston’s current strings instructor. The transition to CCSD did not slow down in her string instruction in her new academic setting. Her transition to CCSD was an effort to challenge herself. Her missions is to instruct and mentor minority students in music.

“It is important for everyone,” said Patrus-Buck. “Music education builds community and family. The students are learning with great discipline and hard work.

In addition to the 22 students in the district at Burns, the school also teaches 10 orchestra students and numerous music ensembles at North Charleston Middle School.

Class at Burns and held just twice a week.

“I am now an extra student in Patricia Buck’s first period and she is an extra student in my second period,” said Johnston.

“It is an amazing experience. She is so passionate about music and I am so excited to be here,” said Johnston. “I really enjoy playing because it helps me stay focused and that is the most important thing.”

During the upcoming season, Johnston said she hopes to participate in more music programs and competitions.

Johnston is a very sweet child who is very talented and has a great future ahead of her.”

**LaShelia Currence – Education and Community Engagement Coordinator for the Gullah Society**
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