

Focus ON CCSD

News for, by and about Charleston County School District,
the state of South Carolina's premier school district where *Students are the Heart of Our Work.*

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Charleston Shared Future Project Addresses Education System



Charleston Shared Future



What might our education system and our community look like in 2035?

For the past four months, a 30-member team from across Charleston County came together as part of the Shared Future project to co-create a set of four scenarios to answer that question.

This diverse group bridges race, sectors, geography, politics, age, and roles. This Charleston Shared Future team took into account previous studies, like the Clemson Study on Diversity and Inclusion, Post and Courier's "Minimally Adequate" series, The Avery Institute's Racial Disparity Study, the 1998 Harvard Study on Charleston's Education System, the recent Charleston County School District's (CCSD) strategic plan, and other relevant data and experiences.

After several months of work, the scenarios were shared with educators, CCSD parents and community members at the CCSD Board of Trustees meeting on January 28, 2019. The meeting was held in the Burke High School auditorium to accommodate the number of attendees.

The scenarios present four different stories about what the future of education might look like in 2035 in Charleston County and some possible paths to get to those endpoints.

In summary, they include: -1835: A fixed point in time, with no movement forward

- Sweetgrass Basket: A slow and intensive process like that of making a basket. The sweetgrass must be processed before it is pliable enough to produce useful products.
- Reconstruction: The need to reconstruct a system that was designed not to benefit all.
- Techtowne: Technology drives the future.

The scenarios are not predictions, nor are they a vision, proposal, or plan. However, they are plausible - the events and actions in the scenarios make logical sense and could take place. — *continued on page 3*

CCSD Hosts Teacher of the Year Inauguration and Leadership Summit



Charleston County School District (CCSD) Teachers of the Year were honored Friday, February 1, 2019 at an inauguration and leadership summit designed to celebrate teachers with a professional development focus on leadership through connections, collaboration, and advocacy.

The summit was organized by CCSD's 2017-2018 Teacher of the Year Mia Pace, Stephanie Haecherl, the 2018-2019 Teacher of the Year, and the District's Honor Roll Team (the top five finalists for Teachers of the Year from across the district).

The event featured speakers Dr. Jenna Hallman, 2008-2009 South Carolina Teacher of the Year, Nicholas Snyder 2017 Berkeley County Teacher of the Year, and Julie Chapman South Carolina Chapter Leader of Our Community Listens.

Breakout sessions and short lecture topics included everything from coaching, teacher recruitment, employee relations, mentoring and online learning.

"Being named as a school's Teacher of the Year is a huge accomplishment and speaks volumes about their work inside and outside of the classroom," said Haecherl. "It is a testament to how teachers truly have a positive impact on those in our profession and the community at large."

Haecherl described the day as an opportunity to show teachers they are appreciated and to encourage them to become more involved in things that truly have an impact not just in their classrooms and schools, but in the district as a whole. "

CCSD is working hard to try and ensure students, teachers, and staff members feel valued in their work and learning," said Haecherl. "This summit helps to inspire teacher leaders and build a foundation for collaboration that allows us opportunities to make a difference and promote change."

Haecherl attended the summit last year and left with a sense of enlightenment. She said networking with teachers from across the district and having the opportunity to meet with District representatives was priceless.

"There are incredible resources for teachers within the district if we focus on ways we can better connect the two," added Haecherl. "I wish every teacher could have an opportunity to participate in a similar professional development. Building stronger relationships between teachers and those who help make decisions about the future of education in our district are greatly needed."



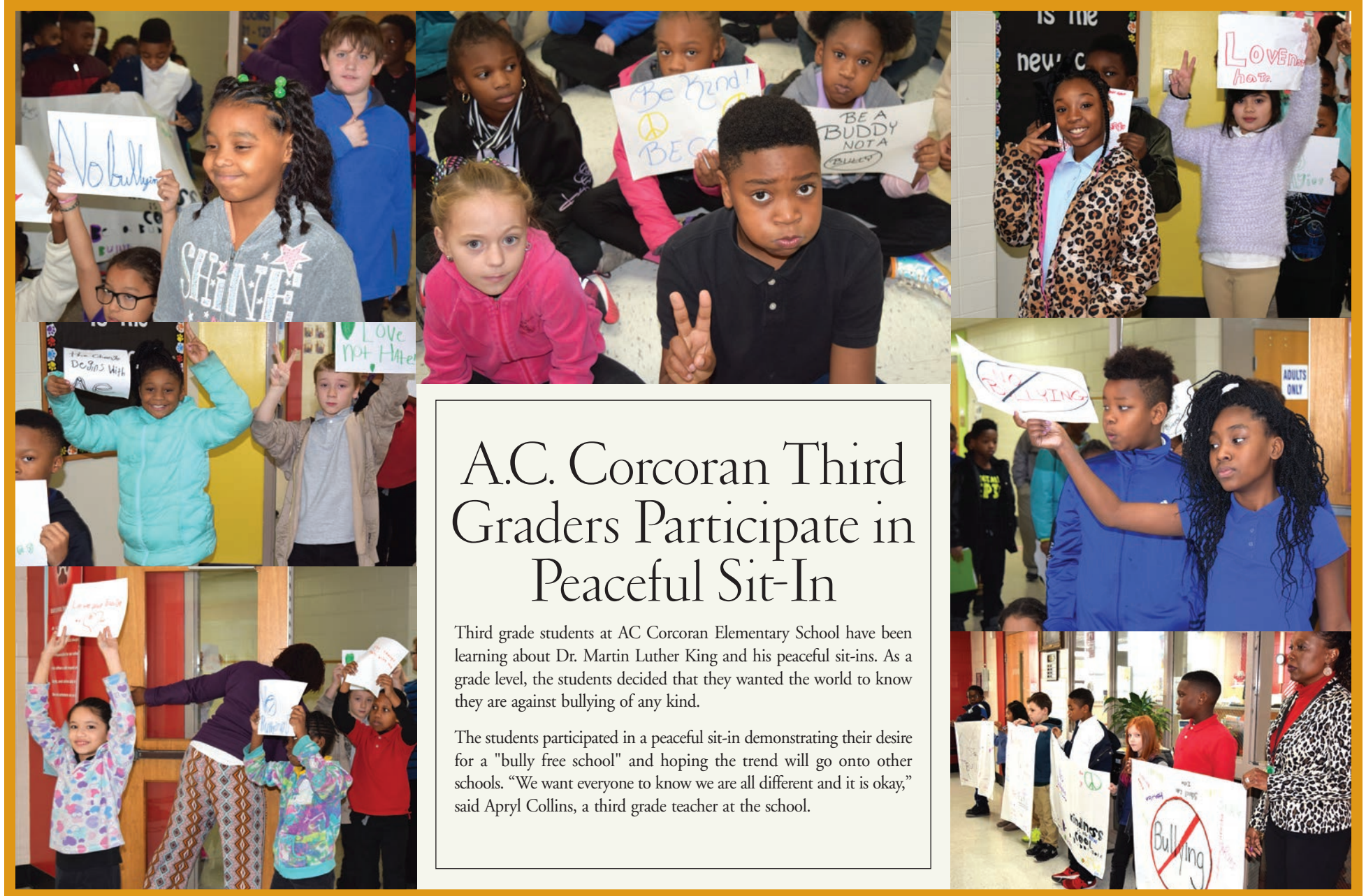
STEPHANIE HAECHERL
2018-2019 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

"CCSD is working hard to try and ensure students, teachers, and staff members feel valued in their work and learning. This summit helps to inspire teacher leaders and build a foundation for collaboration that allows us opportunities to make a difference and promote change."

STEPHANIE HAECHERL, 2018-2019 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

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A.C. Corcoran Third Graders Participate in Peaceful Sit-In

Third grade students at AC Corcoran Elementary School have been learning about Dr. Martin Luther King and his peaceful sit-ins. As a grade level, the students decided that they wanted the world to know they are against bullying of any kind.

The students participated in a peaceful sit-in demonstrating their desire for a "bully free school" and hoping the trend will go onto other schools. "We want everyone to know we are all different and it is okay," said Apryl Collins, a third grade teacher at the school.

CCSD Hosts National Signing Day



National Signing Day is one of the biggest moments in a student-athlete's career; they are making one of the most important, and celebrated, decisions of their life. All of the hard work, time, energy, and support from parents and coaches culminates the moment the student-athlete puts the pen to paper to make an official commitment to play a sport at the college level.

Today, 49 student-athletes, in 11 different sports, from five Charleston County School District (CCSD) schools were honored at the 2019 CCSD National Signing Day Ceremony.

Director of Operational Planning Bob Olson, and Superintendent Dr. Gerrita Postlewait provided welcoming remarks, congratulated the scholars on their success in sports thus far, and encouraged them to continue their hard work in college.

The following CCSD student-athletes were part of the countywide ceremony:

Academic Magnet

Skyler Ayers - University of Vermont – Swimming
Colin Baker - Harvard University - Cross Country/Track & Field
Malia Borg - Macalester College – Swimming
Riane Coman - University of South Carolina – Soccer
Ethan Fewell - Winthrop University – Baseball
Jourdan Gruber - USC-Aiken – Soccer
Annie Riesberg - Aurora University – Softball
Ryan Troy - Colby College – Swimming

James Island Charter

Bobby Alexander – College of Charleston - Baseball
Tereis Drayton - The Citadel – Football
Olivia Erwin - Limestone College – Golf
Noah Gregory - Mars Hill University – Lacrosse
Alden Ray - College of Charleston – Soccer
Drayton Stewart - Clemson University – Golf
Jaxon Weatherford - USC-Lancaster – Baseball

R.B. Stall

Hakim Martin – Catawba College - Football
Tyshon Richardson - University of Charleston (West Virginia) – Football

Wando

Chloe Bailey - Charleston Southern University – Soccer
Maddie Boylston - University of Virginia – Volleyball
Jaelen Edwards - Newberry College - Football
Micah Green - Lander University - Lacrosse
Brooke Hopson - Francis Marion University – Soccer
Meredith Jones - Wingate University – Swimming
Sophie Job - College of Charleston – Soccer
David Kowalchick - United States Naval Academy – Track and Field
Paul Kowalchick - United States Naval Academy – Track and Field
Anna Mansfield - Lees-McRae College – Swimming
Huw Meredith - The Citadel – Football
Samantha Meredith - University of South Carolina - Soccer
Jonah Miller - Lander University – Soccer

Sarah Missroon - Appalachian State University – Volleyball
Drake Peden - Erskine College – Football
Justin Pelic – University of Florida - Football
Alyssa Rosado - Francis Marion University – Soccer
Tucker Rose - Franklin Pierce University - Football
Abbey Schad - USC-Aiken – Volleyball
Gabrielle Slye - Savannah College of Art and Design – Soccer
Micah Spickerman - Lander University – Soccer
Maggie Van Thullenar - Auburn University – Soccer
Sophie Vanderpool - Lees-McRae College – Swimming
Anna Warwick - Clemson University – Rowing
Andrew Weil - North Carolina State University – Football

West Ashley

Bryce Brown - College of Charleston – Baseball
Terrence Frasier - North Carolina A&T – Football
Gigi Fusco - West Virginia Wesleyan College – Swimming
Dominique Kershaw - Savannah State University - Football
Connor Sibbald - Limestone College – Baseball
Chad Waldrop - St. Cloud University – Swimming
Elijah Wright - South Carolina Faith Athletic and Music College - Football

Highlights and pictures of the ceremony are available on the CCSD Facebook page and online at ccsdschools.com.

Students Recognized for Award Winning Essays

Students at Buist Academy were recently recognized for their award winning writing.

James Prutting, 1st place winner, Livi Dodd, 2nd place winner, and Piper Hudgins, 3rd place winner for the Fleet Reserve Association essay contest "What Freedom of Speech Means to Me." This essay was done as an interdisciplinary assignment with Humanities and Language. Local winners are forwarded for competition at the regional level and regional winners compete for national prizes.

In addition, Noa Wallen placed in the Top 10 Middle School Essay category in the Atlantic Institute for Diversity Art & Essay contest. The theme this year was "Building Community: The Role of Teens."



Charleston Shared Future Project Addresses Education System – continued from page 1



Anthony Brown



Benny Starr



Craig Ascue



Kathleen king



Kyra Freeman



Michelle Faust



Vanessa Brown

They are challenging as they offer a chance to notice blind spots and may present ideas or insights not considered before. They are relevant - they take into account what is happening and has happened in Charleston County.

Finally, they are clear - each scenario incorporates critical certainties - things known about 2035, and then uncertainties - things that could change over that period and cause different things to happen in each scenario, which is what makes the four scenarios distinctive and clear.

Locations

Ashley River Creative Arts School – 1841 Wallace School Rd, Charleston SC

Stall High School – 3625 Ashley Phosphate Rd, N. Charleston, SC

Wando High School – 1000 Warrior Way, Mt. Pleasant, SC

St. Johns High School – 1518 Main Road, Johns Island, SC

One of the participants, Vanessa Brown, Principal of Baptist Hill Middle High School, said she hopes that this creates a sense of urgency in the Charleston community to examine the CCSD system and make drastic system changes and process.

“We have become so used to this being the way we do things, and we don’t understand that our system has some flaws,” Brown said.

“Through this, I hope we create reaction (and cause action), and people will want to do things differently and make decisions that to impact our children now and impact our city – because we are Charleston.”

Eric Thome, Director of Venture South Charleston, also participated in the process. He hopes the scenarios will change the dialogue and how people think and talk about the future of education in Charleston.

“We know we have a segregated school district and we know we have failing schools,” Thome said. “Yet we don’t change. So we have to understand that this is a system that is failing our community. It is not a failed system. It is a system working exactly as designed.”

Local businessman and team member Craig Ascue, a local paint and body shop owner, also acknowledged that the local education system is broken.

“What we found was that it was set up for certain people to be successful and what we found was a lot of people ended up not being successful,” said Ascue. “I hope the results will be that more people are tuned to what the Charleston County School system looks like.”

Three high school students were also included in this Shared Future process.

“I hope this is not something thrown to the side after a while,” said Early College High School Sophomore Kyra Freeman. “I hope people take the results we are bringing to them, and they use it to better our schools, our community, our kids and, our teachers.”

Burke junior Anthony Brown has hope for the next steps of the process.

“I want the community to get involved. I don’t want this to die off. I want this to keep going, so someone can solve this solution, Brown said. “Not as minorities, but as one Charleston. Because we are all Charlestonians, we are all South Carolinians.

Academic Magnet High School Junior Sully Gholson was impressed to see such a diverse group come together and put aside differences.

“It also helped me realize that there are students out there that do not have the same opportunities as I do,” said Gholson. “There are inequities in our district that need to be solved. But with this group, I truly believe we can make that happen.”

What happens next belongs to the community. While CCSD represents a key part of the education system, Charleston County - its people and its organizations - are as critical to this effort as the school district is and will help decide and facilitate next steps.

Scenario Team Members

Celina Anthony, Title I bilingual coordinator for CCSD

Craig Ascue, business owner and former Board member of the Charleston County School District

Jennifer Baez, group Leader for the School Choice Committee for the Diversity Task force for Charleston County Schools

Barney Blakeney, a reporter for the Charleston Chronicle

Anthony Brown, an eleventh-grade student at Burke High School

Vanessa Brown, Principal at Baptist Hill Middle High School

Mary Carmichael, founder and executive principal of Charleston Charter School for Math and Science

Stephen Cofer-Shabica, Branch 3rd Vice President, and currently serves as Chairperson of the Education Committee, Charleston Branch NAACP

Vanessa Denney, founding administrator at CCSD’s Early College High School

Michelle Faust, CCSD parent and Education Chair on the Johns Island Community Association

Kyra Freeman, Sophomore at Early College High School

Todd Garrett, attorney and Trustee on the Charleston County School Board and is Chair of

the Audit & Finance Committee

Kristopher “Sully” Gholson, Junior at Academic Magnet High School

Lee Gill, Chief Diversity Officer and Special Assistant to the President for Inclusive Excellence at Clemson University

Darrin Griffin, business owner, and a school advocate and basketball coach for Military Magnet Academy

Natasha Jefferson, Director of Civic Engagement at Charleston RISE

Don Kennedy, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer for Charleston County School District

Kathleen King, Director of Alumni & Family Partnerships for Meeting Street Academy

Linard McCloud, Director of Bands at Burke High School in Charleston

Bill Moody, District 11 Councilmember on the Charleston City Council

Mia Pace, CCSD Teacher of the Year on Special Assignment with Learning Services

John Read, CEO for the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

Nelson Rivers III, is Vice President of Religious Affairs and External Relations of the National Action Network (NAN), and Pastor of Charity Missionary Baptist Church

Kevin Smith, principal of C.E. Williams Middle School for Creative Arts

Benny Starr, entertainer and deft collaborator and community leader

John Steinberger, business owner and publisher of news and commentary blog Low-countrySource.com

Portia Stoney, Clemson Diversity and Inclusion and Shared Future Project administrative specialist for CCSD

Eric Thome, CCSD parent, and director of VentureSouth Charleston

Maurice Washington, business owner, and local and state political dignitary

Fran Welch, Dean of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance at the College of Charleston

LeAnne Grillo, co-founder of REOS Partners

Jacquie McLemore, a senior REOS Partners consultant with an expertise in cultural

Adam Kahane, a managing director with Reos Partners and author of *Solving Tough Problems, Transformative Scenario Planning, Collaborating with the Enemy: How to Work With People You Don’t Agree with or Like or Trust*

Gerardo Marquez, a consultant with REOS Partners and co-founder of Integrity Leadership, a leadership program for immigrant women in Calgary, Alberta

Christel Scholten, a managing director with REOS Partners specializing in convening, designing, and facilitating large-scale systems change processes



Briggman Named SC Personnel Administrator of the Year

Bill Briggman was named 2018-2019 SC Personnel Administrator of the Year Thursday at the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA) 2019 Personnel Winter Conference in Columbia.

This statewide award is presented to a personnel director at the district level. The award recognizes involvement with regional or statewide SCASA educational issues, and the nominee’s impact on improvement in his or her school district.



BETH PHIBBS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCASA PRESENTS BILL BRIGGMAN WITH THE 2018-2019 SC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Vanessa P. Brown, Principal of Baptist Hill Middle High School nominated Briggman for this prestigious award.

“There are so many amazing Human Resources professionals in school districts across the state, all of whom work hard every day to support student education,” said Briggman. “I am fortunate to work among this group and consider it a great honor to be selected as the South Carolina Personnel Administrator of the Year.”

Briggman has 27 years of experience in human resources and currently serves as the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Briggman has been instrumental in ensuring the District is fully staffed at the beginning of every school year. Under his leadership, CCSD has been able to consistently reduce the number of teacher vacancies and develop a well-designed recruiting plan that intentionally seeks to find teachers who represent the diverse population of students in the Charleston County.

“His department has done an excellent job of recruiting teachers from across the country and around the world to find the best and brightest for the students of Charleston County School District,” said Brown. “Bill and his team are creative and daring. Through his guidance, the District instituted initiatives such as rural travel stipend. Since most first-year educators are placed in schools with the highest needs, Bill implemented the Top Talent initiative to reduce the achievement gap.”

As an advocate for all employees of the District to earn a livable wage, Briggman has brought in firms to conduct studies on the salary structure for administrators which increased pay for principals and assistant principals.

“It is this type of action that keeps the District competitive and attracts experienced educators to join and to retain them as well,” said Brown. “Most importantly, even though he is responsible for managing the fourth largest employer in Charleston County with nearly 6000 certified and classified staff, he is a man who has never met a stranger. He is genuinely caring, compassionate and kind. Charleston County truly has a strong anchor in Bill Briggman.”



GERRITA POSTLEWAIT
SUPERINTENDENT
CHARLESTON COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

POSTLEWAIT RECEIVES PATRIOT AWARD

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is excited to announce Superintendent Dr. Gerrita Postlewait is receiving the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Patriot Award. She was nominated by Rich Gordon,

CCSD’s Executive Director of Career and Technology who serves in the South Carolina Army National Guard.

The Patriot Award reflects efforts made by employers to support National Guard and Reserve soldiers, such as flexible schedules, deployments, family care and leaves of absence.

“The nomination was a ‘thank you’ for supporting employer policies and practices that allow me to fully participate in the South Carolina Army National Guard,” said Gordon. “My wife and children truly appreciate the outpouring of support and well-wishes from the Board of Trustees and the entire CCSD family during a very busy 2018. This is undoubtedly a direct result of Dr. Postlewait’s command climate.”

Dr. Postlewait was formally recognized and presented the award at the January 28, 2019 Board of trustees meeting. The meeting will be held at Burke High School, 244 President Street in downtown Charleston.

Kumarasinghe Takes Top Spot in CCSD’s 2019 Spelling Bee



RANITHA KUMARASINGHE
ORANGE GROVE CHARTER SCHOOL
7TH GRADER

It took 30 rounds to get to the final word of the night in the Charleston County School District (CCSD) 2019 Spelling Bee held January 17, 2019 at Burke High School. Orange Grove Charter School 7th grader Ranitha Kumarasinghe spelled “debacle” with ease, giving him the title.

Forty-two students from 38 schools began the competition. Only four scholars took the top four spots. Eighteen students total advanced to the SpellBound! 2019 competition sponsored by the Post and Courier on March 7, 2019.

Kumarasinghe was the 2018 CCSD Spelling Bee runner-up and the winner of the Post and Courier’s SpellBound! 2018 competition.

“I was much more confident this year because I knew the words from

last year,” said Kumarasinghe. “I studied every chance I got.”

Kumarasinghe edged out John Ryan Ottaviano, an 8th grader from Camp Road Middle School.

Kumarasinghe also had to spell “prosciutto” once Ottaviano barely missed it.

“I am very nervous about moving forward to SpellBound!, but I’ll just enjoy the moment right now,” Kumarasinghe said. “I’ll just continue to study.”

The winner of SpellBound! 2019 moves on to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., which will be held in May.

The following CCSD students advanced to The Post and Courier SpellBound! Spelling Bee:

- 1st place: Ranitha Kumarasinghe, Orange Grove Charter School, 7th grade
- 2nd place: John Ryan Ottaviano, Camp Rad Middle School, 8th grade
- 3rd place: Randolph Villariza, School of the Arts, 6th grade
- 4th place: Grace Reed, Laing Middle School, 6th grade

Additional top 18 spellers:

- Amulanga Adyaeva, Drayton Hall Elementary, 5th grade
- Wes Baldwin, Thomas C. Carlo Middle School, 8th grade
- Aayush Bansod, Oakland Elementary School, 5th grade
- Henley Bilbro, Stiles Point Elementary School, 5th grade
- Pierce Brewer, Springfield Elementary School, 5th grade
- Celeste Gamble, Charleston Charter for Math and Science, 8th grade
- Finn Hayes, C.E. Williams Middle School, 6th grade
- Destiny Mambo, Deer Park Middle School, 5th grade
- Sophia Milner, Orange Grove Elementary School, 5th grade
- Harold Mullin, Haut Gap Middle School, 7th grade
- Luke Nestleroad, Buist Academy, 5th grade
- Zuriel Nyamutsaka, A.C. Corcoran Elementary School, 5th grade
- Dinysee Porcher, St. James-Santee Elementary Middle School, 8th grade
- Keerthana Samuel, St. Andrew’s School of Math and Science, 5th grade



Gretchen Looney, an assistant principal at Wando High School, served as the pronouncer, and Zoe Roff, a math teacher at Northwoods Middle School, was the lead judge.

Middle School Volleyball Established in District 20

A brand new athletic team with novice players is sure to have some struggles. However when your entire school, your coach and your parents are behind you, it motivates you to push harder. This was the case for the first ever girls’ volleyball team consisting of players from James Simons Elementary School (JSES) and Simmons-Pinckney Middle School (SPMS). The girls did not close out the season with any major victories, but they’re more motivated than ever to make next year’s season one where they get noticed. Coach Cortnie Jones began as a long-term substitute teacher at JSES in 2015. As she transitioned to a full-time physical education teacher, students and parents continually expressed interest in creating sports teams at the school. An athlete herself, with an interest and knowledge in track and field, she started a running club that competes annually in the Charleston Youth Marathon, along with meets across the Lowcountry. The success of that program prompted other students to seek her out to help in creating a basketball team and a volleyball team. Logistics and timing put the basketball team on hold initially, but the creation of the first-ever James Simmons Pinckney Girls Volleyball Team delighted of a handful of girls hoping to play. The school partnership came about to ensure the sister schools provide the most for their students. “It was a win-win for both schools,” said Jones. “At SPMS, they’ve established a boys’ basketball team. The momentum to provide more athletic opportunities is there. Now we need funding and coaches.” SPMS principal Nathan Nelson was working separately from JSES principal Chris Ryan to provide athletic opportunities for the students and parents in District 20.

“We realized that the students know each other because they live in the same communities. What better way to combine our efforts and resources than to give our students an additional connection through volleyball and basketball?”

NATHAN NELSON, SIMMONS-PINCKNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

others whom they might not otherwise associate which also boosts school-wide climate and culture. Nelson noticed bonds being created not just between students, but students and faculty as well. “The addition of these two teams have made a difference in our student’s academics,” said Nelson. “They have a coach to keep them accountable, and they’re also able to put academics in perspective – teams build relationships with teachers and students when it comes to their academics.” The City of Charleston Recreation Department facilitates the athletic program. The girls played against other beginner level teams in the area from Summerville to McClellanville. Home games are played at the nearby Arthur Christopher Community Center. Eight female students signed up to play – all of them brand new to the sport. “It was a learning experience for me,” said Jones. “For me, coaching such a young age and actually having to teach them to play the game, was new for me.” But with the help of a parent volunteer as an assistant coach, and many adoring parents cheering the team on from the stands, Jones considers the season a success. “We didn’t win any games, but I pushed the girls to learn the game and put in 110 percent,” said Jones. “I could see the progression in the girls and the fight they put up for each point.” Jones hopes to incorporate a basketball team for the males next year. In the meantime, she’s already planning conditioning sessions for next year’s interested players. If the interest is there, they could create an A-Team, B-Team and C-Team. “This year is just the beginning of what we hope will be a robust sports program at James Simons,” said Ryan. “By incorporating sports teams at James Simons, in partnership with Simmons Pinckney, we are expanding the opportunity for our students to become more physically fit. In addition, sporting events bring parents and families together”

Money to support the team and pay for required equipment come from fundraising and grants. The team would not be possible without parent volunteers. Anyone interested in learning more about the James Simmons Pinckney Volleyball Team can contact Cortnie Jones at cortnie_jones@charleston.k12.sc.us.



GIRLS FROM JAMES SIMONS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND SIMMONS PINCKNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL



JAMES SIMONS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PE TEACHER CORTNIE JONES AND PRINCIPAL CHRIS RYAN



THE JAMES SIMMONS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

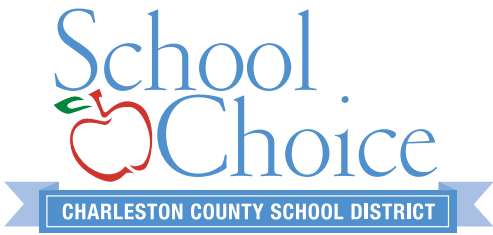
Focus ON CCSD

Focus on Charleston County School District is published for, by and about CCSD, the state of South Carolina’s premier school district where *Students are the Heart of our Work.*

Gerrita Postlewait, *Superintendent of Schools*

Erica Taylor, *Chief Officer, Strategy & Communications*

Sully Witte, *Communications Officer*



CHOICE FAIR
February 23, 2019
10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary
C.E. Williams Middle
North Charleston High
St. John’s High

Please visit the location closest to your residence to learn about your available school options



Choice Application Process Begins: www.ccsdschools.com - February 11, 2019	Choice Acceptance/Non Acceptance Notifications Online: April 18, 2019
Choice Application Process Ends: Applications are due by March 11, 2019 Paper applications by 4:00 pm; Online submissions by 11:59 pm	Parents Accept or Decline Choice Online: May 6, 2019

For more information about School Choice (including Application Pick-up/Drop-off Sites and Application Assistance Events):
Visit <https://ccsdschools.com/families/students/choice>
Call 843-937-6582 | 843-937-6431