

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.*

Volume 2 | Edition 1 | January 2019



Camp Road Middle Breaks Ground for New School



Charleston County School District (CCSD) officials joined local dignitaries Friday, December 7, 2018 to break ground for the new Camp Road Middle School building. Construction is scheduled to be

complete for the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

School administrators from Camp Road Middle, CCSD Board of Trustees members, leaders from the District, City of Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg, Town of James Island Mayor Pro Tem Leonard Blank, and Town of Folly Beach Mayor Tim Goodwin participated in the event. They were treated to a choral performance by Camp Road students, including 6th graders who will be the first 8th graders at the new building.

In November 2014, the citizens of Charleston County voted to continue the penny sales tax to help fund building projects for the 2016-2022 building phase. A community task force was created in January 2015 to create the vision for this project. Part of that vision was merging the two former middle schools, Fort Johnson Middle School and James Island Middle School, into one middle school for all students on James Island.

"We are building on what I consider an 'historical site'; this is where the first high school was built on James Island, in 1953," said Camp Road Middle School Principal David Parler. "As part of this vision, we hope to continue to honor this piece of community history with a strong alumni group



that has stayed in close contact with CCSD throughout this process. The community now has one middle school to support and we look forward to bright future with a state of the art facility in the spring of 2020, when the 6th graders who recited the Pledge of Allegiance today will be 8th graders in the new building."

The school's mascot is the Cougars, and the colors are silver and royal blue.

"I am so excited about this opportunity for the James Island community," said Dr. Joe Williams, Executive Director of the Middle School Learning Community. "We are building one amazing middle school for scholars that will give all access to a state of the art facility supporting the high-quality education

they will receive."

The new Camp Road Middle School will be approximately 137,000 square feet and have an initial capacity to serve 900 students, with a core and expansion space for a future capacity of 1,200 students.

The middle school serves all of James Island students. The school is currently housed on the campus of the former James Island Middle while the state-of-the-art new school is being constructed on the former Fort Johnson Middle property. The school offers Project Lead the Way engineering classes, chorus, French and Spanish.

"We are building one amazing middle school for scholars that will give all access to a state of the art facility supporting the high-quality education they will receive."

DR. JOE WILLIAMS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNING COMMUNITY



Fast Facts

Construction Management: Cumming
Project Manager: Joe Christian
Site Manager: Ryan Jordan
Architect: Rosenblum Coe
General Contractor: TQ Constructors
Project budget: \$43 million
Square Footage: 137,000 SF
Site Size: 15 acres

For more information about the ceremony or the school, contact Principal David Parler at (843) 762-2784.



LADENE' CONROY
PRINCIPAL
MARY FORD ELEMENTARY

LaDene' Conroy Retires After 31 Years with CCSD

Principal LaDene' Conroy has announced her retirement from Mary Ford Elementary School where she will continue to serve through December. Camille Hendrix has been named Interim Principal.

Conroy has served in the educational field for the last 36 years; 31 years in Charleston County School District. She served 17 years as Principal in six CCSD schools.

She is known best for her work with teachers, teacher training, professional development, children's literature and her love of learning.

Conroy was asked three times by three superintendents to assist in area schools:

Mt. Zion Elementary was her first school to assist in community relationships.

At Malcolm C. Hursey, she implemented the first Montessori Program as a partial magnet for CCSD. She stepped in for a year as interim principal at Murray-LaSaine Elementary while the school was moving from swing space to their new Montessori space while still serving as Charleston County School District's Montessori Specialist.

Ms. Conroy has selflessly served Charleston County School District in many leadership capacities from teacher to Learning Specialist to Principal for many years. For more than a decade she has led the district in our development, support, and expansion of our Montessori programs. She has garnered certifications in specialized areas, including Montessori, that makes her a leader and well-respected resource internally and externally in our community and beyond."

RUTH TAYLOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR EARLY LEARNING

Conroy currently is a Montessori instructor for Montessori Philosophy and four leadership courses for administrators /adolescent teachers through Houston Montessori Center; instructor for Palmetto Primary Montessori Teacher Education Program with Seacoast Montessori Training Center; and teaches for Gulf Coast Montessori Training Center.

Conroy was chosen as Employee of the Year by the Access and Opportunity Division CCSD in and was selected as one of the fifty Most Progressive People making a positive impact on Charleston in 2015.

"Ms. Conroy has selflessly served Charleston County School District in many leadership capacities from teacher to Learning Specialist to Principal for many years. For more than a decade she has led the district in our development, support, and expansion of our Montessori programs," Ruth Taylor, Executive Director for Early Learning. "She has garnered certifications in specialized areas, including Montessori, that makes her a leader and well-respected resource internally and externally in our community and beyond."



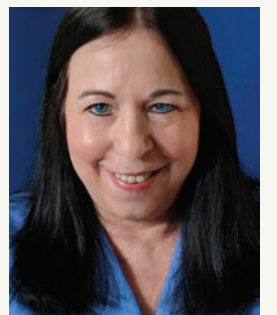
Hendrix to Serve as Interim Principal at Mary Ford Elementary School

Camille Hendrix has been named the Interim Principal of Mary Ford Elementary.

Hendrix brings a wealth of experience to this position. She most recently served as the Program Coordinator for the Child and Family Development Center at Mary Ford.

Hendrix led Chicora Elementary School from 2005-2012, guiding the school to marked achievement and growth. She has also served as a Title I coordinator in CCSD.

"Ms. Hendrix comes to us with intimate knowledge of the culture and environment at Mary Ford Elementary School. That makes her a great fit for this position. Her work with the Child and Family Development Center afforded her the full-spectrum view," said Ruth Taylor, Executive Director for Early Learning. "Her skill set, professionalism, and passion are what we need to continue the success at that school."



CAMILLE HENDRIX
INTERIM PRINCIPAL
MARY FORD ELEMENTARY

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MUSC Boeing Center and CCSD Partnership Improving the District's Wellness Culture



What started as a programmatic health initiative at Burke High School ten years ago, has turned into a district-wide wellness commitment within Charleston County School District (CCSD).

The MUSC Boeing Center for Children's Wellness (BCCW) was developed as a partnership between MUSC and CCSD in 2007. The program was initially housed out of Burke and only reached a handful of schools.

The wellness initiative has since expanded to a state-wide effort with the goal of improving nutrition and increasing physical activity for students and staff by motivating districts and schools to make policy, system, and environmental changes.

Schools who participate select proven strategies from the School Wellness Checklist© and earn points awarded for each wellness item implemented. The team at the MUSC BCCW partners with teachers, administrators, and district personnel to follow a "train the trainer" model by providing training, resources, and connecting the schools with community partners to increase the sustainability of their wellness programs.

During the 2017-2018 school year, 45 CCSD schools earned a Wellness Award. The first place winner was James Island Elementary School (JIES). The second and third place winners were Harbor View Elementary (HVES) and Murray LaSaine Elementary (MLE).

The Roper St. Francis Physicians Endowment has funded the monetary awards for two years, which range from \$250 to \$2,000. The award money must go into the Wellness Awareness Initiative at each school. In total, almost \$22,000 went to CCSD schools for the 2017-2018 school year.

"District personnel, leaders at the school and wellness committees, do all the work," said Courtney Hensch, Program Coordinator. "They take full ownership, choose items on the wellness checklist that fit the school's culture and environment and implement them. Every school is so different in CCSD; what works for one, won't work for another."

The Wellness Checklist has seven categories with various point-weighted actions. For example, the Nutrition category has 22 action items that range from posting nutritional analysis information for each menu item to offering a salad on a daily basis.

"This coordinated approach to wellness is working," said Janice Key, MD, Director of BCCW. "We have seen a decrease in

obesity in participating schools. For example, obesity prevalence in CCSD has decreased significantly from 25 percent in the 2008-2009 school year, to 21 percent in the 2015 2016 school year."

"Changing the health of the students is just a band-aid if you're not getting the whole family on board, You can't just do it for the students. It's got to be a community effort."

CHARLENE BARBOT, MARY FORD ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL NURSE

The Schools –How They Did It

Mary Ford Elementary School nurse Charlene Barbot helped to initiate the program to address the high level of behavioral and academic issues among the students.

"We looked at the hierarchy of needs here and decided to start with the basics," said Barbot. "You can't expect children to come in and learn if they're not nourished, hydrated, healthy, and rested."

A Water Campaign was one part of that effort.

"It became very obvious that students were dehydrated," explained Barbot. "We changed out all of our water fountains, distributed water bottles to each student, and started providing water infused with fruits and vegetables."

Along with that, the school hosted Wellness Week with themes surrounding not only hydration, but sleep, nutrition, and exercise.

"On average, we saw eight to ten office referrals a day," said Barbot. "During Wellness Week we had three referrals for the entire week. The student engagement was unparalleled to anything else we've seen."

Barbot said that little by little the school is getting parent buy-in.

"Changing the health of the students is just a band-aid if you're

not getting the whole family on board," said Barbot. "You can't just do it for the students. It's got to be a community effort."

Liz Chirles, the school counselor at JIES, made a concerted effort to get everyone from the PTA to students, teachers, and staff involved in the wellness campaign.

Food tasting events and a wellness challenge helped to get the parents involved. The money awarded for being the top school will go back into the school's efforts to offer different opportunities such as after-school yoga classes for teachers.

"This year we're kicking it up a notch," said Chirles. "We wanted to provide exposure for both teachers and students. We're taking the wellness checklist and expanding to doing more items, more often."

CCSD's Instructional Specialist for Health and PE, Holly Kut explained that once everyone at the school is onboard to start making those changes, the students begin to see that they should care about their health as well.

"If we can change it within the school system then we can take these initiatives home, and it becomes a community involvement," said Kut. "The health index focuses on the whole person and is referred to as a health triangle," said Kut. "The physical, social and mental health of each individual is important because when one goes up, the others do too."

At HVES, school nurse, Faith Hostetler, and teacher assistant Heather Hord, are co-chairs of the Wellness Committee.

"We have always been big on physical activity, and since last year we focused on nutrition, having more school-wide fruit and vegetable tastings," said Hord. "We use the HVES news show to promote the tastings, water drinking, and fun information and activities. HVES has been participating in the wellness challenge for eight years. As the years go on, we are getting more parents who want to be involved, helping us with activities which are so important."

The 2019 School Wellness Checklist is due to BCCW in April, and the points will be compiled and verified. A prize patrol will then be deployed to the top three schools and a wellness celebration, will be held in May to recognize those schools formally.

For more information about the CCSD and MUSC Boeing Center for Children's Wellness partnership, contact Holly Kut at Holly_Kut@charleston.k12.sc.us.

Department of Exceptional Children Awarded for Strategic Leadership in Education



TregoED recognized Charleston County School District (CCSD) as a winner of the 2018 Benjamin B. Tregoe Award for Strategic Leadership in Education for their organizational excellence in collaborative decision making.

The award is presented to school districts, individuals or teams that have achieved significant and enduring results using TregoED tools for collaborative problem solving and decision making. The honor recognizes the district's ability to demonstrate successful resolution of a critical issue and shown evidence of systemic change that has had a lasting impact on their decision-making and problem-solving culture.

Since 1993, TregoED has helped school districts achieve problem-solving and decision-making excellence using proven processes delivered via high-quality workshops, consulting, and coaching. Since The processes through workshops and consulting have reached over 20,000 education leaders in the U.S. and Canada. TregoED processes are adapted from those developed by Kepner-Tregoe. KT processes have been used by government and Fortune 1000 companies in 44 countries for over 60 years.

"I am pleased that the Department for Exceptional Children team is receiving this recognition," said Beverly Holt-Pilkey, Executive Director of the Department for Exceptional Children. "They care deeply about the work they do for students, and they are passionate about developing collaborative teams to support students."

Three other districts, nationwide, New Brighton Area School District (PA), York County School Division (VA) and Johnston County School District (NC) were also honored for their work.



TregoEDs collaborative problem-solving and decision-making processes were used by the Department of Exceptional Children to improve communication and increase leadership capacity within the schools through the development of cross-collaborative teams. These steps allowed them to address high-priority issues more effectively, minimize barriers that occur in large districts, maximize opportunities and establish a system of communication.

"We are proud to see the work being done in Charleston County to help meet the complex needs of exceptional children," said Dr. Kathryn Blackburn Executive Director of TregoED. "We look forward to helping the district build upon this effort to increase transparent and data-based decision making in all areas."

Jerry Zucker Middle School Students Produce Literary Book



The words, artwork, spirit, and energy of students at Jerry Zucker Middle School of Science will forever be memorialized in their bi-annual production of The Zucker Book. This student publication of literary works is the brainchild of Erik Hilden, an 8th grade ELA and Honors English 1 teacher.

It started with the notion of the undeniable excitement of students seeing their own works in print. He teamed up with a colleague and created an after-school class that produced a magazine of literary contributions and art.

During the 2012-2013 school year, it evolved into an actual book, funded solely by Hilden and his colleague. But the

excitement fizzled when a call to join the after-school project the following year failed to garner interest.

Undeterred, Hilden regrouped and with the blessing of Principal Jacob Perlmutter, created an elective class. It was a way to run The ZuckerBook with enough students to staff a small company dedicated to the cause.

It has been a success, and today the class is divided into teams – fundraising, internal production, external production, and public relations. From costs and budgets to raising funds and awareness, each student plays a crucial role in ZuckerBook’s output. Students across the entire school are encouraged to submit their work as well.

“It was a learning experience for myself and my staff, and we all grew as a result,” said Hilden. “It’s amazing. I never thought we’d produce a real paperback book. I am very impressed with what we have.”

Hilden raised money to purchase a professional, creative software suite, computers, and equipment. Several students typeset copy, scan in artwork and paginate the latest edition. Others handle social media while another team handles advertising and brand awareness.

Citlali Avila Sanchez is head of the “Art Department.” She joined the class to learn about the publishing aspect because she hopes one day to become an author. She and three other students produce posters and advertisements for the book. Her artwork is featured on the Chapter Head pages.

“It’s an important role because we have to produce good posters so people will want to buy the book,” she said. “It’s exciting to see people anticipating the release of the book. We get feedback

from the students and use that as inspiration for the next book.”

Sicilia Benjamin works alongside Sanchez in the Art Department. She handles the scanning for the book. She joined because of her interests in writing and drawing. She hopes to one day become an animator.

“I take pride in creating a book that others will read and enjoy,” she said.

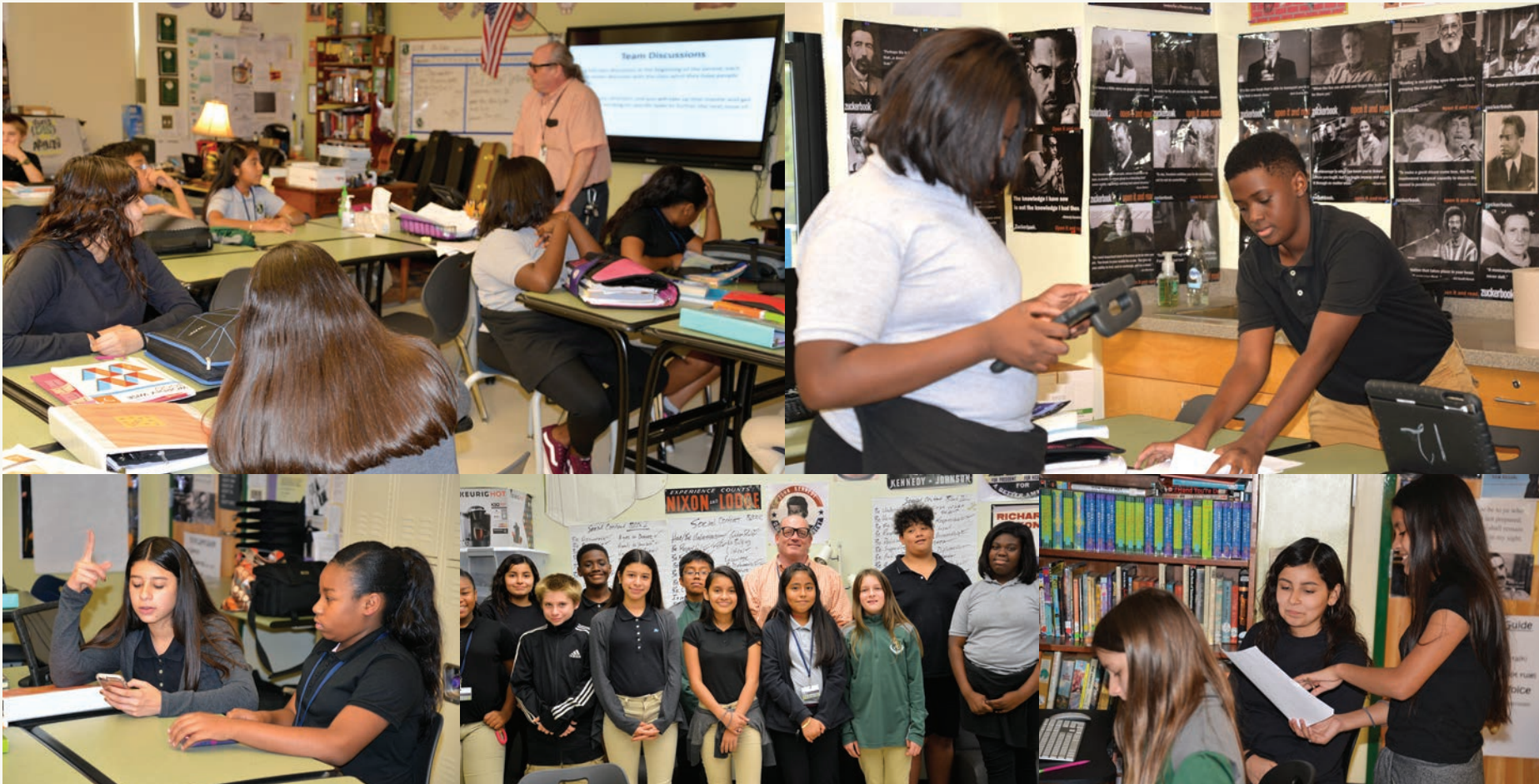
Today the book averages just over 200 pages and is filled with stories, poetry, fairy tales, the occasional editorial, and art.

Three grants help to fund the bi-annual production as well as a GoFundMe account and individual donations. It costs upwards of \$2,000 to produce the book. Sales from the book go back into producing the next book.

The next edition will be released in January and is available for \$15. This year the students will publish and release Volume 9 and 10. The book is available in four bookstores: Blue Bicycle Books, Mr. K’s, and two Education Station stores. It is also available at lulu.com.

“The point of Zuckerbook is to engage students in reading and writing, and there is nothing I can think of more engaging than seeing your work in a book,” said Hilden. “I’m excited that we’ve come as far as we have and I don’t see an end in sight.”

To learn more or donate to the Zucker Book Project, contact Erik Hilden at erik-hilden@charleston.k12.sc.us. A Stories of CCSD feature about the project is available on YouTube.



DISTRICT CALENDAR

The Lowcountry Student Summit



CCSD and Clemson University Inclusion and Equity present this extension of the Clemson University Men of Color National Summit **Saturday, January 26, 2019 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** at Academic Magnet High School in North Charleston.

Attendance is free, but limited walk in registration is not permitted. Register at Clemson.edu/menofcolor.

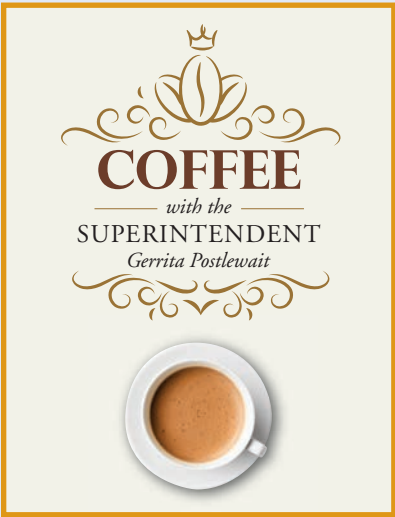
Coffee with the Superintendent

Join us for Community Coffee with CCSD Superintendent Gerrita Postlewait and the Board of Trustees at area Panera Bread locations from **7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.**

Friday, March 8, 2018
Panera Bread
5070 International Boulevard
Charleston, SC 29418

Friday, April 5, 2018
Panera Bread
2000 Sam Rittenberg Boulevard
Charleston, SC 29407

Friday, May 3, 2018
Panera Bread
2135 Ashley Phosphate Road
North Charleston, SC 29406



Hiring Fair

Charleston County School District’s Annual Teacher Hiring Event is will be held **Saturday, February 2, 2019** at the Marriott Hotel on Lockwood Boulevard in downtown Charleston.



This event is planned to help connect principals with teacher candidates seeking teaching opportunities for the 2019-2020 school year. All 80 schools will be represented. Both current teachers who are seeking a transfer, as well as external candidates, are encouraged to attend. Principals will be collecting resumes and interviewing candidates on a first come first serve basis during the event. In some cases, principals may invite candidates to interview at the school at a later date.

Teachers in all areas of certification are encouraged to participate. Pre-register by January 31, 2019, or register on the day of the event. There is a hotel discount rate of \$159 at The Marriot. Reservation information can be found here.

The Annual Hiring Event will be held from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at the Marriott Hotel 170 Lockwood Blvd. Charleston, S.C. 29403. For more information contact Jobs@Charleston.k12.sc.us (843) 937-6350 or visit www.teachincharleston.com.

CCSD INITIATES STOP THE BLEED TRAINING FOR STAFF



Charleston County School District kicked off the new year with a life-saving initiative that will be available to district employees in every school over the next few months.

Through a partnership with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and The Medical University of South Carolina MUSC Trauma Center, nearly 1,100 Combat Level Tourniquet Kits were distributed to all CCSD facilities.

These tourniquet kits contain supplies and cuff-like devices which can stop severe traumatic bleeding during an emergency on the school campus or during a school event, enabling lay-people to intervene and potentially save lives.

On Friday, January 4, 2019, multi-site training was conducted. The City of Charleston Fire Department, Charleston County Emergency Medical Services, South Carolina State Guard, North Charleston Fire Department, Trident Trauma Center, MUSC Trauma Center, and

Mount Pleasant Fire Department members assisted in the training.

Stop the Bleed: Bleeding Control for the Injured is designed to address uncontrolled bleeding from accidents or intentional harm. Uncontrolled bleeding is the number one cause of preventable death from trauma.

“Accidents can happen - whether it be from sports, on the playground or in the classroom,” said Stiles Point Elementary School nurse, Jill Burgin, District Nurse of the Year. “This training helps to keep our students, and anyone in our buildings safe. With an arterial bleed, you can die in three minutes. Emergency personnel can’t get there that quickly, and this will allow everyone from custodians to lunchroom staff and anyone else employed within CCSD to respond quickly.”

Burgin has been a nurse for almost 25 years and has spent 14 years with the district. She said the combat level kits are greatly improved from things used in the past.

“Injuries can be caused by something as simple as a slip and fall - it can be one extreme or another,” said Burgin. “Whatever the cause of that injury, CCSD staff will be ready to take care of it.”

Kit distribution and training is a tri-county effort coordinated by MUSC and local first responders. It began two years ago in the private sector and has now reached community entities.

Regina Creech is the Injury Prevention Coordinator for MUSC’s Trauma Center. She said the initiative allows schools to be more readily equipped to move into action to save a life should an injury occur.

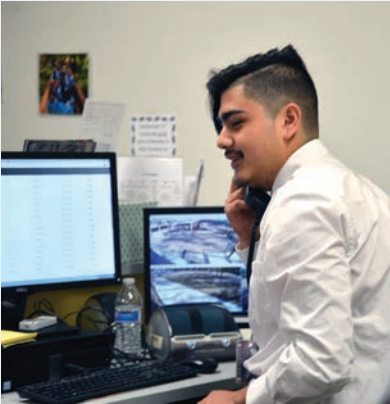
“It’s about being the help until help arrives,” she said. “Tourniquet training is just as important as CPR and the knowledge can be applied in many scenarios.”

For more information, contact Melissa Prendergast, CCSD Director of Nursing Services at 843-745-2183.

Ambassador Program Fosters Inclusion and Peer-to-Peer Learning



STEPHANIE BECKS
ANGEL OAK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEAD TEACHER



JOSUE GONZALEZ
10TH GRADER AT SJHS



BRITNEY GONZALEZ
11TH GRADER AT SJHS

Bilingual students at St. John’s High School (SJHS) are setting the example for what a successful high school student looks like. They are taking ownership of their education by participating in the new Ambassador Program that pairs non-English speaking students with a Heritage speaking student. It counts as a course credit and is designed to support and foster the inclusion of non-English speaking students. (Watch the YouTube video here).

These bilingual students are transported to nearby Angel Oak Elementary School (AOES) to assist students in the classroom and help staff and administrators where needed. Thirty percent of the school’s student population is Hispanic, but nearly 10 percent receive English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) instruction.

The Ambassador program is the brainchild of Sam Duncan, a Spanish teacher and Director of Student Activities at SJHS.

Last year he noticed bi-lingual students helping their non-English speaking classmates.

“Out of the kindness of their hearts they pitched in to help because they had the ability to do so when their classmates did not,” said Duncan. “Since the district is willing to support creative ways to promote career readiness I came up with this initiative to provide a Work/Service Learning Credit.”

Ambassadors are chosen based on several requirements. For example, students must be in good academic standing and show proficiency in both English and the native language of their assigned students.

Ambassadors must keep records and create progress reports to provide Ambassador Program Faculty Coordinators with documentation of goals, progress in English comprehension by their student, and overall academic achievement.

Stephanie Becks is the Lead Teacher at AOES. She said the program has fostered a sense of community at the school between the teachers, students, and parents.

“It is amazing to see these high school students take a leadership role in being responsible for helping to support younger students,” said Becks. “They’re helping these kids and motivating them to be successful.”

The success stories are numerous, but one, in particular, is of a 5-year-old non-English speaking student who had never been to school before.

“He was scared,” she said. “But after working with his Ambassador, he felt understood. It also allowed us to learn that he understood far more about the concepts he was being taught than we thought. Teachers want students to have a voice. In most cases the students ‘get it,’ they just can’t speak the words.”

Becks said that Duncan’s idea is already paying dividends and bearing fruit in this first semester.

“The Hispanic community is very influential on Johns Island, and they make up a large part of our school,” said Becks. “The Ambassador Program has helped the Hispanic Community feel like their kids are being supported in our school.”

Earning a service hour credit, world language credit, and limited ESOL certification/credit is incentive enough according to the participating students, but gaining the leadership experience, cultural exchange opportunities, and becoming invested in the success of their classmates and the generation that will follow them to SJHS is the real prize.

Duncan explained that he’s trying to demonstrate to students that being bilingual can be a game-changer when it comes to securing a lucrative career.

“It is amazing to see these high school students take a leadership role in being responsible for helping to support younger students. They’re helping these kids and motivating them to be successful.”

STEPHANIE BECKS, ANGEL OAK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LEAD TEACHER

Josue Gonzalez, a 10th grader at SJHS, described the program as a creative way to work with high school students to ready them for the workforce.

“Being bilingual will be beneficial to me when I go to apply for a job and perhaps allow me to earn better wages,” Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said he wanted to participate in the program because when he was younger, he was fortunate enough to be able to speak English. But many of his peers could not.

“Being able to speak both languages gives you confidence, and I want to encourage these young students to speak both because it will offer them better chances in life,” Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez has done everything from working with the students to answering the phones in the front office. He’s put many parents at ease by translating for them.

“I am a graduate of Angel Oak Elementary School, so I am appreciative of the opportunity and honored to help,” he said.

Britney Gonzalez is an 11th grader at SJHS. She’s always wanted to work with children, and as the oldest of five siblings, she’s been doing that most of her life.

She hopes to be a pediatrician one day and being bi-lingual will be a useful job skill. For now, being able to help these young students is her focus.

“I was working with a first grader who couldn’t learn his numbers and after a week of me helping to translate he was beginning to learn them,” Gonzalez said. “It makes me feel good because when you’re only Spanish speaking, it makes you feel closed in and judged. When I am working with the students, they open up to me and show me what they know. As they begin to learn English, their education gets easier, and they’re better able to interact with others and make friends.”

According to Duncan, this real-life experience is showing his students that they have value if they are bilingual.

“They feel empowered and are motivated because they’re representatives of not only the school but the community,” said Duncan.

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*

THE ELITE LADIES OF DUNSTON PRIMARY



The Elite Ladies of Matilda Dunston Primary held a toy drive for others less fortunate.

The group of young ladies consists of second and third-grade girls who are nominated by their teachers and agree to adhere to strict guidelines which include exemplary conduct, positive attitude, and strong work ethic. The girls sign a commitment contract along with a parent or guardian after reviewing the Elite Ladies of Dunston expectations. The girls also participate in fundraisers, cooking classes, etiquette classes, and book clubs. The vision is for the girls to dream of a college education which can lead to a future as scientist, mathematician, or any career of their choosing.