Charleston County School District receives Accreditation from AdvancED – continued from page 1



AdvancED is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that conducts rigorous reviews of a variety of educational institutions and systems in 70 countries to ensure that learners realize their full potential. AdvancEd is a global leader in providing continuous improvement, assessment, and accreditation services to over 36,000 institutions serving 25 million students worldwide.

Using a set of rigorous research-based standards and evidence-based criteria, AdvancED examines the whole district — its policies, programs, practices, learning conditions and cultural context — to determine how well the parts work together to carry out the district's vision and meet the needs of every learner.

Accreditation engages the school community in meeting high-quality standards, implementing a continuous improvement process, and engaging in quality assurance through internal and external review.

Elgart and his team of reviewers spent a three days examining the district. The review encompassed detailed documentation and data analysis, onsite visits, in- depth meetings to chart progress and discuss future goals, and a culminating report detailing strengths, weaknesses, and the district's final accreditation status.

The review team also shared in its findings that the district's strategic plan was a sound blueprint for the future with a clear vision for success if progress can be made.

"We embrace the continuous improvement model that the AdvancED Performance Accreditation is built on. We know that there are areas where we must continue to work to improve -- and we will," Postlewait said.

"District leaders and their community must change their commitment, remain focused on every learner, and have the courage and conviction to persevere regardless of the roadblocks or hurdles that must be overcome," urged Dr. Elgart. "Making and ensuring students are the heart of your work is a future worth pursuing and a journey worth taking."

CCSD Students Score Above State/Nation on 2018 SAT

Charleston County School District (CCSD) seniors scored above the state and nation on the overall composite and on both subtests of the 2018 SAT. That's an increase in seven points on the district's overall composite (1096 composite score). About two-thirds of seniors took the SAT.

CCSD's SAT composite ranks #8 among districts in South Carolina and is the highest ranking district in the lower part of the state (east of Columbia).

The SAT is a standardized test often used in the college admissions process. The SAT tests the reading, writing, and mathematics skills that students learn in school, and that are critical for success in college and beyond. Most students take the test during their junior or senior year of high school.

The District's Academic Magnet High School had the highest SAT Combined score among all high schools in South Carolina.

Also, ten CCSD high schools increased their overall composite (ERW + Math), with only three high schools showing decreases on the overall score.

This year CCSD tested more seniors, with the percentage of seniors tested increasing by 9.1 points. The District's percentage of seniors taking the SAT ranks Number 3 among districts in South Carolina.

"This exceptional performance shows we're succeeding in preparing students for college readiness," Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Gerrita Postlewait said. "These are positive gains that we must continue to build upon."

2018 SAT SCORES (SENIOR CLASS)

	% Seniors Tested	Reading and Writing (ERW)	Math	Composite Score	Change from Last Year
Charleston County School District	65.7%	558	538	1096	+7
South Carolina	44.8%	543	529	1064	+6
Nation	n/a	529	520	1049	-11

CCSD HIGH SCHOOLS 2018 SAT COMPOSITE SCORES

	Tested	+ Math Score	Last Year
Academic Magnet	96.9%	1383	+42
Baptist Hill	37.3%	940	+66
Burke High	52.6%	875	+1
Charleston School of the Arts	89.2%	1184	+26
Charleston Charter Math and Science	72.6%	1040	+1
Garrett Academy of Technology	86.8%	815	-54
James Island Charter High	64.5%	1074	+17
Military Magnet Academy	65.0%	928	+6
North Charleston High	44.9%	805	-68
RB Stall High	24.7%	988	+54
St. John's High	36.1%	978	+97
Wando High	77.2%	1162	+13
West Ashley High	56.0%	972	-33

Thankfulness

The month of November is a time for counting our blessings and showing gratitude. We recognize the many soldiers who serve or have served our country on Veteran's Day in November. We gather together with friends and family on Thanksgiving in November. November is truly a special month of the year where we celebrate and honor those who have secured our freedoms and established the traditions that we carry on today to show our thankfulness.

As I traveled home from the State Teacher Forum this past week feeling energized and grateful for the opportunity to meet so many amazing educators, I found my focus starting to shift the further away I traveled. I began to think about all of the deadlines and paperwork that I would need to complete over the next few months. I began to think about my students, my lesson plans, and all of the upcoming events in my classroom and school. I thought about my blog post I hadn't done yet (yes, this one). Thought after thought kept running through my mind and all of the positivity and gratefulness I felt earlier that day, was slowly starting to be



pushed out of mind and replaced with stress and an overwhelming feeling.

Being a teacher is a hard job. It sometimes comes with very little affirmation and it is all too easy to get caught up in the little things that we miss moments of celebration. Now I'm not saying that we don't have some big problems in the education field, because we all know that is not true. There are issues with equality, standardized testing, teacher pay, and the list goes on and on. Problems and struggles are always present and we can let them divide us or unite us. How we choose to address these struggles is a true measure of our character and can pave the way for a "road trip" headed toward disdain or thankfulness.

My time collaborating with other teachers at the State Forum is an experience I never will forget. I left feeling purposeful, appreciated, and connected and despite the moments of doubt and frustration that began to creep into my mind, I was able to shift my view back to one of thankfulness. Every day is a new day to seek out opportunities to grow and approach the unknown with gratitude. We need to recognize our



blessings and that our strength truly lies in one another. We need to open the doors to our classrooms and work together as only then can we be true advocates for change.

In the words of Albert Schweitzer, "In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit."

Thankfulness shouldn't just be a huge part of November, it should be a HUGE part of our everyday lives.

Stephanie Haecherl, a teacher from Whitesides Elementary in Mount Pleasant is the **2018 CCSD Teacher of the Year**. She takes over the blog from **Mia Pace**, the 2017 Charleston County Teacher of the Year.

You can email Stephanie at: stephanie_haecherl@charleston.k12.sc.us

For more information on the Teacher of the Year award, please visit https://ccsdteacher.wordpress.com.

2018-2019 CCSD Teacher Pay Raise in Effect -continued from page 1

salary enhancements. CCSD invested \$12.2 million in

The Charleston County Board of Trustees approved CCSD Staff's recommendation to put in place a variety of teacher

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
Andy Pruitt, Director of Communications and Technology
Diane Knich, Writer

Diane Knich, Writer
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Claire Wilson, Project Manager
Stephen Wyatt, Interim Webmaster

teacher salary increases this year. The results are impressive: CCSD is entering the 2018-19 school year with fewer than two teaching vacancies district-wide – an unprecedented accomplishment.

Pay increases

- 1. ALL TEACHERS 4% COST-OF-LIVING RAISE (on average) that will be a permanent adjustment to the CCSD salary schedule. Our teachers received on average a 4% Cost-Of-Living adjustment. By the way, CCSD's raise is 4 times more than the 1% raise the State mandated for teachers. The Board of Trustees approved this raise as part of a three-year plan (subject to approval by the Board each year) to ensure CCSD teachers are the highest paid in South Carolina.
- 2. ALL TEACHERS STEP RAISE for longevity that averages 2% for up to 25 years of experience. This is on top of the cost-of-living raise, meaning the majority of teachers will see a total of 6% more in salary this year. To put all this into an actual dollars example, a master's level teacher moving into their 16th year went from a salary of \$54,507 last year to \$57,822 this year with the Step raise added to the cost-of-living raise.
- 3. FIRST YEAR TEACHERS WILL BE PAID AS SECOND YEAR TEACHERS starting in September with state received funds that can be used specifically for this purpose. This adjustment will further our goal to offer first year teachers a starting salary of \$40,000.
- 4. MATH TEACHERS IN HIGH-POVERTY SCHOOLS get an extra salary incentive for teaching in identified schools. The extra salary is \$7,593 for beginning teachers

(pushing their salary to \$45,000 this year) and could go as high as \$16,267 extra for a doctorate and 23 years experience. Using the example of the master's degree math teacher moving into their 16th year, the salary would increase from \$54,507 last year to \$70,270 this year with cost-of-living, Step and math salary incentive). This extra salary incentive is available for any certified math teacher, even those who have "maxed-out" on Step raises or those who are working retirees.

5. RETIRED TEACHERS HAVE MORE OPTIONS THIS YEAR with working retirees under earnings limitation can work in any of 40 identified CCSD schools and receive their state retirement income and enjoy all the salary enhancements (above) available to CCSD teachers. In addition to the 40 identified schools, various content areas are exempt from the earning limitation. Note, last year we discontinued the retired teacher salary schedule that reduced the salary of working retired teachers by 15%

There are several other opportunities that CCSD is offering to recruit and retain teachers:

- Partnership with College of Charleston will allow teachers to add math certification and complete a master's degree.
- Partnership with USC will allow teachers to become certified as hard-to-find teacher librarians.
- Partnership with Trident Technical College and College of Charleston to create Teach Local at Early College High School which is an Educator's Academy to grown our own teachers.

In addition, the Board has approved the 2020 Teacher Salary



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Charleston County School District Receives Accreditation from AdvancED



The Charleston County School District (CCSD) Board of Trustees learned Monday afternoon that the district will receive its first-ever system-wide accreditation from AdvancED, the world's foremost education accrediting agency. AdvancED President and CEO Mark Elgart presented his agency's findings to the Board with a set of priorities for the district's initial five-year accreditation period. Elgart also chaired the AdvancED team that conducted a rigorous on-site review in the district in September.

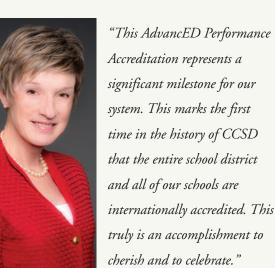
"The district is moving in the right direction. That's the major message. But it must maintain that effort," Dr. Elgart said. "Accreditation and achieving it is one aspect of it. Maintaining, and drawing and improving throughout it is even a harder hurdle to cross. But, I am proud to announce that the recommendation to our international commission to be voted on in the next few weeks will be that Charleston County School District should receive initial accreditation."

While accreditation was recommended today, district officials recognize that it is not a label for a one-time evaluation. Accreditation runs on a five year cycle, with yearly continuous monitoring checks to ensure districts and schools are still committed to making strides in the areas of feedback received from the AdvancED engagement review team.

"This AdvancED Performance Accreditation represents a significant milestone for our system," said Superintendent Gerrita Postlewait. "This marks the first time in the history of CCSD that the entire school district and all of our schools are internationally accredited. This truly is an accomplishment to cherish and to celebrate."

Elgart informed the board that the recommendation for accreditation status also includes the following focus areas for the board and district:

- Board governance, with an emphasis on whole board training;
- Equitable alignment of resources to meet the needs of all students
- Assessment and realignment of structures and processes to ensure the curriculum is based on high expectations and aligned to standards and best practice
- Greater community awareness, commitment to improvement, and ownership of the district's strategic plan
- Investment in creating and sustaining a culture in all classrooms that is responsive and supportive of the long-term vision for student engagement continued on page 4



GERRITA POSTLEWAIT, SUPERINTENDENT

CCSD BOARD APPROVES RURAL RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

The Charleston County School District Board unanimously approved a recommendation to increase all first-year classroom teachers (with zero years of experience on their South Carolina Teaching Certificate) to the second year teacher salary schedule (1 year of experience on their South Carolina Teaching Certificate) for the school year 2018-2019 via the Rural Recruitment Initiative expenditure. A supplement will be used to elevate the first year teacher salary schedule to the salary of a second year.

For FY 2019 CCSD will receive state funding for the Rural Recruitment Initiative.

The Rural Recruitment Initiative is a state-funded recruitment and retention program to address the statewide teacher shortage concerns. The use of the term rural is somewhat misleading, however. The District's eligibility is based on a five-year average teacher turnover rate as reported on the district report cards and the funds can be used district-wide, not limited to select schools.

The district was awarded \$1.67 million for recruitment initiatives.

"The district is permitted to use a portion of these approved funds to increase the salary of our current first-year classroom teachers to the second year salary level in an effort to encourage them to stay with CCSD," explained Bill Briggman, Chief Human Resources Officer. "This is another step for the board in reaching their goal of being the highest paying district in the state," he said.

The total cost, based on an estimate of 250 first year teachers (salary and benefits), is \$289,030. This increase is for classroom teachers only; guidance, media and any other paid positions on the teacher salary schedule are not subject to increase.

"The district is permitted to use a portion of these approved funds to increase the salary of our current first-year classroom teachers to the second year salary level in an effort to encourage them to stay with CCSD. This is another step for the board in reaching their goal of being the highest paying district in the state."

BILL BRIGGMAN, CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

Per guidelines issued for the use of these funds, the total cost, based on an estimate of 250 first year teachers (salary and benefits), is \$289,030. This increase is for classroom teachers only; guidance, media and any other paid positions on the teacher salary schedule are not subject to increase.

2019 Salary Schedule

BA – (First Year) \$37,407 (Second Year) \$38,258 BA+18 – (First Year) \$39,566 (Second Year) \$40,478 MA – (First Year) \$42,089 (Second Year) \$43,062 MA+30 – (First Year) \$45,235 (Second Year) \$46,284 DCTR – (First Year) \$49,005 (Second Year) \$50,160

2018-2019 CCSD Teacher Pay Raise in Effect

The start of the 2018-19 school year marked a financial milestone for Charleston County School District teachers. Whether a veteran or are brand new in the position all teachers saw pay increases and step raises, making CCSD the highest paying teacher salary district in the state. — continued on page 4

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State/Nation on 2018 SAT..

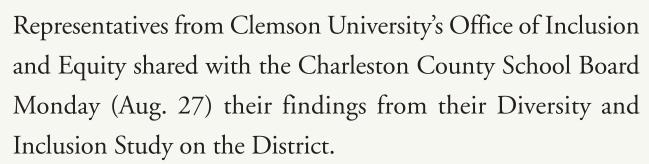
Thankfulness.

Charleston > excellence is our standard County SCHOOL DISTRICT



Clemson Report Offers CCSD Board Recommendations on Equity and Inclusion







The Board contracted with Clemson in December 2017, and in the months since, this group conducted interviews and discussions with a wide range of CCSD stakeholders, including teachers, students, district personnel, and community members. They researched and analyzed issues related to diversity, inclusion, and sources of tension throughout the district.



- Close the gaps in performance and achievement
- Reform the system to ensure access to quality schools
- Engage community stakeholders
- Restructure utilizing the 2020 school improvement referendum as a catalyst to achieve equitable opportunities for all schools

Action to address inclusion and equity must be developed for inclusion in the CCSD Strategic Plan according to Lee A. Gill, Chief Inclusion and Equity Officer with Clemson University, who presented their findings during the meeting.

His report stressed the need to address the divide between high performing and low performing schools and said solutions must involve the wider community.

"Make school district governance more efficient, accountable and credible," he said. That would involve addressing the effectiveness of magnet and choice programs with equitable access to high quality programs, he explained.

To restructure the district model, he suggested using a 2020 School Improvement Referendum as a catalyst to achieve equitable opportunity for all students.



The Follow Through

The report also called for follow through and gave some possible recommendations to be considered as part of the next step in the process. They also recommended that a team of experts be created to determine what resources and management authority is needed to improve the performance of students and will be presented within three months.

Greg Ladewski, also with Clemson's Office of Inclusion and Equity, shared a list of potential actions and explained that realistic but firm timeframes will be used to show progress.



Intractable Challenges

CCSD Chief Financial Officer Don Kennedy set the stage for the Clemson report by sharing with the Board the "intractable challenges" the district faces. Those include historically racial issues have not been adequately addressed within the school district. He explained that most issues (and even opportunities) have race as a component.

The challenges Kennedy shared include: The intractable challenges shared included: historical racial issues that have not been adequately addressed; the CCSD governance structure established by Act 340; the persistent low achievement for children of color and poverty; the geographic and economic diversity of the district; cycles of generational poverty; inadequate funding due to Act 388; resistance to change by the community; rapid expansion of school choice and charters leading to uneven educational opportunities; and lingering distrust. He shared that the area's growing economy required a well-educated workforce, and that too many of the District's students of color were not being prepared for those jobs.

These issues and the need to remedy them led to the contract between CCSD and Clemson.



Shared Future Project

The Board also received an update from Kennedy about the Shared Future Project, which is a process that is designed to integrate and build on results of CCSD initiatives such as the Clemson Study on Diversity and Inclusion, the Charleston County School District's Strategic Plan, and Phase V of the Charleston County School Construction Plan, along with non-traditional approaches to education being discussed in the community, and required employment skills identified by the business community.

Once plans are identified and created, with assistance from the company Reos Partners, CCSD staff and community members will determine how to implement the plans that address the concerns addressed in Clemson University's study.

According to Kennedy, funding will come from the CCSD procurement card (P- card) rebate program.



Discussions about equity and inclusion in Charleston County School District, recently identified in a Clemson University study, are the centerpiece of a collaborative process called Shared Future, which began its work last week with a 27-member team of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.

In August, representatives from Clemson University's Office of Inclusion and Equity shared with the Charleston County School Board their findings from their Inclusion and Equity Study over a six-month research process. In addition to their findings, the Clemson team recommended that CCSD continue the work using local stakeholders and an outside facilitator to delve deeper into the concerns raised in their report.

The work will continue as part of the Shared Future Project, a process designed to integrate and build on results of CCSD initiatives such as the Clemson Study on Inclusion and Equity, the Charleston County School District's Strategic Plan, and Phase V of the Charleston County School Construction Plan, along with non-traditional approaches to education being discussed in the community, and required employment skills identified by the business community. As part of the follow through, the report recommended that a team of experts be created to determine what resources and management authority is needed to improve the performance of students and will be presented within three months. CCSD has contracted with Reos Partners to facilitate the Shared Future Project. Once plans are identified and created, with assistance from Reos Partners, CCSD staff and community members will determine how to implement the plans that address the concerns addressed in Clemson University's study.

The Clemson group's recommendations came after they conducted interviews and discussions with a wide range of CCSD stakeholders, including teachers, students, district personnel, and community members. They researched and analyzed issues related to diversity, inclusion, and sources of tension throughout the district.

THE CLEMSON STUDY INCLUDED THESE MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Close the gaps in performance and achievement
- Make school district governance more efficient, accountable, and credible
- Reform the system to ensure access to quality schools
- Engage community stakeholders
- $\bullet \ Restructure \ utilizing \ the \ 2020 \ school \ improvement \ referendum \ as \ a \ catalyst \ to \ achieve \ equitable \ opportunities \ for \ all \ schools$
- Follow through with action on the recommendations

The Shared Future Process

- Phase 1: Initiate the project Deliverable: synthesis of the perspectives, concerns, and questions of leaders from across the system
- Phase 2: Construct the implementation scenarios Deliverable: a set of 2-3 useful implementation scenarios/plans
- Phase 3: Implementing the scenarios/plans Specific strategies for creating educational outcomes that have been considered through the lens of possible futures we may encounter in Charleston County

The Shared Future Team

A team of 27-30 people, along with Reos staff, convened last week to engage in the first of three, 3-day scenario workshops (Sept., Oct., Nov.)

The team includes those who are insightful, influential, and interested and who have the capacity to make things happen. Team members bring their thinking, experiences, and energy together to construct the scenarios. They are individuals who agree that something must change but they may vastly differ on what needs to change and how. The team is diverse in that from their different positions and perspectives, they can understand and influence all of Charleston County's communities and they come from all facets of diversity – age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

Reos staff will help the team through the various steps of the transformative scenario planning process. The scenario team is building a shared understanding of what is happening in the system. The process requires team members to see not just their part of the system but more of the whole system, and to open up and inquire and learn.

The third step is for the team to construct a useful set of scenarios about what could happen in and around their system. To be useful, the scenarios must be relevant, challenging, plausible, and clear.

The fourth step is for the team to see what their scenarios tell them about what they can and must do. These conclusions may be about actions that they need to take to adapt to things they cannot influence, or about actions to influence things they can. These conclusions may be about actions that they need to take jointly or separately.

In the fifth and final step, the members of the team act, with one another and with others from across the county, to transform their situation. These actions can take any number of forms: campaigns, meetings, movements, publications, projects, initiatives, institutions, or legislation; private or public; short-term or long-term.

The activities of this step, more than those of the previous steps, will therefore generally not be able to be foreseen or planned during the current phase of the project. Reos' role is not to advise or instruct, but to guide and support.

To date, Reo's has conducted dialogue interviews with the Scenario Team and has published an unattributed synthesis of the perspectives, concerns and questions of leaders across the district. Funding for the Shared Future process came from the CCSD procurement card (P- card) rebate program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL:

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John Read, Cradle to Career, johnread@tricountycradletocareer.org

Maurice Washington, CEO Trust Management, LLC. management@bellsouth.net



The Shared Future Synthesis document was created from interviews by Reos of 24 of the Scenario Team members. Through these interviews, Reos captured a range of views on the current state of the education system in Charleston County and hopes for its future. The synthesis document carefully lays out the range of perspectives expressed (without attributing any of the statements to particular individuals) and the key areas of consensus and of conflict. This will be an input to the next phases of the project—designing and implementing innovative ways of creating change in the system.

