

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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District adopts new Standard Response Protocol

Charleston County School District (CCSD) will officially adopt a new safety response program known as the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) on January 21, 2020. The SRP is a response framework that provides clear, consistent language and response actions for all staff, students, and first responders. The SRP is a program made available to school districts by The "I Love U Guys" Foundation.

Prior to January 21, CCSD used color codes that indicated emergency lockdown (Code Red), administrative lockdown (Code Yellow), or bomb threat evacuation (Code Green). Because of limitations that exist with that system, district officials have adopted this new and improved system to eliminate inconsistencies and allow students, faculty, staff and visitors to better understand actions required for each code.

"During an emergency, we want to take away the need to interpret codes," said Michael Reidenbach, Director of Security and Emergency Management. "The SRP provides consistent, clear, shared language and actions that can be quickly interpreted and put into action during an emergency."

On September 27, 2006 at Platte Canyon High School in Bailey, CO a gunman held seven girls hostage and ultimately shot and killed student Emily Keyes. During the time Keyes was a hostage, she sent her parents two text messages saying "I love you guys." That was the springboard for the creation of The "I Love U Guys" Foundation, formed by Keyes' parents in conjunction with first responder agencies.

According to Reidenbach the new protocols will create greater consistency across the over 80 schools and administrative sites served by the district's Office of Security and Emergency Management.

"The SRP will enhance the district's capabilities by making our response protocols easier to understand, use, and remember," added Reidenbach. "Staff will receive training in this new protocol, but the plain language and clear instructions will make it easy to understand even for those who have not been through training such as campus visitors. The SRP does not change our current response procedures; it merely enhances them by adopting clear, consistent language used to initiate a particular response."

This SRP has been used successfully for approximately ten years in over 100,000 schools.

THE FIVE DIFFERENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS IN THE SRP ARE:

- **Lockout** - Get inside. Lock outside doors. (Called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building.)
- **Lockdown** - Locks, lights, out of sight. (Called when there is a serious threat inside or immediately outside the building.)
- **Evacuate** - To the announced location. (This is used when there is a need to move students from one location to another, away from danger.)

- **Shelter** - Hazard and safety strategy. (Called when the need for personal protection is necessary, such as during a tornado or earthquake.)
- **Hold** - In your classroom, clear the halls. (There may be situations which require students to stay in their classroom.)



BUIST WINS MIDDLE SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL



Mock Trial champions

Buist Academy for Advanced Studies earned top honors in the 2019 Mock Trial State Championship in a competition held December 6-7 in Columbia.

Buist defeated Socastee Middle School in the finals, earning its first state crown in the wake of their 2018 state runner-up finish and 2019 Georgetown Regional Title.

Buist team members include Betsy Bailey, Jordan Burrell, Keren Collins, Eliza Compton, Ella Grace Dillard, Harry Ding, Parker Legette, Campbell Lesher, James Prutting, Grayson Skipper, Ava Smoak, Caroline Spann, Lukey Sutherland, Noa Wallen Walker Cote, Paul Biddle and Finley Love. Beth Bailey is the team's attorney coach, with Liz Good and Chris Garner serving as teacher coaches. Thurmond, Kirchner, and Timbes, P.A. has been Buist's community partner since the team was founded in 2012.

Mock Trial is a legal simulation competition sponsored by the South Carolina Bar Association, in which teams of middle schoolers playing the roles of attorneys and witnesses re-enact a case.

Forty one middle school teams across the state participated in regional competitions held last month in Lexington, Georgetown, Conway, and Greenville, with the top 12 teams advancing to the state competition.

Buist's Mock Trial participation dates back to 2012. The team has previously boasted three regional championships and six consecutive state tournament appearances.

"We are proud of our team not only for its victory, but for its hard work, determination, grace under pressure, and sportsmanship," said Garner. "No team could be more deserving of success. They were champions no matter what the final score was."

BURNS GIVES BACK



Burns' students gave back to their community this season. Students, families, and school staff donated items to give to residents at a local nursing home. Students were excited to donate items, with other students donating their small change because they couldn't gain access to a store but still wanted to help out their community. Students also volunteered their time to make the special Palmetto Rose Cards and wrap the donations to look festive so the residents

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DHEC NAMES TWO SCHOOLS AS ‘CHAMPIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT’



A recent in-class salt marsh estuary dissection with the marine biologists from US Fish and Wildlife Service



Students participate in last year’s sporobolus transplant field trip



JBE students participated in a sporobolus transplant field trip

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) announced that James B. Edwards Elementary School (JBE) and Mount Pleasant Academy (MPA) are the recipients of a grant that will support efforts to educate the next generation of environmental stewards.

Students from both schools will restore a salt marsh habitat and contribute relevant data to an international database for global analysis of climate change. In addition, students will be uploading real-time atmospheric measures to Channel 2 News meteorologists and to the NASA and NOAA databases.

“The Champions of the Environment program represents an excellent opportunity for schools to inspire environmental stewardship in the youth of our state,” said Dr. Mike Marcus, Chief of DHEC’s Bureau of Water.

Champions of the Environment grants are issued each school year to foster environmental education and action in South Carolina’s classrooms, from kindergarten through 12th grade.

“The students and staff of Mount Pleasant Academy are extremely excited about the opportunity to support our local marsh habitat through this partnership,” said MPA Principal Kim Jackson.

Students, teachers and environmental educators apply for grant funding by outlining their educational project that focuses on pollution or waste reduction, water or energy efficiency, or preservation of natural areas.

JBE teacher Nancy Platt applied for the grant.

“In being selected as a Champions of the Environment grant recipient, I am filled with immense pride for my James B. Edwards’ Green Team’s accomplishments,” said Platt. “We are thrilled to be taking our model to a sister school, Mount Pleasant Academy, where this grant will be used to foster upper elementary school students as citizen scientists, to contribute relevant data taken from our communities for global analysis of climate change, and to remain champions

of our environment.”

The grant program is sponsored by DHEC, Dominion Energy, and International Paper, with assistance from the Environmental Education Association of South Carolina.

“We are excited for JBE students to have the opportunity to become real citizen scientists through this award,” said JBE principal Robin Fountain. “Being ‘Champions of the Environment’ directly aligns with our mission to develop global leaders with strong character, ready to serve their communities.”

This is the second year JBE has received the grant funding.

“Thanks to additional partner funding this year, we’re excited to increase the number of awards presented, as well as the award amount,” said Amanda Ley, DHEC’s coordinator for the Champions of the Environment program.

This year, each grant winner will receive \$2,500.



JBE students participate in Wreaths Across America

Tuesday morning, December 17, 2019, fifth grade students at James B. Edwards Elementary School held their annual commemorative Wreaths Across America service at Mount Pleasant Memorial Gardens. After building seven jumbo wreaths representing the five branches of the military and MIA and POW and after researching veterans’ experiences within their families, six students placed the wreaths in the Veterans’ Garden for holiday display. Each shared testimonial of family members’ military experiences.

Left to right: Aidan Singleton, Emily Butler, Adelynn Strother, Thomas Reed, Cotes Cuttino, and Carter Heath

District celebrates new Dunston facility with dedication ceremony

Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School, in Charleston County School District’s (CCSD) Constituent District 4 opened its doors to students for the 2019–2020 academic school year, and was unveiled to the general public in a dedication ceremony December 18, 2019.

Former principal Janice Malone joined principal Cheryl Savage, City of North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey and Superintendent Dr. Gerrita Postlewait as distinguished guests. District Board member Cindy Bohn-Coats and Constituent District 4 board member Janna Wilson were also in attendance. The Dunston Chorus performed alongside the Distinguished Gentlemen and Elite Ladies who led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The new facility was funded by a “Yes” vote of the Charleston County Education Sales and Use Tax Referendum of 2014.

The new state-of-the-art 77,434 square foot building is a two-story facility that sits on a six-acre site and is designed to accommodate students in grades Childhood Development – 5.

It was a challenging project to design and construct given that a significant percentage of the building was on an active school campus. Now complete, the campus boasts adequate parking for faculty and visitors and a larger facility with an increase in natural lighting, play space and an array of colorful accents for a most enjoyable learning experience.

Liollio Architects designed the new Dunston ES, TQ Constructors built the school and Brownstone in partnership with Cumming, served as the program management firm to ensure the CCSD design requirements, project budget, and timeline were followed. The project started in May 2018 and was completed for occupancy in August 2019.

“We are thrilled to have a brand new state-of-the-art facility that provides more resources and access for collaborative learning throughout our school,” said Principal Cheryl Savage. “The natural light from the windows have really enhanced the environment and gives a perspective to our students about what’s outside in their community.”



Distinguished Gents and Elite Ladies of Dunston recite the Pledge of Allegiance



District leaders participate in the Service of Dedication

2nd Annual Gingerbread with the Principal: Building a Better Foundation

Principal Natasha Jones and the staff at W.B. Goodwin Elementary School (WBGES) are continuing to build on an established, positive relationship with the school community. Jones hosted the second annual “Gingerbread with the Principal” December 11, 2019. About 50 families attended the event to hear Jones speak about building upon a foundation of learners, and how parents can get involved.

This is Jones’ second year as the principal at WBGES, and her door is always open to speak with parents. She encourages creative thinking and welcomes ideas to make Goodwin a better place. Jones would like to see parents come up with events involving students and take the lead on preparation and follow through.

“We can’t do this without you,” said Jones. “This is a partnership between home and school. We are getting ready to build a better Goodwin. Every house has a good foundation. Today, you are going to build a gingerbread house to represent our school in your vision of the future. How do you want your house to look?”

The morning was filled with music and fun. As families made their gingerbread houses, Jones discussed what they (the houses) symbolized for her: the milk cartons represent the foundation of our school; the graham crackers are the

framework (students, parents, faculty, and staff working together to build that sense of community); the icing is what holds the school community together; and the special treats are the talents that everyone brings to the table.

The parents and families that attended had a great time, and at the same time, understood the underlying message. Music and laughter filled the room as parents worked on their gingerbread houses. Seeing parents having a good time and talking about how they can help the school was well worth the time to have this event.

“I am here because I want to support my sons and Ms. Jones,” said Michelle Oliver. “Whether my kids are here or not, I support the efforts made for the children of our community. I was here last year, and it was a lot of fun!”

Cherese Belin is a long time parent and supporter of Goodwin.

“All of my children attended this school,” said Belin. “I am here to support my daughter today. They do a great job here at this school, and I want them to stay open. It’s the people that make a school and this school is special.”

There was also a contest was to honor to best gingerbread houses. More than 40 houses were constructed, so the staff had a tough time deciding on the winners. However, three

stood out among the rest:

First place - Lataisha Brown

Second place - Cristelto Gonzalez

Third place - Monique Levine

All three parents received gift cards and prizes.

Jones reiterated the importance of getting involved and asked parents to get creative, volunteer, and stay in touch.

“If you have ideas, bring them to me and we will work together on it,” said Jones.

“We can’t do this without you. This is a partnership between home and school. We are getting ready to build a better Goodwin. Every house has a good foundation.

Today, you are going to build a gingerbread house to represent our school in your vision of the future.

How do you want your house to look?”

NATASHA JONES, W.B. GOODWIN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL



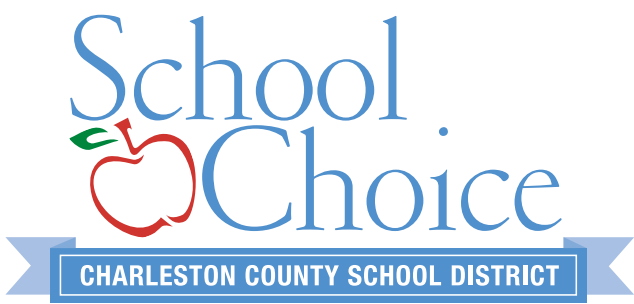
Contestants’ gingerbread houses on display



Gingerbread with the Principal contest winners from left to right (front row): Monique Levine, Cristelto Gonzalez and Latisha Brown



Contestants building their gingerbread creations



APPLICATION WINDOW OPENS JANUARY 28, 2020

Charleston > excellence is our standard
County SCHOOL DISTRICT

- JANUARY 28, 2020**
Application opens
- FEBRUARY 1, 2020**
Choice Fair
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(All CCSD schools participating)
- FEBRUARY 28, 2020**
Application closes:
4:00 p.m. for paper applications
6:00 p.m. for online submissions
- APRIL 3, 2020**
Acceptance notification to families
- APRIL 23, 2020**
Deadline to accept or decline

What is School Choice?

Each school-aged child in Charleston County is assigned to a neighborhood school based on grade level and home address. In addition, CCSD offers specialized programs, magnets, and charter schools to which students can apply.

Who can apply for a choice school?

All students residing in Charleston County are eligible to apply. Out-of-county residents are required to pay tuition. Residency verification is due by June 28, 2020.

CHOICE FAIR

Visit one of these four locations near you:

- Laing Middle
- C.E. Williams Middle
- North Charleston High
- St. John’s High

For more information about School Choice
Visit <https://www.ccsdschools.com/schoolchoice>
or Call 843-937-6582

Three CCSD students awarded by Engaging Creative Minds

Engaging Creative Minds (ECM), a local educational nonprofit that promotes Arts Integration in area schools, traveled to Buist Academy and Burke High School Wednesday, December 18, 2019, to surprise the O2 Fitness Charleston Youth Marathon® t-shirt design contest winners.

The first-place winner, was Alex Eastman, a sixth grade student at Buist Academy. He received a check for \$100 and his design will be featured on the Youth Marathon® t-shirt.

Second place winner Louise Martin, a sixth grader at Buist Academy, received a check for \$50. The third place winner was Aysha Bowens, a Burke senior who was recently accepted to North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. She received a check for \$25.

As in years past, the official charitable partner for the O2 Fitness Charleston Marathon® race is ECM.



2020 Charleston Youth Marathon t-shirt contest winners

ECM partners with local artists and art organizations to provide unique educational programming for Kindergarten through eighth grade. This year they are in 22 schools across Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties and will impact over 10,000 students.

In addition to supporting ECM programs, the Charleston Marathon® also distributes grants to local schools and classrooms through funds received from the race. In its 10th year, the O2 Fitness Charleston Marathon® is expected to see continued growth in its participation numbers.

Starting in downtown Charleston (full and half marathons) and North Charleston (Shrimp & Grits 5K® and Youth Marathon®), all four races will finish at Riverfront Park, the site of the post-race celebration.

O2 Fitness Charleston Youth Marathon® t-shirt design contest winners



Winning design by Alex Eastman



Second place design by Louise Martin



Third place design by Aysha Bowens

INTERTECH GROUP HELPS 20 ZUCKER FAMILIES OVER THE HOLIDAYS



Representatives of The InterTech Group Foundation contacted the guidance department at Zucker Middle School in order to identify families the company’s foundation could assist. The guidance counselor helped InterTech Group Foundation to identify 20 families that were in need of assistance during the holidays and to get a “wish list” from all of the family members. With funding from the foundation and those wish lists, everyone in the office adopted and shopped for a family. Before the Charleston County School District’s winter break, bags of gifts for each person were delivered to the school along with a box of food, hygiene and cleaning products for each family. The products for the families are purchased from the Lowcountry Food Bank.

Karolyn Belcher named Chief Academic Officer for CCSD

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Gerrita Postlewait, *Superintendent of Schools*
Erica Taylor, *Chief of Staff*
Sully Witte, *Communications Officer*

Charleston County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or any other applicable status protected by federal or state law. Questions about non-discrimination policies should be sent to Charleston County School District, 75 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC 29401.

Charleston County School District announced Karolyn Belcher as the new Chief Academic Officer, beginning January 6, 2020.

Belcher will lead the District’s Learning Services division. Belcher is an experienced educator with nearly 30 years of experience as a teacher, principal, teacher trainer, and organizational leader.

Most recently, Belcher was Interim Chief Talent Officer for the Alliance College-Ready Public Schools network in Los Angeles, serving 13,000 students.

Belcher began her career in education as a seventh grade science teacher in New Orleans.

Belcher was a founding member of TNTP (formerly The New Teacher Project) and worked in various roles over an 11-year period, including national president for three years and leadership positions in new teacher effectiveness, talent and operations, and human capital in partnership with more than 200 school systems nationwide.

Belcher helped build the innovative Teaching Fellows program, attracting thousands into the classroom to teach math, science, and other high-need subjects.

Belcher founded and led the John A. Reisenbach Charter School in Harlem, NY for five years. She also worked in various leadership positions with Teach For America in New York and Texas.

For the last decade, Belcher has worked with many of the nation’s largest school systems in New York City, Washington, D.C., Nashville, Houston, New Orleans, Chicago, and Philadelphia.

In addition to her work experience, Belcher is a Broad Academy Fellow, a prestigious two-year fellowship for highly accomplished educational leaders.

Belcher earned degrees from Mount Holyoke College and Teachers College at Columbia University.

In her new role in Charleston County, Belcher will focus on improving core instruction in English language arts and math, helping attract a more diversified teacher workforce, and investing in evidence-based programs to reduce the opportunity gaps between white students and students of color.



Karolyn Belcher