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 31, 2020. The SRP is a response framework that provides clear, consistent language and response options for all staff members, and first responders. The SRP is a program made available to school districts by The "I Love U Girls" Foundation.

Prior to January 31, CCSD used color codes that indicated emergency lockdown (Code Red), administrative lockdown (Code Blue), or lockout threat evaluation (Code Green). Because of limitations that exist with these systems, district officials have adopted this new and improved system to eliminate inconsistencies and allow students, faculty, and families to better understand actions required for each code.

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

On September 27, 2016 at Pinecrest High School in Bailey, a gunman held ten girls hostage and ultimately shot and killed student Kimery Rogers. During the time Kimery was a hostage, she sent her parents two text messages saying “I love you guys.” That was the impetus behind the creation of the “I Love U Girls” Foundation, formed by Kaye Payne in conjunction with first responder agencies.

According to Riedererbach the new protocol will create greater consistency across the entire school and administrative staff 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 Riedererbach. "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 new employees. 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:

• Lockdown - Get inside. Lock outside door. (Called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building.)
• Lockdown/LoLo - Lock, lock, ignore, out of sight. (Called when there is a serious threat inside or immediately outside the building.)
• Household - To the specified location. (This is used when there is a need to move students from one location to another, away from danger.)
• Shelter - Handled in safety strategies. (Called when the need for personal protection is necessary, such as during a tornado or earthquake.)
• Hold - Stay in your classroom, close the door. (There may be situations which require students to stay in their classrooms.)

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Burns staff have been back to their community this season. Students, families, and school staff donated time to give to residents at a local nursing home. Students were excited to donate time with other students donating their small change because they couldn’t gift access to a more home but still wanted to help out their community. Students also volunteered their time to make the special Palmetto Rose Center and bring the donations to local families as the residents

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BUiST WINS MIDDLE SCHOOL Mock Trial

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 Irmo Middle School in the finals, surviving to face state crown in the wake of their 2018 state run-up successes and 2019 Governor’s Regional Trial. BuiST team members include sewn Bubba, Jordan Russell, Kevin Collings, Hana Cornwell, Elle Grace Dillard, Harry Ding, Parker Legato, Campbell Lasher, Sydney Pupp, Grayson Skipper, Joey Smith, Corrine Evans, Luke Southwell, New Wellington, Casey Web and Ryan Love, Both BuiST is the team’s attorney, with Liz Good and Chris Gutter serving as team coaches. Warwick, Ridgmont, and Simms PA 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 school students reenact the play of attorney and witness to reenact a case.

Every one middle school team across the state participates in regional competitions held last month in Lexington, Greenwood, Greenville and Greenwood, with this top 12 teams advancing to the state competition.

BuiST Mock Trial participated date back to 2012. The team has previously hosted three regional championships and an onetime state tournament appearance.

“We are proud of our team not only for their victory but for their hard work, determination, grace under pressure, and sportsmanship,” said Gutter. “We were able to move dozens of reasons. They were champions no matter what the final was.”

School 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.
Focus ON CCSD

DHEC NAMES TWO SCHOOLS AS ‘CHAMPIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT’

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 Gents 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.

“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 education apply for grant funding by submitting their educational project that focuses on pollution or waste reduction, water or energy efficiency, or preservation of natural areas. JRE teacher Nancy Platt applied for the grant. “In order to become a Champion 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 community 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 thrilled for JRE students to have the opportunity to become our citizen scientists through this award,” said JRE principal Robin Brown. “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 JRE has received the grant funding. "Thanks to additional partner funding for this year, we’re excited to increase the number of awards presented, as well as the award amounts,” said Amanda Ray, DHEC’s coordinator for the Champions of the Environment program. This year, each grant winner will receive $2,500.

District celebrates new Dunston facility with dedication ceremony

Marilla 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.

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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.

"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.”

JBE students participate in Wreaths Across America

District leaders participate in the Service of Dedication

Lolliss 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.

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JBE students participate in a sparrow transfer plant field trip
2nd Annual Gingerbread with the Principal: Building a Better Foundation

Principal Natasha Jones and the staff at W.B. Goodwin Elementary School (WGBES) are continuing to build on an established, positive relationship with the school community. Jones hosted the second annual “Gingerbread with the Principal” December 13, 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 in the principal at WGBES, and her door is always open to speak with parents. She stresses 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 house) symbolized for her; the marshmallow represents the foundation of our school; the candy was students’ hard work; the frosting was faculty and staff working together to build this sense of community; the icing was 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 son and Mrs. 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!”

Chatria Felix, a long-time parent and supporter of Goodwin, “All of my children attended this school,” said Felix. “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 to honor the best gingerbread houses. More than 40 houses were constructed, as the staff had a tough time deciding on the winners. However, there stood out among the rest.

First place: Monique Levine
Second place: Cristeio Gonzalez and Latisha Brown
Third place: Monica Levine

All three parents received gift cards and prizes.

Jones reminded 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

APPLICATION WINDOW OPENS
JANUARY 28, 2020

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.

For more information about School Choice
Visit https://www.ccsdschools.com/schoolchoice
or Call 843-937-6582
Focus on Charleston County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or any other applicable status provided by federal or state law. Questions about non-discrimination policies should be sent to Charleston County School District, 75 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC 29401.

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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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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 grade student 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 Youth Marathon® race is ECM.

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