

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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CCSD TO ROLL OUT CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING TO ALL STAFF

Charleston County School District (CCSD) will unveil a new Board mandated Cultural Competency training in the coming months for all district employees.

The district is developing an advisory group to help teachers and staff understand their roles in creating schools that are more culturally responsive to the diverse student population it serves.

The official policy was adopted by the CCSD Board of Trustees December 16, 2019.

Additionally, the committee will help recruit an individual to lead the district's diversity and inclusion efforts. Staff is currently drafting the job description for the committee to review when they first convene in March. The group will meet quarterly and consist of 11 community members that are not CCSD employees.

Don Kennedy, the District's Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, said the committee's responsibilities will include the identification of ways to improve diversity at all levels through leadership and feedback in developing initiatives, strategies and training.

Kennedy and his team consulted with entities around the country, includes Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Austin, TX. Independent School District and the Colorado Department of Education to develop a model for CCSD.

Targets for the diversity and cultural training ultimately developed will include principals, teachers, volunteers, paraprofessionals, district level leaders, department heads, and school board members.

Top-level leadership training will differ from that of the classroom teacher who is working directly with students said Kennedy. Teachers must be more culturally responsive to a student as compared to district leaders who need to develop wide-range strategies that benefit the entire district.

The committee will also find ways to obtain baseline data to ascertain

where district staff is as far as their understanding of cultural competency, Kennedy explained. Once complete, the committee will create the various types of training that will be rolled out.

Cultural Competency is comprised of four components:

- Awareness of one's own cultural worldview
- Attitude towards cultural differences
- Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews
- Cross-cultural skills

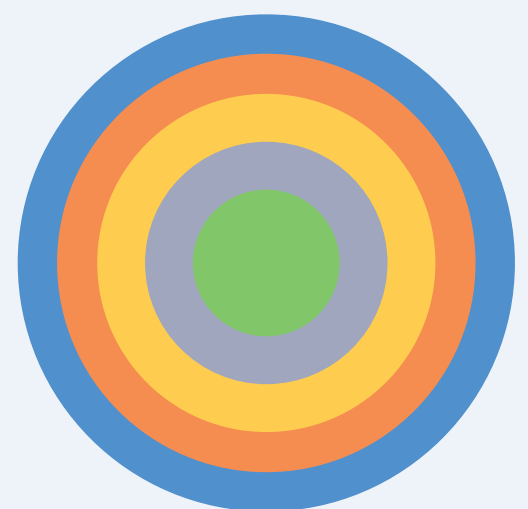
The word culture implies the integrated patterns of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups.

The word competency implies having the capacity to function in a particular way: the capacity to function within the context of culturally integrated patterns of human behavior defined by a group. Competency in functioning cross-culturally means learning new patterns of behavior and effectively applying them in the appropriate settings.

The policy adopted contains the following elements that are essential for its employees to contribute to the District's ability to become more culturally proficient:

1. Value Diversity: Claim Differences • Incorporate differences in the curriculum – students must see themselves in their curriculum and instructional materials • Acknowledge the contribution of various cultural and ethnic groups through teaching and learning
2. Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge • Incorporate cultural knowledge and training into the professional development of all District staff • Ensure educators' pedagogy is culturally responsive • Structure opportunities to engage parents and communities in cultural awareness
3. Adapt to Diversity • Develop structures for revisiting community needs and values to align school policies and resources

Targeted Training Model For Cultural Competency Training



- Students, Families
- School Based; Principals, Teachers, Volunteers, Contracted Services (Kelly), Paraprofessionals, Bus Drivers, Food Service, etc.
- District Level Leaders and Staff, Department Heads, Coordinators, etc.
- Cabinet, Chiefs
- Board of Trustees, Constituent Boards, Superintendent

Frierson unveils remodeled library



Frierson Principal Dr. Deborah Davis-Cummings and mural artist Claudia Boyce

Edith L. Frierson Elementary School became a partial magnet Montessori school in 2018 and as a result, did a complete overhaul on their media center to reflect the teachings of Montessori. The remodeled space includes a mural handpainted by local artist Claudia Boyce depicting Wadmaw, local landmarks with historical ties to the school and the surrounding area.

Frierson serves District 9 offering three primary Montessori classrooms, serving 3, 4, and 5-year olds, and one lower Elementary classroom. In addition, Edith L. Frierson Elementary serves non-Montessori classes in grades 2-5.

In the new media center, everything from the colors to the chairs model the Montessori Method.

The components of the Montessori program are grounded in choice, concentration, independence, and order. This instructional method is characterized by providing a prepared environment: tidy, pleasing in appearance, simple and real, where each element exists for a reason in order to help in the development of the child.

“The revitalized library environment meets the needs of all children and has furniture of varying sizes where children can work independently or in small groups in a truly beautiful setting. The District's commitment to creating a Montessori program for the families of D9 is very evident in the revitalized Edith L. Frierson Elementary and Montessori School.”

DR. DEBORAH DAVIS-CUMMINGS, EDITH L. FRIERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



The new library at Edith L. Frierson Elementary School

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Keerthana Samuel takes top spot in CCSD's 2020 Spelling Bee

Forty spellers participated in the Charleston County School District (CCSD) 2020 Spelling Bee held January 16, 2020, at Burke High School. It took eight rounds for Keerthana Samuel of C.E. Williams Middle School to earn the top spot. Samuel struggled with the word "Sommelier" adding an "e" at the end but much to her relief spelled "Pruritus" with ease, giving her the title.

Samuel said she originally was unable to obtain the list to begin studying so she used the list from the previous year.

"I studied two pages a day and memorized each word," said Samuel. "Today, I stayed home from school to continue memorizing my words. I did my best but I certainly didn't expect to win first place."

Thirty-six schools sent competitors. Only four scholars took the top spots.

Samuel along with 17 other top spellers will advance to the Post and Courier's SpellBound! 2020 competition in March.

The winner of SpellBound! 2020 moves on to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

The following CCSD students took the top four spots and will advance to the Post and Courier SpellBound! Spelling Bee:

- 1st place: Keerthana Samuel, C.E Williams Middle School, 6th grade
- 2nd place: Daniel Kagen, Buist Academy, 7th grade
- 3rd place: Piper Koziick, Haut Gap Middle School, 5th grade
- 4th place: Erin Baylock, Deer Park Middle School, 8th grade

Samuel said to prepare for the next round she will continue to study the words and learn more about root words and learn tips for memorizing words that originated from other languages. "I am really looking forward to the next level," Samuel said.

The other fourteen students who will advance to SpellBound 2020 include:

- Shaniya Brown – Simmons Pinckney Middle School – 8th Grade
- Jacob Crosby – Haut Gap Middle School – 8th Grade
- Samajaye Garrett – St. James Santee Elementary-Middle School – 5th Grade
- Isis Hanna – Charleston County School of the Arts – 7th Grade
- Maxine Lussier – Moultrie Middle School – 7th Grade
- Parc Mudock – Orange Grove Elementary School – 8th Grade
- Luke Paggi – James B. Edwards Elementary School – 5th Grade
- Alanna Simmons – Charleston Charter School for Math and Science – 7th Grade
- Sadie Smith – West Ashley Advanced Studies Magnet – 7th Grade
- Mason Toporek – Orange Grove Charter School – 5th Grade
- Christina Washington – Oakland Elementary School – 5th Grade
- Gabriel Williams – Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School – 5th Grade
- Victoria Williams – Jerry Zucker Middle School – 7th grade
- Jenna Zimmermann – Thomas C. Cario Middle School – 7th Grade



Keerthana Samuel was the winner of the CCSD 2020 Spelling Bee



The CCSD 2020 Spelling Bee Top Four winners from left: Erin Baylock, Piper Koziick, Daniel Kagen, and Keerthana Samuel



The CCSD 2020 Spelling Bee finalists and Top Four winners

HUNLEY PARK HONORS STUDENTS FOR GROWTH AND EFFORT



Hunley Park Elementary celebrated their mid-year Principal's Recognition for Growth and Effort Ceremony.

The students recognized performed well enough on MAP to be on track for a year and a half growth. Students were rewarded with a medal during the ceremony.

They had a special recognition for 4th-grader, Eliana Yelverton, who scored a Perfect Score on the 2019 South Carolina Ready Math Test.



HISTORICAL LANDMARK CEREMONY HELD AT SITE OF OLD LAING MIDDLE SCHOOL



The Laing Alumni Association hosted a historical marker unveiling on January 29, 2020 at the former site of Laing Middle School. The property was sold to Home Depot and the school relocated to the shared Sweetgrass Basket Campus. Laing has a storied history and as part of the demolition of the old school, Home Depot representatives promised to memorialize the school's history by preserving and implementing architectural and landscape elements of the old school into the new store and surrounding area.

Wando High School students were tasked with designing a site plan to enhance the area around the historical marker. They were recognized during today's dedication by local, regional and state officials as well as Charleston County School District Superintendent Dr. Gerrita Postlewait.

In addition, Home Depot donated a \$5,000 check to the Laing Alumni Association which was presented by two Laing alumni that work at the Mount Pleasant store.



Burke's Anthony Brown honored

"Thank you to my jungle and my village...it takes the village to raise the child, but it takes the village and the jungle to raise a king."

Anthony Brown, a senior at Burke High School shared these words with an audience of over 100 attendees at The South Carolina Education

Associations 2020 Human and Civil Rights Luncheon on January 25, 2020. Brown received the Richard W. Riley Award and was the youngest award recipient at the annual event.

The Richard W. Riley Award is given to a K-12 student whose achievements in the school and/or community has helped enhance the sense of worth and dignity of others. Brown met both sets of criteria for the award by promoting leadership in specific activities and actions; showing appreciation for diversity and the elimination of bigotry and prejudice; and by demonstrating leadership in improving the

conditions and self-esteem of minorities or the disadvantaged. Brown is the only student to receive this award statewide.

Brown's passion for equity and social justice is one of the many reasons why he was a student selected to participate in the Charleston County School District's Shared Future Project, which focused on equity and inclusion. At Burke, Brown also participates in the Burke High School Marching Band, the school step team, and soccer team. He plans to major in business and has already received numerous acceptance letters and scholarship opportunities.

WANDO BAND HONORED BY NATIONAL BAND ASSOCIATION

The Wando High School Band was recently named as one of the 2019 National Recipients of the National Band Association (NBA) Program of Excellence Blue Ribbon Award.

The NBA Programs of Excellence initiative recognizes quality programs at all levels. Those programs and educators which challenge students and promote standards of excellence are honored nationally through this initiative.

The band is under the direction of Bobby Lambert, Lanie Radecke, and Jeff Handel.

“The National Band Association is one of the most respected band organizations in our profession,” said Lambert. “They have honored legends in our field as well as programs that expose their students to extraordinary opportunities. We are honored to be

counted among some of the best programs in the country and are thrilled to bring a national spotlight to Charleston County.”

According to Lambert, Radecke spent many hours compiling videos, audio recordings, and past programs as part of their application.

“It was quite rigorous,” said Lambert. “The committee is very adamant the winners must have a well-rounded program; a rarity for so many music programs. There are colleges who would love to have our program.”

Many school bands focus on just marching or jazz but Wando exhibits high standards and performance in the realm of ensemble and solo playing in the mediums of concert, marching, and jazz literature.

“We just couldn’t be prouder of the work our students have done,” said Lambert. “This award is not the same as ‘winning a contest’. It is a cumulative award for the great work of not only this band but our previous classes of alumni students and staff members.”

The Bands of Wando are in large part, supported by the local community, along with the Charleston County School District, the Town of Mount Pleasant, its Harmony Sponsors, the Bands of Wando Foundation, parents, and alumni. For more information visit WandoBands.org.

“It takes committed students, parents, and administrators, coupled with a community that values doing the best for our students to make our Wando Band successful,” added Lambert.



The Wando Band has been recognized on the state, regional and national levels



Wando Band 2019

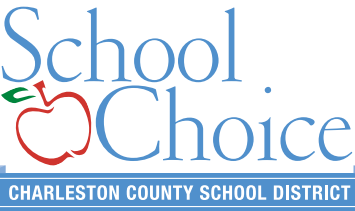


The Wando Band is nationally recognized

CCSD’s School Choice application process for 2020-2021 school year runs through February 28, 2020

Charleston County School District (CCSD) opened its School Choice application process for the 2020-2021 school year Tuesday, January 28, 2020; it will end Friday, February 28, 2020. The following calendar includes the dates, deadlines, and events associated with this year’s application process. January 28, 2020 Application process opens at 12:00 p.m. February 1, 2020 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Choice Fairs at C.E. Williams Middle, Laing Middle, Military Magnet Academy, and St. John’s High *Families should visit the location closest to their residence to learn about their available school options.

February 28, 2020 Paper applications due by 4:00 p.m.; online application window closes at 6:00 p.m. April 3, 2020 Notification of acceptance April 3 – April 23, 2020 Parents confirm acceptance June 30, 2020 Residency address confirmations must be received Paper application pick-up and drop-off locations for this year’s cycle are: Baptist Hill Middle High, Camp Road Middle, C.E. Williams Middle, Laing Middle, Military Magnet Academy, St. John’s High, and the District’s Office at 75 Calhoun Street.



The District is holding six Application School Choice Parent Assistance Events during the open period. Each one will start at 5:30 p.m. and last until 7:00 p.m. : Military Magnet Academy – February 6, 2020 | St. John’s High School – February 6, 2020 | C.E. Williams Middle School – February 13, 2020 | Laing Middle School – February 13, 2020 | Military Magnet Academy – February 20, 2020 | St. John’s High School – February 20, 2020 Applications for the following charter schools can be submitted as part of this process: Allegro Charter School of Music, Carolina Voyager Charter, East Cooper Montessori Charter, Greg Mathis Charter High, James Island Charter High, and Orange Grove Charter.

For more information, please visit www.ccsdschools.com/schoolchoice. Parents and guardians with questions are encouraged to call (843) 937-6582. You can obtain a complete list of choice schools by selecting “Choice Schools” from the left menu on the “School Choice” webpage.

Charleston > excellence is our standard
County SCHOOL DISTRICT

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

BEGINNING JANUARY 28, 2020

Why Enroll Now?

- 85-90% of brain development happens during a child’s Pre-K years (Rauch Foundation)
- Stimulating classroom experiences foster optimal brain development
- Provides preparation for kindergarten

Benefits for Your Family

- The programs are no cost to families
- Full-day program provides a safe and healthy learning environment for children

Enrollment Requirements

- Child must turn 4 years old by September 1, 2020
- Child will participate in a screening
- Charleston County resident



HOW TO APPLY

Apply 2 ways:

1. Online at ccsdschools.com
2. Fill out paper intake form at zone school

FOR MORE INFORMATION

visit www.ccsdschools.com
or call 843-937-7916
or email pamela_waters@charleston.k12.sc.us

Over 300 NCES students receive new shoes from Shoes of Hope

One in three children experience homelessness in the United States. Shoes and socks are in the top 10 items needed by students in school.

In an effort to combat that Shoes of Hope, sponsored by Samaritan's Feet and Thrivent, delivered 330 pairs of shoes to students at North Charleston Elementary School (NCES) last week.

Samaritan's Feet International is a non-profit organization founded in 2003 by Nigerian-born Emmanuel "Manny" Ohonme and his wife, Tracie, for the purpose of sharing hope with children in need by washing their feet, giving them a new pair of shoes, and helping them believe that their dreams can come true.

"These shoes are magical," said one kindergarten student at NCES.

The legacy of Samaritan's Feet began when an aid worker in Lagos, Nigeria gave a pair of athletic shoes to a 9-year-old boy named Manny. Those shoes became a symbol of hope to Manny and a catalyst to his love for basketball. Over time, he earned a basketball scholarship to a college in the US, graduated, began a career, and lived life to the fullest. However, he never forgot the children of his homeland, or that one "Good Samaritan" who gave him hope with a pair of shoes.

"We have matching shoes," added a NCES first grade student. "I have extraordinary shoes and enjoyed having my feet washed and dried by a teacher!"

The heart of the Shoes of Hope program is foot washing. It may seem uncomfortable when first considered, but when put into practice, it is life-changing for both the volunteer and the recipient. Humility and service are never wasted commodities; they are investments of the human spirit that result in real needs being met and inspiration of others.



Volunteers prepare to distribute shoes



NCE students admire their new shoes



From left: Mrs. Suzanne Reed; Everette Landrith and Zalynn Rodwell, 7th grade band students; and Katie Smith, One80 Place

SOA students donate over \$1,000 to One80 Place

Charleston County School of the Arts (SOA) Middle School Band presented a check on January 23, 2020 to One80 Place in the amount of \$1,032. These funds were raised during their two holiday concerts in December.

The concert featured a piece titled "A Solitary Wish" composed by Brian Balmages. In concert halls and venues across the country, it has become customary to collect a "love offering" from those in attendance when playing "A Solitary Wish." SOA's Middle School Band chose this year's love offering to benefit one80 Place, a Charleston service agency dedicating to helping families and individuals end their homelessness and turn their lives around.

"I am very proud that my students took these piece to heart and portrayed an act of kindness while helping those less fortunate," said Suzanne Reed, SOA Middle School Band Director.

Balmages describes the piece as one that begins with a single individual (a clarinet soloist) just asking to be noticed while everyone walks by, some dropping a few coins or a dollar but avoiding conversation at all cost.

"As the music develops, we experience a wide range of emotions as the joy of the holidays is juxtaposed with solitude," Balmages has noted. "Ultimately, in this particular story, the individual is joined by another, and eventually there are four of them together (the quartet). As a couple people begin to leave, two voices remain - Flute and Oboe representing one, and alto sax representing the other. The person's wish comes true - they are no longer alone."

"To Mrs. Reed and the SOA Middle School Wind Ensemble, thank you for continuing my efforts to make a difference," said Balmages. "It means the world."

"I am very proud that my students took these pieces to heart and portrayed an act of kindness while helping those less fortunate."

SUZANNE REED, SOA MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND DIRECTOR

WE SEE YOU

School Resource Officers are often the first thing students see every day when they arrive at school. They serve as more than just a law enforcement officer, they are a friend, a mentor and sometimes a parental figure.

We see these men and women show kindness and compassion to the most vulnerable members of our society. So, in appreciation of their service to Charleston County School District scholars, we honor them for what they do – for it so profoundly impacts every individual in the school communities where they so selflessly serve.

To nominate your school resource officer, please email sully_witte@charleston.k12.sc.us.



Ofc. Anthony Powell
SRO

City of Charleston
Burke High School

What brought you into this work?

I got into this line of work because of my love for helping people in my community. I was born and raised in Charleston and I was 23 years-old when I decided to go into law enforcement. I started at the county detention center where I worked for two years and then moved on to work at The City of Charleston where I have been for the last eight years. I have a total of ten years in law enforcement.

What makes the position of School Resource Office unique?

Being a School Resource Office allows me to connect with the younger generation. I have a hand in improving not only their world at school but the community overall. I've seen a lot things in world and can relate when the students come to me. I might not be able to reach them all but if I can help some of these students and make difference in our future generation then I've done my job and met my calling.

What makes the school community you serve so special?

I like to say Burke has always treated me like family-literally. The Downtown community is a very tight-knit family and so is the school. I've only been at Burke for a year but since day one they have treated me like family. Burke is one big family from Principal Swinton on down to the students and even the alumni.

What is your favorite part of the day?

The perfect time of day is lunch because it the one time in the day where I get the full attention of the kids. I can talk to them in halls but at lunch I sit with them and get to know them. We goof around. I see what is going on in their lives. It is also helpful because they give me information on things going in the community which may allow me to stop negative things before it happens.

Focus ON CCSD

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

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