

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 LAUNCHES NEW MOBILE APP

Charleston County School District (CCSD) has launched the new CCSD Mobile App this week, where parents, students, and the community can find the latest news and information using their smartphones and mobile devices.

CCSD has expanded its communications outreach with a free mobile app that is now available in the online Apple App and Google Play app stores.

The CCSD Mobile App will offer an updated feed of district news and events with photos and links to the district website. The app can also be customized by the user by selecting the schools they are most interested in for news and updates. Multiple schools can be selected as the user customizes the app to align with their family needs.

Users will be able to see and receive real-time notifications as they are sent from the school. Direct access to the school's social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram will be just a click away.

"We are very excited about this new initiative," said Erica Taylor, CCSD Chief of Staff. "With our new user-friendly mobile app, parents and community members can stay connected with our district and schools, and with activities, our students are engaged in every day."

In addition to calendars and notifications from the district and schools, a link to the breakfast and lunch menus, transportation, news, and media will be available. A link to

the department directory at the district level will allow users to send messages directly to building administrators.

Parents, students, and community members are encouraged to download the CCSD Mobile App to their smartphones. Search "Charleston County Schools, SC" in both app stores to find the app!

"We are very excited about this new initiative. With our new user-friendly mobile app, parents and community members can stay connected with our district and schools, and with activities, our students are engaged in every day."

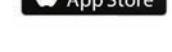
ERICA TAYLOR — CCSD CHIEF OF STAFF



You can find

Charleston County Schools, SC

in the app store.



Opportunity for students and the community highlighted in Cooper River CAS dedication ceremony



The Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies, in Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Constituent District 4, will provide life-changing opportunities for the students who take advantage of the opportunities offered in that new facility. The facility, and those opportunities, were highlighted and celebrated at a recent dedication ceremony.

Featured speakers at the event included City of North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey, CCSD Board of Trustees Chair Rev. Dr. Eric Mack, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Gerrita Postlewait, and Principal Vanessa Brown.

"This is a place where students can put into practice the hope they have for the future," said Brown. "Now students who live in the same neighborhoods I grew up in will have access to explore and study careers they may have previously considered beyond their reach. My staff and I pledge that this is where we will develop highly-trained professionals."

Scholars from Burke High School, Military Magnet Academy, North Charleston High School, and R.B. Stall High School can choose from seven Career Pathways that offer a total of 12 high-demand, high-wage programs.

The new state-of-the-art, 84,000 square-foot building is designed to seat 600 students and is located across from North Charleston High School. The building includes both classrooms and lab spaces for programs such as health science technologies, information technology pre-engineering, arts, and audio-visual technologies.

Cooper River CAS also has high-bay facilities for Auto Collision Repair, Mechatronics and Building Construction, labs for STEM classes, Biomedical and Health Sciences, Cyber Security, Computer Repair, and 'Project Lead the Way' classes. Other areas of the building include maker spaces, a two-story exhibition space, and a 150-seat lecture hall.

"I don't think I've walked into any building that is classified as a school in Charleston County that has demonstrated so much beauty and a welcome approach," said Mayor Summey. "I think this is one of the greatest and wisest things that we've done in the greater Charleston area in years. Our children and grandchildren are going to benefit from what's happening here."

The construction team worked in tandem with local and state agencies to open the school on time and within the approved budget of \$42.7 million. The Cooper River CAS was funded by a "Yes" vote of the Charleston County Education Sales and Use Tax Referendum of 2014.

In addition to the construction management team, Cumming/Brownstone, the architect was Steven & Wilkinson/Red Iron Architects, and the general contractor was McKnight Construction. The Project Manager was Margarita Perez and the Site Manager was John Calvin.

CCSD 2020 Graduation Rate is highest on record



The Charleston County School District's 2020 seniors have the highest four-year graduation rate on record, with 86.6 percent graduating "on time," according to the latest district and school report cards released this week by the S.C. Department of Education. The 2020 mark is up

2.4 percentage points from last year, and CCSD's rate is 4.5 percentage points above the average for all districts in the state. CCSD's graduation rate is the highest since the state report card system began keeping track of on-time graduates.

CCSD's three largest demographic groups, White, African-American and Hispanic, had record-high graduation rates as well. All three groups are also above the state average for their comparison groups.

Graduation rates and other district and school data on the S.C. Report Cards can be found at <https://screportcards.ed.sc.gov/>.

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STATE CHAMPIONS



Beckham girls' tennis team wins first state title in school history

Lucy Beckham High School has been open for less than two months, but the brand new school already has a South Carolina High School League state championship. The Bengals' girls' tennis captured the AAAA title with a 5-1 victory over Greenville in the state finals this past weekend at the Florence Tennis Center. Two days later, Piper Charney (17-1 season record) added to the LBHS tennis program's impressive start by winning the SCHSL AAAA-AAAA individual state title; teammate Ella DeFord finished third in the individual bracket. Before winning it all, the Bengals rolled to Region 7-AAAA and Lower State titles. They finished the season with a 21-1 record.

ROSTER

Piper Charney
Ella DeFord
Perrin Rogers
Kaia Reiter
Lila Small
Kayla Fergus
Blythe Myers
Kate Daniel
Mackie Black
Lilliana Iacofano
Kaia Hamill
Abby Jones
Ellie Gitte

For more information contact Scott McInnes at (843) 953-2900.

JICHS Girls Cross Country wins SCHSL title

The James Island Charter High School girls' cross country team won the South Carolina High School League AAAA state championship yesterday in Columbia. The Trojans edged out Hilton Head by one point! This is the second state title for the JICHS girls' cross country program (they won in 2012).

James Island also has the individual SCHSL AAAA state champion; freshman Hannah Vroon finished first with a time of 18:25.39 (winning by more than 10 seconds). Teammate and senior Amelia Carson also ended up in the top 10 with an eighth-place finish.

This is the first time JICHS won both the girls' cross country team and individual state titles in the same year, and Vroon is the first student-athlete to win an individual girls' cross country state championship in school history.

ROSTER

Julia Beebe
Amelia Carson
Anna Sofia Crews
M.K. Huddleston
Carlisle Miller
Anikka Pace
Hannah Vroon
Avery Belk
Kirra Borg
Sierra Wiggins

Head Coach

David Lee

Assistant Coaches

Joe Eshelman
Ed Carson
Kelly Kimball
Chris Covert



Wando captures fourth title SCHSL state championship in girls' swimming

Academic Magnet student wins individual title

The Wando High School girls' swimming team continues to be a dynasty at the AAAA level. The Warriors, led by coaches Cheryl Durden and McKenzie Nash, captured their fourth straight state championship this past week (and sixth overall) at the South Carolina High School League AAAA state championship meet at the new North Charleston Aquatic Center this past weekend.

Wando held off Spartanburg for the team title; Gil Shaw added an individual state title by winning the 100-yard breaststroke event with a time of 1:04.49.

It was a strong showing for other CCSD programs in the girls' championships; Lucy Beckham High School came in third place in the AAAA meet in their first year of competition, and James Island Charter High School finished fifth. At the AAA level, Academic High School finished in fifth place.

In the boys' swimming state championships, Academic Magnet's Kyle Hertwig won the 50-yard freestyle AAA state championship with a time of 22.10. Hertwig helped the Raptors come in third place in the team standings.

Wando was the runner-up in the AAAA state meet, and at the AAAA level, Lucy Beckham took third place and James Island came in fifth place.



Wando girls' 2020 state title team

ROSTER

Eliza Baxter
Estelle Bauer
Sophie Frece
Mara Goodrich
Regan Leach
Illy Lightfoot
Caitlin Mason
Ellis Pitts
Halle Schart
Gil Shaw
Jenna Thrift

Wando Girls' Volleyball wins fourth SCHSL title

Wando High School is back on top of the volleyball world in the state of South Carolina. The Warriors rallied past T.L. Hanna in the SCHSL AAAA championship match in five sets on Saturday in Columbia, 25-17, 17-25, 17-25, 25-22, 15-11 to win their fourth state championship in program history (first since 2015).

Junior Hastings Witt led the Warriors with 11 kills; sophomores Emma Sanders and Hannah Togami each added 10 kills. Senior Ava McCarthy made 53 assists and senior Chandley Thompson recorded 28 defensive digs.

The Warriors finished the year, and head coach Alexis Glover's 34th season in charge of the program, with a 20-1 record.

This was Wando's 13th appearance in the state finals.

ROSTER

Ansley Albrecht
Reese Campbell
Taylor Feher-Hall
Aureana Fisher
Lauren Garrett
Kat Hranowsky
Ella Hudock
Emily King
Grayson Lutz
Taylor Martel
Ava Grace McCarthy
Ellie Middleton
Emma Sanders
Emily Sturdivant
Chandley Thompson
Hannah Togami
Brynn Whitehair
McKinley Wing
Hastings Witt

Head Coach

Alexis Glover

Assistant Coaches

Jennamarie Lesky-Aull

Cole Condon

Amelia Dawley

Tracy Carper



School-based CCSD employees Hero Week

In order to celebrate the hard work that is happening in all of our schools across the district, the week of October 26th was dedicated as Hero week for school-based CCSD employees! In order to achieve the amount of success that we have with teaching scholars in the midst of a pandemic, we recognize that it takes the work of those who are committed to changing the lives of scholars despite our current circumstances. It takes those who see solutions instead of problems. It takes those who dig deep and pull from the depths of their souls because they have exhausted everything else, still pushing forward in an almost supernatural way. Pushing forward with supernatural powers like SUPERHEROES!"



Left to Right

Top Row: Deer Park Middle, Early College High School, Jerry Zucker Middle School, Laurel Hill Primary School
Row 2: W.B. Goodwin Elementary School, Memminger Elementary School, St. John's High School

CCSD staff members to participate in Racial Equity Institute training

YWCA GREATER CHARLESTON

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OUR PARTNERSHIPS

OUR NEWS

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eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
YWCA Greater Charleston

RACIAL EQUITY INSTITUTE



Around 300 Charleston County School District staff members will take part in Racial Equity Institute (REI) workshops offered in partnership with YWCA Greater Charleston (YWCA.GC). CCSD staff in leadership and teaching roles will participate in REI Phase 1 virtual workshops; the training starts this month and will continue through June 2021.

REI is designed to develop the capacity of participants to better understand racism in its institutional and structural forms. Moving away from a focus on personal bigotry and bias, the workshop presents a historical, cultural, and structural analysis of racism.

"REI training is one of the critical CCSD initiatives designed to increase the capacity of teachers, principals, and district staff members to better serve all of our students," said CCSD's Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, Don Kennedy. "By doing so, we prepare our young people to live and thrive in a multicultural world."

"In order to effectively address the achievement gap in the district, it is crucial that CCSD leaders and staff begin with a common language, framework, and analysis in which to evaluate how they do their work and its impact on black and brown children," added Tina L. Singleton, director of

programs at YWCA.GC.

This training is part of the Board of Trustees' plans to train all CCSD employees in Cultural Competency. The initial training for more than 1,000 employees began in the summer and continues to reach across the organization. All district leaders, as well as hundreds of teachers, engaged in the Implicit Bias Professional Development. Each participant watched the Ohio State University's Kirwan Institute Implicit Bias Modules, followed by a circle conversation via Zoom to explore implicit biases and how they affect our day-to-day lives.

Training at the district level will differ from the school level. For example, teachers and school administrators have more direct interaction with students and their families, while district leaders must develop wide-range strategies that benefit communities throughout the district.

Cultural competency is comprised of the following four components:

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

The policy adopted by CCSD's Board of Trustees last year contains the following elements that are essential for its employees to contribute to the district's ability to become more culturally proficient:

VALUE DIVERSITY - 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

INSTITUTIONALIZE CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE - Incorporate cultural knowledge and training into the professional development of all District staff to ensure educators' pedagogy is culturally responsive; structure opportunities to engage parents and communities in cultural awareness

ADAPT TO DIVERSITY - Develop structures for revisiting community needs and values to align school policies and resources

HOMECOMING



Left to Right

Top row: Military Magnet Academy: *Homecoming King* Malique Simpson
Homecoming Queen Destyni Pughy

R.B. Stall High School: *Homecoming Queen* Janea Whaley

Bottom row: Wando High School: *Homecoming King* Charlie Rohaley and
Homecoming Queen Amelia Hathaway as well as the Homecoming Court

CEW-North Yoga Mondays

Every Monday, the C.E. Williams North school psychologist (certified yoga instructor) Carrie Rittle offered the faculty and staff a guided practice for the adults in the building to leave their day on the mat and participate in self-care. Yoloha Yoga (on James Island) donated several beautifully hand crafted cork mats for their practice.



Baptist Hill senior earns Legion of Valor Bronze Cross

Fifth year in a row a JROTC Cadet from the school has received this honor

Baptist Hill Middle High School announced that Angel Simmons-Bocanegra was named a 2020 recipient of the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement. This award is presented to top Army JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps) Cadets around the world during their senior year.

Baptist Hill's JROTC program continues its tradition of excellence; this is the fifth consecutive year a Bobcat cadet has earned this award from the Legion of Valor of the United States of America, Incorporated. Class of 2020 Valedictorian Nykara Heyward received the honor last school year.

Simmons-Bocanegra is one of three Cadets in South Carolina, and the only student from Charleston County School District (CCSD) and the Lowcountry to earn the honor this school year. Additionally, she is one of just 29 of the approximately 315,000 Army JROTC Cadets worldwide to receive the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross.

"I am very elated and equally humbled to receive this award," Simmons-Bocanegra said. "Representing CCSD adds to this honor. I have always given my best and worked hard to do well. I am grateful to my family, friends, and teachers for supporting me."

Simmons-Bocanegra will formally receive the award and be promoted to the rank of Cadet Lieutenant Colonel and designated the Bobcat Battalion Commander of the Bobcat Battalion at a later date.

The Legion of Valor Bronze Cross Achievement Award, which was created in 1951, is awarded annually to senior JROTC Cadets. To be considered for this honor, Cadets must apply during their junior year and be in their third year of the Army JROTC. They must also be in the top 25 percent of their overall graduating class and Army JROTC class academically. Finally, Cadets have to demonstrate outstanding military leadership qualities.

Cadet Simmons-Bocanegra was nominated by Lt. Col. John McLeod, Senior Army Instructor of the school's JROTC program, and endorsed by the principal.

"Angel is one of the most well-rounded scholars and students-athletes here at Baptist Hill," stated Principal Dale Metzger. "She is a well-respected, high-performing scholar, leader, and is dual credit student with Trident Technical College. She has the complete respect of the faculty and her peers, and possesses great intellect, skills, confidence, and strength of character. I am proud that she is representing our school with this award."

"Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Simmons-Bocanegra is a mentor to other Cadets and students here at Baptist Hill, and a selfless team player," added Lt. Col. McLeod. "Her energy and smile are infectious and motivates her peers to do their best. She has faithfully and diligently performed and conducted herself well and exceeds all of my high expectations. She is a 'go-to' student and friend that everyone can count on."

Simmons-Bocanegra plans to attend college and dual major in Chemical Science and Marine Biology with the goal of working in both fields.



Angel Simmons-Bocanegra

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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.