

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 SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS SELECT THEIR Teachers of the Year for 2022

School leaders throughout Charleston County School District (CCSD) have announced and honored their school Teachers of the Year last month. These outstanding educators will begin serving as representatives on the district's Teacher of the Year Roundtable and as a voice for their school and fellow staff members this spring.

Many of these educators will vie to be selected as the CCSD Teacher of the Year in the coming weeks. District staff members will surprise the district's top five Teacher of the Year finalists later this spring, and announce the winner before the conclusion of the 2021-2022 school year. West Ashley High School's A.J. Barnes is the current District Teacher of the Year.

The following educators were recently recognized as their school or program's Teacher of the Year (listed alphabetically by school):

A.C. Corcoran Elementary - Brittany Fichter
Academic Magnet High School - Natasha Akery
Angel Oak Elementary - Robyn Markovic
Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary - Judi Beaudrot
Baptist Hill Middle High School - Allie Tronoski
Belle Hall Elementary - Katherine Cotter
Buist Academy - April Bonneau
Burke High - Karen Thompson
C.E. Williams Middle (North Campus) - Sara Holstein
C.E. Williams Middle (South Campus) - Bonnie Johns
Camp Road Middle - Noel Bridges
Carolina Park Elementary - Stephanie Ethridge
Charles Pinckney Elementary - Carol Gurrieri
Charleston Charter School for Math and Science - Teresa (Jandi) Withrow
Charleston County School of the Arts - Christopher Selby
Charleston Development Academy - Tanisha Martin
Charleston Progressive Academy - Laura Shaw
Chicora Elementary - Brittany Mitchell
Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies - James Dean
Daniel Jenkins Academy - Rosa Jonson
Deer Park Middle - Nakia White Hazel
Drayton Hall Elementary - Angelique Kochera
E.B. Ellington Elementary - Alice Debow
Early College High - Dawn Althen
East Cooper Center for Advanced Studies - Melissa Beyel
Edith L. Frierson - Taylor Bensinger
ESOL Department - Becca Nexsen (School?)
Gifted and Talented Department - Greg Thomas (Sullivan's Island Elementary)

Harbor View Elementary - Angela Vaughan
Haut Gap Middle - Kenneth Huttner
Hunley Park Elementary - Alichia Leavy
James B. Edwards Elementary - Ashley Pomposelli
James Island Charter High School - Emily Crocker
James Island Elementary - Suzanne Baranski
James Simons Montessori - Lauren Martin
Jane Edwards Elementary - Marcia Fields
Jennie Moore Elementary - Candace Harvey
Jerry Zucker Middle - Adam Bevins
Julian Mitchell Elementary - Chak Or
Ladson Elementary - Dawn Murdaugh
Laing Middle - Laura Owen
Lambs Elementary - Dorothy Rogers
Laurel Hill Primary - Danica Dickerson
Liberty Hill Academy - Rachel Crow
Lucy Beckham High - Nicole Forrester
Malcolm C. Hursey Montessori - Deetz Hanna
Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary - Patricia Smoot
Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center - Blair (Amanda) Hranowsky
Matilda F. Dunston Elementary - John Farrelly
Memminger Elementary - Kory Roberts
Midland Park Primary - Angelica Chavez
Military Magnet Academy - Carla Ferrette-Clark
Minnie Hughes Elementary - Andriette Dent
Morningside Middle - Jacqueline Townsend
Moultrie Middle - Julia Kuehn
Mount Pleasant Academy - Ari Tuttle

Mount Zion Academy - Casey Sullivan
Murray-LaSaine Montessori - Polly Schultz
North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary - Juan Ruiz
North Charleston Elementary - Casey Engleking
North Charleston High - Bryanna Smalls
Northwoods Middle -Nathalie Bennett
Oakland Elementary - Brooke Maguire
Orange Grove Charter - Jackie Turner
Pepperhill Elementary - Tabitha Strong
Pinehurst Elementary - Hillary Crosby
R.B. Stall High - Maurice Grant
Sanders-Clyde Elementary - Ilona King-Wilson
Septima P. Clark Academy - Brian Shields
Simmons-Pinckney Middle - Barbara Harpe
Springfield Elementary - Taylor Steele
St. Andrew's School of Math and Science - David Wingard
St. James-Santee Elementary-Middle - Casey Marlowe
St. John's High - Becca Nexsen
Stiles Point Elementary - Kate Weller
Stono Park Elementary - Nathalie Melvin Rodriguez
Sullivan's Island Elementary - Natalie Harden
Thomas C. Cario Middle - Joel Crosby
Turning Point Academy - Arlyne Shine
W.B. Goodwin Elementary - Sarah Swain
Wando High - Jason Sox
West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies - Robert Woods
West Ashley High - Sandra Cannon

CCSD increasing number of Heart Safe Schools through live-saving initiative



Jennie Moore Project Adam



Project Adam participants



Moultrie Project Adam

Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Nursing Services Department works hard to keep students and staff safe and healthy. During the month of February, which is American Heart Month, the CCSD nursing team partnered with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) to provide staff training at Jennie Moore Elementary School and Moultrie Middle School for cardiac emergencies. By completing the course, these schools earned their certification to become Project ADAM Heart Safe Schools.

Jennie Moore and Moultrie join North Charleston High School and Wando High School as the four schools that are certified with this organization. The CCSD Nursing Services Department's goal is to have all middle and high schools certified by the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

"Project ADAM promotes teamwork and coordinate efforts to ensure staff members can quickly respond to a serious situation on campus, including the ability to use an AED (automated external defibrillator) effectively," said CCSD's Director of Nursing Services, Ellen Nitz.

Project ADAM affiliate sites assist schools and communities in establishing a practiced plan to

respond to a sudden cardiac arrest. The organization also provides the foundation for a school to develop and sustain their program, including planning templates, a reference manual and one-on-one consultation.

A certified Project ADAM Heart Safe School has successfully implemented a quality sudden cardiac arrest program of awareness, training and effective emergency response to promote a safe environment for students, visitors, and staff as outlined within the Heart Safe School Checklist.

Project ADAM began in 1999 after the death of Adam Lemel, a 17-year-old Whitefish Bay, WI, high school student who collapsed and died while playing basketball. Adam suffered a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), in which ventricular fibrillation occurred, a condition in which the ventricles cannot pump blood into the body. Defibrillation, or an AED, could have saved his life.

In addition to the staff training for Project ADAM, MUSC program manager Sissy Stoughton trains high school students throughout CCSD in hands-only CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

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MMA students surprised with new laptops at digital inclusion celebration



Forty Military Magnet Academy (MMA) students were invited along with their teacher Carla Ferrette-Clark to the Charleston Workforce and Digital Inclusion Day on Thursday, February 24, 2022.

The annual event celebrated 10 years of Internet Essentials and preparing today's workforce for tomorrow's digital future.

During the event, Comcast surprised the students with brand new personal laptops. Ferrette-Clark, MMA's 2023 Teacher of the Year, was also recognized.

Comcast is been committed to bridging the digital divide and advancing future workforce readiness by expanding broadband access and connectivity in South Carolina's diverse communities.

COVID-19 accelerated the need for digital equity and internet adoption programs. In response, Comcast recently announced a \$100 million commitment to advance social justice and equality.

Since 2011 and through the Internet Essentials program, Comcast has connected more than 10 million Americans and 35,000+ Metro Charlestonians from low-income families to the internet at home.



Team Laing supports Special Olympics

Students at Laing Middle School created Team Laing for the IOP Polar Plunge for the Special Olympics which was sponsored by SC Law Enforcement Torch Run and the team of 11 raised \$934. Laing was in the top 10 of groups that raised money. Students also received the Coolest School award.



SCMEA REGION, ALL STATE BAND AND ORCHESTRA PARTICIPANTS ANNOUNCED



The following Charleston County School District (CCSD) Band and Orchestra students auditioned for the opportunity to participate in Region and All State ensembles, and have received the honor of being selected as part of these prestigious opportunities. Region and All State ensembles are selected annually as part of a rigorous audition process and include students from all over South Carolina. Congratulations to all who were selected, and to their Band and Orchestra teachers who helped them prepare.

High School

Burke High School Band

Region Band
Jabori Carter

Charleston County School of the Arts High School Band

Senior All State Band
Jack Altenbach, Maria Alexander, Gabby Hylton, Soren Jones, and Severancerancet

Clinic All State Band
Madeline Church, Lucas Fetton, and Darby Horschel

All State Jazz Band (Richards Band)
Jack Altenbach, Tyson Gallerani, Gabe Goldman, and Bryce Waldron-Noren

All State Jazz Band (Tomaro Band)
John Lapolla, and Skyler Waddell

Region Senior Band
Jeremiah Collins, Nick Cook, Kasyiah Dunham, Joshua Feaster, Max Gair, Ellie Garner, Gabe Goldman, Gabriella Hylton, Soren Jones, Sydney Kahler, Will Lamar, Carolyn Macklin, Evy Massey, Alex Park, Aiden Rix, Martina Salinas, Ella Grace Sines-Thomasson, Abby Thornley, Flora Majkrzak, Austin Walton, and Addison Wood

Region Clinic Band
Ella Aikman, Emma Brubaker, Jackson Fox, Kylie Kothera, Kamrin Mungin, Zalynn Rodwell, Aaron Ruopp, Nick Severance, Skyler Waddell, Jason Wan, and Mia Voelker

Charleston County School of the Arts High School Strings

All State Orchestra
Carolina Agrest, Maria Alexander, Evan Baker, Devin O'Brien, Addie Black, Riley Borkowski, Gabrielle Chinnis-Limehouse, Giovanni Cusatis, Nash Doar, Decker Elam, Lena Fimian, Elaina Gable, Tyson Gallerani, Kayley Genova, Justin Gilliard, Nicholas Grayson, Eloise Hastie, Sophia Kozlowski, Alex Lim, Daniel Maniscalco, Margaret Moore, Peter O'Malley, Grace Pennington, Katilin Petersen, Emily Russell, Alex Selby, Kate Selby, Cyle Tang, Trow Weeks, Jade Williams, and Sadie Wood

James Island Charter High School Band

Region Band
Andrew Carriera, Maddie Chanthabane, Noah Counts, Corinne Crumpton, Tristan Donaldson, Mary Alice Fairey, Bashwyn Fitch, Lukas Garvin, Avery Gordon, Noah Maier, Joshua Nisoff, Alexander Palmer, Juliana Tinoco, Christina Vines, Gabriel Wohlfarth, and Shane Zbyrowski

All State Band
Kate Harper, and Christina Vines

Lucy Beckham High School Strings

Region Orchestra
Jackson Allison, Alyssa Almaguer, Caroline Campbell, Christian Curran, Caleb Davenport, Daniel Fletcher, Mila Ganaway, Jacob Hammond, Henry Giles, Jackson Haak, Lila Morrall, Lydia Plante, and Jason Sherrill

All State Orchestra
Christian Curran, and Lydia Plante

Lucy Beckham High School Band

Senior All State Band
Nathan Freeman

Clinic All State Band

Savannah Bowlin, Stephen Carlisle, Nora Dukes, Mia Liebenow, and Oliver Murrell

Senior Region Band

Wilson Collins, Marcus Lewis, and Cooper Snowdon

Clinic Region Band

August Boozier, Stephen Carlisle, Matthew DeBarros, Nora Duke, Neil Durlach, Pete Harden, Mia Liebenow, Ryan Lockett, Donovan McClain, Oliver Murrell, Isabella Nichols, Presley Osborne, James Rosenthal, Ian Rutledge, Elsie Seay, Grange Simons, and Max Thomas

Wando High School Strings

Region Orchestra
Bella Bausano, Oliver Berle, Samuel Boyd, Joseph Brooks, Autumn Buchta, Kennedy Chisolm, Nicholas Cladakis, Alaina Crothers, Casey Fitzgerald, Natalie Gizzo, Melody Goldberg, Benjamin Halford, Anna Claire Hughes, Leila Ibach, Jackson Jones, Liam Kleckley, Molly MacKellar, Braden Mann, Annika Meetze, Mayla Merrifield, Justinian Murphy Abbott, Tyler Phan, Ashleigh SecorMiles Sullivan, Ian Suthon, Rylie Tart, Katya Tokarev, Madison Villafane, Trista Walter, and Jonathan Wang

All State Orchestra

Bella Bausano, Autumn Buchta, Leila Ibach, and Braden Mann

Wando High School Band

All State Band
Wes Baldwin, Kaitlyn Barnard, Bella Bausano, Annabelle Boozier, Brendan Breen, Blayne Burklow, Walker Cashon, Will Castellow, Claire Cathey, Logan Clements, Jackson Craft, Riley Craft, Carolyn Dang, Samuel DeSantis, Evan Furtaw, Julia Gaglione, Joseph Gaglione, Claire Gibson, Carter Gillespie, Giovanni Giuliano, Sam Henshaw, Alexa Hills, Luke Interrante, Ann Johnson, Edward Jones, Hugh Kennemur, John King, Caden Lagestee, Kiersten Miller, Peyton Moody, Devon Madelstumph, Emma Nodine, Wilson Orvin, Declan Paduani, Luke Phillips, Andrew Pitsis, Luca Ratliff, CJ Robinson, Bailey Samonte, Beckham Schou, Vivienne Sjolander, Nikolai Sjolander, Brooke Smith, Chase Snoots, Ren Takemoto, Annabelle Twomey, Finn Twomey, Lauren Wiggins, Jacob Winston, and Grace Zuo

Region Band

Lexie Allen, Claire Andersen, Kyle Angelich, Ethan Arthur, Miles Baldwin, Nash Baldwin, Katilyn Barnard, Conor Barton, Annabelle Boozier, Carter Brandt, Levi Broxom, Riley Bumgardner, Everett Busch, Blayne Burklow, Elijah Butler, Brooke Carthon, Cheyenne Lambton-Carr, Sophia Champ, Adam Chavez, Julia Cherry, Jacob Cox, Matthew Dang, Clara Danner, Devin Dietrich, Charlie Dentzman, Sara Embrey, Nathan Erenst, Isabel Favre, Nick Gergits, Claire Gibson, Michael Ferrara, Francesco Giuliano, Colsen Guy, Reagan Guy, Sela Guy, Breeden Hall, Corbin Harp, Sam Henshaw, Leila Hollingshead, Jackson Hooks, Sarah Hudspeth, Ethan Huff, Remington Joy, Leilana Kahalehoe, Pierson Kelley, Carson Kenner, Kathleen Kidd, Addy Rose Knotts, Fritz Kuester, Reby Levesque, Elise Lo, Avarie Lyon, Emerson Mackes, Sidonie Mahon, Kevin Maxted, Kiersten Miller, Peyton Moody, Chaz Mulligan, Devon Nadelstumph, Benjamin Nodine, Graham Norman, Cecilia Ollis, Erika Oltmann, Nicole Pace, Charlie Pratt, Luke Phillips, Kayden Pinto, Andrew Pitsis, William Ray,

Colby Reese, Logan Ryle, Eric Maciewjewski, Mackenzie Ring, Kennedy Rivers, CJ Robinson, Ryan Rodriguez, Beckham Schou, Brady Setser, Genevieve Sjolander, Brooke Smith, Adam Sokoloski, Noah Song, Samantha Spruill, Richard Stewart, Ren Takemoto, Cameron Thompson, Carleigh Torykian, So Takemoto, Anna Terry, Ryland Watson, Alexander Wiley, Zachary Wiley, Abby Wimer, Zachary Winston, Eleanor Yarbrough, Caleb Young, Avery Verzaal, Jeremy Zetrouer, and Meghan Zimmerman

West Ashley High School Band

Region Band
Ben Schell, and Makayla Stewart

Middle School

Camp Road Middle School Band

Region Band
Daniel Carreira, Collin Hlavac, Mikey Kardell, Leo Messia, Kynisha Middleton, Xavier Nutting, and Isaac Webb

All State Band
Mikey Kardell, and Xavier Nutting

Charleston County School of the Arts Middle School Band

All State Band
Ava Wolf, Julia Bates, and Calev Harrold

Region Symphonic Band

Charlie Cooper, Nadia Fox, Evelyn Gwin, Edward Hart, Sophia Hoffmann, Elijah Ellington, Simon Halberda, Nikolai Mackie, Celia Massey, Kaylin Mungin, Kylah Munoz, Gavriel Pekar, Sam Terrell, Abby Trolley, Kade Tumminia, and Elle Walton

Region Concert Band

Jenna Calafiore, Harrison Carter, Dante Criscitiello, Elliott de Hass, Sam Harris, Janai Smith, Kibru Stanfield, Emani McNeal, Addy Pryor, Javin Medina-Valencia, and Leo Voelker

Charleston County School of the Arts Middle School Strings

Region Orchestra
Sabreen Adem, J Edgard Batiz, Jordan Mae Bazzle, Annabella Cusatis, Luciano Cusatis, Santiago Calzada, Victoria Chan, Stella Dye, Lila Elm, Jacob Freligh, Kendrick Freligh, Juvon Gilliard, Ethan Hayre, Mercedes Griffin, Logan Jetter, Kenneth Joyce, Max Kai, Joshua Kozlowski, Paul Knox, Elijah Liu, Isaiah Liu, Mille Magee, Maisy McElroy, Maya Pehl, Michael Rayburn, Joseph Dorwart, Elliott MacDonald, Elliot MacDonald, Roger Martinezz, Jonathan Mei, Abbey Morea, Myles Owens-Walker, Reagan Passantino, Rayna Perez Prichard, Kate Selvirelli, Emma Stavrakis, Zaida Stokes, Joseph Sun, John Stuckey, Alison Wager, Meghan Wells, Ava Whitener, Callie Williams, Clara Woolum

All State Orchestra

Victoria Chan, Luciano Cusatis, Lila Elm, John Gilliard, Kenneth Joyce, Elijah Liu, Elliot MacDonald, Jonathan Mei, Maya Pehl, Myles Owens-Walker, Rayna Perez Prichard, Kate Selvirelli, Callie Williams, and Ava Whitener

Laing Middle School Band

All State Band
Aubrey Gadson, Xander Gilbert, and Luke Spruill

Region Symphonic Band

Aaron Berkowitz, Lily Cunningham, Noah Davis, Joey Dixon, Grace DuBose, Amelia Evans, Mia Fletcher, Gage Hall, Anson Harrison, Austin Horry, Zanaya Howard, Ava Kaplan, Valerie Mejia-Gomez, Connor Manley, Peyton Miller, James O'Connor, Olivia O'Reilly, Chase Sargent, Caleb Trammel, John Tiller, Ava Torres, Eric Vera

Region Concert Band

Cannon Corless, Olivia Evans, Drake Fletcher, Lucas Johnson, Tate Kramarczyk, Oscar O'Neill, Gio Martinelli, Morgan Rogerson, Sam Wiesner

Laing Middle School Strings

Region Orchestra
Marshall Baker, Ava Daffron, Sanjana Gangaraju, Abby Huss, Brody Myles, Claire Sieverdes, Liam Rohrbacher, Kai Varitz, and Sylvi Wright

All State Orchestra

Sanjana Gangaraju

Moultrie Middle School Band

Region Band
Connor DuBay, Jaden Gethers, Gina Kim, Alaina Low, and Brandon Marcus

All State Band

All State Honor Band Members:
Rhys Brustoski

Moultrie Middle School Strings

Region Orchestra
Anna Dayan

Thomas C. Cario Middle School Band

All State Band
Noah Arnold, Jackson Bentley, Gideon Boyet, Evelyn Durkee, Graham Gregory, Thomas Haddigan, Tyler Heckman, Maria Lamberg, Nate Letoumeau, Alexa Maldonado, Marco Martino, Elizabeth Mellette, Noah Miller, Finn Northup, Nate Reese, Aiden Robinson, Brian Shay, Emma Smit, Ben Snyder, Minor Takemoto, Makoto Thompson, Hanna Williams, Maxwell Winters, and Estee Yu

Region Band

Alivia Allen, Noah Arnold, Ryan Barnard, Duru Bayram, Jackson Bentley, Landon Blackmon, Tyler Blonshine, Dylan Brown, Jed Campbell, Greta Denning, Ayden Dehnkamp, Lucy Donohoe, Evelyn Durkee, Avery Doyle, Heather Ferraro, Libby Gibson, Graham Gregory, Mary Ella Grier, Thomas Haddigan, Torie Howard, William Kirlis, Natalia Klein, Kennedy Lagestee, Jackson Lamontagne, Emi Larsen, Hunter Landon, Emily McCain, Piper Macrill, Alexa Maldonado, Natasha Mann, Connor McDougale, Micah McDougale, Marco Martino, Ryan Myers, Zoe Norman, Braydon Norton, Cara Omo, Ace Piper, George Pishko, Katie Pratt, Nate Reese, Grace Rillorta,

Hunter Rinehart, Hollis Rivers, Emma Smit, Sasha Tomaich, Will Torykian, Andrew Tumminelli, Hanna Williams, Stryder Wilson, Daniel Yeomans, Erick Yu, Estee Yu, and Andrew Zuo

Thomas C. Cario Middle School Strings

Region Orchestra
Rebekah Appleton, Sameen Basunia, Fisher Bond, Aaron Gizzo, Ruby Gizzo, Bradley Rillo, Melina Su, Zachary Teachma, Makoto Thompson, and Maxwell Winters

All State Orchestra
Fisher Bond

CCSD remembers African-American pioneers who shaped local education

In Charleston County School District (CCSD), the contributions of African-Americans in the Lowcountry are memorialized and honored in various ways. Countless African-American citizens helped shape the public school system in Charleston County through the years, and they are often remembered through the dedication or naming of a school or district facility.

These men and women were pioneers and advocates for children. They demanded a quality education for their peers, particularly, children of color.

In celebration of Black History Month, CCSD remembers the men and women of the district who created opportunities for the children of Charleston County, as well as those who benefited from them.

“There has never been a day I didn’t want to go to work. I am fortunate to have had a lengthy career with CCSD where I made many friends I now consider family.” — PAMELA GIBBS

Pamela Gibbs is a lifelong resident of Charleston and is an over 20 veteran educator at the former Wilmont Fraser High School.

“We were a very close staff back then,” said Gibbs. “In fact, we still to this day. We connect with each other and keep in touch. I met my best friend at Fraser.”

Gibbs explained that the community surrounding the school was tight-knit and that was the same for the administration and staff at Fraser.

“We all considered the kids and the parents our family,” said Gibbs. “They all did extra to make things at the school work like stay longer, after school or work on projects in the community. We felt we were making a difference.”

After Fraser closed, Gibbs was assigned to James Simmons Elementary School where she has spent the last four years of her career.

“There has never been a day I didn’t want to go to work,” said

Gibbs. “I am fortunate to have had a lengthy career with CCSD where I made many friends I now consider family.”

Linda Murphy graduated from the former Bonds-Wilson High School in 1968. She played clarinet in the marching and concert bands under director Lonnie Hamilton. It is also where she became motivated by her beloved teachers to attend college and become an educator.

Murphy went on to become a teacher with CCSD and retired after 42 years. She looks back with fond memories of her time at Bonds-Wilson, named after Dr. James Roosevelt Bonds (1904-1992) and John T. Wilson (1910-1973).

Bonds was Supervisor of Schools for Cooper River District 4. Wilson was a longtime educator at what was originally called Six Mile School.

“My teacher and my band director encouraged me to pursue music in college and a degree in education,” said Murphy. “That shaped my future. Even though I am retired I am still working with students in various capacities at Deer Park Middle School, motivating future generations to pursue college and their career dreams.”

And as for her alma mater, she and her fellow classmates still celebrate the “Cobra Spirit.” The Cobra was the Bonds Wilson mascot.

“We had students from Lincolnvile to Mount Pleasant Street attending school at Bonds-Wilson and we somehow all merged

My teacher and my band director encouraged me to pursue music in college and a degree in education. That shaped my future. Even though I am retired I am still working with students in various capacities at Deer Park Middle School, motivating future generations to pursue college and their career dreams.” — LINDA MURPHY

into a family,” said Murphy. “We still get together as a Bonds-Wilson chapter, and still have grade-level reunions, and fellowship.”

“I came back home to the Lowcountry because I had to do as much as I could for the area I grew up in.” — JOHN SMALLS

John Smalls, a 1959 Laing High School graduate, also went on to become a longtime CCSD educator.

In 1866, Laing was founded by Cornelia Hancock, a Quaker from New Jersey and a former Union Army nurse in Gettysburg. The school was named for Henry M. Laing, the treasurer of a Quaker organization and abolitionist society. While Laing was not African-American, he financially supported the school and its mission to provide an opportunity for recently freed slaves in the Mount Pleasant area to learn to live as free men and women with a desire for better living, higher ideals, and good citizenship.

Smalls credits his high school football coach at Laing, Joseph Dunkin, and Principal William E. Rouse with helping him get an athletic scholarship to college. Smalls attended Kittrell (NC) and then went to Claflin University where he received a major in health and PE and a minor in biology which led to a 49-year career in education with CCSD.

“I came back home to the Lowcountry because I had to do as much as I could for the area I grew up in,” said Smalls.

Smalls is still serving at Charleston Progressive Academy as a volunteer and substitute.

Fast forward to 2022, where for the first time ever, CCSD recognizes interim superintendent Don Kennedy, who is the first Black man to serve in the role. The first woman was the late Dr. Maria Goodloe-Johnson.

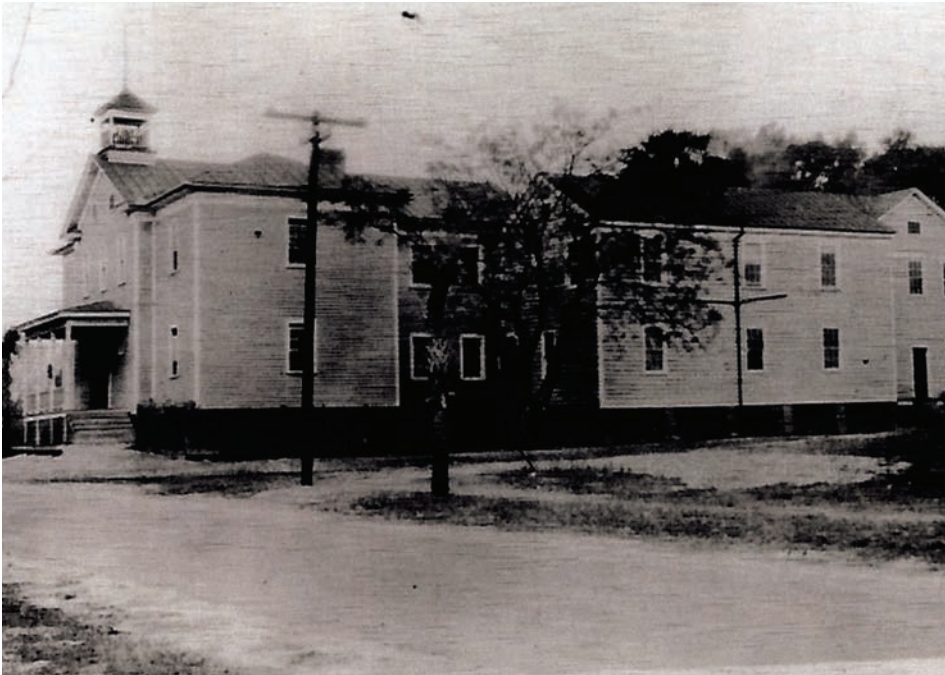
There are countless other African American graduates and educators with hundreds of stories to tell and memories of events that shaped their lives and their communities. The district is honored to remember those trailblazing individuals who left their mark in the community and will forever be memorialized



80-year-old substitute teacher John Smalls



Mr. Smalls is #14 pictured in this 1959 high school picture.



Laing High School



Bonds Wilson High School



Academic Magnet



Baptist Hill Middle High



Camp Road Middle



Charleston Progressive Academy



Matilda F. Dunston Elementary



Sanders Clyde Elementary

SCHOOL LEVEL CELEBRATIONS FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH



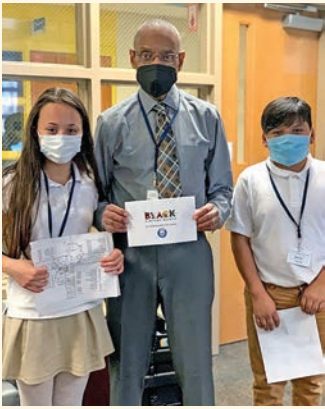
North Charleston Elementary

North Charleston elementary school held dozens of Black History Month activities, including celebrating the black educators at the school.



Northwoods Middle

A special guest visited to Northwoods Middle School as part of their Black History Month celebrations. Charlton Singleton, Grammy winning musician, composer, and conductor performed for the students.



Lambs Elementary

Lambs Elementary School hosted volunteers from around the district and Joint Base Charleston to read to students for Black History Month. Charleston County School District Interim Superintendent, Don Kennedy; Associate Superintendent of Elementary Learning, Michelle Simmons; Associate Superintendent of Secondary Learning, Joe Williams; and Executive Director of Administrator Mentoring and Coaching, John Cobb joined students along with Dr. Katchia Gethers, the principal from Hunley Park. Sixteen volunteers from Joint Base Charleston also attended. visited classrooms CD-fifth grade to read books that focused on African American stories and characters.



only had a winner – but three students won in three out of four categories!

Aubry Daley won “Best in Show”
Mia Anroodgi won “Recreational Choice”
Layla Phillips won the “8/9 Year Old Category”

Ladson Elementary

Charleston County School District’s afterschool program, Kaleidoscope, participated in a Black History Month contest that asked Ladson Elementary School students to design a poster to commemorate and celebrate Black History Month. Ladson school not

Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center

The students and staff of Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center celebrated their week of learning about Historically Black Colleges and Universities with a schoolwide parade. Each class “enrolled in” an HBCU for the week and researched that school’s colors, mascot, city, band, and sports. Students wore their university colors and learned chants to say as they paraded down the halls. Our hope in having this event was that every student heard that someday, they will have the chance to choose what and where they learn... and, that higher learning is for everyone.



Black Truth. Black Joy. Black Beauty: Memorable Night at James Simons Montessori

On February 16, 2022 James Simons families gathered for the first time in two years to celebrate Black History Month. It was a joyous occasion for many reasons. Families were so glad to come together in a socially distanced way to celebrate, to learn, and to connect with an important part of our history: black history.

Prior to the 16th, a social planning committee composed of James Simons staff planned the event. They created a scavenger hunt, an agenda that included rotating stations to minimize crowds, and they even hired a food truck to provide meals for families. Additionally all staff members were invited to decorate their doors with an aspect of Black History that they deemed important or relevant to their classroom. Students then engaged in gallery walks around the school to observe the doors, and families voted on their favorite door at the family night.

On the night of the event, families were welcomed with varying agendas. Rotations included a trip to the food truck Caribbean Creole; a visit to the cafeteria where families could learn about James Simons’ 100 (plus) years of history as well as a place where families could learn how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with the Primary team which was inspired by George Washington Carver; a visit to the Lower Elementary hallway where families could make quilt squares to tell a story inspired by the work of Faith Ringgold. Ringgold who used her art to elevate stories of joy amid changing life situations is well known for her book Tar Beach; a visit to the Upper Elementary hallway where families could use QR codes to hear a Black History month playlist and contribute to the playlist to add their own interpretation of black history via music. Their work was based on Black Music Is by SC Poet Laureate Marcus Ammaker; and the final rotation was a visit to the music room where middle school students researched and presented on a variety of jazz musicians while local musician Pierre Pickney played the piano for families.

James Simons staff members who were on the planning committee explained that they wanted to find a way to celebrate our families who haven’t been able to gather over the last few months and years while also celebrating black joy and other important aspects of our history. “We wanted our families to feel special and loved. It has been a difficult few years and just as many who have come before us have overcome difficult times, we wanted this event to represent joy and hope” said educator Gwen Dillings of the planning committee.

Overall it was a successful event that reunited the James Simons community in our rich local and global history. As middle school journalism student Layla Jeffcoat recounted, “it was a beautiful night full of doors to remember and just the right amount of kindness and community that we need in the world right now”.



OLYMPIC GAMES AT SPRINGFIELD ELEMENTARY



Springfield Elementary School hosted the 2022 Olympic games Friday, February 11. The day was filled with friendly competition for all grade levels and over 40 countries were represented.

Playtime at Laurel Hill Primary



Laurel Hill Primary School's Child Development program participated in a unique activity after wrapping up their unit on exercise. Students received a visit from Go Play Fitness. Students were able to climb, tumble, and scramble on equipment inside a tiny house. Each class had 30 minutes of play and it was a big hit.

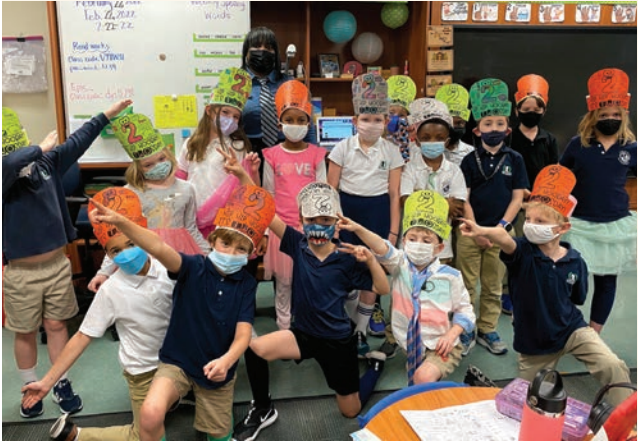
North Charleston Creative Arts Kindergarteners learn about the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics!

Mary Barr, Kindergarten Teacher, and Kenya Cummings, Teacher's Assistant at North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary school gave their students an up-close glimpse of the Olympics.

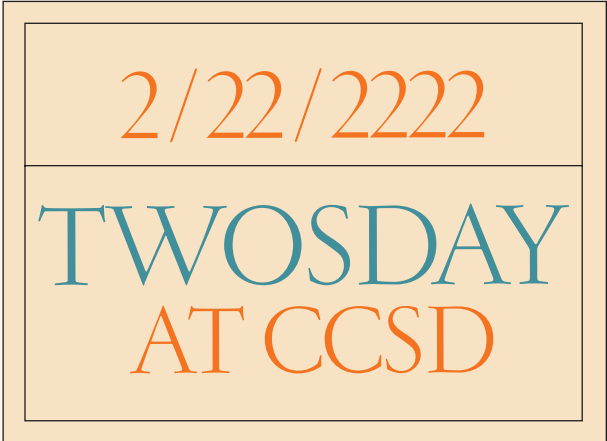
In accordance with their state standard of “recognizing the significance of symbols of the United States that represent its democratic values, including the American flag” (K-3.1) as well as experiencing real-world learning opportunities, Mrs. Barr's kindergarten class has been discussing and watching the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics!

The class watched clips from the opening ceremonies, noting the Olympic torch, the many flags represented, watched our American athletes process into the ceremonies, and watched clips from skiing and snowboarding events. Barr's friend from attending the University of South Carolina works on the marketing partnerships team for the US Ski and Snowboard Team and sent some very exciting goodies to her class. Every student in the class received a US Ski and Snowboard folder, notepad, sticker sheet, pin, and bib worn by our US ski and snowboard athletes.





Buist Academy



Charleston Progressive Academy Twin Day



Chicora Elementary



Ladson Elementary



Memminger Elementary



Sullivan's Island Elementary



Springfield Elementary

Ladson's Robotics team returns to state tournament

Ladson Elementary School's LEGO Robotics team is young, but their skill and teamwork made up for their lack of experience in the First LEGO League (FLL) Ace Basin Qualifier in Colleton County last week. The Bulldogs finished second overall out of 23 teams, and advanced to the state tournament for the eighth time in 10 years. The Ace Basin Qualifier field was comprised of elementary schools, middle schools, home schools, and private schools from several counties throughout the Lowcountry.

Ladson took second place in both the Robot Run and the Core Value Skills competitions, despite all seven team members being in fourth grade and new to robotics and FLL. Next up for the Bulldogs is the state competition at Cane Bay High School on Saturday, February 19, 2022.

FLL is a STEM-based program that inspires students to experiment and grow their critical thinking, coding, and design skills through hands-on learning and robotics. The program also teaches public speaking skills, as the teams have to present their project to a panel of judges.

"We are extremely proud of the hard work these students have put into their team," said Lisa Hopson, Ladson data clerk who also serves as the co-head coach of the school's LEGO Robotics team. "They shined at competition showing teamwork and pride in themselves as well as cheering on the other teams. In the words of FLL, they brought their gracious professionalism, core values, and cooperation to the competition for everyone to see. Most of all, they had fun while accomplishing their goal."

Every year, FLL has a theme where the teams have to solve a real world problem; this year's theme is "Cargo Connects." Competitors had to rethink the global transportation system and explore ways of improving how to access and deliver needed and desired goods, making all communities more connected.

The Bulldogs explored a way to get fresh vegetables and fruit to consumers quicker. They spoke with experts in food distribution, specifically Anthony Mirisciotta from Grow Food Carolina, Lindsay Ferguson of Jeburg Junction, and a South Carolina farmer, Jordan Hodgins. Following conversations and interviews, Ladson's Robotics team came up with a plan to install lockers in convenient locations in the community (like outside of school buildings). Farmers could deliver items directly to the lockers for pick-up and distribution.

After the state competition is over, the Bulldogs plan to create a website so people can order directly from local farmers and will look at raising money to buy lockers. Ferguson told the team she would put lockers at Jedburg Junction when they get finally start the program. Hodgins added said she would love to have this opportunity and knows other farmers would support this kind of delivery system.



Wando Honors Orchestra performs at Jennie Moore

Students at Jennie Moore Elementary were treated to a performance by the Wando Honors Orchestra, directed by Ryan Silvestri.





CCSD celebrates
bus driver's during
**BUS DRIVER
APPRECIATION
MONTH**

CCSD celebrated School Counselors in February



Brenda Jenkins at Northwoods Middle Rachel Washington at Northwoods Middle Destiny McCoy at Ashley River Creative Arts Mary Haigler at North Charleston Creative Arts



Mary Reynolds at Jane Edwards Elementary Christina Bottomley at James B. Edwards Elementary Shujuan Shannon at CE Williams, North Campus Sarah Westervelt at Northwoods Middle

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.*

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr., *Interim Superintendent of Schools*
Erica Taylor, *Chief of Staff*
Sully Witte, *Communications Officer*



Memminger in Peace Parade

Memminger Elementary School students participated in the Peace Parade in downtown Charleston. The project was organized by the College of Charleston and the students walked peacefully with banners, tye-dye, and peace symbols to the Stern Center and back.

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