

# 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 CELEBRATES BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH

Charleston County School Board (CCSD) joined school districts throughout the state and nation to celebrate School Board Recognition Month. On, Monday, January 24, 2022, CCSD board members were recognized. Board members signed an ethical principles poster in celebration and a proclamation was read aloud during the meeting.

More than 600 locally-elected and appointed school board members throughout the state will be recognized by schools and communities for their service and dedication to public education.

The theme this year is Celebrating Local Leaders.

"I am honored and privileged to work alongside the nine board members who have so willingly agreed to serve the students of Charleston County," said CCSD Superintendent Dr. Gerritta Postlewait. "This month we honor the year-round commitment that school board members make to our district and the community."

In Charleston County, school board members develop policies and make tough decisions on complex educational and social issues impacting the entire community.

They bear responsibility for the General Annual Operating Budget of more than \$540 million which impacts nearly 49,000 students in 88 schools and programs.

By signing the principles, school board members publicly vowed to uphold effective governance principles and pledged to improve public education in their community.

The men and women serving CCSD are Rev. Dr. Eric Mack, Board of Trustees Chair; Courtney Waters, Board Vice-Chair; and Cindy Bohn Coats, Erica Cokley, Kate Darby, Dr. Helen Frazier, Dr. Kristen L. French, Joyce Green, and Lauren Herterich.



## C.E. Williams' Keerthana Samuel defends CCSD Spelling Bee crown with virtual victory



Keerthana Samuel

C.E. Williams Middle School's (South campus) Keerthana Samuel has been named Charleston County School's District (CCSD) Spelling Bee winner for the third year in a row.

"We are very proud of Keerthana," said Principal Kevin Smith. "Winning the CCSD Spelling Bee once is a great accomplishment. Winning it three consecutive years is almost implausible. Congratulations to her, the other winners, and everyone who participated. To have the confidence and commitment to compete is an accomplishment unto itself."

For the second year in a row, the competition was held virtually, facilitated by the online spelling platform created by Scripps National Spelling Bee. Samuel and the rest of the Top 10 spellers will be moving forward to Spellbound, the regional spelling bee hosted by the Post and Courier.

Samuels said the spelling assessment competition was easier than the other competitions because of the experience she gained in prior events.

"I did not feel as nervous as I was in my previous spelling bees," Samuels added.

Top 10 Spellers Include:

Jordan Bazzle, Charleston County School of the Arts; Claire Bidgood, Thomas C. Cario Middle School; John Graham, Moultrie Middle School; Charlotte Ham, Northwoods Middle School; Shivam Kolwalkar, Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School; Melisa Ruiz, North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary

School; Keerthana Samuel, C. E. Williams Middle School (South Campus); Priyanka Sattur, Laing Middle School; Aaliyah Spencer, Jerry Zucker Middle School; and Ahmed Touma, Simmons-Pinckney Middle School.

Forty-two school bee winners, from fifth to eighth grade, participated in this year's district spelling competition. At the school level, school bee coordinators could facilitate socially-distanced, in-person competitions or use an online format.

CCSD's online spelling bee was structured just as last year's competition. Students had 30 minutes to spell 25 words. The online format allowed the student to hear the word and then provided the origin of the word, part of speech, and a sentence that the word could be used.

Samuel was able to spell every word correctly, making her the clear winner.

"I am honored to once again represent CCSD and C.E Williams Middle School," said Samuels.

Spellbound will be held Thursday, March 24, 2022. The winner, along with the other 229 regional bee champions, will advance to the 2022 Scripps National Bee. The event will return to the Washington D.C. area on Thursday, June 2, 2022, and will be televised nationally.

## Cooper River Center CAS hosts Student Showcase



Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies (Cooper River CAS) hosted its Winter Student Showcase on Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

Prospective students, families, and community members toured the campus and learned about the nine Career Clusters and 12 Completer Programs offered in Health Science, PLTW Biomedical Science, Information Technology, Media Technology, PLTW Engineering, Mechatronics, Global Logistics, and Supply Chain Management, Automotive Collision and Repair Technology and Building Construction.

During the Showcase visitors had the opportunity to meet the

instructors, see actual student projects and skill demonstrations. Light refreshments were catered by the North Charleston High School's Culinary Arts Program.

Students at Cooper River CAS develop world class skills, technical skills, academic skills, and employability skills that help them to define their career path and identify post-secondary plans. The school's career counselors work closely with students to provide real-world career experiences.

Students gain relevant industry education, training, and certification through rigorous college and career teaching standards. Students

learn to demonstrate life and career characteristics that enhance their global perspective, develop self-direction, promote a strong work ethic, and build interpersonal skills.

The Center's instructional programs align with regional, state, and national college and career indicators that prepare students for high-skill, high-demand, high-wage careers for the 21st century global economy. The programs offered ensure all students are well prepared for career fields that will meet the demands of future industry.

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CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2022

Teachers of the Year

A.C. CORCORAN ELEMENTARY  
**Brittany Fichter**

ACADEMIC MAGNET HIGH  
**Natasha Akery**

ANGEL OAK ELEMENTARY  
**Robyn Markovic**

ASHLEY RIVER CREATIVE ARTS ELEMENTARY  
**Judi Beaudrot**

BAPTIST HILL MIDDLE-HIGH  
**Allie Tronoski**

BELLE HALL ELEMENTARY  
**Katherine Cotter**

BUIST ACADEMY  
**April Bonneau**

BURKE HIGH  
**Karen Thompson**

CAMP ROAD MIDDLE  
**Noel Bridges**

CAROLINA PARK ELEMENTARY  
**Stephanie Ethridge**

CCSMS  
**Teresa (Jandi) Withrow**

C.E. WILLIAMS MIDDLE NORTH CAMPUS  
**Sara Holstein**

C.E. WILLIAMS SOUTH CAMPUS  
**Bonnie Johns**

CHARLES PINCKNEY ELEMENTARY  
**Carol Gurrieri**

CHARLESTON DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY  
**Tanisha Martin**

CHARLESTON PROGRESSIVE ACADEMY  
**Laura Shaw**

CHICORA ELEMENTARY  
**Brittany Mitchell**

COOPER RIVER CAS  
**James Dean**

DANIEL JENKINS ACADEMY  
**Rosa Jonson**

DEER PARK MIDDLE  
**Nakia White Hazel**

DRAYTON HALL ELEMENTARY  
**Angelique Kochera**

E.B. ELLINGTON ELEMENTARY  
**Alice Debrow**

EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL  
**Dawn Althen**

EAST COOPER CAS  
**Melissa Beyel**

EDITH L. FRIERSON ELEMENTARY  
**Taylor Bensinger**

ESOL  
**Becca Nexsen**

GIFTED & TALENTED  
**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  
**Emily Crocker**

JAMES ISLAND ELEMENTARY  
**Suzanne Baranski**

JAMES SIMONS ELEMENTARY  
**Lauren Martin**

JANE EDWARDS ELEMENTARY  
**Marcia Fields**

JENNIE MOORE ELEMENTARY  
**Candace Harvey**

JERRY ZUCKER MIDDLE SCHOOL OF SCIENCE  
**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 AND EARLY LEARNING CENTER  
**Angelica Chavez**

MILITARY MAGNET ACADEMY  
**Carla Ferrette-Clark**

MINNIE HUGHES ELEMENTARY  
**Andriette Dent**

MORNINGSIDE MIDDLE  
**Jacqueline Townsend**

MOULTRIE MIDDLE  
**Julia Kuehn**

MT. PLEASANT ACADEMY  
**Ari Tuttle**

MT. ZION ELEMENTARY  
**Casey Sullivan**

MURRAY-LASAINÉ ELEMENTARY  
**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  
**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**

SOA  
**Christopher Selby**

SPRINGFIELD ELEMENTARY  
**Taylor Steele**

ST. ANDREW’S SCHOOL OF MATH AND SCIENCE  
ELEMENTARY  
**David Wingard**

ST. JAMES-SANTEE ELEMENTARY-MIDDLE  
**Casey Marlowe**

ST. JOHN’S HIGH  
**Samantha Dale**

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**

WANDO HIGH  
**Jason Sox**

W. B. GOODWIN ELEMENTARY  
**Sarah Swain**

WEST ASHLEY CAS  
**Robert Woods**

WEST ASHLEY HIGH  
**Sandra Cannon**

CONGRATULATIONS!





# Office of Family and Community Engagement holds first annual community expo



Charleston County School District’s Office of Family and Community Engagement held their first annual community expo on February 4, 2022, showcasing community and district resources for students and their families. Attendees had the opportunity to browse hundreds of vendors, attended breakout sessions highlighting curriculum, opportunities, community partners, and a nationally recognized keynote speaker. Breakfast, lunch, and childcare were also provided.

# CCSD RECOGNIZES MORE THAN 50 STUDENT-ATHLETES ON NATIONAL SIGNING DAY

*Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud to recognize the student-athletes from the Class of 2022 who have signed or will sign a National Letter of Intent on National Signing Day.*

The following 54 CCSD student-athletes representing seven CCSD schools and a total of 10 sports are set to play at the college level:

**Academic Magnet**

Oliver Abar – Haverford College – Lacrosse

**Baptist Hill Middle High School**

Aiden Bailey – Milligan University – Bowling

**James Island Charter**

Trip Brown – Spartanburg Methodist College – Baseball  
D.J. Dickerson – Fayetteville State University – Football  
Hogan Garner – Clemson University – Baseball  
John Grant – Coastal Carolina University – Football  
Kayla Freeman – Spartanburg Methodist College – Soccer  
Owen French – Spartanburg Methodist College – Baseball  
Hannah Higgins – USC-Salkehatchie – Softball  
Tia Lucas – North Carolina Central University – Track and Field  
Lillian Ray – College of Charleston – Soccer  
Jeb Stevens – Flagler College – Cross Country  
Torren Thomas – USC-Salkehatchie – Softball

**North Charleston**

Evander Jones – Bluefield State College – Football

**R.B. Stall**

Ky’Juan Mack – College of the Desert – Football  
Terrance Mitchell – Ramah Juco Academy – Football  
Nathaniel Rock – Newberry University – Football

**Wando**

John Bagwell – Sewanee – Baseball  
Piper Barnhart – Austin Peay University – Cross Country  
Kendall Bensen – East Carolina University – Swimming  
Kaleigh Bosak – Chattanooga – Soccer  
Ben Bullard – College of Charleston – Baseball  
Thomas Campagna – USC-Lancaster – Baseball  
Morgan de Barros – USC-Upstate - Soccer  
Ava deLyra – Clemson University – Lacrosse  
Peter Foulke – College of Wooster – Lacrosse  
Sophie Frece – University of Tampa – Swimming  
Calder Garris – The Citadel – Baseball  
Lucas Green – Keiser University – Lacrosse  
Thomas Ketchin – Anderson University – Baseball  
Regan Leach – University of Lynchburg – Swimming  
Branton Little – Wofford College – Baseball  
Destynd “Des” Loring – William Penn University – Football  
Gabe Major – William Penn University – Football

**Wando** *continued*

Caitlin Mason – University of New Hampshire – Swimming  
Kieran Maurer – Anderson University – Lacrosse  
Laurel Maynor – Converse College – Tennis  
Langdon Moore – Allegany College of Maryland – Baseball  
Isabella Pecunes – Providence Christian College – Soccer  
Caroline Richvalsky – Chattanooga – Soccer  
Halle Schart – Roanoke College – Swimming  
Mary Shaw – UNC-Wilmington – Swimming  
Jet Solinger – University of Northern Iowa – Football  
Kennedi Walker – The Citadel – Soccer  
Madison Wood – Florida Southern College – Lacrosse

**West Ashley**

Dravian Blake – Benedict College – Football  
Jordan Hoppes – Columbia College – Softball  
Gabriel Johnson – Muskingum University – Football  
Jahleel Porter – Virginia Military Institute – Football  
Sakharis Smalls – Benedict College – Football  
Matthew Smith – Spartanburg Methodist College – Baseball  
Zaye’Quan Smith – Bluefield State College – Football  
Enuka Taylor – Guilford College – Soccer  
Calib Thompson – Spartanburg Methodist College – Baseball





February is Healthy Heart Month and Buist Academy students participated in the Kids Heart Challenge, formerly Jump Rope for Heart. They learned about being healthy and celebrated WEAR RED DAY to support the American Heart Association.

# CCSD increases rate for substitute teachers

- The pay rate for substitute teachers in Charleston County School District (CCSD) has increased across all levels. The following changes are listed below:
- Teacher substitutes with a college degree - \$150 per day (up from \$112 for certified and \$110 for non-certified)
  - Teacher substitutes with a high school diploma - \$130 per day (up from \$80)
  - Teacher assistant substitutes - \$15 an hour (up from \$10 an hour)

In addition to the daily increases, teacher and teacher assistant substitutes can earn a \$25 bonus for working on a Monday or a Friday and will receive a \$125 bonus if they work every day of the week that has five instructional days.

Certified long-term substitutes will continue to receive the daily teacher rate per the current CCSD Teacher Salary Schedule. They are now eligible for the \$25 bonus as outlined above.

The temporary raises went into effect on January 10, 2022, and will last for the rest of the current school year. For these rates to become permanent, they must be approved as a part of the budget process for school year 2022-2023.





# LET’S GET ENGAGED

## Department of Alternative Programs and Services announces engagement campaign winners

The Charleston County School District’s (CCSD) Department of Alternative Programs and Services recently announced winners of a student video/poster contest. This is part of a larger initiative to encourage students, parents, community partners, and CCSD staff to connect and work together to promote student engagement for overall student success.

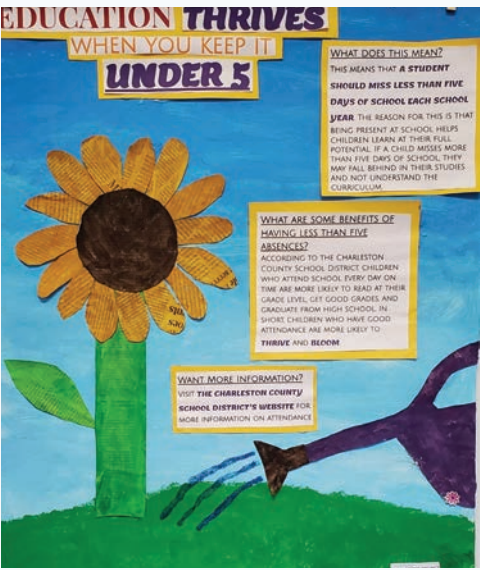
The “Let’s Get Engaged: Be Present, Be Involved, Be Motivated” campaign focused on three pillars; Attendance, Academic, and Attitude (Behavior).

In September, schools across the district participated in a district-wide lesson discussing what attendance means to them. During this time, students created posters/videos using one of the four themes (Education Thrives When You Keep It Under Five, Attend Today Achieve Tomorrow, Let’s Get Engaged! Be Present, Be Involved, Be Motivated, and Rebound with Attendance).

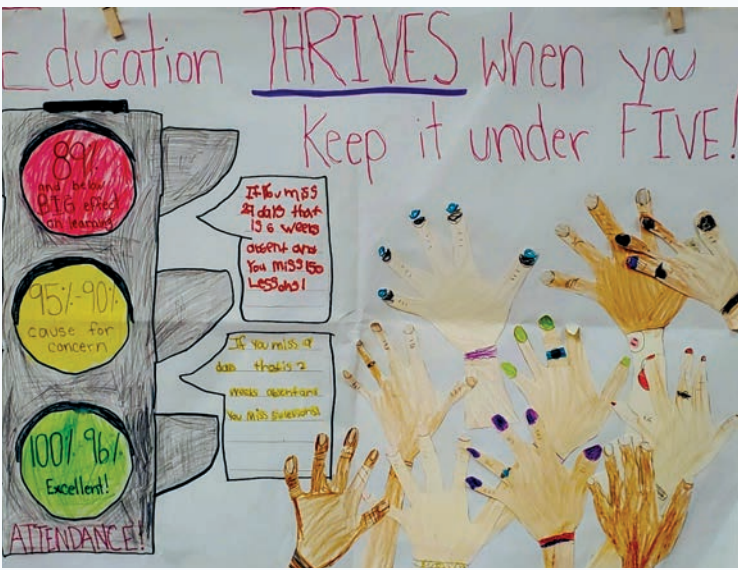
The posters and videos were judged by Constituent Board Members David Bell (District 10), Janie Daniels (District 10), and Susannah Sheldon (District 3), and a representative from the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, Colleen Dempsey.



Grand Prize Winner – Baptist Hill High School  
Anayah Mustafaa, 11th Grade



Grand Prize Winner – Buist Academy School  
Louise Martin, 8th Grade



Grand Prize Winner – Pinehurst Elementary School  
Ms. Madeline Taylor's 1st Grade class

## The winners

### Elementary Learning Community

**Grand Prize Winners:** *Pinehurst Elementary School*

Madeline Taylor's first grade class (Alondra Vallecilo, Tah'Nylah Evans, Yeferson Funes Lucas, Keiry funez Cano, Khyli Gibbs, Yamileth Gonzalez Rangel, Victor Guadalupe Rangel, Camila Hernandez Techuacati, Kendra Inestroza Quintero, Abigail Leon Perez, Kiela Ortega Rosas, Benny Perez-Lopez, Mateo Rodriguez Raymundo, Angel Torres-Teran, Keifer Velasquez Velasquez, Yoselin Victoria Barrios, Deandrae Lockwood)

**Second Place Winners:** *Mt. Zion Elementary School*

Megan Fleetwood's fourth grade class (Andrew Fipps, Scarlett Price, Immanuel Cilliard, Nicole Velasquez, Jeremiah Jinks-Rampersant, Krislyn Sams, Juliet Legare, Kiera Maloney, Preston Caligiuri-Lime house, Zoei Johnson, Jailyn Rpoer, Isla Hance, Kimberly Arana, Jorian Medrano-Aguirre, Kamden Morris, and Henry Faust)

**Third Place Winners:** *W. B. Goodwin Elementary School*

fourth grader Sharon Gonzale Valverda, Traniya James, and Shirley Mender



Baptist Hill Middle High School

### Middle School Learning Community

**Grand Prize Winner:** *Buist Academy*

eighth grader Louise Martin

**Second Place Winners:** *St. James Santee Elementary Middle School*

seventh graders Kiara Deas, Samajaye Garrett, and Ella Bare

**Third Place Winners:** *Baptist Hill Middle High School*

seventh graders Jordan Carter, Varion Simmons, and Codi Stokes



Buist Academy

### High School Learning Community

**Grand Prize Winner:** *Baptist Hill Middle High School*

eleventh grader Annayah Mustafaa

All participants received a certificate and free pizza from Little Caesars. The top video or poster winners from each learning community received a plaque for their school, a \$100 gift card, and a pizza party for his/her class. Second place winners received a \$50 gift card, and third place winners received a \$25 gift card.

“This year more than ever, we have to stand as a united front in supporting our students in every way,” said Talecia Drayton. “The pandemic has brought about many hardships for our schools, students, and families. Many students struggled to adjust to online and hybrid models. Student engagement was impacted drastically and in many cases, negatively.”

In an effort to increase school-wide attendance and academic achievement, CCSD is reaching out to families to connect them to resources and provide them with encouragement and support.

The mission of Charleston County School District is to enhance students' success by providing interventions to reduce chronic absenteeism.

“This mission is supported by the CCSD Attendance and Truancy Project Team,” said Drayton. “A comprehensive and interactive action plan has been developed to engage all stakeholders. Student interventions are a major component of this initiative for supporting schools, students, and families so that all students have equitable access to a high quality education that will assist them in becoming productive members of society.”



Pinehurst Elementary School





# NEW HOURLY RATES FOR KALEIDOSCOPE STAFF

Effective January 25, 2022

Current Job Class	Old Rate	Old Name	New Name	New Job Class	New Rate
2902	\$13.00	Assistant Site Coordinator	Expanded Learning Assistant Site Coordinator 1	2902	\$16.00
2913	\$14.96	Enrichment Coordinator	Expanded Learning Assistant Site Coordinator 2	2919	\$17.00
2905	\$8.00	Assistant Counselor	Expanded Learning Assistant Counselor	2905	\$10.00
2904	\$9.25	Lead Counselor	Expanded Learning Counselor 1	2904	\$12.00
2903	\$10.00	Lead Counselor 1	Expanded Learning Counselor 2	2903	\$13.00
2921	\$10.50	Lead Counselor 2	Expanded Learning Counselor 3	2921	\$14.00
2922	\$11.00	Lead Counselor 3	Expanded Learning Counselor 4	2922	\$15.00
2911	\$26.00	Homework Teacher	Expanded Learning Homework Teacher	2911	\$26.00
2912	\$35.00	Instructor	Expanded Learning Instructor	2912	\$35.00
2901	\$23.63	Site Coordinator	Site Coordinator	2901	\$23.63

## C.E. Williams Middle (North Campus) using bicycles to enhance students’ well being



C.E. Williams Middle School’s North Campus is excited to announce that the school will be participating in Outride’s Riding for Focus program.

Outride is a non-profit organization that provides an evidenced-based school cycling program, Riding For Focus, to improve middle school students’ social, emotional, and cognitive health.

Riding For Focus is designed to provide schools with everything they need to get their middle school students riding, including bikes, helmets, teacher training, curriculum, and maintenance through local bicycle retailers.

“We are excited to partner with Ride For Focus to give our sixth grade students the opportunity to learn bike skills and safety,” said Principal Maite Porter. “Through

this grant, we will receive 20 Specialized (brand) bikes assembled by our generous business partner Ride Bikes in West Ashley. Our P.E. teachers will complete training this spring and we will be ready to kick off in fall of 2022.”

Physical activity has an impact on cognitive skills such as concentration and attention, and it also improves student engagement and behavior, all of which are important components of improved academic performance.

The program also helps children learn how to ride bikes. On average, 20 percent of students at a middle school don’t know how to ride a bike before the program. By the end of Riding For Focus, students who didn’t know how to ride feel confident.

“It’s been a challenging year and youth need a safe outlet to experience freedom and joy,” said Lauren Freeman,

Riding For Focus Program Manager. “There’s no better way to do that than by riding bikes. Students need bikes now more than ever and we at Outride are committed to getting more youth on bikes. We are so thrilled to be onboarding our 2021-2022 schools.”

This is the third middle school in Charleston County School District to participate in the program. St. James-Santee Elementary-Middle School and Deer Park Middle School are in their third and second year, respectively. The goal of Riding For Focus is to establish a sustainable school cycling program that will help students succeed, as well as grow and connect the community. More than 180 schools and 50,000 students across the United States and Canada are already benefiting from the program.

## Wando JROTC cadet selected as J-100 scholarship recipient

Wando High School’s Bryant Nowicki has been selected as a 2021-22 J-100 Character in Leadership scholarship recipient. Only 100 scholarships were awarded this year. Each cadet that accepts a scholarship does so in pursuit of a commission in the United States Air Force or Space Force.

Candidates are nominated by their instructors and must pass the initial quantitative review. Cadets are also interviewed by a three-person panel comprised of active duty officers, enlisted, and federal civilian members from Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base.

“We are so very proud of Cadet Nowicki for this incredible accomplishment and opportunity,” said JROTC Instructor John Farese. “He competed with senior cadets from 900 other AFJROTC units, and successfully navigated the arduous application and board interview process.”

According to Farese, this scholarship will culminate in his graduation as a second lieutenant in the US Air Force or US Space Force.

“I feel honored to have been chosen for this scholarship; it will be my first step in becoming an officer,” said Col. Nowicki. “This scholarship will allow me to be 100 percent focused on my future and it could not have been achieved without the help of my family, friends, and mentors. This shows me that anything you really want to achieve is possible with hard work and great relationships.”

The J-100 Character in Leadership scholarship pays for tuition, books, a monthly stipend, travel to any university, and housing.

“The faculty and staff of Wando High School honor, celebrate, and salute our own Cadet JROTC Bryant Nowicki as having been selected for the 2022 J-100 AFJROTC Character-in-Leadership Scholarship,” said Principal Sherry Eppelsheimer. “As one of only 100 students across the nation, this is both a significant achievement and accomplishment. His hard work and dedication have proven him worthy. We are so proud of Cadet Nowicki, and we wish him well in all his future endeavors.”



Cadet Bryant Nowicki

*“This scholarship will allow me to be 100 percent focused on my future and it could not have been achieved without the help of my family, friends, and mentors. This shows me that anything you really want to achieve is possible with hard work and great relationships.”* – CADET JROTC BRYANT NOWICKI



# Teacher at James Simons honored as All-Star Educator by national organization



Sharon Beeson

Sharon Beeson is committed to serving the students and families at James Simons Montessori School, specifically the children in her Upper Elementary class. That commitment led to a national award; she is one of four recipients of the McGraw Hill ALEKS All-Star Educator Award for 2022.

Beeson is one of two honorees at the K-12 level. This awards program recognizes K-12 and higher education instructors who use the ALEKS learning solution to achieve exceptional results through extraordinary effort to help learners succeed.

“In a Montessori environment, we strive to integrate and meet each student's needs,” explained Beeson. “The ALEKS product allows me to analyze at a granular level how a student is progressing, what specific needs they

have, and how they approach problem-solving independently. In a multi-age classroom, I can easily provide reviews on standards and acceleration to fit student needs. The students enjoy sharing their challenges and work with their peers in our lesson to develop strategies; Socratic talk is alive and well!”

McGraw Hill ALEKS® (Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces) is a course assistant that helps math and chemistry educators forge constructive learning paths for students, blending personalized modules with instructor-driven assignments to ensure every student always has another block to build on their knowledge base. Since all students enter a course with varying levels of preparedness, educators can identify what their students know and don't know and, from there, ALEKS will deliver customized practice until they understand concepts and standards. To date, ALEKS has helped more than 20 million students at thousands of K–12 schools, colleges, and universities around the world.

“We are proud to recognize these incredible instructors who are using ALEKS in unique and impactful ways and making a difference in their students’ lives,” said Simon Allen, CEO of McGraw Hill. “It’s a joy to read through the nominations and see how educators have adapted and helped their students during a challenging year.”

Beeson uses the program to get a detailed view of her students’ skills and where they need more support. Her students bring two of their favorite ALEKS questions every Monday to discuss as a class.

“Ms. Beeson’s obvious passion for our profession is evident in her daily engagement with students,” added Principal

Chris Ryan. “She searches for resources to meet the needs of her students and propel them forward through the curriculum. Given the personalized, independent nature of Montessori, Ms. Beeson feels ALEKS best meets the learning needs of her students as a curriculum supplement.”

Beeson will receive a \$1,000 donation from McGraw Hill to an education-focused non-profit or charity of her choice, a \$250 gift card, and a collection of McGraw Hill books for professional development.

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*“Ms. Beeson’s obvious passion for our profession is evident in her daily engagement with students. She searches for resources to meet the needs of her students and propel them forward through the curriculum. Given the personalized, independent nature of Montessori, Ms. Beeson feels ALEKS best meets the learning needs of her students as a curriculum supplement.”*

— CHRIS RYAN, JAMES SIMONS MONTESSORI SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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Join Coaches For Character, Charleston County Schools and Senator Tim Scott honoring our 74 “Unsung Heroes” at the 2022 CHAMP Awards.

May 14, 2022  
7:00 p.m.  
TD Arena

Based on character, community service, academic effort and overcoming odds, you can nominate an 8th or 12th grader at [www.coachesforcharacter.com/champ-awards](http://www.coachesforcharacter.com/champ-awards).

DEADLINE TO NOMINATE IS MARCH 1ST, 2022.



# CCSD’s “Reading Around the Bases” partnership with Charleston RiverDogs slides into sixth year



Charleston County School District (CCSD) and the Charleston RiverDogs, the Lowcountry’s professional baseball team (and Single-A affiliate of the Tampa Bay Rays) are excited to start the sixth year of their literacy initiative, “Reading Around the Bases.”

The program began during the 2016-2017 school year to promote fun and reading with second graders throughout the county.

Tuesday, January 25, 2022, second graders from 23 elementary schools in CCSD began a 10-week baseball-themed incentive program. Every student received a Reading Challenge packet that includes a scorecard, tracking sheet, and their very own personal

baseball card.

To move around the bases on the scorecard, a student must read a certain number of pages: 100 pages for a single, 200 pages for a double, 300 pages for a triple, and 500 pages for a home run.

Special guests from the RiverDogs are visiting schools in CCSD over the course of the next few months to encourage and engage the students as volunteer readers.

“We continue to be impressed with and grateful for the effort the RiverDogs put into in this initiative, and for their continued support of our district,” said CCSD’s Chief Academic Officer, Karolyn Belcher. “Credit goes to Christy James and our teacher-

librarians as well. They do so much work behind the scenes to make this a memorable and enjoyable program for our students.”

The top-25 second graders from each participating school will be honored at select RiverDogs’ games during the upcoming season.

“The RiverDogs are proud to continue this relationship with Charleston County School District that has existed since I have been a part of the organization,” added RiverDogs President and General Manager Dave Echols. “Literacy and education are vital for the development of young members of the Charleston community, and we are excited to continue impacting students in the sixth year of this tremendous program.”

## EXPANDED LEARNING OFFICER SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN PRESTIGIOUS RILEY INSTITUTE PROGRAM

*Harold Sanders selected for SCALE Fellowship*

Harold Sanders, a 21st Century program officer for Charleston County School District (CCSD) was recently selected as one of the inaugural participants in the South Carolina Afterschool Leaders Empowered (SCALE) Fellowship.

The Riley Institute at Furman and the South Carolina Department of Education have partnered to offer SCALE, a new program that will prepare individuals across the state to be strong leaders in the field of afterschool and expanded learning.

“Mr. Sanders will have the opportunity to connect with and hear from other afterschool and summer learning professionals in a structured, well designed curriculum,” said Jason Sakran, CCSD’s Director of Expanded Learning (Kaleidoscope). “I am proud that he is representing our department and our school district in this state initiative. As a former Riley Diversity Equity and Inclusion Fellow, I know his Riley Institute experience will be top notch.”

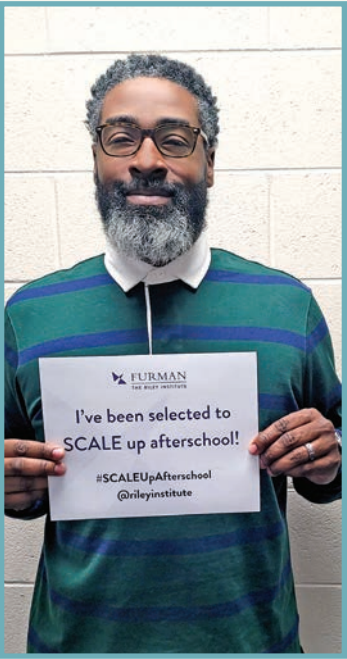
Sanders was one of only 20 applicants chosen for this inaugural year. Each year for the next three years, SCALE will convene additional diverse cohorts of emerging summer and afterschool learning leaders, providing them with the resources they need to build strong partnerships, secure funding, design and scale effective programming. Ideal participants are leaders who work in the school district or are partnering with the school district to provide evidence-based afterschool and summer learning programs. Participants will receive continuing education credits for their participation.

“This was something I was interested in applying for because it will provide me with an opportunity to grow my leadership skills,” said Sanders. “I feel it will allow me to gain the knowledge I need to build CCSD’s expanded learning and summer programs which ultimately benefits our students facing the challenges of COVID-19 and the resulting learning loss creative. I hope to be introduced to creative ways to reach those students.”

SCALE will be a hybrid in-person and virtual educational experience. The program begins with a weeklong intensive on Furman’s campus from February 20-25, 2022. SCALE Fellows will then participate in monthly webinars, take part in a field trip to a nationally-acclaimed summer learning program, and work on a capstone project related to afterschool or summer learning.

The program will be grounded in deep discussion and led by a diverse faculty with afterschool and summer learning expertise.

“My philosophy is to always continue to learn and strive to provide opportunities for our scholars to succeed,” said Sanders. “This helps me honor my commitment to our scholars.”



Harold Sanders

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### 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.*

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