



**James Island Elementary
School**

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Interim Superintendent of Schools

Karolyn Belcher
Chief Academic Officer

Michelle Simmons
Associate Superintendent of
Elementary Learning Community

Jonetta Gregory
Principal

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Jonetta Gregory, 843-762-8240

Media Release

James Island Elementary students to share their perspective on Civil Rights Era with community

Charleston, SC – Lessons learned about the Civil Rights struggle in the 1960s by fifth graders at James Island Elementary School (JIES) have turned into an art display that will be available for the community to view at the James Island Cultural Center. Shelby Joffrion, a fifth grade teacher at JIES, coordinated the effort, which is titled “An Exercise in Empathy.”

“These children and their families completed an incredible cultural empathy project that is simply breathtaking,” said Joffrion. “We did the program in February, but it is not just another ‘Black History Month’ project. It is so much bigger than that.”

The display, which will be unveiled to the public on Friday, May 27, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., explores the unique perspective of fifth graders.

Each child chose a photo from the 1960s, researched it, and recreated it. Every student was then asked to interpret what was happening in the photo and how the actions within the image made them feel.

“When I tell you that the art they submitted is stunning, impactful, and empathetic, it seems like an understatement,” added Joffrion. “I am so proud of them.”

Joffrion made sure to stay in close contact with the students’ parents and guardians for this project.

“Including families in the planning and execution of the assignment is a big reason for this program’s success,” Joffrion said.

Joffrion added the project aligns with the following state standard:

*[5.4.CC](#) Analyze the continuities and changes of race relations in the United States and South Carolina following the Supreme Court decisions of *Briggs v. Elliott* and *Brown v. Board of Education*. This indicator was developed to promote inquiry into how race relations in the U. S. changed due to the ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education*. This indicator was also designed to promote inquiry into how the efforts*

of civil rights groups and leaders helped to promote racial equality throughout the United States.

The JIES students' display at the James Island Cultural Center will be available through June 17, 2022.

For more information, email Shelby Joffrion at shelby_joffrion@charleston.k12.sc.us.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 49,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), music and other creative and performing arts, career and technical preparation programs, and military.