



**For Immediate Release**  
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## Media Release

### **Mitchell Elementary School renovations complete in time for 2021-2022 school year**

**Julian Mitchell Elementary School**

**Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Karolyn Belcher**  
Chief Academic Officer

**Michelle Simmons**  
Executive Director of Elementary School Learning Committee

**Amber Sainz**  
Principal

**Charleston, SC** – Julian Mitchell Elementary School received an \$11.5 million overhaul just in time for the 2021-2022 school year.

This renovation project increased campus security with the new secured vestibule for the main entrance, which is located on the second floor. Relocating the front office in place of an existing classroom allowed for the construction of a new exterior elevator. In addition, having a second elevator outside improves the control of visitors who require ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access.

“Upon the start of the renovation project, it was clear that the building needed more work than the original scope had outlined,” said Robert “B.J.” Sturman Interim Director of Capital Programs. “Using proceeds from the sale of the Archer school building, we were able to increase the scope to include much needed items like new flooring and windows throughout the building. Not wanting to postpone the Mitchell student’s return to their school this year, we had to be very strategic as to what in the project needed to be done this summer and what could be deferred to later in the year.”

Principal Amber Sainz can’t wait to see the look on the children’s faces when they see the improvements.

“We are thrilled for our scholars to be able to experience our newly renovated learning environment,” said Sainz. “The new space has classrooms designed for collaboration and opportunities for STEM and Science immersion. Our goal is to provide our learners with the skills they need to pursue their goals and dreams beyond elementary school.”

Improvements were also made to the HVAC system and air quality as new roof top and interior HVAC units were added. Upgrades and modernization were also made throughout the inside of the 31 year old school to include interior paint, flooring, casework, acoustical ceiling tile in the hallways, group and faculty restrooms and selected doors.

Assistant Principal Brian Keough added, the renovations unite the building's unique history with today's expectations for teaching and learning to prepare students for college and career readiness.

"We are excited to welcome back this year's students and families and are now prepared to serve generations to come," said Keough.

"COVID-19 has had a lingering effect on our construction projects and continues to force the construction teams to overcome new challenges to include material costs and availability," said Sturman. "It has been a race to get all of the new school buildings online before the students return for the new school year, which was strategically managed by Cumming (the District's construction management firm). The internal and external partnerships between the design team, general contractors, sub-contractors, CCSD staff, and others were the keys to a successful project."

Construction Management was handled by Cumming; Project Manager was Joe Christian; Site Manager was Matt Corish; Architect was Red Iron Architects; and General Contractor was Brantley Construction Group.

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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.