

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Ten CCSD schools reduce waste by recycling more

**Office of Strategy and
Communications**

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Charleston, SC – Recycling Education Grant funds were recently awarded to ten Charleston County School District (CCSD) schools by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

Funds can be used toward the purchase of recycling and/or composting equipment and supplies, share table equipment/supplies and recycling-related field trips.

Stefanie Vandiver, Environmental Health Manager with the DHEC Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling said CCSD projects include composting food scraps in culinary arts classes, creating a "sharing table" in the cafeteria, and a field trip to recycle oyster shells for reef restoration.

Grant recipients

- Baptist Hill Middle High School received funds for recycling containers to be placed in the classrooms, gymnasium, and stadium. They also received funds to be used toward recycling and/or composting related field trips. They received \$1,500.
- Burke High School received funds to purchase a rain barrel and for composting supplies. They also received to be used toward recycling and/or composting related field trips. They received \$1,500.
- Carolina Park Elementary received funds to purchase recycling containers and supplies to start a share table in the cafeteria. They received \$600.
- Haut Gap Middle School received funds to purchase supplies to build compost bins for the school. They received \$1,321.
- Jerry Zucker Middle School received funds to be used toward recycling and/or composting related field trips. They received \$1,500.

- Military Magnet Academy received funds to purchase supplies to start a composting program using food waste from the cafeteria. They received \$1,500.
- RB Stall High School received funds for a vermicomposter to be added to their composting program. They also received funds for supplies to start a share table in the cafeteria and for recycling/composting related field trips. They received \$1,050.
- Sullivan's Island Elementary School received funds to purchase recycling containers and compost tumblers. They also received funds for supplies to start a share table in the cafeteria. They received \$988.
- Thomas C. Cario Middle School received funds to purchase recycling containers and recycling related field trips. They received \$1,500.
- West Ashley High School received funds for composting supplies. They also received funds for supplies to start a share table in the cafeteria and for recycling/composting related field trips. They received \$1,296.

Jason Wheless, the culinary instructor at West Ashley High School (WAHS), and his students are working on becoming a zero food waste culinary program.

"With the grant funds, I purchased a composter, gardening tools and seeds for the garden, and a share table and baskets to collect unwanted fruit from the cafeteria," said Wheless. "In addition, we are scheduled to visit a local organic farm to see the entire farm to table operation."

The students at WAHS have already repurposed around 25 pounds of fruit in the culinary classroom, including fresh apple and orange juice, pickles, fermented citrus, jams, and jellies.

The students baked banana bread and served it to faculty to practice customer service skills," said Wheless. "We are growing plants from seed under grow lights and transporting them into our indoor hydroponic garden, where we will use the produce throughout the semester."

Simona Spinner, a math teacher at Military Magnet Academy will use the money to make compost for the school's future garden.

"Our students collect food scraps from the cafeteria and make compost," said Spinner. "Our trees are already growing and they will benefit from the compost that we are making for them. The trees should be about 6 feet tall before summer comes and they will continue to grow, just like the kids who planted them."

The money MMA received went to buy tools for their project. Students collect food scraps from the cafeteria during lunch, then dump the scraps in the compost bin that they spin twice a week.

The compost is ultimately used to grow Moringa trees that were started indoors and which will go in the ground outside during spring.

“The trees are growing very fast, said Spinner. “We expect to harvest their leaves soon. Moringa is known for the nutritional value of its leaves, flowers, and pods, so we plan to use these parts in smoothies or salads right here on campus.”

The project itself is designed to be an ongoing project since we will continue to make compost and grow food and consequently will have a greater impact on our students and even the close-by community

“Throughout this project, students will learn math, science, engineering, culinary arts and leadership skills, and they will become more aware of their own well-being and more respectful of the surrounding environment,” said Spinner.

For more information contact the Office of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD), a nationally-accredited school district, is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.