



**For Immediate Release**

December 12, 2017

**Contact:**

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## Media Release

### **NFL Star's Foundation Boosts Athletics at Jerry Zucker**

Jerry Zucker Middle School of Science

Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Cynthia Ambrose  
Deputy Superintendent of Learning Services

Joseph Williams, Ed.D.  
Executive Director of Middle School Learning Community

Jacob Perlmutter  
Principal

**North Charleston, SC** – J.J. Watt is known for taking down quarterbacks and disrupting opposing offenses in the NFL. The Houston Texans' star also made headlines earlier this year when he helped raise more than \$37 million for hurricane and flood relief in the Houston area. However, students and staff at Jerry Zucker Middle School (JZMS) will remember the All-Pro defensive lineman for something else; building up their athletic programs.

JZMS is receiving nearly \$20,000 from the [J.J. Watt Foundation](#) to pay for uniforms and equipment. The donation will be used to purchase supplies for the Lightning soccer, volleyball, football, and basketball teams.

Dwayne Crankfield, the school's bilingual parent advocate and soccer coach, applied for the funding; he received positive feedback about the J.J. Watt Foundation from fellow educators in Charleston County School District.

"Currently, our soccer team needs a new soccer goal since our only one was destroyed in a storm," explained Crankfield. "We were reusing soccer balls from PE class and leftovers from previous soccer seasons. The football team depends on [R.B. Stall High School] to donate football equipment, and our football field is missing a goal post. We don't have uniforms on hand for our basketball teams. Each year, parents have to purchase uniforms."

Crankfield added the JZMS football team went through several challenges last year because many of the players could not afford to purchase uniforms and pads. That meant several players missed critical practice time, and actually had to forfeit a few games. Fortunately, that will not be the case next year.

The following list includes the Zucker teams receiving uniforms and equipment from the donation:

- Boys' and girls' basketball - Uniforms (\$4,000)
- Volleyball – Uniforms, volleyballs, knee pads, and line flags (\$1862)
- Soccer - Uniforms and soccer balls (\$1206.50)

- Football – Uniforms, shoulder pads, leg pads, helmets, and footballs (\$9360.20)

The school will also use \$2,389 to purchase football/soccer combo goals (with netting for soccer) to be placed in the ground at their athletic field.

“Our motto is ‘Every student. Everyday. No excuses. No Exceptions’,” stated Principal Jacob Perlmutter. “We feel that no student should be held back from participating in afterschool activities or clubs for financial reasons. We believe that afterschool athletics are important and help student develop critical character traits like personal accountability, teamwork, leadership, and perseverance. This donation is a huge benefit to our school and community!”

The J.J. Watt Foundation will send the payments directly to the vendors, and school administrators hope to have the new uniforms and equipment before the winter break.

For more about the donation to JZMS athletics, contact Dwayne Crankfield, Bilingual Parent Advocate, at (843) 767-8383.

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#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 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.