

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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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

When I read *The Post and Courier* editorial “Stemming Teacher Shortage Starts with Expanding Talk Beyond Money,” I was very encouraged. My team and I have been working on a set of strategies to address our local teacher shortage since my first day in the Superintendent’s chair. I’ve delayed taking a proposal to the school board because I want to include the results of the survey I will soon send to all CCSD teachers. I want to hear from the people who directly work in our classrooms every day, and I want to be able to assure our school board that the set of strategies we ask them to support encompasses things that will have a positive professional and personal impact on our most valuable employees—our teachers. I want to know what matters to educators and what we can do to keep them in our district.

For many years, there has been a shortage of highly qualified teachers in specific academic content areas and in specific sets of schools. The editorial and, presumably, the State’s task force recognize that “salary increases are necessary but insufficient.” Clearly, any new plan to chip away at the teacher shortage must have, as its foundation, improved compensation.

Yet, as we have observed during the past two years, there are factors that impact one’s job satisfaction that are only tangentially connected to salary and benefits.

Better salaries for public school teachers will help open the door to a new future for the teaching profession. However, to truly transform the quality of education we provide to students, we need to think more broadly about what our organization

can do to improve a teacher’s quality of life and help each teacher become the peak performer he/she aspires to be when one first graduates from college. This is why teacher input is so important.

We’ve assembled a list of promising practices. Our Teacher Compensation Task Force generated some of them, and we borrowed others from other districts and other professions. Through our survey, we will ask teachers to react to these ideas or offer their own new and original thoughts.

The teacher shortage is a serious and complex national issue. Yet, the solution must come at the local level. The challenges we face in Charleston are similar to the issues faced in other communities, but no other district has the same exact set of challenges, nor do they have the same combination of resources and resolve that are needed to overcome our current obstacles.

Teacher needs and life circumstances vary. That is why our plan must be creative enough to offer multiple strategies to meet varying needs. Top priorities for some teachers may be on- the-job child care; more late starts/early outs; release time to plan during the day; job sharing; part-time positions; ability to earn extra pay through extra duty; graduate school scholarships; more professional support; etc.

We won’t know what’s important until we start listening.

To get the results we want and our children deserve, teachers must shape the plan we adopt in Charleston.



Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Superintendent
Charleston County School District

D20PCP initiative off to a successful start



Five principals from the Constituent District 20 schools, located in downtown Charleston, formed a collaboration to strengthen and direct the academic progress of students served in its feeder system of elementary, middle, and high schools. The derivative of this collaboration is now called the District 20 Principal Collaboration Program (D20PCP).

District 20 principals Janice Malone (Sanders-Clyde Elementary School), Amber Sainz (Julian Mitchell Elementary School), Wanda Sheats (Charleston Progressive Academy), Stephanie Spann (Simmons-Pinckney Middle School), and Cheryl Swinton (Burke High School) collectively agreed that addressing the most pressing needs that permeate D20’s student population was crucial. Their efforts will not only address the Vision 2027 goal of all students in Charleston County School District (CCSD) reading on grade level by fifth grade but will also engage students in real-world experiences, broadening horizons, and removing barriers to success.

The D20PCP principals identified areas of need that they describe as “the most pressing needs that permeate our student bodies,” including academic performance, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, discipline, engaging families, mental and physical health, access to youth-centered activities, and developing positive self-esteem. Another important focus of the collaboration is attracting and retaining excellent teachers and staff to support D20 schools.



The goals designed to address these needs are ambitious. As described by this group of dedicated principals, the proposal gives hope that change can be made for the betterment of D20 students and their families by banning together and creating the chain that overlaps and connects the overall growth of students who come through D20 schools.

“We don’t pity our students, we empower our students and their families with the tools and skills needed to break the cycle of poverty and low expectations,” said Janice Malone (Sanders-Clyde Elementary School) leader of the principal team.

Through this collaboration, these school leaders are looking forward to sharing measurable outcomes related to improvement. Positive outcomes for all students will be grounded in the collaboration’s initiatives of student support, family support, community support, and teacher recruitment, as well as retention. Each positive outcome will, ultimately, support student achievement.

Using ESSER III funding, the principals sought the guidance and expertise of long-time educator and former CCSD Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Barbara Dilligard, to coordinate student and family support systems. The principals of each school have committed to working collaboratively on each of the initiatives outlined in the ESSER III proposal.

In the spirit of collaboration, this partnership has resulted in numerous



community and civic organization partnerships. The City of Charleston Recreation Center enabled 18 students to successfully complete a swimming summer camp. The Burke High School Foundation, Inc. purchased school uniforms and other items for D20PCP students. School supplies were donated at two community Back-to-School events (Eastside and Westside parks), and a collaboration was established with the Preservation Society of Charleston to share historical projects on African American contributions to the Charleston area through the D20PCP Heritage School of Knowledge. The Lowcountry Period Project was re-established to provide feminine hygiene products for girls at Simmons-Pinckney and Burke.

One tenet of the collaboration, embedded in the multifaceted work, is that the collaboration will provide students with opportunities and experiences with cultural activities that stretch students’ minds and promote social growth. Recently, CCSD Superintendent Don Kennedy accompanied students and teachers to the Beyond Van Gogh Charleston: The Immersive Experience.

It’s clear that, even in its infancy, D20PCP is having a positive impact. More than 260 students with their teachers and volunteer chaperones attended the Immersive Experience. Students expressed great interest and many creative ideas about what they saw and what they learned from this enriching experience.

ANITA HUGGINS IS CCSD’S DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT



Anita Huggins
Deputy Superintendent
Charleston County
School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud to announce Anita Huggins has been selected as Deputy Superintendent by the Superintendent and Board of Trustees.

Huggins’ commitment and deep sense of service have been critical to CCSD over the last two decades. During her most recent time as the Interim Chief Transformation Officer and Interim Deputy Superintendent, she demonstrated a passion for closing the persistent achievement gap for students of color through her work to develop interim goals and guardrails that will be used to plan for educational opportunities that serve all students. Huggins was also charged with designing, executing, and measuring the success of programs that support Vision 2027 – the goal of all students reading at grade level by fifth grade by the spring of 2027. Her servant-minded leadership has served CCSD well.

“Ms. Huggins is a collaborative, humble leader who works to build consensus among teams while holding student outcomes at the forefront of all discussions, plans, and actions,” said Superintendent of Schools Don Kennedy. “We are fortunate to have such an experienced, enthusiastic educator with a deep knowledge of CCSD serving our community. Her proven leadership in the

community is visionary, strategic, and outside-the-box.”

Before being named Deputy Superintendent, Huggins served as the Interim Chief Transformation Officer. She worked with the Superintendent, senior leaders, and other stakeholders to establish the district’s vision and develop strategies to meet the needs of all students. Another key responsibility for Huggins is ensuring that systems, accountability, and support structures are in place to effectively serve schools, students, and communities. Huggins is currently a Riley Institute Diversity Leaders Initiative fellow.

Huggins is an accomplished educator; she has experience at the school level as an English teacher, a master teacher, and principal. She served in various CCSD schools and communities during her tenure, including Simmons-Pinckney Middle School, Burke High School, Edmund A. Burns Elementary School, Fort Johnson Middle School, and Moultrie Middle School.

Huggins has provided guidance from the district level as well. For over 12 years, she trained hundreds of teachers and administrators from all of CCSD’s schools on how to plan for instruction effectively, deliver instruction, and develop conducive environments for learners as the

Executive Director of Educator Effectiveness. In that role, Huggins was instrumental in developing district-wide systems for teacher development, support, and recognition while leading a team that simultaneously designed and executed An Evening with Stars gala event to recognize teachers and principals. Some of the proceeds from that event supported the Charleston Educator Symposium, a locally-recognized multi-day professional development event for educators that her team also hosted.

Over the course of her career, Huggins has presented at numerous conferences, served as a guest lecturer, facilitated and served on various panels, as well as co-authored journal articles to help grow and support aspiring, novice, and veteran educators.

“Ms. Huggins’ breadth of experience in Charleston and diverse skill set uniquely position her for this pivotal role,” added Kennedy. “A respected educator with a heart for kids, her enthusiasm and passion for making sure all students achieve at very high levels, regardless of their zip code, will serve students and schools well.”

Huggins holds bachelor’s degrees in both English and Secondary Education and a master’s degree in Secondary Administration.

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CCSD HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START CELEBRATE Head Start Awareness Month!

The Head Start program was announced in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson as a complete framework for providing the required health, educational, and nutritional needs of children from low-income families to pave better opportunities for them.

Since Head Start's inception, the program has served over 35 million children. Head Start has given them access to learning tools, healthcare, and more, as well as supporting their families. Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded initiatives that are crucial for preparing young children for a life of independence and success.

While the program started in 1965, Head Start Awareness Month was initiated by President Ronald Reagan on October 22, 1982.



HEAD START DISTRICT STAFF



HEAD START AT MARY FORD EARLY LEARNING CENTER



Head Start/Early Head Start PROCLAMATION RECIPIENTS

Kimberly Foxworth, Executive Director of Early Learning and Dena Davis, Head Start - Early Head Start Director received a Proclamation from the city of North Charleston in honor of Head Start Awareness month.

Angel Oak Elementary named ArtsNOW Leadership School

Angel Oak Elementary School was recognized as a 2022-23 ArtsNOW Leadership School. ArtsNOW Leadership Schools are schools that consistently provide arts integration school-wide with a high level of fidelity. The arts are pervasive throughout Angel Oak, and teaching and learning are positively reinforced and supported through the lens of arts integration. “We are proud of our continued recognition as an arts integrated elementary school,” said Principal Judith Condon. “We have seen the power of the arts to transform learning for our students and we are committed to continuing our work using this model.” In addition, ArtsNOW Leadership Schools have principals who make arts integration a school-wide priority and who are passionate about positively impacting students, and their school communities, through the arts.



Baptist Hill construction program receives support from Southeastern Construction



Baptist Hill Middle High School (BHMHS) students in Darrin Moore’s Construction Technology class received a welcomed surprise Monday, October 24, 2022. Darryl Thornton, of Graycor Southern Inc., arrived carrying a giant check for \$5,500. Principal Michael De Jong was on hand to receive the generous investment. Thornton serves as a member of the Southeastern Construction Owners and Associates Roundtable (SCOAR). This support from SCOAR will be used to supplement the BHMHS construction program’s materials expenses as well as provide two \$500 scholarships for post-secondary education and training for completers of Moore’s program of studies. The students were excited to hear about this support for their program and Thornton was able to speak one on one with several students about local career opportunities during his visit. “We are so thankful to have business partners such as SCOAR and Graycor Southern that provide Baptist Hill and our students with opportunities in and out of the classroom,” said De Jong. “A special thanks to Darryl Thornton, of Graycor Southern for visiting us and providing us with this monetary donation.” Next steps for this welcomed partnership include field trips for students in the construction program to see first-hand how the valuable skills they are learning in their classroom provide them with a strategic and timely competitive advantage as they transition to post-secondary opportunities.

BURKE STUDENTS GAIN ACCESS TO MORE DUAL CREDIT COURSES

Multiple colleges offering unique educational opportunities through National Equity Education Lab Project

This year, Burke High School students are taking courses offered at Arizona State University, Harvard University, Princeton University, and Spelman College, thanks to the efforts of Charleston County School District’s (CCSD) Acceleration Schools Learning Community and the district’s participation in The National Education Equity Lab. The classes are designed to challenge students in a high school setting and prepare them for the rigors of a college course. Each course is taught (virtually) by a professor from the corresponding college or university, with support in the classroom from a certified CCSD teacher. Burke is the first school in South Carolina to offer this opportunity to students.

Burke students can take the following classes through this initiative:

Fall 2022

Poetry in America: The City from Whitman to Hip Hop - a course offered by Arizona State University and Harvard University

Cloud Computing - provided by Arizona State University in partnership with Amazon Web Services

Spring 2023

Western Way of War from Princeton University

Education of a Black Girl from Spelman College

Each course offers college credits that are transferable to colleges around the country, allowing students to start college a step ahead. With 36 students enrolled in dual credit courses this semester, Burke staff members are excited about more students signing up for classes for the spring semester. The school plans to offer more classes in the 2023-2024 school year, covering topics that interest all upperclassmen, including personal finance, and big data.



National Education Equity Lab offers Title I high schools courses from Howard, Princeton, Stanford, Wharton, University of Pennsylvania, Wesleyan, Cornell, Georgetown, Arizona State University, Barnard, and Harvard. Students gain valuable experience and expand their horizons beyond the high school classroom at no cost to them. Students have increased confidence in their abilities from completing rigorous coursework required of a college class. With this confidence, they have an increased dedication to perform well in high school and pursue higher education.



Drayton Hall Elementary named Apple Distinguished School

Drayton Hall Elementary School is pleased to announce that it has been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for 2022–2025, thanks to a digital learning culture built around connection, creation, and personalization. Apple Distinguished Schools are centers of innovation, leadership, and educational excellence. They use Apple technology to inspire creativity, collaboration and critical thinking in learning, teaching, and the school environment, and have documented results of academic accomplishment. The selection of Drayton Hall Elementary as an Apple Distinguished

School highlights the school’s success as an innovator and a compelling learning environment that engages students and provides tangible evidence of academic Achievement. As the students move through the grade levels, they are gradually released to create, research, and take full ownership of their learning. Drayton Hall staff will work to sustain the school’s technology program and update innovative instructional expectations. Students and staff use Apple devices to assist with mastery of the South Carolina College and Career Readiness Standards.

From Hunley Park Bees to Future South Carolina State Bulldogs

On Saturday, October 8, 2022, 19 students visited South Carolina State University’s (SCSU) Youth Day. They were joined by Mr. Hartwell, Ms. Glover, Ms. Skipper, Ms. Holmes, and Ms. Gadsden. All were able to watch the game, be mesmerized by the Marching 100 and ate a wonderful lunch prepared by SCSU Alumnae.



R.B. Stall staff hosts dedication ceremony for CCSD’s Newcomer Center

R.B. Stall High School welcomed students, parents, community members, and staff members to the brand new Charleston County School District Newcomer Center for a dedication ceremony on October 18, 2022. Staff members, along with Superintendent Don Kennedy, spoke to the crowd and highlighted the importance of this program. Those in attendance received tours of the center, listened to music, danced, and ate. CCSD’s Newcomer Center operates as an English acquisition school and is designed to help students new to the United States acclimate to the district. The center’s mission is to create a safe, nurturing, and language-rich learning environment for multi-language learners, supported by their native language instruction.

AROUND CCSD

CITADEL VISITS CCSD SCHOOLS

October 19, 2022 was The Citadel's annual Leadership Day, where every cadet participated in a leadership and/or service activity. The entire freshman class (over 700 cadets) participated in the school's SHARE Program along with approximately 150 sophomore team leaders where teams of cadets visited elementary classrooms to lead a heroism-themed activity and help students make cards for their personal and community heroes.



Charleston Progressive Academy



Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School



James Island Elementary School



Springfield Elementary School



LAUREL HILL COLOR RUN

The Color Dash at Laurel Hill Primary School was another success!



Laurel Hill Primary School

MEMMINGER CHALK GRANT

Memminger Elementary School, with the help of from their PTO, was able to purchase colorful cement paint and created engaging stencils using their very own Magic Cutter provided by the district. A Boeing Wellness Grant for \$300 enabled the purchase. Art teacher Ms. Bilger, also did an amazing job painting mazes that incorporate both academic components and IB components. The playground now has a variety of games that encourage students to collaborate together.



Memminger Elementary School

NCES COAT GIVEAWAY

North Charleston Elementary School students were the beneficiaries of the second Annual Coat & Uniform Drive benefiting local schools. Sonia Hanson Vice President Branch Manager of South State Bank started this drive to help keep kids warm, help parents with one less cost, and to support the community and families in this small way. Coats were bagged and labeled so that each student received their very own coat. Coats were donated by community members, business owners, and customers.



North Charleston Elementary School

CCSD SPORTS



CAMP ROAD KAYAKING

Camp Road Middle School students in the outdoor club enjoyed a recent kayaking adventure.

MITCHELL RUNNING CLUB FIRST PRACTICE

The Julian Mitchell Elementary School “Speedy Sharks Running Club” had their first practice last month. They are working towards the goal of completing a 5k race. On day one the scholars already showed encouragement for one another and determination!



WANDO BOYS WIN STATE TEAM

The Wando High School Boys Swim team earned the State Championship last month. Congratulations to the all the swimmers and Coaches Gibbons and Manchester!



WHITESIDES STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN COLORFUL RACE

Students at Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School in Mount Pleasant raised over \$100,000 in two weeks during the fifth annual Parent Teacher Association Color Run fundraiser. To celebrate exceeding the six-digit fundraising goal, students participated in a color run on Oct. 14, where PTA volunteers threw colorful powder on the students as they raced around a jungle-themed field.

CCSD Homecoming 2022



Academic Magnet High School



Baptist Hill Middle High School



Lucy Garrett Beckham High School



St John's High School



Burke High School



Wando High School

October Unsung Heroes at CCSD



Elissa Flavin, Kindergarten
Stono Park Elementary

Miss Flavin goes above and beyond everyday to ensure her Kindergarteners have a supportive, meaningful, and fun first year of school.

She works tirelessly to plan creative and engaging lessons that help her students meet grade level standards while still giving them opportunities to build social and emotional skills.

She cares for each child in her classroom and always makes sure they feel safe, loved, and empowered while at school.

Elissa is also a natural leader and is always willing to go out of her way to help anyone who needs it.

Elissa’s kids and colleagues are lucky to have her!



Jessie Mintz
West Ashley High School

Jessie Mintz is the very definition of “Students are the Heart of Our Work”. She is consistently working and striving to serve our students at West Ashley High School. She sponsors clubs to help students engage in extracurricular activities and find a community. She also volunteers at the Cat Mobile (a PBIS incentive) and supports the culinary students by visiting the Bistro!

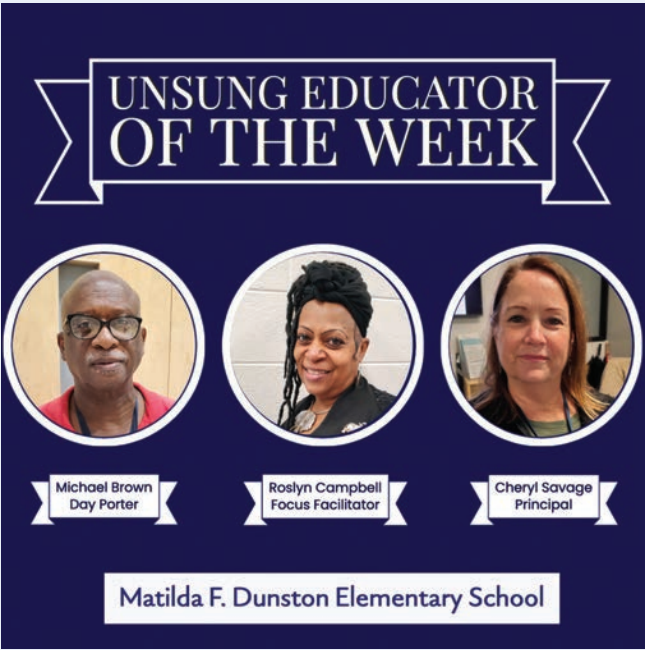
However, Jessie Mintz’s passion for WAHS does not stop with our students. She is a strong advocate for the well-being of our teachers. She leads the Teacher Wellness Committee, where she creates monthly newsletters, sponsors wellness events, and is always there spreading positivity.



Michael Brown, Roslyn Campbell, and Cheryl Savage, *Dunston Elementary*

Dunston Elementary was used as a shelter for Hurricane Ian and our principal, Cheryl Savage, day porter, Mr. Brown, and focus facilitator, Roslyn Campbell, spent 56 hours straight at school to care for the 60 people who came to the shelter, even sleeping at school.

They worked tirelessly to care for the physical and emotional needs of those seeking refuge and then came back to school Monday morning, as usual, to care for the needs of our students.



Dr. Shavonna Coakley
Director of School Support, CCSD

Dr. Coakley is relentless in her endeavors to create safe and orderly schools across the entire district. Whether she is needed to problem solve a difficult situation, provide clarification on a decision, intervention, or consequence, or be present through every stage of contentious and difficult scenarios, Dr. Coakley is a reliable constant for school leaders to rely on. It is not uncommon to receive an email from Dr. Coakley late at night or early in the morning, which is evidence of the amount of time she commits and sacrifices to help building level leaders.

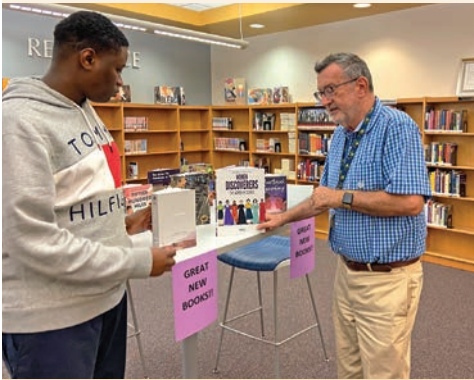


Camp Road Middle Cougar Community Day

Students and staff at Camp Road Middle School participated in Cougar Community Day - a day-long celebration acknowledging and including ALL students while fostering school-wide community and connections. Students attended their session of choice during their designated grade-level time. Their 45-minute sessions had bingo, dance lessons, volleyball lessons, lacrosse clinics, time in a Wellness room, a movie room, computer games, arts and crafts, football, basketball, dodgeball, LEGO creation, and kickball. The community partners for the event were the school's PTO, Dance Moves of Charleston, and James Island Charter High School's lacrosse, football, and volleyball teams (including more than 20 high school student-athletes).

The school's PBIS facilitates Cougar Community Day (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) team.

Four CCSD schools awarded grants from Laura Bush Foundation



Burke High School



Springfield Elementary School



Pepperhill Elementary School



R.B. Stall High School

Springfield Elementary School and Pepperhill Elementary School, along with Burke High School, and R.B. Stall High School were each awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries. A total of 300 schools from 44 states received a grant. No more than four schools per district received a grant; Charleston County School District (CCSD) is one of the few districts with four grant awards.

As a former school librarian, Laura Bush knows that library resources are often less prioritized for funding. The Laura Bush Foundation provides funding to schools with the greatest needs to focus on their library collection. The foundation has provided over \$19.5 million to 3,300 schools in the last 20 years.

Burke High School Librarian David Matthews said the grant funds will be used to update the school's book collection to reflect the

school's diverse population and community.

Grant money for Springfield Elementary's Librarian Regina Stephens will be spent on similar updates for the school's library collection.

R.B. Stall High School Librarian Elizabeth Tonelli requested more print books

WANDO'S YEARBOOK TAKES TOP HONOR IN THE STATE

For the second year in a row, Wando High School's yearbook, *Legend*, is South Carolina Scholastic Press Association's (SCSPA) Best Yearbook in the state. The Warriors earned this year's honor with their 2022 volume, "Something Within Us."

This the third time *Legend* has earned SCSPA's top award, and this the first time in school history Wando won *Best Yearbook in the state* two years in a row.

In addition, *Legend's* staff brought home 12 individual awards, the most of any competing yearbook in 2022. In fact, *Legend* won more first place awards than any other yearbook in the state won in total awards.

- The following *Legend* staff members received SCSPA individual awards:
- First Place, Academics Spread Design - Graduate Harper Duffy
 - First Place, Clubs Spread Design - Junior Jordan Condie
 - First Place, Feature Story - Graduate Millie Rice
 - First Place, Feature Photograph - Graduate Sarah Cote
 - First Place, Personality Profile Story - Graduate Allie Frizzell
 - First Place, Sports Action Photo - Graduate Anna Jane Morrall
 - First Place, Sports Story - Junior Gracie Sams
 - First Place, Sports Reaction Photo - Graduate Abigail McLeod
 - First Place, Student Life Spread Design - Senior Brooke Tribolet
 - Second Place, Sports Spread Design - Junior Ava Kempinski
 - Third Place, Alternative Copy Spread Design - Senior Katie Brown
 - Third Place, Cover Design - Graduates Clara Barresi, Lily Higgins, Millie Rice

Finalist for National Designer of the Year



Clara Barresi

Former *Legend* yearbook co-editor in chief, Clara Barresi, has been named a Top 10 finalist for Designer of the Year by the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA). She was chosen among yearbook, newspaper, and magazine designers across the nation after submitting a portfolio of her best yearbook design work.

Barresi is the tenth NSPA individual awards finalist in *Legend* history, and she has won more design awards than any past yearbook student, including winning the Southern Interscholastic Press Association's Design Portfolio Contest an unprecedented three years in a row.

Barresi, a freshman at the University of Georgia, and the *Legend* staff will find out her final ranking in the top 10 when the staff travels to the NSPA conference in St. Louis on November 12, 2022.



Focus ON CCSD

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Donald R. Kennedy, Sr., Superintendent of Schools
Vanessa L. Denney, Interim Executive Director of Communications
Sully Witte, Communications Officer

Wonderful Wildcat Cafe

Mount Zion Elementary celebrated our first quarterly celebration for positive behavior with the Wonderful Wildcat Cafe. Students were given menus to pick the snack and drink of their choice and the cafeteria was transformed into a cafe! Students enjoyed their snacks while chatting with one another and listening to music. Teachers, staff, and volunteers served students their food. Way to go Wildcats!



Charleston County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or any other applicable status protected by federal or state law. Questions about non-discrimination policies should be sent to Charleston County School District, 75 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC 29401 | Phone: (843) 937-6300 | communications@charleston.k12.sc.us