

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.*

Volume 5 | Edition 9 | September 2022

CCSD has host of mental health supports to benefit students and staff



National Suicide Prevention Week is being recognized this year from September 4 – 10, 2022. In recognition of that Charleston County School District (CCSD) wants to make students, staff, and families aware of the many mental health supports in place.

According to CCSD Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator, Marques Johnson, it is important to note that the mental health supports in place in CCSD should be considered a continuum of supports.

“CCSD anchors the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

(MTSS) Framework, which aligns with the continuum concept,” said Johnson. “MTSS allows for targeted support for students. Mental health supports in our schools are tiered in order to be more effective and to meet student needs.”

Both the pandemic and social justice issues in recent years have put a spotlight on mental health and wellness.

Fronde Stille, CCSD Director of School Counseling Services said that society has developed a better awareness of need and maybe less of a stigma around seeking and providing mental health support.

“CCSD has a renewed commitment to making sure that those supports are equitably distributed and accessible,” said Stille. “Starting with the adults, we have allocated funds for both wellness initiatives including trauma informed educator training, self-care strategies and calming rooms in schools. For our students, we have increase our number of mental health professionals in schools such as clinical counselors, school psychologists, and social workers, to support students not only at school, but also help families connect to resources outside of school when the need arises.”

These professionals not only provide direct support to students at school, but they are also available to help families

connect to resources outside of school when the need arises. CCSD has also invested in additional wellness curriculum options for middle and high schools.

“Our goal is to provide safe and supportive environments that normalize a need for strategies to help manage things from everyday stress to significant trauma,” Stille explained.

There is federal government funding currently in place to provide these additional supports and CCSD is committed to sustaining the level of support needed to support our school communities.

“We recognize that the need doesn’t end with the funding,” said Stille. “We are proactively identifying ways to track the impact of our support so that we will be able to identify the highest leverage resources that we will want to continue with other funding sources available.”

While the departments typically involved in student support like counseling services, psychological services, alternative programs and services, and special education have taken the lead in this work, other departments such as the Office of Family and Community Engagement, curriculum and instruction, early learning, nursing, and school leadership teams also actively engage in mental wellness initiatives.

Governor Henry McMaster signs legislation to help provide eye glasses to students in low-income communities



Governor Henry McMaster celebrated the work of Vision To Learn at a bill signing ceremony at North Charleston Elementary School.

Vision To Learn is a nonprofit charity that provides children at schools in low-income communities with free vision screenings, eye exams and glasses. The program brings licensed optometrists to school sites, eliminating barriers to care that would otherwise prevent many students from getting the glasses they need to succeed in school and in life. Vision To Learn began service last school year in Charleston County on a pilot basis. Through this legislation, the program now can expand operations to low-income communities across the state.

Governor McMaster signed the new legislation, House Bill 4837, allowing Vision To Learn's mobile vision clinics to offer services at Title I schools throughout the state.

“With today's signing, we take another step forward in improving the lives of our state's children and their educational outcomes,” said Governor Henry McMaster. “Through this legislation, and programs like Vision to Learn, we remove barriers for our children and allow them to reach their true potential. This seemingly small change in state law will have a life-changing impact on the lives of so many.”

“Our work in Charleston this past year identified a clear need and demonstrated a cost-effective solution,” said Austin Beutner, Vision To Learn Founder. “This

law will allow us to help many thousands of children in low-income communities across South Carolina in the months and years to come. Every child, every school, everywhere in the country should have the glasses they need to succeed in school and in life”

Estimates are more than 100,000 children in schools across South Carolina go to school every day without the glasses they need to see the board, read a book, or participate in class.

About one in four children, whether from a family with means or a family struggling to get by, will naturally need glasses. Children who need glasses and don't have them are more likely to be misdiagnosed with behavioral issues in kindergarten, be considered “slow” learners by 5th grade, and to drop out of high school. Unfortunately, in low-income urban and rural communities, most children who need glasses don't have them due to financial constraints, language barriers, unresponsive health bureaucracies or the simple fact there are no eye care professionals in their neighborhood. This program solves the problem by bringing the glasses to the kids where they are almost every day—their local neighborhood school.

Here's how it works. Vision To Learn visits schools, where their staff teams up with classroom educators, school nurses and public health departments to make sure every child receives a vision screening. For children who don't pass the screening, Vision To Learn vans, staffed with trained eye care professionals, visit schools to provide eye exams and glasses. All free of charge to the child and their family. Since launching in Charleston County School District in 2021, Vision To Learn has provided 2,050 eye exams and 1,705 glasses to students at 17 schools.

“The district's Vision 2027 is for all students to read on grade level by grade five,” said Don Kennedy, Superintendent of Schools. “We know one of the very

first steps to being able to read is being able to see properly. The signing of this bill not only ensures that our students will receive access to eye care where it may otherwise be unavailable, but will also ensure that our students are able to make strides toward this most important and fundamental goal of reading proficiency that will provide pathways of success for them in life.”

Founded in 2012, Vision To Learn has provided vision screenings to more than 1.5 million children, 387,000 with eye exams and 311,000 with glasses in 14 states and the District of Columbia.

Vision To Learn's program will help students in affiliation with MUSC Health, which helped with funding for the mobile vision clinic, and offers additional choices to families for continuity of care, including specialized optometric and ophthalmologic care for students in need of more complex care following the initial “glasses” exam. As many as 20% of students who receive eye exams from Vision To Learn are referred for follow-up care to local community healthcare providers.

“The idea is to reach out to children who otherwise most likely would not receive any eye care to provide them with a screening examination and a pair of glasses free of charge to enhance their ability to learn,” said Dr. Andrew Eiseman, Professor and Chair of the Storm Eye Institute. “MUSC, including our senior leadership, our children's hospital, and the Storm Eye Institute all 100% agree with that philosophy.”

A groundbreaking study published in September 2021 in The Journal for the American Medical Association Ophthalmology by researchers from the Center for Research and Reform in Education and the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University shows the impact of providing glasses to children at schools. The researchers conducted the largest and most rigorous study in the U.S. to measure the impact of providing

eyeglasses to students directly at their schools. Thousands of children from more than 100 schools in Baltimore participated in the study. Guess what? The children who received glasses did better in school and the impacts were greater than more costly measures such as lengthening the school day, providing computers, or creating charter schools. The children who showed the biggest gains, the equivalent of an additional four to six months of learning, are those who are often the hardest to help—students in the bottom quarter of their class academically and students with learning differences and disabilities.

JHU study senior author Dr. Megan Collins, pediatric ophthalmologist from the Wilmer Eye Institute said, “The Hopkins research study demonstrates how school-based vision care improves vision and learning for students in need. School-based vision care is a simple, yet effective way to help children see more clearly and achieve more academically.”

North Charleston Elementary School is among the schools visited recently by Vision To Learn. 254 students received vision screenings at the school, 113 eye exams, and 86 students were provided with glasses.

This program is made possible thanks to the support of a long list of generous funders, led by the Beutner Family Foundation and local philanthropist Henry Blackford, including Medical University of SC, MUSC Children's Health, MUSC Health Storm Eye Institute, The Boeing Company, Charleston County School District, the City of Charleston, The Duke Endowment, Essilor Vision Foundation, Motley Rice, LLC, Roper Saint Francis Physicians Endowment, Ingevity, First Citizens Bank, The Leon Levine Foundation, SC Physicians Care Charity, Walmart, Charleston County, Amanda's Fund, Volvo US Car Operations Community Fund, TRUIST, The Ceres Foundation, Carolina Panthers, Henry & Sylvia Yashchik Foundat

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CCSD GRANDPARENTS DAY



CCSD students outperform state on both SCPASS and SC READY

The South Carolina Department of Education released the results of the South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) and South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) from the 2021-2022 school year today. Overall, Charleston County School District (CCSD) students outperformed the state average in all of the tests: SCPASS (science), SC READY – English Language Arts (ELA), and SC READY – Mathematics.

Nearly 52 percent (51.7) of CCSD students scored “Meets Expectations” or “Exceeds Expectations” on the SCPASS assessment, close to six percent (5.7) higher than the state average. CCSD scholars also improved their overall average by more than four percentage points from last year.

More than 53 percent (53.2) of CCSD students met or exceeded expectations on the SC READY – ELA test, six percent (6.4) better than the state average. The district’s overall score also improved by 4.1 percent compared to 2021.

Close to 49 percent (48.9) of CCSD scholars met or exceeded expectations in SC READY- Math, almost 10 points (9.8) better than the state average. The district also increased by two percentage points from last year to this year.

“These are very encouraging results and I am grateful to our teachers, leaders, and families for their work supporting our students,” said Superintendent Donald Kennedy. “Although these gains are promising as we kick off the new school year, we still have much work to do in our efforts to ensure that we establish high expectations collaboratively by engaging with families and communities. I look forward to identifying together – as a community – what students need to know and be able to do and to working closely with the Board to set the standard for student outcomes.”

Currently, per state law, fourth and sixth grade students take the SCPASS (science), and all students in grades 3-8 take the SC READY (ELA and math).

“We believe this is a sign of things to come in our district,” said Interim Chief Academic Officer Michelle Simmons. “The credit goes to our students, teachers, administrators, and support staff for their collective hard work and commitment to excellence in education.”

Additional CCSD SCPASS (science) highlights

- CCSD improved on last year’s results in both grade levels and performed higher than the state average in both grades
- 15 elementary schools improved by 10 or more percentage points from 2021 to 2022
- The district improved in the following subgroups: Black (3.2), Hispanic (5.8), White (2.8), Other (3.8), Multilingual Learners (1.9), and Pupils in Poverty (3.1)

Additional CCSD SC READY (ELA) highlights

- CCSD improved on last year’s results in all elementary school grades, as well as grades 6 and 8, and remained higher than the state average in all grades (3-8)
- 10 elementary schools improved by 10 or more percentage points from 2021 to 2022
- The district made gains in the following subgroups: Black (5.2), Hispanic (4.6), White (3.0), Other (1.8), Special Education (1.6), Multilingual Learners (2.0), and Pupils in Poverty (4.9)
- Overall, the CCSD Acceleration Schools community increased in ELA by 7.5 percentage points from 2021 to 2022.

Additional CCSD SC READY (math) highlights

- CCSD improved on last year’s results in all elementary school grades, as well as grades 6 and 7, and remained higher than the state average in all grades (3-8)
- Six elementary schools grew by 10 or more percentage points from 2021 to 2022
- Overall, the CCSD Acceleration Schools increased in math by 7.4 percentage points in meets & exceeds from 2021 to 2022.

“We are off to a strong start with our use of the district’s new reading curriculum to reach our goal of all students reading on grade level by grade five,” added Kennedy. “Students also have access to high-quality math programming to prepare them for success in advanced level math courses. This kind of support ensures students can achieve at high levels and are college/career ready upon graduation.”

Goals for improvement

CCSD leaders recognize significant achievement gaps still exist throughout the district, and averages for “Meets Expectations” and “Exceeds Expectations” for all middle school grades in SC READY – Math were below 50 percent.

“CCSD will continue to prioritize closing achievements gaps by building upon the modest gains made in all subgroups,” added Deputy Superintendent, Anita Huggins. “While we believe our system is headed in the right direction, we must remain focused on our shared goals, committed to our school-based teachers and leaders, and dedicated to collaborating with families and community partners to ensure all students achieve at high levels.”

DISTRICT CELEBRATES NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK

by highlighting dance programs for all ages



Charleston County School District (CCSD) prides itself on offering an in-depth menu of creative arts choices for students. CCSD boasts a diverse student population, and as such, the arts programs offered in all 88 schools and programs are plentiful. According to CCSD Grants Officer Alicia Kokkinos, each year, over 20 CCSD schools apply for grants to support visual and performing arts opportunities. The grant funds provide over \$200,000 in additional arts resources for students.

In celebration of National Arts in Education Week September 11-17, CCSD recognized the various dance programs in which students participate in.

According to Dr. Denisse Santos, Assistant Director of Visual and Performing Arts, CCSD dance programs offer students comprehensive experiences in creativity and movement.

CCSD schools offer a variety of dance styles ranging from ballet to hip hop and modern dance.

The ballet program at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary School began in 1984 when the school opened. It originated as a program offered by Robert Ivey through a state grant. In 2010 it became a certified district position/program. In the early 1980s Rose Maree Myers presented CCSD with the idea to create an arts magnet program that would include classical violin and ballet disciplines. Once Ashley River was established, Myers went on to open School of The Arts as their principal.

Santos said that some CCSD schools offer dance programs at a very young age and students have the opportunity for group instruction to explore a variety of styles.

All students at Ashley River that are in CD, Kindergarten, and special needs attend Movement Class with instructor Brooke McMurray. This class utilizes the South Carolina Dance Curriculum and National Elementary Dance Standards through creative movement. Students in grades first through third may register for classical ballet. Fourth grade students are taught contemporary, and fifth grade students learn classical jazz.

“Students leave with exposure to several styles,” explained McMurray. “Fourth and fifth graders also focus on student composition.”

Kimberly Majewski has taught in numerous CCSD elementary schools since 2009 and is currently the full-time dance instructor at North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary School.

The program at NCCAES, which serves the north area of Charleston County, began in Fall 2011 as a program serving grade K-1. It was expanded to the entire elementary school serving Grade CD – 5 with the goal of developing a child-centered, developmentally appropriate atmosphere centered around arts integration and enriching experiences in the arts.

Majewski began dancing at the age of three, and the introduction to

the art at such a young age inspired her to pursue a dance education.

“It is important to introduce students to dance arts at a young age so they have the basic building blocks to build upon as they matriculate up to middle and high school,” said Majewski. “At this age, they get to experience something they may later become passionate about, but more importantly it gives them the tools to be self-confident, self-aware, and team players.”

Her classes are structured around fun so that both girls and boys feel comfortable and willing to show off their talents and participate fully in the class.

McMurray has taught dance at ARCAES for the last 13 years and teaches everything from classical ballet to contemporary and classical jazz. She also explained that dance helps students learn spatial awareness, discipline, artistic expression, and aesthetics in terms of an audience.

“It is important for students to be exposed to all art forms at a young age so they can develop an appreciation for all that it encompasses,” said McMurray. “We want children to see different forms of art and be able to really think about what they are seeing.”

Majewski added that dance arts help young children learn about themselves so that they become well-rounded people. She teaches dance to all grade levels. The instruction goes beyond stylized dance and is integrated with art and classroom standards, adding an additional way for students to be exposed to core content.

“I always wanted to teach dance to elementary age students,” said Majewski. “It is amazing to watch their eyes light up and their self-confidence increase,” said Majewski. “I love witnessing those moments when they truly enjoy working together to create and express themselves.”

At Burke High School, dance students are not only learning generational dances and music, but choreography as well. Instructor Kenyetta Bailey has created a well-rounded dance curriculum that includes social dance, cultural dance, and classical dance.

“Most kids like to dance and this class gives them some formal structure and an opportunity to choreograph and create their own routines,” said Bailey. “It is also an opportunity for students to learn about the multiple career opportunities available to them should they decide to pursue that route.”

Santos said that students enrolled in CCSD dance programs have the opportunity to explore a variety of options and express themselves through movement and music.

“As students get older, they have the opportunity to participate in more focused instruction on particular dance styles,” explained Santos. “Some of our students go on to explore dance instruction in higher education, participate and teach in dance studios, become performers, and explore other options in professional careers.”

Bailey is an example of that and relays to her students the path she took.

“I started dance in high school and went on to earn a bachelor in arts management,” said Bailey. “My background is in choreography in the private studio sector. I eventually went on to earn my Masters in Dance Education from New York University so that I could be an instructor.”

Tenth grade student Ja’Chia James loves to dance and enjoys Bailey’s class.

“At home I dance and have fun with my friends and we make up our own dances for Tik Tok,” said James. “What I am learning in this class is totally different than that. It’s new music and new moves. I enjoy learning about things I didn’t know before.”

Traditionally a performance or recital is held at the end of the year or semester for students to showcase what they have learned. Students in McMurray’s class perform for parents and their peers at West Ashley High School in a recital that features full choreography, costume, lighting, and sound.

“It is a culmination of their hard work throughout the year,” said McMurray. “It is when my students can walk away and say, ‘I am a dancer,’ or ‘I am an artist.’”

Bailey agreed and said the added component is that a student had fun in the class and enjoyed creating.

“If my students had fun, then I have more than met my goal,” said Bailey.

McMurray said the hope is that students learn how to process and identify what they are seeing, hearing, and feeling, and put into words their thoughts.

“In the dance program, we use this tool when deciding ways to present our ideas and create work for audiences,” said McMurray. “This is how we design and create movement in a way that communicates our intention to people who may be watching.”

Santos said CCSD is very fortunate to have world class dance instructors that can provide this type of instruction for students.

“We believe that creativity and movement are an essential part of a student’s arts education, and we are committed to continuing to offer this opportunity for our students,” added Santos.

This is the first time in several years that Burke students were offered dance class as an elective. Bailey is working on building the program at Burke and anticipates an increase as the word spreads.

“At the beginning of the year I was told that there is talent among our students when it comes to dancing,” said Bailey. “That was accurate. That talent showed up and I could not be more proud to watch them grow and improve.”

Two CCSD leaders to join Riley Institute’s Diversity Leaders Initiative

Charleston County School District’s (CCSD) Interim Deputy Superintendent of Schools, Anita Huggins, and Director of General Counsel Investigations, Oscar Douglas, were recently selected to participate in the Riley Institute’s Diversity Leaders Initiative (DLI) for Fall 2022. They are part of a 43-member class from the Lowcountry.

The DLI, hosted by Furman University, provides individuals with new tools and perspectives to leverage diversity to improve organizational outcomes and drive social and economic progress in South Carolina. These leaders, who are members of DLI’s 16th Lowcountry class, were selected through a rigorous application and interview process after being nominated by DLI alumni. They are uniquely positioned to create impact within their organizations and communities. Each class is crafted to reflect the diverse demographics in South Carolina.

Huggins has served a teacher, school administrator, and district leader in CCSD for more than two decades. In her current role with the district, she is helping design, execute, and measure the success of programs that support Vision 2027, an initiative that focuses on having all students reading at grade level by fifth grade, by Spring 2027.

Douglas supports the district’s Office of General Counsel. Before taking his current position, he was a Deputy Director in the Office of Security and Emergency Management for CCSD. Douglas has been with the district for more than five years.

“Ms. Huggins and Mr. Douglas exemplify the high standards of our district and commitment to serving all our students, staff, and families,” said Superintendent of Schools Don Kennedy. “They will be excellent representatives for both CCSD and the Riley Institute’s storied program.”

The Riley Institute confirmed Huggins and Douglas brought CCSD’s total number of DLI participants to 13.



Anita Huggins



Oscar Douglas

Over the course of five months, the class will engage in intensive discussions and scenario analyses that allow them to openly examine sensitive issues related to diversity and inclusion with fellow leaders, explore “blind spots,” and gain tools to develop strategies within their own organizations.

“In a time of significant social strife, leaders must come together to identify ways to unite communities to improve outcomes for all,” said Dr. Don Gordon, executive director of the Riley Institute. “The DLI experience will help them as they lead South Carolina

toward a better tomorrow.”
Class members also work together to develop capstone projects, partnering with nonprofit organizations to respond to real challenges and opportunities in their communities.

Graduates of DLI become Riley Fellows, members of a powerful cross-sector network of South Carolinians that includes corporate CEOs, legislators, superintendents, religious and nonprofit heads, and business and community leaders.

LIBERTY PLACE HILTON DONATES SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO CCSD



Liberty Place Hilton, neighbors of the Charleston County School District’s main office in downtown Charleston, delivered a generous donation of school supplies August 31, 2022. Staff from the Hilton came together and held a supply drive in support of our students and community and CCSD is incredibly grateful for their kindness and partnership!

Leadership Charleston’s Class of 2023 features two CCSD leaders



Channa Williams

Charleston County School District’s (CCSD) Chief Financial Officer Channa Williams and Director of Strategic Engagement Maggie Dangerfield, were recently named to the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce’s Leadership Charleston Class of 2023. Williams and Dangerfield were selected through a competitive application process.

The mission of Leadership Charleston is to identify and motivate emerging leaders and to develop their leadership potential by introducing them to the realities, opportunities, and challenges of civic and business communities. Graduates experience the power of working with other community leaders and organizations for positive growth and advancement of the region.

Williams and Dangerfield are part of the 49th Leadership class, which is made up of individuals representing a diverse cross-section of public and private businesses and educational institutions throughout the Lowcountry. The program started this fall and will last for nearly 10 months; highlights include strategic collaboration, work sessions, and a trip to the State House.

“We are proud to have Channa and Maggie represent our district in this prestigious professional development opportunity,” said Don Kennedy, CCSD’s

Superintendent of Schools. “They possess an array of knowledge, experience, and commitment that will benefit the entire Class of 2023, and through this program, the community overall.”

Once this group graduates in August next year, members of the Leadership Charleston Class of 2023 will become Leadership Charleston Alumni, a distinguished group of leaders that includes Chamber Board of Directors, elected officials, and prominent local leaders.



Maggie Dangerfield

CCSD Operations Division celebrates employees of the year



Shanikqua Johnson-Smith



Mary Wakefield



Sonya Jones



Terris Wilson

Employees across the Charleston County School District (CCSD) are celebrated every day, and annually the best of the best are recognized as Employees of the Year. The Operations Division announced their nominees, Thursday, September 1, 2022. Five employees were recognized by department and one individual was chosen as the overall Operations Division Employee of the Year (EOY).

Shanikqua Johnson-Smith was named EOY for the Capital Programs Department and is this year’s awardee for the entire division.

Also recognized were Tom Gribben, (Security and Emergency Management), Sonya Jones, (Transportation), Mary Wakefield, (Facilities Management), and Terris Wilson, (Nutrition Services).

“I have had the pleasure of working with Shanikqua Johnson-Smith for more seven years now, and just when I think she can’t have an even greater year, she does,” said Jeff Borowy, Chief Operating Officer. “Her efforts this past year were truly phenomenal and have had a wide ranging positive impact across CCSD.”

Johnson-Smith supports both Capital Programs and the entire Operations Division. As the “information hub” for the division, she routinely coordinates actions and directs customers across the enterprise with her exceptional communication and interpersonal skills. Additionally, she is the District 4 Constituent Board Advisor.

Her many accomplishments include the following: led the effort to establish a Capital Programs public meeting process to effectively gather community input and concerns; spearheaded the creation and execution of a Facilities Management Department employee climate survey; coordinated the interview effort for the Executive Director of Capital Programs position and ensured a seamless on-boarding of the selectee; coordinated the transition efforts for the new Principal-on-Special Assignments and exiting of the prior Principal-on-Special Assignments; and demonstrated personal

initiative and continued professional development by completing a Master’s Program in Human Resources Management and Cultural Diversity.

Additional finalists

- Gribben is a campus safety manager. He was hired as the district’s first manager of the Search and Safety Team in 2018. Gribben has built the program from the ground up which includes random searches in high schools, a comprehensive security assessment program of all schools, and providing security staffing support for unusual occurrences throughout the year.
- Jones is a quality assurance manager with Transportation. She has worked with the state, First Student, and Durham Transportation. Jones’ efforts have resulted in significant cost savings for the District and safe and efficient bus routes for all CCSD students.
- Wakefield is a playground coordinator with Facilities Management she works to provide safe and enjoyable play areas for CCSD students. She is always looking for ways to improve playgrounds, both for safety and inclusion of ADA students.
- Wilson is a Nutrition Services Manager. During the pandemic, he traveled all over the district covering for managers in area of the county. Wilson was asked to take over Meeting Street at Brentwood this past year and exceeded the standards set by Nutrition Services. Additionally, he managed the summer school meal program at North Charleston Creative Arts.

“Selecting finalists among the hundreds of dedicated employees across the Operations Division was not easy, but each of the five teammates honored this year is clearly deserving of being recognized for all they have done for our schools and children,” added Borowy.

Supportive family members at Hunley Park Elementary



For a brief period one day at the start of school, Hunley Park Elementary School was without power. The husband of teacher Jamie Lange came to the rescue. Nick Lange donated box fans to keep the air circulating so instruction could continue! Hunley Park appreciates the continued support of their school family and community.

Supportive donors at Hunley Park Elementary



Pinnacle Financial Partners provided school supplies for Hunley Park Elementary students this year. Parents were able to get items that they needed at Hunley Park’s Meet the Teacher event held on Monday, August 15, 2022. This initiative is just one of many the financial group has organized the benefit the scholars at Hunley Park.



Septima Clark Girls with P.E.A.R.L.S. awarded \$1,000 by Education Association

The South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) and Charleston County Education Association (CCEA) honored Septima P. Clark Corporate Academy on September 6, 2022 with a \$1,000 for the Girls with P.E.A.R.L.S mentoring program. Students were on hand to receive the award.

Additionally, the CCEA recognized the school with the Community Service Award. This award was originally presented to Septima P. Clark in 1976. A plaque with the original historical document from that time was recreated and presented to Principal Nakeam Binyard to commemorate the school's namesake and history.

CCEA President Adrian King also announced the restart of its annual Community Service Award, which will recognize a Charleston Count School District employee for his/her work in the community. The award will be presented each April at the Spring Social.



ST. JAMES-SANTÉE ELEMENTARY-MIDDLE CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

CD scholars at St. James-Santee Elementary-Middle School celebrated International Literacy Day by sharing some of their favorite stories with their classmates. Additionally, Casey Marlowe, Teacher Librarian has been collaborating with second grade teacher, Ms. Branham, to help support the new EL curriculum. St. James-Santee second grade scholars are currently learning about schools around the world in their classroom and in the library. Scholars learned about schools in different countries, and they even built their own model schools in the library.



SJSEMS students share stories with classmates



SJSEMS students learn about Schools Around the World

District launches new online reading platform for students and staff

Charleston County School District (CCSD) has started using an online reading platform called Beanstack with teachers and students. The tool allows users to log their reading and compete in district and school-based reading challenges. The launch corresponded with International Literacy Day, September 8, 2022. Additionally, the platform is one of many programs implemented to support and promote Superintendent Don Kennedy’s Vision 2027 reading initiative.

Challenge Accepted



15,000,000 Minutes
#ReadCCSD

Beanstack makes it easy for students to earn virtual badges, tickets for drawings, and prizes by logging their reading. Readers can also post book reviews and keep track of activities they complete along the way.

In an effort to grow a reading culture and celebrate all students as readers, CCSD kicked off a year-long, district-wide challenge on August 17, 2022, called 15,000,000 Minute Challenge. Each school has a community goal based on the number of staff and students, and each reader has an individual goal to contribute toward the 15,000,000 minutes.

“We are excited about this challenge,” said Kennedy. “I hope it will motivate our students and staff to read and accomplish their established goals.”

According to Christy James, CCSD Library Media Services Coordinator and District Textbook Coordinator, Beanstack offers an exciting opportunity for all students and staff to make the commitment to reading and literacy visible.

“Everyone can log reading done during school and out of school,” explained James. “Students and staff can track anything they read, whether it is a library book, an ebook, magazine articles, or audiobooks. It all counts!”

CCSD also has challenges set up for K-8 for the new EL curriculum modules (new ELA curriculum) and launched South Carolina Book Award challenges after Labor Day.

Additionally, the Charleston County Public Library system just added Beanstack, creating the ability to have community challenges.

“This will be an exciting addition to our partnership with CCPL to support and celebrate reading in our schools and in our community all year,” added James.



Wando High School vs. Lucy Garrett Beckham High School

In the first-ever showdown, Wando High School vs. Lucy Garrett Beckham High School, the Bengals beat the Warriors. A friendly bet between Interim Wando Principal Kim Wilson and Beckham Principal Anna Dassing resulted in the losing team’s principal (Wilson) having to kiss a goat on the 50-yard line for all to see and wear Bengal attire the Monday following the game.



TRAINING SESSIONS FOR K-12 TEACHERS DESIGNED TO FOCUS ON INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE FOR WORKING WITH MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS AND FAMILIES.

The Charleston County School District (CCSD), in conjunction with Seidlitz Education, presents a series of training sessions for K-12 teachers designed to focus on instructional practice for working with Multilingual Learners and Families.

All training materials, a catered lunch, and a \$110 stipend will be provided by CCSD’s ML Office for all who register.

Each training is limited to 50 spots. Participants are eligible to register for all four seminars as long as space is available. Participants should register in Frontline to reserve their opportunity for these valuable workshop training sessions.

SCHEDULE

- Boosting Achievement for Underschooled Learners with Dr. Carol Salva - This training demonstrates user-friendly techniques that close achievement gaps for Unschooled or Underschooled Learners. Experience the strategies that capitalize on the gifts of your diverse classroom. Discover ways to maximize the impact for SLIFE, especially non-English speakers. Learn to empower these students to work at grade-level in content classes and the ESL classroom.

– October 8, 2022, at North Charleston High School from 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

• Teaching Social Studies to ELLs with Tina Beene - This training will feature specific examples of engaging accommodations for all language proficiency levels and strategies that maximize content mastery while students acquire academic language. Participants will learn how to support and engage all ELLs with social studies content; accelerate language acquisition in social studies classrooms; meet the unique needs of their ELLs in each component of a typical social studies lesson.

– October 22, 2022, at Matilda F. Dunston Elementary School from 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

• Reading & Writing with English Learners: A Framework for K-5 with Valentina Gonzalez - This training offers educators a deep dive into reading and writing instruction with a special focus on increasing the effectiveness of instructional methods to serve multilingual learners. Participants will explore and engage in techniques they can implement immediately with students.

– November 12, 2022, at Pinehurst Elementary School Cafeteria from 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

These small-group seminars are focused around uniquely targeted subject matters for teachers, principals and administrators. For more information contact frederick_pleis@charleston.ccsd.k12.sc

CPA hosts an evening of leadership, learning, and fun



Charleston Progressive Academy is a Leader In Me Lighthouse school that prides itself in building the future leaders of America today. School officials invited parents to join the staff for an evening of leadership, learning, and fun on September 7, 2022.

CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL FAMILIES



SAVE THE DATE

for Family Data Conferences

**October 21, 2022 to
December 16, 2022**


Be on the lookout for more information from your child’s school in the coming weeks with dates and times for your student’s family data conference this fall!

Charleston >excellence is our standard
County SCHOOL DISTRICT

STUDENTS ARE
THE HEART
OF OUR WORK!


WANDO HIGH SCHOOL

Alumni Football Friday



OCTOBER 28
5:00-7:00PM
7:30PM Kick-Off

MORE INFORMATION:
bit.ly/wando50



Wando's alumni and family are invited to join us for an evening of fellowship and fun!

PRINCIPAL BAEZ GRADUATES FROM CIVIC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Pepperhill Elementary School Principal Dr. Jennifer Baez recently graduated from the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce Civic Leaders Academy.

Civic Leaders Academy is an advanced and informative public service training program designed to identify, cultivate and train individuals from across our region to both run for public office and serve on appointed boards and commissions. Through the Civic Leaders Academy, individuals will gain a better understanding of data-driven decision making, strong peer relationships and valuable community connections.

“The most beneficial part of the program was understanding how much real estate impacts the community and our schools,” said Baez. “It helps you understand the economic segregation that is continually happening in our community and what civic leaders can do to provide more access and equity to families. It enables the leader to find avenues to empower community members to engage in civic discussions around what is best for their neighborhood and community.”

This was the inaugural year for the academy, hosted in partnership with Charleston Trident Association of Realtors and Charleston Home Builders Association.

In three half-day sessions with regional and national experts, participants gained insight on campaign fundraising and budgeting, developing a deeper understanding of polling and data-driven decision making and enhanced their knowledge of what is expected from a civic leader.



Focus ON CCSD

Focus on Charleston County School District is published for, by and about CCSD, the state of South Carolina’s premier school district where *Students are the Heart of our Work.*

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

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