

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Carolina Park wins CCSD's fourth annual Book Battle

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Charleston, SC — Students at Carolina Park Elementary School won the fourth annual Charleston County School District (CCSD) Book Battle. They competed against 16 other teams on Saturday, March 4, 2023 at Burke High School. Teams competed in a literary quiz bowl, answering questions from 20 books on the 2022-2023 South Carolina Children's Book Awards nominee list.

Coached by Kristen Smith, the Carolina Park team, called the Pink Carrots, competed in the finals against Buist Academy's Page Turners.

The Charleston County Book Battle is a program offered for fourth and fifth grade students. The purpose is to encourage students to read good books and have fun while competing with peers.

"I am so proud of my students," said Smith. "They showed such maturity both emotionally and academically as I saw them work in a truly collaborative fashion to divide up the reading, help each other with outlining and noting parts of the text, and support each other in learning the rules and procedures for the event. It was a joy to see them connect with books that they might not have otherwise chosen to read. We also had so much fun quizzing each other and practicing with our buzzers at school prior to the event."

Christy James, CCSD's Library & Media Services Specialist, was the emcee for the district championship. The crowd included over 150 family and community members there to support their readers. James explained that the championship is held as a kick off for the district's Read Across America Week, celebrated this year March 6-10, 2023.

"This is the fourth year that CCSD elementary schools have competed in a district battle that even includes its traveling trophy," said James. "The energy is electric and it is so exciting to have an auditorium filled with supporters around students' love of reading."

District librarians comb through the South Carolina Children's Book Award list, choosing titles and writing questions that are asked of students and teams to test their knowledge of the books they have read.

Leslie Cooper, the librarian at Stiles Point Elementary School, organizes the event but said it takes an entire team to make it happen.

"Librarians start writing questions in May for the competition," said Cooper.

"Teams were established in October, and the reading begins. There are multiple copies of each book on hand so that each team member can read the book they are assigned."

Teams were made up of five members, and they completed a reading list of 20 books by January. Teams competed against each other at the school level, and the top team from each school competed in the district event.

"The Book Battle promotes a variety of diverse books that students might not automatically select but often find they enjoy," said Cooper. "The competition aspect also encourages students who didn't necessarily like reading to look at it differently. We see a big difference in our students as readers and in the activity of our libraries when children participate in this."

Cooper added another positive aspect of the competition was that electronic devices were not necessary and students could unplug.

"The competition results in students getting excited about reading, and that shows in the increased number of checkouts we see in our media centers," said Cooper.

"This year at Stiles Point, we broadcasted our school tournament to every classroom, and the kids loved it. Students are now asking about how to participate next year."

In addition to promoting reading, the competition promotes leadership, cooperation, and a sense of accountability.

"I think the competition sets a great example that hard work pays off," said Cooper.

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

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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.