



**For Immediate Release**

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## Media Release

### **Burke Earns Honor in First Year with New Tech Network**

#### Burke High School

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**Charleston, SC** – When Burke High School (BHS) became part of the New Tech Network (NTN) program for the 2017-18 school year, school administrators and staff were excited about the doors this partnership could open for students. As it turns out, the administrators, staff, and students were ready to walk through those doors together, and did so in a way that earned them NTN's 2018 Best in Network award earlier this month.

This honor is given to a project that exemplifies the goal of successfully combining active exploration, application, authenticity, and academic rigor. BHS teachers Amelia Navarrete and Edgar Johnson, along with their students, earned the award for their project, *Finding a Voice*.

"The recognition from NTN demonstrates the dedication and passion of our teachers in promoting academic success for our students," said Burke's Executive Principal Cheryl Swinton. "Likewise, this recognition applies to our students who showed perseverance and motivation in taking ownership of their own learning. Ultimately, the project furthers not only their success, but the success of the community."

*Finding a Voice* combined World Literature and Government classes, and asked students to design graphic novels about disenfranchised and marginalized groups around the world. To assist with the graphic novels, Navarrete and Johnson reached out to the Charleston County Public Library system, which enthusiastically joined the project. The students reached the final stage of their project by doing independent research and interviewing a student their age who is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Then the students wrote first-person narratives about someone in their region and storyboarded all the panels of their graphic novel.

"These questions of international policy and humanitarian concerns have engaged political leaders around the world," stated Navarrete. "Our students used these platforms to spread awareness of these issues from being a refugee, to child soldiers, to understanding that women in other countries are still fighting for rights that they might take for granted. Our students surprised even us with the level of empathy and understanding they showed for the people of their regions, as they progressed through the project."

For more information about the honor, or how NTN is used at Burke, contact Executive Principal Cheryl Swinton at (843) 579-4815.

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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.