

**For Immediate Release**

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## Media Release

### **The State's Top School Nurse and School Nurse Administrator Reside in CCSD**

Office of Strategy and  
Communications

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**Charleston, SC** — Charleston County School District (CCSD) is proud to announce two of its employees were honored by the South Carolina State Department of Education and the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) recently; Mary Ford Elementary School's Charlene Barbot is the 2018 South Carolina School Nurse of the Year, and Ellen Nitz, Nurse Liaison for Districts 1 and 2, is the 2018 South Carolina School Nurse Administrator of the Year.

Barbot has 25 years of pediatric nursing experience, and is in her third year at Mary Ford. She graduated from Lander University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1994, and is a member of the National Association of School Nurses and South Carolina Association of School Nurses (SCASN). Barbot manages clinic visits, medications, and health screenings for students at her school and also mentors nursing students from Trident Technical College, MUSC, and Charleston Southern University. Under her leadership, Mary Ford Elementary won the 2016-2017 Boeing Center for Children's Wellness School Health Initiative Award.

"Without Charlene's efforts, energy, and enthusiasm for building a school around Maslow's Hierarchy, we would have never made the progress we have for children," stated Mary Ford Principal LaDene Conroy. "She cares about the students, families, and teachers. Her boundaries are limitless for reaching out to the community-based sponsors and stakeholders. It seems like we have new partners once a week, and they do great work with their donations and commitment to the children and school. She is an amazing gift and a shiny, bright star in the Mary Ford Constellation."

"Charlene is a dedicated advocate for the Mary Ford community," said Melissa Prendergrast, CCSD's Director of Nursing Services. "She is keenly aware of her school's needs and works tirelessly to meet those needs. She is a thorough planner, an active member of the school team, and a wellness champion!"

Nitz has served as a CCSD Nurse Liaison for 10 years and, according to Prendergrast, is a key contributor to program development and

management. She works closely with area pediatricians and DHEC to meet the needs of students. She serves as a consultant for her nurses on Individual Health Care Plans, emergency plans, immunizations, screenings, safety plans, and parent concerns. She has worked with Roper St. Francis staff to put an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) in every school and with MUSC and the American Heart Association as the lead CPR/AED/First Aid Instructor.

"Ellen is a lifelong learner who takes time to update and educate herself to be the best that she can be," added Prendergrast. "She sets the bar high for her nurses as well as herself. She is a compassionate, informed, and professional school nurse administrator."

Barbot and Nitz will receive their awards at the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual SCASN Conference Saturday, January 27, 2018 in Columbia, SC.

For more about these honors, please contact the Office of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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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.