



**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact:**

James Whitehair 843-849-2809

## Media Release

### **Laing Middle Receives Awards for STEM Education Excellence**

#### **Laing Middle School of Science and Technology**

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**Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Cynthia Ambrose**  
Deputy Superintendent of Learning  
Services

**Joseph Williams, Ed.D.**  
Executive Director of Middle School  
Learning Community

**James Whitehair**  
Principal

**Mount Pleasant, SC** – Laing Middle School of Science and Technology continues to establish itself as one of the leading STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) middle schools in the nation. The International Technology and Engineering Educators Association (ITEEA) has selected Laing Middle School of Science and Technology to receive its Program Excellence Award for 2018.

ITEEA is a professional organization for technology, innovation, design, and engineering educators. Its mission is to promote technological literacy for all by supporting the teaching of technology and promoting the professionalism of those engaged in this pursuit. Sponsored by ITEEA and Paxton/Patterson (a company dedicated to providing classroom technology learning systems), the Program Excellence Award is presented in recognition of outstanding contributions to the profession and students. It is one of the highest honors given to technology and engineering education programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. These award-winning programs serve as a standard for comparison and models for the development of other programs.

This isn't the only award ITEEA is giving to Laing Middle; along with the Program Excellence Award, the school's STEM Coach, Dr. Mel Goodwin, is also receiving the Teacher Excellence Award.

Goodwin and other representatives from Laing's staff will be honored during a ceremony at ITEEA's 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA Thursday, April 12, 2018.

"Both these awards reflect a great deal of dedication and hard work by many people, including Laing students, faculty, and parents, as well as many others in the greater Charleston community," Goodwin said. "It is great to be able to work with a group like this, and to see our collective efforts recognized and honored by an organization such as ITEEA."

Laing launched its Whole-School STEM Initiative in 2012, with the goal of improving academic mastery, building 21st century workplace skills, fostering interest in STEM careers, and narrowing achievement gaps. The plan is unique

in that it emphasizes an integrative approach that aims to use STEM tools in all curriculum areas.

“This strategy helps make students more engaged with their classes and helps them understand how their skills are relevant to the world outside of school,” added Goodwin. “Scholars receive a new way to help reach their full potential, and they are given personal experiences with engineering design and technologies through which they may discover interests in STEM careers.”

This is the second year in a row Laing Middle School has earned a national accolade; they were named the top STEM middle school in the country at the 2017 Future of Education Technology Conference in Orlando, FL.

For more information regarding these awards and/or Laing’s STEM program, please contact Principal James Whitehair (843-849-2809) or Dr. Mel Goodwin (843-830-6480).

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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.