



**For Immediate Release**

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## Media Release

### **CCSO and CCSD Receive Grant from U.S. Department of Justice to Bolster School Security**

Office of Strategy and  
Communications

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Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Erica Taylor  
Chief Officer

**Charleston, SC** – Charleston County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) and Charleston County School District (CCSD) are excited to announce the United States Department of Justice awarded the county a School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) grant worth \$435,013. The DOJ released the news in October.

The SVPP grants, which total nearly \$25 million nationwide, are authorized by the STOP School Violence Act. The funding is intended to improve school security by helping students and teachers reduce exposure to risks, prevent acts of violence, and quickly recognize and respond to violent attacks.

"President Trump and his administration will ensure the safety of every American school," said then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions. "Earlier this year he signed into law the STOP School Violence Act, which provides grant funding to develop anonymous school threat reporting systems, to implement school building security measures, and to train students, school personnel, and law enforcement on how to prevent school violence."

The SVPP grant will be used in Charleston County for the following equipment and technology upgrades in schools throughout the District from now until September 30, 2020:

- Electronic front door locks & intercoms;
- Keypad door-release devices for first responders; and
- Integration of CCSD data into Charleston County's Alastar situational awareness tool (to learn about Alastar, visit the company's website [www.alastar.com](http://www.alastar.com)).

"The safety of our students should be a top priority for all law enforcement," stated Sheriff Al Cannon, Jr. "We make every effort to improve safety measures through training and equipment upgrades. We are doing all we can to make sure parents know their kids are safe."

Staff members from CCSO and CCSD worked together to submit the grant to the Department of Justice, highlighting the importance of partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and school district when it comes to protecting students, teachers, staff members, and administrators.

"CCSD is truly thankful for the positive partnership that exists between the district and our law enforcement partners," added Michael Reidenbach, CCSD's Director of Security and Emergency Management. "Sheriff Cannon and his entire team went above and beyond to help secure this federal funding to improve the safety and security of students in Charleston County. The outcomes from this grant will result in more secure school buildings and enhanced systems that will reduce the time it takes for law enforcement officers to respond to a school emergency."

CCSO and CCSD would like to recognize the following partners who formally supported this grant initiative: Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch Board, Safe Schools Project, Charleston Police Department, Mount Pleasant Police Department, North Charleston Police Department, and Sullivan's Island Police Department.

For more information about the SVPP grant, please contact CCSO Captain Roger Antonio at (843) 554-2444 or CCSD's Office of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6583.

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#### **About the Charleston County Sheriff's Office**

Today, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office is one of the largest full-service Sheriff's Offices in the State of South Carolina. Charleston County is South Carolina's seventh largest county geographically and its third-most populous. As a political subdivision, Charleston County has been in existence since 1682, as one of three original counties in South Carolina.

The Sheriff's Office serves a complex and diverse population which continues to experience steady population growth. Latest U. S. Census reports indicate a population of 365, 209 in an area of 916.0 square miles. Along with its cultural, recreational, and historical attractions, Charleston County boasts 90 miles of coastline and 192 miles of creeks and rivers.

The agency is proud to be internationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, the American Corrections Association, and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care reflecting the commitment of the Sheriff's Office to continually improve the quality of law enforcement service provided to the citizens of Charleston County.

#### **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.