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Media Release

Application Process for CCSD Early College High School Underway

Office of Strategy and
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Charleston, SC — In September 2016, the Charleston County School District (CCSD) Board of Trustees authorized staff to develop a model for an Early College High School (ECHS), similar to one currently available to students in Horry County Schools. The purpose of ECHS is to serve students who are first-generation college bound, and give them the opportunity to earn their high school diploma and the possibility to earn an Associate's Degree and/or technical degree by the end of the 12th grade. The model is in partnership with Trident Technical College (TTC) and is an extension of dual credit options currently available to CCSD high school students.

The program, which will operate on TTC's Palmer Campus in downtown Charleston, was approved by the Board of Trustees on April 24, 2017.

CCSD is excited to announce the application process for the district's Early College High School for the 2017-18 is now open. The deadline to apply is 6:00 p.m. on June 1, 2017. The form is available at www.ccsdschools.com; click on the "Early College High School Application" Quick Link on the left side of the front page.

"I think that students who have never been exposed to college, talked about going college, had the opportunity to be on a college campus, nor had a hope and a dream to move on to something beyond high school, this is that opportunity," said Kim Wilson, CCSD's Executive Director of Secondary Learning. "The earlier we can get to these kids, the better chance we have of them graduating high school and actually moving on to some type of post-secondary education or some type of work related to the college work they will complete here. I think from a motivational point of view, if you tell me my son or daughter is going to go to high school on a college campus, that gets me excited."

The CCSD ECHS blends high school and college into a coherent educational program and serves both the developmental and intellectual needs of young people. It is a research-based model, which includes a program of study featuring options such as summer bridge programs beginning the summer

prior to the ninth grade, high school credit bearing courses, dual credit courses, career exploration, internships, and apprenticeships. School-wide Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) classes will support students as they work through a challenging curriculum to reach their goal of earning a high school diploma and an Associate's Degree and/or technical degree.

"We are looking for those kids who are hard workers and have the ability to get the work done," added Wilson. "They just need some support in place to help them be successful at whatever they decide to do, whether it's a four-year college, two-year college, they go in to the workforce right after high school, or they join the military."

Opportunities to apply for the ECHS will be extended to all middle quartile students across the District, and transportation will be provided to the campus daily. Students who are enrolled in the ECHS will retain the ability to participate in arts and athletic programs at their neighborhood schools while engaging in this unique dual degree program.

Students and families benefit from the ECHS by establishing a seamless pathway from high school through the first two years of college at a savings of approximately \$10,000 to \$14,000 through utilization of the lottery tuition advantage only available in our region with TTC. This program will define and refine a model that closes the achievement gap while providing necessary guidance and support for students by both K-12 and higher education teachers.

In general, ECHS students are significantly more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in college, and earn a college degree than comparable students. According to statistics compiled from ECHS models across the nation, 93% of students graduate high school in four years, 70% of students graduate with some college credits, 30% of students graduate having earned a full Associate's Degree, and 81% of students enroll in college after high school.

The CCSD ECHS is designed to encourage student groups who are underrepresented in post-secondary education, such as students of color, English language learner (ELL) students, students from low-income families, and prospective first-generation college students.

The selection of the school's principal will be finalized very soon and announced at a later date.

For more information about CCSD's Early College High School, please contact Vanessa Denney at echs_admissions@charleston.k12.sc.us or CCSD's Office of Secondary Learning at (843) 937-6513.

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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 several 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 led by associate superintendents. 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.

About Trident Technical College

Trident Technical College is a public two-year college offering more than 150 associate degree, diploma and certificate programs, as well as hundreds of continuing education courses for professional development and personal enrichment. The college also offers a wide variety of university transfer programs for students who plan to earn a four-year degree.