

**For Immediate Release**

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## Media Release

### Laing Middle School Wins Top Honor at National Conference

Office of Strategy and  
Communications

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Charleston, SC — Laing Middle School of Science and Technology received a prestigious honor this week. The Braves were named the top Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) middle school in the country at the 37<sup>th</sup> National Future of Education and Technology Conference last week.

“This award is a tribute to the tremendous work of our students and staff along with the support of our parents and community partners,” said James Whitehair, Principal of Laing Middle School of Science and Technology. “Our STEM philosophy is a unique approach that breaks away from the traditional educational approach.”

Principal Whitehair and several staff members, including the school’s STEM coach, Dr. Mel Goodwin, attended the event in Orlando, FL. Laing Middle School was a finalist for this award in 2016, but did not win the top honor. 2017 is a different story.

“The teachers deserve an enormous amount of credit with executing the finer details of the program,” added Whitehair. “By creating a student-centered environment that utilizes the tools of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to solve problems, our students will be equipped with the skills needed to succeed in higher education and the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace.”

Engineering and Science University Magnet Middle School of New Haven Public Schools in Connecticut and Rose Park Magnet Middle Prep of Metro Nashville Public Schools in Tennessee were the other two finalists for this year’s award. Over 100 schools applied for this honor.

The Future of Education and Technology Conference STEM Excellence Awards applications are evaluated based on the use of interdisciplinary curriculum, collaboration, design, problem-solving, and the STEM experiences offered.

For more information about this award, please call 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 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.