



**For Immediate Release
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**From the Office of Communications
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Clarendon County School District Office of Nutrition Named a Top Five Winner of the Certified SC Cafeteria Award

District to Receive \$10,000 to Support Locally Grown Foods in School Meals

MANNING, S.C. – October 16, 2026 – Clarendon County School District (CCSD) is proud to announce that its Office of Nutrition has been recognized as one of the Top Five School Food Authorities in South Carolina through the Certified SC Cafeteria Awards. As a top-five recipient, the district will receive \$10,000 to support the purchase of locally grown products and incorporate more South Carolina-grown foods into school meals.

The Certified SC Cafeteria Awards recognize school nutrition programs for their commitment to supporting local agriculture and providing students with fresh, nutritious food options. Through this initiative, the top five School Food Authorities will each receive \$10,000, while the top ten recipients will each receive \$5,000 to further strengthen farm-to-school efforts across South Carolina.

“This recognition is a tremendous accomplishment for our Office of Nutrition and a reflection of our district's commitment to providing students with quality, nutritious meals,” said Dr. Shawn L. Johnson, Superintendent of Clarendon County School District. “Our nutrition professionals play an essential role in student success, and this award provides an opportunity to strengthen our connections with South Carolina agriculture while continuing to meet the nutritional needs of our students. We are extremely proud of this achievement.”

The \$10,000 award will allow CCSD's Office of Nutrition to expand its efforts to purchase South Carolina-grown products, strengthen connections with local agricultural producers, and introduce students to more fresh, locally sourced foods through its school meal programs.

“I am incredibly proud of this accomplishment and the dedication of my amazing staff,” said Gwen Phillips, Director of Nutrition for Clarendon County School District. “We take great pride in providing nutritious, nourishing meals to our students and community, ensuring that our scholars have the fuel they need to learn, grow, and succeed each day. This recognition reflects our team's hard work, passion, and commitment to excellence. We are especially excited about the opportunity to incorporate more South Carolina-grown products into our meals while supporting local farmers and strengthening our community.”

Clarendon County School District extends its appreciation to Certified South Carolina for its continued investment in school nutrition programs and its commitment to connecting South Carolina schools with the state's agricultural community. This recognition highlights the dedication of CCSD's school nutrition professionals, whose daily efforts ensure students have access to nutritious meals that support their health, well-being, and academic success.

“When we invest in school nutrition, we invest in student success. This recognition is another example of the outstanding work taking place throughout Clarendon County School District as we remain Unified as One,” added Dr. Johnson.

About Clarendon County School District

Clarendon County School District is committed to providing high-quality educational opportunities that prepare all students for college, careers, military service, and lifelong success. Through strong community partnerships, innovative programs, and a commitment to excellence, CCSD continues to create opportunities for every scholar, every day.

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