



# MEDIA RELEASE

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**Charter Institute at Erskine schools statewide experience academic success, growth**  
*Standout schools include Belton Preparatory, Royal Live Oaks, and Brashier Middle College*

**COLUMBIA, SC** – According to [recently released data](#) from the South Carolina Department of Education, many charter schools within the Charter Institute at Erskine (the Institute)’s portfolio demonstrated strong academic performance and growth in the 2021-2022 school year. Institute charter schools also demonstrated high performance in areas such as graduation rate and career readiness, in comparison to district averages.

“We are exceptionally proud of the hard work of our schools and students,” said Institute Superintendent Cameron Runyan. “The Institute is committed to Moving the Needle to improve student outcomes in all areas of South Carolina and looks forward to continuing these efforts in the coming years.”

One example of a high-performing elementary school is Belton Preparatory Academy (BPA), a public charter school located in Anderson County. The elementary school scored in the top 1% of the state for English and mathematics. BPA is also the highest performing Title I elementary school as well as the highest performing elementary charter school in South Carolina based on state English and mathematics assessments.

One Lowcountry school demonstrated significant academic growth on the SC READY English and Mathematics assessments, as measured by the South Carolina Department of Education’s Student Progress metric. Royal Live Oaks Academy of the Arts and Sciences Charter School (RLOACS) is a K-12, Title I school located in Jasper County. RLOACS’ elementary students ranked in the top 2% in the state for student progress in English and mathematics, placing them at number 12 out of 661 schools across the state for academic growth. RLOACS’ middle school program ranked in the top 3% for student progress in English and mathematics, placing them at number 8 out of 333 South Carolina middle schools for academic growth.

Institute high schools also demonstrated academic excellence. Two of the ten highest-performing high schools in the state, Brashier Middle College Charter High School and Oceanside Collegiate Academy, are authorized by the Institute. Brashier Middle College (Brashier), a high school located in Greenville County, is the fourth-ranked high school in South Carolina, scoring in the top 5% of the state in all subject areas. Brashier was also recognized as a 2022 Blue Ribbon

School of Excellence by the United States Department of Education earlier this year. Brashier was one of fifteen charter schools in the country, as well as the only charter school in South Carolina, to receive this distinction.

Other high-performing Institute high schools include Legion Collegiate Academy (Rock Hill) and Gray Collegiate Academy (West Columbia).

“While we are certainly proud of the efforts of our schools and students, we recognize along with the rest of the state that there is still much work to be done when it comes to closing the achievement gap, particularly in mathematics, for South Carolina’s students,” said Rich Melzer, Executive Deputy Superintendent of Innovation and Accountability. “We are excited to continue to provide all our schools with innovative opportunities to increase their students’ academic achievement.”

Other notable data points include:

- **Elementary Schools:** Lowcountry Leadership Charter School scored in the top 25% of the state for English and mathematics. The Montessori School of Camden scored in the top 25% of the state in English.
- **Middle Schools:** Thornwell Charter School scored in the top 10% of the state for science and the top 25% of the state for mathematics. The Montessori School of Camden scored in the top 10% of the state for English in middle school.
- **Title I Schools:** Lowcountry Leadership Charter School and Belton Preparatory Academy scored in the top 10% for both English and mathematics in the elementary level. Additionally, Belton scored in the top 10% of the state for science. In middle school, Thornwell Charter School, South Carolina Virtual Charter School, and Mevers School of Excellence scored in the top 10% of Title I schools for English. Thornwell Charter School also scored in the top 10% for Mathematics. Finally, Lowcountry Leadership Charter School and Thornwell Charter School scored in the top 5% of all Title I schools for science.
- **College or Career Readiness:** Seven schools from the Institute’s portfolio ranked above the state average for College or Career Readiness:
  - Brashier Middle College, Oceanside Collegiate Academy, Gray Collegiate Academy, Legion Collegiate Academy, Calhoun Falls Charter School, Cyber Academy of South Carolina, and Midlands STEM Institute.
- **Graduation Rates:** The brick & mortar and virtual graduation rates for schools within the Institute’s portfolio showed improvement. The Institute’s overall graduation rate for the 2021-2022 year was 83.5%, as compared to an 80.4% graduation rate for the previous academic year. Seven out of the 30 schools with the highest graduation rates in South Carolina are Institute charter schools. Four of those seven schools had a 100% graduation rate (Midlands STEM Institute, Calhoun Falls Charter School, Legion Collegiate Academy, and Lowcountry Leadership Charter School).

All Charter Institute at Erskine schools are public, tuition-free charter schools. The Charter Institute at Erskine authorizes 24 charter schools across the state, with students represented in every zip code in South Carolina.

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*The Charter Institute at Erskine is the fastest-growing school district in South Carolina. Serving 24 schools and approximately 24,000 students across the state, the Charter Institute at Erskine is committed to innovative, creative, high-quality methods of education. For more information about the Institute, please visit [www.erskinecharters.org](http://www.erskinecharters.org).*



*Erica Shuler, 4th grade teacher at Belton Preparatory Academy in Anderson County, teaches a lesson.*



*Mr. Mike Sinclair, Dr. Amy Ballard, Ms. Trina Freeman, and Superintendent Cameron Runyan of the Charter Institute at Erskine receive the 2022 National Blue Ribbon award on behalf of Brashier Middle College Charter High School.*



*Royal Live Oaks Academy of the Arts and Sciences Charter School in Jasper, South Carolina, experienced impressive academic growth this year.*