



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Columbia County and Richmond County School Boards Vote to Bring JA Discovery Center to Local Middle School Students

Augusta, GA – Junior Achievement of Georgia (JA), in partnership with Columbia County School District and Richmond County School System, announced today the unanimous approval by both Boards of Education to incorporate a JA Discovery Center into the Support Department Complex in Evans.

“We are thrilled with the decisions of each of these Boards that will allow us to move into the CSRA with significant presence and impact,” said John Hancock, President and CEO, JA of Georgia. “We are thankful for the commitment of these two visionary superintendents and their boards, and we look forward to providing unmatched learning experiences that enable students to discover the possibilities that their futures can hold.”

With opening planned in the Fall of 2023, the JA Discovery Center will serve 15,000 middle school students annually in the Central Savannah River Area of the state. The center will provide students continued exposure to their future possibilities through two innovative programs:

JA BizTown creates an unmatched experience where sixth grade students interact within a simulated economy and take on the challenge of running a business. Students not only discover the intricacies of being a professional and a member of the community, but also realize the abundance of opportunities available within their home town.

JA Finance Park provides seventh or eighth grade students the rare opportunity to experience being an adult and providing for the needs of a household. Guided by an assigned ‘life situation,’ students participate in a simulation that enables them to develop skills to successfully navigate today’s complex economic environment and discover how decisions today can impact tomorrow.

“We are very excited to be able to offer our students a culminating experience that extends this area of learning to the real world through partnerships and connections with our local communities,” said Dr. Steve Flynt, Superintendent, Columbia County School District.

Richmond County School System superintendent, Dr. Kenneth Bradshaw, noted, “The opportunity to expose our students to businesses and careers that are right here in our area is remarkable. Broadening their vision into what is possible will enable them to dream big and see the path to achieve those dreams.”

The construction of the center is possible through a joint partnership with JA, the Columbia County School District, and the Richmond County School System.

Currently JA Discovery Centers serve more than 120,000 students a year across five locations - the JA Chick-fil-A Foundation Discovery Center in Atlanta, the JA Discovery Center at Gwinnett,

the Mike and Lynn Cottrell JA Discovery Center at North Georgia in Cumming, the JA Discovery Center of Greater Dalton, and the JA Colonial Group Discovery Center in Savannah. These five locations bring the total impact to more than 45% of middle school students in Georgia.

To find out more about JA Discovery Centers, visit Georgia.ja.org.

About Junior Achievement of Georgia

Junior Achievement (JA) of Georgia is dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make educated academic and economic choices. JA learning solutions are delivered by corporate and community volunteers, and provide relevant, hands-on experiences to students from kindergarten through high school. JA of Georgia offers multiple programs, including in-class programs, 3DE by Junior Achievement, JA BizTown and JA Finance Park, all of which focus on entrepreneurship, personal financial literacy, and workforce readiness. For more information, visit georgia.ja.org.

About Columbia County School District

Columbia County School District (CCSD), is the 15th largest school district in the state and growing, with more than 28,600 students and 4,000 employees across 31 schools and one virtual academy. The CCSD is a leader in academic excellence in the state and the nation, focused on empowering and inspiring student achievement through innovative, relevant and lasting educational curriculum, experiences and opportunities. To learn more, visit www.ccboe.net

About Richmond County School System

Richmond County School System (RCSS) is committed to providing an equitable education and preparation for life beyond the classroom for all of the nearly 30,000 students learning in 56 schools and special programs across the district. RCSS offers flexible curriculum options to meet students' interests and provides future workers to support a strong, local economy. Through teaching, learning, collaboration and innovation the school system is focused to ensure student academic achievement and success. For more information, visit rcboe.org.

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