

## **American Idol Star, Kalifa Wilson, Wows Crowd during 2019-2020 WCSD's Convocation**

The Williamsburg County School District's Opening Ceremony/Convocation was held on Thursday, August 15, 2019, at the Kingstree High School Gymnasium. American Idol Contestant and recent graduate of Williamsburg County School District, Kalifa Wilson, sang the National Anthem. Williamsburg County School District's Teacher-of-the-Year, Kimily Cannion-Brown, presided and encouraged educators to enter the classroom prepared and ready to help students learn.

Superintendent Rose Wilder welcomed employees and recognized special guests. She stressed to staff the need to remain focused throughout the school year on providing a high quality education to Williamsburg County School District's students. The Honorable Cezar McKnight, South Carolina Representative-District 101, The Honorable Darren Tisdale, Mayor of Kingstree, South Carolina, and Dr. Janice Gamble, South Carolina State Board of Education member, greeted employees and urged them to remain dedicated, encouraged and determined throughout the school year to helping all students obtain the necessary skills for success. The Honorable Ronnie Sabb, South Carolina State Senator-District 32, provided a detailed and informative Legislative Update.

Reverend Katherine Crimm, Pastor of Kingstree Methodist Church, delivered an inspiring message that challenged educators to "go the extra mile" to help students excel. Williamsburg County School District's 2019-2020 First-Year Teacher of the Year, Jacoby Graham, introduced the keynote speaker, Janae' Dorsey, the 2019 Valedictorian of Kingstree High School and a completer of the 2019 Google Computer Science Summer Institute. Janae' challenged educators to encourage students to dream big and aspire to excellence in all areas of their lives. Janae' will attend the College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina, and major in Computer Science.

Superintendent Wilder delivered a motivating message to staff members and expressed her desire for the district to experience significant gains in academic achievement and provide additional opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills.

Sherry East informed the audience of the advantages of joining the South Carolina Education Association (SCEA), and Jodie Ortman provided details regarding the benefits of becoming a part of the Palmetto State Teachers Association. Each school expressed their enthusiasm with energizing chants that highlighted staff member's excitement for another opportunity to work with the students of Williamsburg County School District.

Kalifa Wilson, along with talented members of her family, also sang an uplifting selection that featured their unique musical talents. Members of the Kingstree High School's Jazz Ensemble, under the leadership of Band Director, Fred Fulton, provided several musical selections during this event.

After lunch, educators attended required professional development sessions at Kingstree High School.