

*It's All About Teaching
and Learning.*

Charles County Public Schools

School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Pause on conditioning

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has suspended all sports conditioning and skill sessions for student athletes. The suspension is a precautionary measure in light of rising COVID-19 cases reported in Charles County.

Phase 2 postponed

Due to the recent rise in COVID-19 cases county- and statewide, Charles County Public School (CCPS) made the move to pause Phase 2 of its reopening plan that includes in-person learning for special populations of students. CCPS will continue to monitor the data and reassess; however, CCPS will not consider a move to Phase 2 until after the first of the year because of the upcoming holiday season. CCPS will continue virtual learning for all students until further notice. Student instruction continues through StudentVue and Zoom. Go to www.ccboe.com to keep up with schedule changes as CCPS goes through its Reopening Plan.

Internet safety

CCPS parents, guardians and caregivers recently attended a virtual Internet Safety Awareness presentation sponsored by the CCPS Department of Student Services. Joseph Dugan, internet safety specialist with the Maryland State Police and a member of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, gave information on the dangers children may face on the internet and digital world. The documentary "Childhood 2.0" examines real-life issues facing young people today. Watch the documentary at <https://www.childhood2movie.com/>. For more resources, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yxpxnc58> and <https://bark-o-matic.com/>. Parents and families can also contact school-based staff including school counselors, administrators, resource officer and psychologist.



#CCPSkindnessday

Today for World Kindness Day, students and staff wore cardigans and cozy sweaters to emulate Mr. Rogers, Daniel Tiger and other beloved people and characters. At Billingsley Elementary School, Caroline House, SOAR teacher for third through fifth grades, left; kindergarten teacher Kimberly Williams; SOAR teacher for kindergarten to second grade Lauren Suttin; and Steven Haliscak, SOAR K-second grade instructional assistant, meet up in Williams' classroom. Williams said the lessons taught by Mr. Rogers resonate with her students. "I think it's important to teach kindness every day," she said. "We tell our students 'Smile with your heart.'"

CCPS makes changes to employee schedules

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has paused the move to Phase 2 of the Reopening Plan due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Charles County.

The school system has made changes to employee work schedules to slow the spread of this virus. Although school buildings are safe places to work, the adjusted work schedules will help the community stop or slow the spread of the virus so that students can come back into schools and lives can get back to normal.

The school system's mission is to meet the needs of the community's children. This means that in addition to a robust instructional program, CCPS must also provide mental health support and virtual extracurricular activities for students. Effective Monday, Nov. 16, the following will be implemented:

Employees who were approved based on their job title through the teleworking application will continue to be approved. This group includes:

- Teachers
- Media Specialists
- Kindergarten and Prekindergarten instructional assistants (IA)
- Regionalized special education instructional assistants
- IEP Facilitators

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On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County honored outstanding employees at its November meeting including Melissa Bridegum, second-grade teacher, Mary B. Neal Elementary School; Margaret Grove, fifth-grade teacher, Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School; Holly Dolan, high school resource teacher, North Point High School; and Amanda Jones, language arts teacher, Mattawoman Middle School.

Chess tourney winners

CCPS hosted its annual fall chess tournament Oct. 24 in person at Thomas Stone High School. To accommodate COVID-19 social distancing and safety guidelines, this year's fall tournament was limited to students in Grades 4-12. A total of 38 students competed in three rounds of grade-level division play, and one champion was named per grade level. Top finishers also were named in each division. Champions received a trophy and top finishers received medals. Felix Cummings served as the tournament director. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/y3epghfe> to see a list of winners.

SAT, ACT canceled

CCPS canceled the December SAT and ACT testing dates at Westlake High School. This includes the SAT on Saturday, Dec. 5, and the ACT on Saturday, Dec. 12. Students who registered for the tests will receive a cancellation notice from the College Board and/or ACT, Inc. The notice will include information about rescheduling.

New school locator

CCPS has a new school locator on its website, ccboe.com. The new system is linked to the CCPS website under the Quick Links menu area. Click on the School Locator link to access the system. Users can click on the instructions menu on the page for step-by-step directions on how to use the system. CCPS is using a new school bus routing system through VEO Transportation that supports the new locator. A direct link to the new locator is <https://tinyurl.com/yxh8g6ub>.

Family internet center open at three schools

A family internet center at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School opened Thursday, Nov. 12 to aid students in virtual learning. Hours for the Higdon internet center are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Higdon location is the third Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) school to provide indoor internet. Other sites are Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School and Henry E. Lackey High School. Family internet centers provide WiFi to students in need of the resource to complete their schoolwork. Lackey and Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy will re-open family internet centers on Tuesday, Nov. 10. Internet center hours at Lackey and Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy are 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Families will be able to sit together at socially distanced tables. Space is limited and must be reserved between 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. the day before you want to book a space by calling 301-934-7213. Families can schedule up to five consecutive days at once.

A parent, guardian, or adult who is a caregiver must accompany students 15 or younger. The adult will fill out a health screening for themselves and their children before going into the center.

Students using the centers must sign in and wear a face-covering/mask at all times. Students must log on and stay connected to their scheduled instruction.

Students should bring their laptops or learning device to the center. A limited number of desktop computers may be available. Students should not make disruptive sounds or behaviors and use headphones or earbuds.

Parents/guardians must remain with their child(ren) while at the school unless the student is 16 or older.

Parents will sign in using a picture ID and wear a face covering/mask. Other requirements include that the student arrives



Sophia Mullins, a fifth-grade student at Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School, completes assignments at the school's family internet center.

and leaves on time (no earlier than 7 a.m. at Lackey and Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, and 7:30 a.m. at Higdon, and leave no later than 4 p.m.). Please silence your cell phones. Calls may take place outside of the school. Parents also ensure that your child(ren) is not disruptive and should bring lunch, water and snacks for their child. Adults can bring their technology devices and use the CCPS BYOD WiFi. They should use headphones or earbuds while in the family internet center.

The schools have designated parking spaces for visitors to the centers.

At Lackey, the center's entrance is in the back of the gym. After driving up the school's entrance hill, pass the circle and make a right into the parking lot.

At Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, internet center visitors should park in front of the school (in the bus lanes) and enter the center on the building's left side.

At Higdon, families should park in the parking lot adjacent to the gym/cafeteria. The internet center is located in the cafeteria and families should enter the school through the cafeteria doors.

Gooble 'til you wobble — Thanksgiving break is Nov. 25-27

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) schools and offices will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday from Wednesday, Nov. 25 to Friday, Nov. 27.

Winter break is set for Wednesday, Dec. 23 through Friday, Jan. 1. To view an online calendar, go to <https://tinyurl.com/yy9ocz4>.

Young Athletes At-Home Program kicks off

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) partners with Special Olympics Maryland to provide the Young Athletes At-Home Program (YAP), introducing children ages 2 to 7 to basic sports skills like running, kicking and throwing.

The program is typically offered to children in special populations with and without intellectual disabilities who are in prekindergarten and enrolled in early intervention programs.

This year, CCPS is offering the virtual program to all young children and their families who want to improve gross motor movement and skill development. The Young Athletes At-Home Program blends sports and play with self-paced 6-week guided lesson plan that help families track a child's progress.

"The Young Athletes At-Home Program focuses on balance, hopping, jumping, tossing and catching. Each of these gross motor skills are instrumental to early childhood physical devel-



opment," Michelle Ignaszewski, adapted physical education resource teacher and a Young Athletes Program coordinator, said.

Families can show their interest and request equipment needed for participation by filling out a form at <https://tinyurl.com/y2zb636a>. The first of two six-week, self-paced programs is set for Jan. 18 to Feb. 22. The second session is April 12 to May 17. Families looking for activities to do now can attend Zoom sessions — known as YAPpy Hour — at <https://tinyurl.com/y4u8lycc>. The sessions promote movement activities as well as social and emotional literacy skills. A playlist of past YAPpy Hours can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/y39bzotq>.

FNS updates meal distribution

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has made some changes to its meal distribution sites and serving times. The following changes went into effect on Nov. 9.

— Meal sites are open for curbside distribution Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

— Malcolm Elementary School will continue to serve as a meal site, Monday through Friday, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Prior to the postponement of Phase 2 for CCPS, the meal site at Malcolm was scheduled to close after Nov. 6.

— Seven sites that served as evening pickup locations closed on Nov. 6.

— Meals will remain free to children ages 2 to 18 for the entire 2020-21 school year.

— There is no meal service, including mobile meals, on days when students are not in school. Meal sites will be closed during the Thanksgiving break of Nov. 25-27.

Mobile meal sites

Mobile meal service will continue by school bus to select neighborhoods. Grab-and-go meals are available from 11 to 11:20 a.m. at the Wakefield Community Center at 2002 Nantucket Drive in Waldorf; 11:30 to 11:50 a.m. at the Smallwood Village Shopping Center, near Safeway, at 10 King St. in Waldorf; and Arthur Middleton Elementary School at 1109 Copley Ave. in Waldorf from noon to 12:30 p.m.

Meal sites

Meal sites include Henry E. Lackey, La Plata, Maurice J. McDonough; North Point, St. Charles, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools; Mattawoman, Milton M. Somers and Piccowaxen middle schools; and Billingsley, Indian Head, Malcolm, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, J.C. Parks and J.P. Ryon elementary schools.

CHANGES

Employees who were not initially approved for teleworking will be permitted to telework based on a 50 percent schedule. The schedule will be developed by supervisors or principals and will include Wednesday as a teleworking day.

This group includes:

- Teachers who did not apply for teleworking in Phase 1
- Instructional assistants who did not apply for teleworking in Phase 1
- IEP Facilitators and Media Specialists who did not apply in Phase 1
- Principals and Vice Principals
- Instructional Leadership Teachers
- School Psychologists
- School Counselors
- Pupil Personnel Workers
- School Based Secretaries
- Administrative IAs, Inclusion IAs, Literacy IAs, ISR IAs,

- Technology Facilitators and Reading Interventionist IAs

CCPS buildings will remain open; and employees who would like to work from their classroom or offices may continue to do so. Employees who are teleworking should review the [CCPS Teleworking Guidelines](#).

Employees whose job duties are not conducive to telework should continue to work their supervisor-approved schedule.

This group includes building service workers, food service workers, school nurses, maintenance workers, bus drivers and attendants, mailroom and switchboard employees.

The Learning Support Centers and Family Internet Centers will continue to be open to support employees and their children.

With principal approval, a teacher may elect to allow their school-aged child(ren) to access learning from the parent's classroom instead of from the Learning Support Centers.

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CCPS provides nondiscriminatory equal access to school facilities in accordance with its Use of Facilities rules to designated youth groups (including, but not limited to, the Boy Scouts).



Gwynn receives donation

Earlier this fall, Martin "MJ" Gusky Jr., 7, center, donated face masks and hand sanitizer to the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center. Gusky is homeschooled, but his friend once attended a program held at Gwynn. Gusky is pictured with Board of Education Member Elizabeth C. Brown, left, Board Vice Chairman Latina L. Wilson, Superintendent Kimberly Hill and Board Chairman Virginia R. McGraw. To read more, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y5ruwxpy>.

Employee Assistance Program available for CCPS staff

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider, Deer Oaks EAP Services.

The EAP benefit covers six confidential short-term counseling visits for contracted employees who work more than 20 hours per week and their immediate families.

The EAP benefit for employees and their dependents, is free and confidential.

Deer Oaks EAP clinicians help clients of all ages, from young children to senior citizens.

The EAP can assist with stress, depression, anxiety, workplace difficulties, substance abuse, marital

problems, family or parenting conflicts, grief, violence and unhealthy lifestyles.

The EAP can also provide additional assistance with childcare and eldercare resources with referrals; financial and legal issues; and other issues.

Deer Oaks EAP is available 24 hours a day, year-round. Deer Oaks coordinates with CCPS's health plan for cases that require treatment under the medical benefit.

For information or a referral to a provider, call 888-993-7650 or go to <https://www.deeroakseap.com>.

The member login and password are ccboe.

Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job Openings

Food Service Driver — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, temporary position. High school diploma required, along with basic skills in reading, record keeping and arithmetic. Cooking, food handling and/or cashier experience preferred. Apply by Nov. 16.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — Matthew Henson Middle School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Applicants should have an interest in and aptitude for working with school-aged children. Apply by Nov. 19.

Secretary to the Principal — Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 12-month position. A high school diploma is required with experience with Quicken or QuickBooks desirable.

Experience with budgets, payroll and cash handling preferred. Apply by Nov. 23.

Kindergarten Instructional Assistant — Billingsley Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required, an associate's degree preferred. Experience working with children preferred. Apply by Nov. 16.

Instructional Assistant — General Smallwood Middle School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required, an associate's degree preferred. Experience working with children preferred. Apply by Nov. 19.

English Teacher — All high schools, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree is required and applicants must meet certification requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Education. Apply by Nov. 18.

Technology Facilitator — Location to be determined, 10-month position. A high school

diploma and associate of arts degree, or a pass on the ParaPro Assessment are required. Strong computer literacy skills are necessary and an understanding of Microsoft Office Suite and instructional software, and the ability to learn new software as required are preferred. Position open until filled.

New Teacher Mentor - Elementary — Part-time position. Seven years experience of successful prekindergarten to 12th grade teaching with four or more years in a leadership role preferred. Position open until filled.

Elementary Teacher — All elementary schools, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree is required and applicants must meet certification requirements as established by the MSDE. Apply by Dec. 31.

Art Teacher — All schools, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree is required and applicants must meet certification requirements as established by the MSDE. Apply by Dec. 31.