



*It's All About
Teaching and
Learning*

Charles County Public Schools

School News

Notebook

Vote for Vinson

Make sure you cast your vote for a Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teacher who is in the running to be a Future Goals Teacher of the Month by the National Hockey League. Stephanie Vinson is a computer science teacher at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, who is an asset to the state's Career and Technical Education program and computer science. You can cast one vote a day up to 11:59 p.m. Feb. 28 at <https://www.nhl.com/community/future-goals-teacher-of-the-month> by clicking on her picture.



Meals for children

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Food and Nutrition Services staff continues to serve and deliver meals at locations around the county. Meals are free for children ages 2 to 18 -- CCPS students, homeschool students and those in private schools can pick up a meal bag that contains a breakfast kit, lunch, dinner and snack. Go to www.ccboe.com/freemeals.

Zoom update

Zoom has released another program update. Log in to your Zoom account and click on your profile settings in the upper righthand corner to check for an update. Some users may be prompted to complete the SSO sign-in process after downloading the update. To sign in using SSO, launch Zoom and then click Sign In with SSO. The next screen will ask for the domain. Enter ccboe. Teachers and staff will enter their full CCPS email address and password. Students would use their studentID@ccboe.com (for example 123456@ccboe.com) followed by their StudentVue password.



All In for All Students

School counselors at Thomas Stone High School join their CCPS colleagues to celebrate National School Counseling Week -- held Feb. 1-5 this year. From left are School counselors Hope Ransom, Tracey Jarmon, Karen Attick, Angie Prado and Gretchen Salopek. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) school counselors help students in many ways. From helping students apply for college and getting comfortable with virtual learning to being a safe place to discuss anxiety or anger issues, school counselors offer a vital service to students and their families. School counselors have recorded introduction videos and have their contact information available at tinyurl.com/4ex9xh55.

Dr. Mudd named National ESEA Distinguished School

At Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, success and hard work go hand in hand. Teachers and staff celebrate successes with parents, students and community partners. The relationships among these groups contribute to a shared school vision and foundation of a strong home and school connection. Included in the school vision are norms such as high expectations for all, honest and open lines of communication, and the building of trust in relationships.

It is these norms, and the support of all stakeholders, that have helped students at Dr. Mudd reach higher levels of both personal and academic achievement. For these successes, Dr. Mudd was recently honored as a National ESEA Distinguished School. The designation honors Title I schools for outstanding achievements in one of three

categories: exceptional student performance, closing the achievement gap, and excellence in serving special populations of students.

Only two schools per state are chosen for the annual nationwide recognition. Dr. Mudd is the second Charles County public school to receive the honor.

Dr. Mudd was honored for its efforts in closing the achievement gap between student groups for two or more consecutive years. Principal Orlena Whatley said it is the school climate and expectations that have contributed to the success of the entire school community. "We are shaping the school culture that will have a significant impact on student achievement. At Dr. Mudd, our culture is built on the premise of family. As a family, we seek to strengthen our bond by the work we do for our village," Whatley said.

See DR. MUDD, Page 3

College Board honors three high schools

Three high schools lauded for high female representation in computer science

Henry E. Lackey, La Plata and Westlake high schools are getting kudos for achieving high female representation in select Advanced Placement (AP) computer science classes. The three Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) schools are among the 34 public schools in the state that earned the College Board AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award thanks to high participation of females in AP Computer Science A and/or AP Computer Science Principles.

Providing female students with access to computer science courses is critical to ensuring gender parity in the industry's high-paying jobs, according to the College

Board. Diversity in all career fields drive innovation, creativity and representation.

An analysis of 2017 Bureau of Labor Statistics data by code.org found that women represent just 24 percent of the 5 million people in computing occupations.

"Today's students need the power to shape technology, not just cope with it," says Stefanie Sanford, College Board chief of global policy and external relations. "Young women deserve an equal opportunity to become the next generation of entrepreneurs, engineers and tech leaders. Closing the gap in computer science education empowers young women to build the future they want."

On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County honored outstanding staff members at its January meeting including Jacqueline Thomas, left, art teacher, Westlake High School; and Monique Burton, secretary to the principal, Billingsley Elementary School. To read more, go to tinyurl.com/4yklow9h.

February resolutions

The school system celebrates **Black History Month** annually in February. The 2021 theme is The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity. Throughout the school year, as well as Black History Month, CCPS works to improve minority achievement in schools with a goal of eliminating achievement gaps.

The Association for Career and Technology Education recognizes February as **Career and Technical Education Month**. CCPS highlights its career and technical education (CTE) programs annually in February to emphasize the importance of the development of skills and leadership among students.

Gifted and Talented Education Month is celebrated annually in February, and highlights opportunities for students who demonstrate outstanding levels of achievement

CCPS recognizes **National School Counseling Week** annually in February. For 2021, National School Counseling Week is Feb. 1-5. School counselors are recognized annually for the role they have in helping students plan for their future, achieve personal success and work toward academic achievement.

Inclement weather changes

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has adjusted its inclement weather procedures for the 2020-21 school year.

The procedures take into account the virtual learning schedule currently in place for all CCPS students.

To learn more about the updated procedures and employee codes, visit go to tinyurl.com/5ftypl5t.

The link is also available at www.ccboe.com under the Status listing in the top right corner of the site.

Dig in: Kids in the Garden grants available

The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) is accepting applications for its 2021 Kids in the Garden Grants.

The grant program is open to schools and community organizations serving students in grades prekindergarten through 12th grade interested in providing hands-on agricultural experiences during virtual or in-person instruction. The maximum grant award is \$500. Applications are due by Feb. 28.

"MAEF leadership realizes that huddling students around a single garden plot at a school or community center will not be a safe or compliant option for learning this spring," Joe Dymek, MAEF chairman of the board, said. "Instead of our annual garden grants, this year we are supporting the production and distribution of individual garden kits which may be used at home



or at school. We hope that the flexibility of this grant offers teachers and community groups the chance to let kids get their hands dirty with an engaging and memorable hands-on activity that can be used across the curriculum."

Award announcements will be made by March 15.

Application information is at <http://maefononline.com/home/teacher-center/grantsandawards/>.

Employee Assistance Program available for staff

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

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

Deer Oaks EAP is available 24 hours a

day, yearround.

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.

Schools are nominated for the honor by their respective state education agency. Dr. Mudd is one of only 57 schools across the United States to receive the honor this year.

The award, administered by the National Association of ESEA, or Elementary and Secondary Education Act, State Program Administrators (NAESPA), was established to recognize Title I schools for outstanding achievements. Title I is a federal program that provides additional funding to schools with students who are economically disadvantaged in order to promote equal access. There are eight Title I elementary schools in Charles County. Dr. Mudd is the largest Title I school in Charles County with an enrollment of more than 600 students this school year.

Dr. Mudd's nomination was submitted through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on behalf of the school and the CCPS Title I office. Kristin Shields, Title I program director for CCPS, said she could not think of a school more deserving of recognition for increased achievement than Dr. Mudd.

"The CCPS Office of Title I was proud to nominate Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary as a National Distinguished ESEA School. A strong commitment to academic excellence, community support, a staff who believes in all children's potential, and relationships with stakeholders are what have made Dr. Mudd Elementary so successful. Over the last several years, Dr. Mudd Elementary has greatly increased student achievement due to the dedication and hard work of its staff, students, and families," Shields said.

Parents and students agree that it is the focus on positive relationships, parent engagement and high expectations that make Dr. Mudd a successful school. Parents are encouraged to be active partners with their child's teachers and take part in school-led workshops, events and their child's education. Students are celebrated for their accomplishments and shown that kindness and hard work make a difference.

Community partners and faith-based organizations consistently collaborate with Dr. Mudd to support events, programs, meal distribution and more. Dr. Mudd is a place where its stakeholders want to be. More importantly, a place where students want to be. This is demonstrated by the commitment Dr. Mudd

students show to their learning. Students are in class, engaged and achieving success. Their commitment to learning is apparent.

Valerie Lott is the Dr. Mudd Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) president. Her child has been a student at Dr. Mudd since kindergarten. Lott said the biggest change she has experienced as a Dr. Mudd parent is the enhanced focus on parent communication and family engagement.

"I noticed a major increase in family engagement, the understanding that it takes a village to raise children. There is a partnership in place among parents, staff and students. Communication is consistent. The school communicating with me and me communicating with the school has set my child up for success," Lott said.

Lott said she has also noticed an increase on the focus of social-emotional success. Students learn not only how to be ready to learn, but how to be good people. "Staff really love their students and go above and beyond. With Ms. Whatley on board, the outpour of love and support has increased. Staff focus on the kids' social emotional well-being... how to be a kind person and good student... how to set goals. I love the fact that they [staff] take this component and insert it into a child's life," Lott said. Lott's daughter, Dylan, is excelling in the virtual classroom. The fourth grader is in Ms. Forbes' class and said she loves being a Dr. Mudd student. "What I love about Dr. Mudd are the teachers and assistants. They are like family to me and care for me. I can go to them for anything. School is family oriented and we have fun times with learning," Lott said.

At the start of every school year, staff review the schoolwide behavior plan including the 3 R's – respect, responsibility and the right to learn. The plan details consistent rules for students and how to incorporate Positive, Behavioral, Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in the classroom. PBIS initiatives coupled with consistency in rules help to support a safe environment for learning. This also supports relationship building in the school and helps to create a community of learners. Teachers are leaders at Dr. Mudd and ignited by a common passion. They understand the importance of modeling best practices and help mentor new teachers. Teachers work collaboratively and collectively towards the mission and vision



Pictured are members of the Dr. Mudd staff who help to ensure students achieve success each day.

of the school. The mindset among teachers is that everyone must feel connected to the work in order for the work to happen. This is the mindset at Dr. Mudd.

Whatley instills in her staff a desire to be great and in turn, her teachers pass this on to their students. Expectations are high, but when children are shown they can achieve higher levels of success, they rise to the occasion. Whatley credits a strong foundation, but more so her staff and teachers for helping children achieve high levels of success.

"We ask our staff to dig deep and do the work. This isn't about me... I am not in the classroom teaching these kids. This is all on my staff. That hard work paid off... the kids were able to demonstrate and show that all children, regardless of their background, regardless of color, children who are taught at a high level can achieve at a high level," Whatley said.

Norma Williams is a longtime teacher at Dr. Mudd. She began teaching at the school in 1998 and said it is the bond among staff, parents and the students that have kept her heart in education for so long. "The staff here has always been a staff that wants to do the best for children. I think it is why I have stayed here all these years. Attendance is a priority and children are accountable for being on time. It makes a big difference. If a child is not here, we cannot teach them. The foundation is here and we build on it each and every day," Williams said.

School staff hope to plan an in-person award recognition ceremony in the spring so all school stakeholders can be present to celebrate.

Dr. Mudd will be honored alongside other schools chosen for recognition by the NAESPA at the ESEA Conference Feb. 8-11.

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Board of Education meeting agenda for Feb. 9

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 9, at 1 p.m. To maintain social distancing and safety guidelines, the Board will meet virtually. The meeting will stream live on the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) website, www.ccboe.com and air on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon Fios Channel 12. The following is a tentative meeting agenda and is subject to change.

Executive session – 11:30 a.m.

Call to order – 1 p.m.

- Pledge of Allegiance

Superintendent's update

Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Correspondence/Board Member updates
- Education Association of Charles County (EACC) update
- American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) update
- Student Board Member update
- Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) update

* Superintendent search

- Reopening of schools: Deputy Superintendent Amy Hollstein; Dr. Dianna Abney, health officer, Charles County Department of Health; and Amber Starn, epidemiologist, Charles County Department of Health
- Overview of student Board Member staff
- Project status update
- Facility funding task force
- FY 2022 operating budget
- Legislative update

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

- New business
 - * Suspension of Board policies
- Future agenda items

Recognition – 4:30 p.m.

- **Resolutions:** Read Across Charles County; Women's History Month; and Fine and Performing Arts Month.
- **2021 Legislative Pages**
- **2020 Support Staff Award honorees:** James Earl Swann, building service manager, La Plata High School; Richard Day, computer analyst III, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building and North Point High School; Dana Steffe, food service manager, Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School; and Gary Cook, building controls system technician, CCPS maintenance shop
- **Students/Staff:** La Plata High School; Piccowaxen Middle School; and Berry, Dr. Thomas L. Higdon and Eva Turner elementary schools

Public Forum – 6 p.m.

Action items

- Minutes
- Personnel
- FY2022 proposed operating budget
- Reopening of schools

Adjournment

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

Instructional Resource Teacher — All elementary and middle schools, 11-month position. Applicants must have a master's degree and hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate. Apply by Feb. 12.

Learning Resource Teacher — All elementary and middle schools, 10-month position. Applicants must have a master's degree and hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate. Apply by Feb. 12.

Reading Recovery Teacher — All elemen-

tary schools, 10-month position. A degree in early childhood education, elementary education, or reading and meets certification requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Education is required. Apply by Feb. 12.

Reading Resource Teacher — Location to be determined, 11-month position. Applicants must have a master's degree and hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate. Apply by Feb. 12.

School Psychologist — Location to be determined, 10.5-month position. Applicants must possess or be able to obtain School Psychology Certification in Maryland. Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential is preferred. Position open until filled.

Compliance Facilitator — St. Charles High School, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree and Maryland Standard Professional Certificate with special education endorsement are required. Position open until filled.

Plumber 3 — CCPS Maintenance Shop, 12-month position. High school diploma or equivalency certificate supplemented by vocational training and skills. Possession of a current Master's Plumber License issued by the Board of Commissioners of Practical Plumbing Department of Licensing and Regulation in Baltimore required. Position open until filled.

Food Service Worker (6 hour) — All schools, 10-month position. High school diploma or equivalent required. Position open until filled.