



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Teacher in-service Sept. 13

A teacher in-service day is Friday, Sept. 13. School is closed for students only who can visit the Charles County Fair, where admission is free for children on Friday.

College Fair set

The Charles County Public Schools College Fair (CCPS) is Sept. 18 at North Point High School. High school juniors and seniors will visit the fair during the school day to learn more about colleges and universities have to offer. Families and community members can visit the fair 6 to 8 p.m. Sept. 18. There will be financial aid presentations held during the evening sessions.

X country invitational

Middle school students can sign up for a cross country invitational Sept. 28 hosted at North Point High School. Elementary school-aged students can sign up to participate. Registration is 8 a.m., a course walk starts at 8:30 a.m., the race is at 9 a.m. An awards ceremony is set from 9:35 a.m. with a pancake breakfast starting at 9:45 a.m. For more information, contact Jimmy Ball at jball@ccboe.com or 301-753-1759.

Stay in touch

Before the weather gets iffy, sign up to receive text alerts from CCPS. A notification system — School Messenger — is used to send systemwide and school emails, phone calls and text message updates. To opt-in, users must text YES or Y to 67587. Text STOP to 67587 at any time to stop receiving text message alerts from CCPS. Standard text message rates by cell phone carriers apply. Staff members who change cell phone numbers during the school year should contact the CCPS Human Resources Department to update their employee information on file.



Welcome back

Students and staff welcomed the 2019-20 school year on Sept. 3. Top, Maurice J. McDonough High School cheerleaders get into the spirit of the day. Right, John Hanson Middle School learning resource teacher, Kathryn Neiles, helps sixth grader Alina Shank unlock the secret of using a locker. Bottom, Chelsey Short, a former Berry Elementary School teacher, stopped by Billingsley Elementary School to greet students, including fifth grader Jalen Tyson.





On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are Eva Turner Elementary School employees Marlene Harvest, fifth-grade teacher; Cathy Payton, building service worker; and Bethany Webber, special education teacher. To read more about Eva Turner, go to Page 3.

Now showing at Sci Center

The James E. Richmond Science Center at St. Charles High School has a new slate of movies now showing. Tickets are \$8 four adults and children 4 and older. Science center members, children 3 and younger and CCPS staff (one admission per CCPS identification) are admitted free. "Tilt," is an adventure story where Annie and Max explore the world and find out how seasons work. It is showing 6:45 p.m. on Sept. 18 and 25. "Habitat Earth," showing 9:30 a.m. Sept. 21, examines biological and human-built networks showing how life on Earth is interconnected. At 10:45 a.m. Sept. 21, "Life of Trees" will be shown which shows the world of trees. Max the dog gets some space in "Max Goes to the Moon," 6:45 p.m. Sept. 19 and noon on Sept. 21. Stay in orbit for "Invaders of Mars," 6:45 p.m. Sept. 26. The show explores Mars surface and explores the red planet.

Paging students

Know a Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) senior who is interested in government or public service? Encourage them to apply for the Student Page program. Pages spend two nonconsecutive weeks working in either the state Senate or House of Delegates during the legislative session in Annapolis. Students must apply and can receive an application from the program sponsor at their school. Sponsors include Jonathan Webster at Henry E. Lackey High School; Chris Butler at La Plata High School; Nate Mouli at Maurice J. McDonough High School; Anna Newton at North Point High School; Jonathan Perry at St. Charles High School; James Lloyd at Thomas Stone High School; and Dychon Whitaker at Westlake High School. The application is at <https://www.ccboe.com/images/students/StudentPageApplication.pdf>.



Matthew Henson Middle School sixth graders, including Cooper Pollard, received encouragement from parents and staff on the first day of school, Sept. 3.

Henson opens school with words of kindness

Words matter at Matthew Henson Middle School, and kindness was the word of the day on Sept. 3 as schools opened for the 2019-20 school year.

Wearing matching gray shirts with the message "One kind word can change someone's entire day," Henson staff gathered at the front of the school and shared kind words, hugs and encouragement to nearly 800 students as they filed out of buses and cars.

The encouragement and kind words didn't stop at the front door. As sixth graders joined their homeroom teachers, they found postcards on their desks with personal messages of support from parents or a teacher. The postcards made the middle school newcomers smile, and many took a second and third peek at their note before being ushered to their first period class at their new school. The idea for the postcards started with the school's guidance counselor Alexandra Eichel. Each card had a unique inspirational quote glued to the front and a personalized message from a parent or teacher on the back.

"It has been heartwarming to see the students place their postcards in the clear sleeves of their binders or somewhere else in their books. The idea was to shock the students' nerves with kindness and reassurance so that the first day did not seem so scary — and I think it did just that,"



Sixth grader Reign Ysabelle Veloza is greeted to middle school with encouraging words from parents and staff.

said Principal Christina Caballero.

Across the parking lot from Henson, J.C. Parks Elementary School Principal Greg Miller greeted each family in the "car line," welcoming them to Parks and a new school year.

The attention to creating a culture of kindness, respect and academic celebration spread across the county and schools on Sept. 3 as Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) principals and staff opened their doors for the 2019-20 school year. The school system welcomed more than 26,000 students last week, a number that will continue to climb this week as prekindergarten and Three's Program students start school Sept. 10.

Eva Turner Elementary holds a back-to-school carnival, orientation

When Keon Stinnie returned to school Sept. 3, he rode the bus for the first time, attended classes in a new building and started a new grade. So did most of his classmates.

Stinnie, a third grader, is one of about 375 Eva Turner Elementary School students being relocated this school year to the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Transition School.

His school, a 40-year-old open space building, is undergoing a renovation and expansion, sending the Turner Tigers to temporary classrooms for the next two years. Turner's renovation started this summer and should be complete by the start of the 2021-22 school year.

Almost everything at Turner is new this year. Even the principal. Gary Lesko took over as principal on July 1 and was excited to meet his students and their families at an orientation/carnival event on Aug. 28.

Lesko said the event, which was held at the Transition School, is a Turner tradition he adopted to help make orientation fun and engaging for students.

"I took about 40 selfies as part of a scavenger hunt where 'introduce yourself to the principal and take a selfie with him' was one of the items," Lesko said. About 150 people attended the event.

"We had an amazing turnout. Parents were excited and enthusiastic. Students got an opportunity to meet their teacher and more importantly familiarize themselves with the Transition School. Our teachers and staff were extremely well represented," Lesko said.

The renovation triggers another big change for Turner students who normally walk to school.

Students will now ride buses to the Transition School, which is located about 3 miles from Turner. As part of the orientation, Swann Transportation, a CCPS bus contractor, donated two buses to shuttle students and their families to the orientation.

"We believe in supporting our community," Terrance Dyson Jr., chief operating officer for Swann Transportation, said. "What better way to get the families there [to the Transition School] than on a school bus? You cannot put a cost on something like this. Swann Transportation sees providing this service as an important connection between



Top, fourth grader Jacoby Williams is greeted to Eva Turner Elementary School's orientation by Teresa Pritchett, prekindergarten instructional assistant, left, and Emma Callahan, special education instructional assistant. Right, first grader Persephone Miller-Forrest takes her turn in the video game trailer during the carnival/orientation. Turner staff and students will be in the Transition School while their building is being modernized and renovated.

home and school," Dyson said.

Turner's renovation is part of the CCPS Capital Improvements Plan and long term plans to renovate and maintain its older facilities.

This school year, students at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School move back to their school, which underwent a complete renovation and expansion. Mudd students attended classes at the Transition School for two years during the renovation.

Turner opened in 1979 and includes 64,207 square feet. An addition to the school will add 20,022 square feet, increasing the student capacity from 391 to 542 students. Renovation will enclose open-space class-



rooms and add a secure entry way at the front of the building.

The renovation will upgrade major building systems, like heating and cooling, electrical and plumbing. It will also bring Turner's spaces up to today's educational standards and provide learning areas found at newer schools, like a gym, modern media center and additional classroom space. The only part of the school that will remain the same is the full-day kindergarten addition, built in 2011. Cost of the project is estimated at \$22 million.

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Prekindergarten classes added to county elementary schools

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) expanded its prekindergarten program, adding room for about 250 more four-year-olds in seven elementary schools.

The additions were made possible as a result of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, also called the Kirwan Commission, recommendation that the state provide supplemental grant funding targeting early childhood education and expanding publicly funded prekindergarten programs.

- Arthur Middleton Elementary School received one prekindergarten classroom, split between morning and afternoon classes.
- William B. Wade Elementary School added one prekindergarten classroom with morning and afternoon classes.
- Mary H. Matula Elementary School added one prekindergarten classroom with morning and afternoon classes.
- Mary B. Neal Elementary School gained one inclusion prekindergarten classroom with morning and afternoon classes.
- Jennifer's half-day program converted to two full-day prekindergarten classes. The conversion requires added a teacher, two instructional assistants and one new classroom.



Dr. Kimberly Hill, superintendent of schools, works on a math lesson with Caleb Pierce, a pre-kindergarten student in Tara Taylor's class at Arthur Middleton Elementary School.

- Berry Elementary School gained one pre-kindergarten classroom with a morning and afternoon class.
- Billingsley Elementary School opened with one prekindergarten class (morning and afternoon).

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 Placement Coordinator — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. A master's degree in transition, counseling, rehabilitation or a related field preferred. At least five years of prior experience providing case-management and/or employment services for youth is preferred. Experience in case management, job coaching and placement and supervision of direct service personnel are preferred. Apply by Sept. 20.
Technical Assistant in Testing — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A bachelor's degree is preferred with a minimum of three to five years of experience in computer operations required. Apply by Sept. 23.

Job Coach for Adult Independence

Program — Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Experience working with children or adults who have special needs, and the ability to work and interact with people with significant mental and physical disabilities are requirements. Apply by Sept. 23.

Instructional Assistant for the Life Skills program — Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required as is experience working with children or adults who have special needs. The ability to demonstrate patience while working with students is a must. Apply by Sept. 24.

Literacy Instructional Assistant — John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position. Applicants must be able to work with high school and middle school aged children. Apply by Sept. 24.

Building service worker — Location to be

determined, 12-month position. Applicants must have a high school diploma and the ability to read and write effectively. Being physically capable of performing manual labor is a must. Position open until filled.
HVAC Mechanic II — CCPS Maintenance Shop, 12-month position. High school diploma and any combination equivalent to four years journey-level experience in HVAC trade are required. Applicants must have a valid Maryland Board of HVACR Contractor's Journeyman License and a valid Maryland driver's license. Position open until filled.

Title 1 Administrative Instructional Assistant — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Applicants must have an interest in and aptitude for working with secondary school aged children and the ability to communicate effectively with staff, students and parents. Position open until filled.