It's All About Teaching and Learning.

Charles County Public Schools

School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Direct deposit info

Employees can sign up for direct deposit by Oct. 30 to ensure holiday paychecks will be direct deposited. The payday of Nov. 24 falls on a scheduled holiday for Charles County Public Schools employees. All paper paychecks will be mailed to the employee's address on file on the day prior to payday with no exceptions.

Training deadline nears

The online mandated training has been extended to Oct. 15 for all staff. Among the required courses are diversity awareness, financial responsibilities, human trafficking awareness, suicide prevention and awareness, sexual harassment and other courses. Go to http://ccboe.md.safeschools.com. Your username is your employee ID number.

Opioid education event

Charles County Public Schools and Charles County Government are hosting a Community Opioid Education and Prevention event 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 18 at North Point High School. The free event will feature workshops on how to administer Narcan, and rendering first aid and CPR. Vendors will offer treatment and prevention resources. For information, contact Erica Rizor at RizorE@CharlesCountyMD.gov or 301-645-0553. North Point is at 2500 Davis Road in Waldorf.

Orange on Oct. 25

Unity Day is Oct. 25. Participants stand united against bullying and wear orange to school, work and throughout the day on Unity Day to express a message of support, hope and unity. For more information, go to www.pacer.org/bullying.

Taking a lake lunch

F.B. Gwynn Educational Center teacher Susan Cable, left, relaxes with student Tamika Holt during a field trip to Tilghman Lake Park to celebrate Walk Maryland Day on Oct. 4. Gwynn teachers and students walked a little more than half-a-mile on wooded trails to get to the lake where they ate lunch and explored a bit. The school has taken part in Walk Maryland Day — which coincides with National Walk to School Day — since the event started three years ago, said Michelle Ignaszewski, an adapted physical education (PE) teacher.

Graduate honors band teacher as lasting inspiration

A Milton M. Somers Middle School teacher left a lasting impression on a former student who was recently named a 2017-18 Philip Merrill Presidential Scholar at the University of Maryland.

Band teacher Richard Hood is the educator who had the greatest impact on Katelyn Turner's academic achievement, the Maurice J. McDonough High School graduate said.

The Merrill scholar program recognizes academic accomplishments and the important role teachers have as mentors. To recognize the contributions of kindergarten to 12th grade teachers, the University of Maryland and the Merrill family is offering a $1,000 scholarship in Hood's name to an incoming first-year student from a Charles County high school in Fall 2018. A celebration for Merrill-honored teachers is set for November on the College Park campus.

Hood said he is extremely proud of Turner's accomplishments. "She is truly a neat young lady," he said. "And I can't believe she picked me for this. I'm incredibly humbled."

"Mr. Hood is a very perceptive man, and his attentiveness is apparent in his teaching style," said Turner, a senior in Maryland's College of Arts and Humanities. "I don't

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Notebook

On the cover

The Board honored outstanding employees at its October meeting including from left Velvet Gipson, instructional specialist at Theodore G. Davis Middle School; Miriam Ratcliffe, special education teacher at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center; and Catherine Powell, school counselor at Indian Head Elementary School.

HallSpartanWeen set

HallSpartanWeen is 6:30 to 8 p.m. Oct. 26 at St. Charles High School at 5305 Piney Church Road in Waldorf. Children from 2 to 12 can participate in the free event. While there is no admission fee, organizers ask for donations of canned food for the Southern Maryland Food Bank and pet food for the Humane Society of Charles County. RSVP by Oct. 19 to cbier@ccboe.com with the number of children and adults who will attend.

Sign up your minis for camp

James E. Richmond Science Center will hold a Science Saturday Mini Camp Oct. 28 at the center at St. Charles High School. Admission is $25 per student. The camp will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. There are engineering and design lessons, optics and optical illusions, a fulldome movie, holograms and light fountains. Subway will provide lunch. The camp is open to 25 students. Go to www.ccboe.com/sciencecenter to register. Kids can register on the day of the camp if space is available.

Science center has fall hours

Fall hours have started at the James E. Richmond Science Center. Doors open at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays with the fulldome show starting at 6:45 p.m. Go to www.ccboe.com/sciencecenter for more information.

Like, follow, retweet

Students rowing "boats" made out recycled materials in the school pool, gingerbread men flying through a wind tunnel, forensic autopsies on the world's greatest dynasties. Find out what students and teachers get up to all in the name of learning by going to our social media pages on Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, search Charles County Board of Education. We're CCPS on Twitter.

Teacher

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think I ever considered Mr. Hood just a band teacher. He always embodied the spirit of a mentor, and proved himself as such by connecting with students outside of music. He always tried his best to understand us as people first and students second."

"Ms. Turner was very focused," said Hood remembering his former student. "I was impressed that she could synthesize information from many planes — academic experience to life experience together with music. She understood things at a depth you don't see in many middle school students."

It was Hood who encouraged Turner to take up the bassoon in the sixth grade. At first, she was confused. He wanted her – an African-American girl who at the time was shorter than the bassoon — to play an instrument that was predominately taken up by white males. "Why me," she remembered thinking. By the time she was in eighth grade, it dawned on her. "I understood what Mr. Hood realized years before — I was more than capable," Turner said. "I was talented. And I was focused. Mr. Hood saw that and believed in me, and in turn I began to believe in myself."

> ***"Never doubt the impact you have on your students. Continue to empower them, especially your students of color, since you are the difference between their perceived limitations and their actualized potential."***
>
> — Katelyn Turner

The instrument was the perfect fit for a student like Turner. "I look for a certain mindset in a student to play the bassoon," Hood said. "You have to be adept at math, you need to have a certain physical coordination … these are people that if you give them a puzzle, they will not put it down until it's finished."

During his 27-year teaching career, Hood has taught a lot of kids.

There are those who are comfortable being among the crowd, and staying there. "Some like to hide in the herd," he said.

Milton M. Somers Middle School band teacher Richard Hood, left, encouraged Katelyn Turner to play the bassoon. Now a college senior, Turner continues to play the instrument in musical ensembles at the University of Maryland. Turner was an eighth grader in this picture.

Bassoonists tend to stand out. "They're not someone who's afraid to be the only one doing something. They want to do something on their own, but still be part of a group," Hood said.

Hood is among a group of educators who made an impact on Turner's life. "I cannot earnestly reflect on the impact my educators have had on me without thanking the countless other who have shaped who I am," Turner said, pointing out her former teachers Susan Steinmetz, Susan Eckerle, Ashley Hafera, Karen Rowledge, Leah Faris and Stephanie Walent.

"Never doubt the impact you have on your students," she said to CCPS teachers. "Continue to empower them, especially your students of color, since you are the difference between their perceived limitations and their actualized potential."

Turner entered the Honors College at Maryland in 2014.

She is a double major, studying government and politics and philosophy. She minors in musical performance. She spent time studying in Chile and at the University of Oxford.

"This is a young lady on the move," Hood said. "She is so well rounded, well spoken, well thought. Whichever direction she decides to go; we will be seeing her name; it will have great relevance."

Nikial Majors named CCPS Executive Director of Human Resources

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has a new executive director of human resources. Joining the school system with more than 20 years of human resources experience is Nikial Majors. The Board of Education of Charles County approved Majors' appointment last month and she began in her position last week.

Prior to joining CCPS, Majors served as the regional human resources director for eight years and the human resources manager for two years with Nixon Peabody LLP, a global law firm with offices in Washington, D.C. In her role as regional human resources director, Majors was responsible for human resources management functions within the Washington, D.C., office as well as for offices in Chicago, Raleigh, N.C., London and Paris.

Majors also worked at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, in Washington, D.C., for nine-and-a-half years. She worked as its human resources manager for the last five years of her tenure. She was a human resources generalist prior to her promotion to human resources manager.

Nikial Majors

Superintendent of Schools Kimberly Hill said she is excited to welcome Majors to the school system's leadership team. "Nikial Majors brings a wealth of knowledge in all functions related to human resources. Her experience will definitely help to support our employees, which in turn helps to support our students," Hill said.

Majors said she looks forward to working with the more than 3,400 staff members employed with CCPS. "The investments we make in hiring and developing the right people will benefit the children in CCPS. HR is shaping our future by supporting principals, heads of departments, teachers and staff, as well as parents and guardians who all help to manage, nurture, educate and prepare our children – the prospective human resources of society," Majors said.

She has experience in all areas of human resources including talent management, employee relations matters and risk management, compensation, compliance and personnel policies, staff training and development programs, benefits administration, employee leave programs, career coaching, and terminations and separations of employment.

Majors earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Towson University, and her Master of Business Administration degree with a concentration in Human Resources Management from Johns Hopkins University.

She is a member of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) and the Human Resources Association National Capital Area (HRA-NCA). She served as an HRA-NCA Director from 2015-16 and was Vice President of Programs & Professional Development from 2014-15. Majors holds both the SHRM-SCP and SPHR certifications.

Healthy choices: Health insurance open enrollment is Nov. 6 to Dec. 1

Open enrollment for the Charles County Board of Education sponsored health insurance programs begins Nov. 6 and ends Dec. 1. Open enrollment provides employees the opportunity to modify benefit choices or to elect medical benefits. All changes made during the enrollment period will be effective Jan. 1. Aflac representatives will be available at schools and centers to sign up employees for new policies, update current policies or answer questions. The Aflac meeting dates and times can be found at My CCPS.

Employees who want to participate in the flexible spending programs will need to access the online benefit enrollment site to enroll in the unreimbursed medical expense and child care flexible spending accounts. Enrollment is not automatic you must sign up for a new account each year. These accounts are active from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31 annually.

There are no changes to health insurance plans for calendar year 2018 and the rates will remain as follows:

- CareFirst Preferred Provider Plan (PPO/PPN) is $204 for individuals ($102 on a bi-weekly basis) and $546 for families ($273 on a bi-weekly basis).
- Blue Choice Opt-Out Open Access is $150 for individuals ($75 on a bi-weekly basis) and $432 for families ($216 on a bi-weekly basis).

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield will only mail new medical and dental cards if changes are made to plans for 2018. Members will not receive a new prescription card. All plan descriptions are available at https://ccboe.hrintouch.com as a featured link — Open Enrollment for 2018. The current health and life benefit elections will continue for calendar year 2018 if employees do not make any plan changes.

Log on to the enrollment portal at https://ccboe.hrintouch.com to make enrollment elections and/or changes. Employees who waive election for health coverage, they are required to sign an election waiver form on My CCPS.

Accessing enrollment

Employees will need to log on to the human resources In-Touch website to make changes. If there are not any changes, employees are not required to re-enroll.

Enrolling for benefits

- Go to https://ccboe.hrintouch.com
- Click on Register or Reset your Account
- When registering your account, the username must be between six and 50 alphanumeric characters
- Your password must be between eight and 15 characters, contain at least one number, have at least one upper case and one lower case letter and cannot contain more than two of the same characters consecutively
- The password can't be the same as the username or social security number.

Employees will have until Dec. 1 to make 2018 health and life benefit elections. The open enrollment guide has information about benefits and tips on taking an active role in managing health.

Employees who don't make any changes will continue to have their current health and life benefit elections for the calendar year 2018. For questions during open enrollment, contact 301-934-7289 or BenHotline@ccboe.com.

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Schools dig into Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week

Students selected fresh produce — peaches, apples, watermelon and corn on the cob — to go with their lunches during Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week Sept. 25 to 28 in Charles County Public Schools (CCPS).

More than 16,400 hamburgers and 8,422 hotdogs made from livestock raised in the tri-county area and processed in Hagerstown were served. When it comes to produce, 330 watermelons were purchased, 9,600 ears of corn and 445 heads of cauliflower. There were sweet potatoes, spinach and salads. The total number of meals served was about 67,000.

Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week encourages school districts to serve products grown locally and in the state, according to the Maryland Department of Agriculture, which, along with the Maryland State Department of Education, oversees the program that marked it's 10th year in September.

At Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School, local farmer David Hancock of Hancock Family Farms, dropped by to talk with students about his life as a farmer and why the occupation is an integral one.

"Agriculture is an important industry, not just for me, but for everybody," Hancock said. "We depend on it." While his children, who attend Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, have a handle on where food comes from thanks to the family business, some of their peers may not. When Hancock asked a young student where milk comes from, she responded, "The cooler." She's not wrong, but farmers and the Maryland Department of Agriculture are aiming to teach children and adults more about food and its origins.

Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School fourth graders Jordan Hauf, left, and Wayne Proctor enjoy fresh produce and fruit during Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week.

Anna Beyer, the food service manager at Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, said her students often reach for fruits and vegetables throughout the year, and enjoyed seeing the variety offered during the week. "They are intrigued by the peaches and apples," she said. "The corn on the cob has been a big hit. The watermelon … these kids would eat watermelon every day if they could."

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

Assistant Accounting Manager — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with specialization in accounting, finance or a related field. A master's degree or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) is preferred. Position open until filled.

Building Service Worker — Thomas Stone High School, 12-month position. Applicants should be able to read and write effectively and be physically capable of performing manual labor. Good verbal communications and human relation skills and a willingness to work overtime as required in cases of emergency is a must. Apply by Oct. 16.

Environment Education Assistant — Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Education Center 10-month position. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in environmental science, environmental studies, natural science, science education, natural resource management or an equivalent. Successful teaching experience in environmental education in an outdoor setting is preferred. Preferred experience in grant writing, coordinating group dynamics and teaching and working with adolescents. Apply by Oct. 18.

Instructional Assistant — Mattawoman Middle School, 10-month position. Applicants should have an interest in and aptitude for working with secondary school-aged children. Excellent human relations skills and good oral and written communication skills are a must. Apply by Oct. 19.

In-school Retention Instructional Assistant — John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position. Applicants should have the ability to work with school-aged children with varied backgrounds. Excellent human relations skills, organizational and communication skills are a must. Apply by Oct. 19.

Building Service Assistant Manager — St. Charles High School, 12-month position. Applicants must have the ability to read and write effectively and be physically capable of performing manual labor. Apply by Oct. 19.

Extra pay positions

Head Track and Field Coach — Maurice J. McDonough High School. Call 301-934-2944.

Assistant Track and Field Coach — Maurice J. McDonough High School. Call 301-934-2944.

Junior Varsity Boys Basketball Coach — Henry E. Lackey High School. Call 301-743-5431.