



Working together to achieve excellence for every student.

School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Network issues

On Saturday, Oct. 30, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) engineers will perform maintenance on the ccboe.com fire-wall and network systems. The work may cause intermittent network outages.

Play season is full swing

CCPS high schools are staging plays. **La Plata High School** is performing "Trap," a documentary-style thriller by Stephen Gregg. The show is 6:30 p.m., Oct. 29-30. Tickets to the show are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. Go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/trap-by-stephen-gregg-tickets-191160886357> to purchase tickets. "Little Women" at **Maurice J. McDonough High School** is Nov. 4 to 7. Shows on Nov. 4 through 6 will start at 7 p.m., with a Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. on Nov. 7. Tickets are \$8 for students and senior citizens, \$10 for adults and can be purchased at mhsdrama303.booktix.com. **North Point High School** is staging "Romeo and Juliet" 7 p.m. Nov. 18 to 20. Tickets are \$5 for students and senior citizens, and \$10 for general admission. Tickets are available at the door. **Thomas Stone High School** is also taking inspiration from the Bard at 2 p.m. Nov. 20 for "Shakespeare in the Parking Lot." Tickets are free. **Westlake High School** will stage "Vintage Hitchcock: A Live Radio Play" from Nov. 18 to 21. The show will be held outdoors at the school's stadium at 7 p.m. during its run. Tickets are \$6 for students and senior citizens, and \$8 for adults. Tickets can be purchased at the door. **St. Charles High School** will stage "As She Likes It," an anthology of short plays featuring the women from Shakespeare's canon. The shows are 7 p.m. Nov. 19 and 20, with a 2 p.m. Sunday matinee on Nov. 21. General admission tickets are \$8 and \$5 for students. Get tickets at the door.



Water works

Clockwise from above, St. Charles High School freshmen in Maddalena Nesbit's Earth Systems class Ricky Parks, left, Sidney Canales and Ciara Ingram look through water samples to find macroinvertebrates during a Bridging the Watershed: Water Canaries project. Superintendent of Schools Maria Navarro, left, and Tim Emhoff, environmental education resource teacher at Nanje-



moy Creek Environmental Education Center look through a water sample. A student collects a macroinvertebrate from a water sample for further study. Bridging the Waterway hands-on activities for middle and high school students connects students to real world environmental impacts.

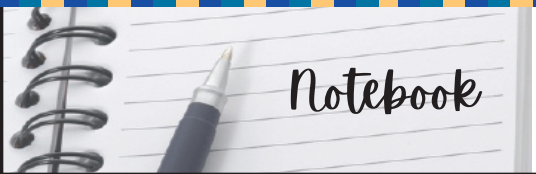
World Language teachers earn Global Seal of Biliteracy

Five Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) World Language teachers recently earned the Global Seal of Biliteracy. The Seal of Biliteracy is a credential that was first established in 2008 in California and adopted by Maryland in 2016. The recognition is given to students and educators who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages and can be used as a credential for academic and employment purposes.

Spanish teachers Joshua Clark of Henry E. Lackey High School, Maureen Stewart of North Point High School, Danyale Ury of North Point, Ana Villela-Villela of Milton M. Somers Middle School and Latin teacher Nancy Jeffrey of Thomas Stone High School earned the distinction.

Joshua Clark, a Spanish teacher at Henry E. Lackey High School, graduated from Lackey in 2014 and has taught at the school

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On the cover

[CCPS staff members](#) were recognized by the Board of Education at its October meeting. Pictured from left are Dr. Beverly Hoy, school psychologist, Henry E. Lackey High School; and Jessica Greenwald, fourth-grade teacher, T.C. Martin Elementary School.

Apply for a mini grant

The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association, through its MRSPA Fund, is offering six mini grants to classroom teachers in Maryland. The grants may be used on projects or activities that are not funded through the school system or Parent Teacher Organization. Mini grant applications are due by Nov. 1. For more information about the mini grants and an application, visit www.mrspa.org.

NBPTS webinar is Nov. 2

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) will hold an Introduction to National Board Certification webinar 7 p.m. Nov. 2. The webinar provides an overview of the National Board certification process and components. Click here to register. To view more professional resources from the National Board, visit <https://www.nbpts.org/core-connections/>

Principal of the Year

Nominate an outstanding leader for the annual [Principal of the Year award](#). Criteria for nomination includes five years of experience as a principal, three of which are with CCPS. The deadline for submission is Nov. 12. Call 301-934-7242 with questions.

Teacher of the Year awards

CCPS is now accepting nominations for the [Maryland Teacher of the Year](#) and *The Washington Post* Teacher of the Year award programs. Nominations are due by Nov. 12. Nominations must be submitted electronically to rdibenedetto@ccboe.com.

Schools, offices closed Nov. 12

CCPS schools and offices will be closed for all staff members on Friday, Nov. 12.

COVID-19 boosters available for interested staff

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently authorized COVID boosters for all approved COVID-19 vaccinations — Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer.

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff members who received their final dose of Moderna or Pfizer six or more months ago, or the Johnson & Johnson vaccine two or more months ago, are now eligible to receive a booster.

Employees can schedule a COVID-19 booster appointment at several locations in the county. To find a site, go to the Charles County Department of Health at <https://charlescountycovid.org/vaccine-registration/>

or Maryland Department of Health COVID Vaccination finder at <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/vaccine> (Scroll down and enter your Zip code. From there, you can narrow the search by vaccination manufacturer.) Pharmacies at CVS, Giant, Safeway and Walgreens are also schedul-

ing booster appointments. Additionally, your family physician may be able to administer the booster.

Due to several factors, staff is encouraged to schedule appointments after school, on days when schools are closed to students, on early dismissal days or on the weekend.

CCPS offers staff up to two hours of administrative leave to obtain their booster if the appointment must be made during the workday.

Staff members should work with supervisors to ensure proper coverage of work obligations. Staff may need to provide proof of the appointment beforehand and an updated vaccination record upon your return to receive the two hours of administrative leave. Supervisors may deny the request and ask the employee to change the appointment to ensure continuity of operations or if there are coverage issues.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jason Stoddard at jstoddard@ccboe.com or 301-392-5550.

Make changes to health plan during open enrollment Nov. 2-30

The annual open enrollment for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) employee health benefits is Nov. 2 to Nov. 30. During open enrollment, eligible CCPS employees can either join a health care plan or make changes to their coverage. Medical plan premiums and co-payments remain the same for 2022. Available benefits include medical/dental, term life insurance, optional supplemental employee or dependent life insurance and flexible spending accounts (FSA).

To access open enrollment, visit <https://ccboe.hrintouch.com>. Benefits for employees who do not make any changes will continue in 2022, with the exception of FSA options. Employees with FSA benefits must renew annually online. Changes and FSA benefits made during open enrollment are effective Jan 1, 2022, the start of the new benefit plan year.

Health insurance plans are provided by CareFirst and include a Preferred Provider plan (PPO/PPN) or a Blue Choice Opt-Out Open Access plan. Plan details are posted

on MyCCPS under the Benefits & Pay tab. Rates are as follows.

Individual coverage

- PPO/PPN \$210 monthly, \$105 bi-weekly.
- Blue Choice \$155 monthly, \$77.50 bi-weekly.

Family coverage

- PPO/PPN \$562 monthly, \$281 bi-weekly.
- Blue Choice \$445 monthly, \$222.50 bi-weekly.

Medical coverage includes pharmacy (CVS/Caremark), dental (Preferred Provider) and vision (Davis Vision Plus). CCPS does not offer stand-alone plans.

Employees can also sign up for group term life insurance or group supplemental life insurance. Group term renews annually and is only available for employee coverage (no spouse or dependent coverage).

There will be a rate increase for the 2022 calendar year for both basic and retiree basic life coverage levels.

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BILITERACY

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for four years. He began taking Spanish as a student at General Smallwood Middle School and continued at Lackey with Cheryl Edge. Edge, currently a teacher at St. Charles High School, was an inspiration, Clark said. “I loved her storytelling teacher style,” he said. Clark’s students feel the same way about him. “Mr. Clark is a great teacher,” Jamari Somerville, a junior, said. “We don’t just sit there on a computer or reading a book. You can’t have your Air-Pods in. You have to listen.” Freshman Demi Stevenson said Clark is engaging and stokes her interest in learning a second language. “There’s a lot of people in the melting pot of America and not everybody speaks the same language.” “I always tell my students that if you are able to learn your first language, then you will be able to learn a second language. Knowing other languages opens new doors and gives you a new set of eyes on how other people live their daily lives,” Clark said.

Nancy Jeffrey grew up hearing different languages. Her paternal grandmother spoke German, while aunts and uncles on her mother’s side spoke Spanish. In the seventh grade, influenced by her grandmother, Jeffrey began studying German. Once she got to high school, she added Spanish to her list of classes. Jeffrey has been with CCPS for 33 years, all at Thomas Stone. She has also taught in New York and Louisiana. Jeffrey teaches Latin and German at Stone and two foreign language exploratory classes at John Hanson Middle School. Trinity White is a junior in Jeffrey’s Latin class. She believes it’s important to explore other cultures. “This is my favorite class,” she said. “Ms. Jeffrey is strict, but not in a mean way — in a motivational way.” Jeffrey tells her students that the benefits of learning language



Joshua Clark



Nancy Jeffrey



Maureen Stewart



Danyale Ury



Ana Vilella-Villela

es are immeasurable. “One does not learn a language without also learning history, culture, art and literature,” she said.

Maureen Stewart can thank her father for sparking her interest in Spanish, who insisted his children take a second language while in high school. Her language skills weren’t stellar when she landed in college. An instructor told her she had some of the worst grades in his class. She couldn’t argue with him. “He was right. My grades were horrible,” Stewart said. The teacher led a program that went to Mexico during the summer, and Stewart went along. “It was the beginning of a beautiful thing,” she said. Two years after that first trip to Mexico, she returned and her Spanish took off impressing not only her teacher, but Stewart herself. She has taught Spanish for more than 30 years and has taken groups of students on trips to Mexico and Spain, meeting lifelong friends along the way. It’s something she wants her students to experience. “I want to travel,” freshman Aaron Smith said. “If you know the language, it’s easier to experience other cultures.”

In college, **Danyale Ury** found she had an aptitude for languages. She also found that she liked communicating with people and hearing their stories. The benefit of knowing another language is sharing authentic experiences with others, Ury said. It also has a very practical side. Being able to speak more than one

language makes a person more “market able” in the employment sector. It’s a skill that high school students on the precipice of going out into the “real world” might want to hone. In addition to speaking English and Spanish, Ury speaks a bit of French. North Point sophomore Nadia Gaskins is in Spanish III and is interested in learning more languages expanding her skills across borders. “I think in America ... we’re not as well-versed in languages other than English,” she said. With the study of different languages and cultures, “We can understand each other better,” she said.

Ana Vilella-Villela, a Spanish teacher at Milton M. Somers Middle School, came to the United States when she was 13. Her first language is Spanish, her second is English. “Knowing two languages has opened many doors and opportunities for me in the workplace,” Vilella-Villela said. She tells her students that in her classroom, they are doing more than learning Spanish. “I always tell my students that learning a new language can help your brain learn new skills, build muscle and increase memory skills,” she said. Vilella-Villela keeps things interesting in the classroom, eighth grader Derrick Perrin said. “She’s fantastic,” he said. “She’s not a teacher who just lets us sit there and look through a book. No, she helps you out and we play games — which helps me a lot.”

CCPS restricts indoor spectator access to 50 percent starting Nov. 1

Effective Monday, Nov. 1, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will limit the capacity for indoor high school extracurricular activities, including athletics and performing arts events, to 50 percent.

The new capacity limit will be controlled by ticket sales for events such as games and plays or productions.

Each CCPS high school has a different capacity limit based on the structure of the school building, including size of the gymnasium, auditorium and bleacher seating space.

The limit is in place to support safe indoor events for students, staff and community members.

Questions about capacity limits for the different high schools can be directed to Steve Lee, coordinator of student activities for CCPS, as slee@ccboe.com.

School News is published by
Charles County Public Schools
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301-934-7220
Fax: 301-932-6651

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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).

Deer Oaks EAP program available for CCPS staff

Deer Oaks Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services is a national employee assistance and work/life company dedicated to helping Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) employees improve their health and well-being through quality services. The EAP benefit covers four confidential short-term

counseling visits for contracted employees who work more than 20 hours per week and their immediate families. For additional information, call EAP toll-free at 888-993-7650. Online tools are available at www.deeroakseap.com. The member login username and password is ccboe.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

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The active employees – basic life coverage raised 17 percent from \$0.519 in 2021 to \$0.607 in 2022.

The retiree basic life coverage raised 17.33 percent from \$0.150 in 2021 to \$0.176 in 2022.

Group supplemental insurance is provided to CCPS through Voya Life Insurance Company with a guaranteed issue of \$250,000.

Insurance above \$250,000 requires the employee to complete the evidence of insurability (EOI) medical questionnaire.

Coverage is also available for eligible children of employees who select the optional coverage.

Two FSA options are available for employees: medical and dependent care.

FSA accounts do not renew annually. Participants must re-enroll during open enrollment annu-

More info at MyCCPS

To learn more about open enrollment and medical, basic employee term life insurance, optional supplemental employee or dependent life insurance, and flexible spending accounts (FSA), [click here](#).

ally. Employees can elect up to \$2,400 of their salary per year to pay for qualified medical expenses. Employees who enroll in a dependent care FSA can contribute up to \$5,000 family maximum on a pre-tax basis to pay for qualified dependent care. Visit the benefits page of the MyCCPS employee website for more information on CCPS benefits.

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

Special Education Instructional Assistant — F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by Nov. 1.

Registration and Records Secretary — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. High school diploma or general education degree required with previous experience in an educational setting and/or interpreting for Spanish speaking families preferred. Apply by Nov. 2.

Web/Digital Content Specialist — Annex II, 12-month position. Knowledge of FinalSite website platform preferred. Advanced knowledge of principles and practices of graphic design and desktop publishing, website design and development, and various web enabling

computer languages. Apply by Nov. 2.

Computer Analyst III — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Associate degree in information technology or related field is preferred and a minimum of one year's experience or three years of technically progressive current work experience in local and wide area networks, user and help desk support. Apply by Nov. 3.

School Bus Driver — Annex I, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required, with five years of successful work experience as a school bus driver in Maryland preferred. Apply by Nov. 3.

Title III Family Reunification Liaison — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, hourly position. A high school diploma or equivalent is required, as is native or near native fluency in English and Spanish (including reading, writing, speaking and listening. Apply by Nov. 3.

Attendance Secretary — Gale-Bailey Elementary School, 11-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by Nov. 8.

Registration Secretary — Berry Elementary School, 11-month position. A high school diploma is required. Nov. 8.

Reading Resource Teacher — Location to be determined, 11-month position. A master's degree is required and applicants must hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate with an endorsement in reading. Apply by Nov. 9.

Job Placement Technical Specialist in the Adult Independence Program — Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required with a bachelor's degree preferred. Five years of experience working with youth and working with children with disabilities. Knowledge of the Southern Maryland local labor market is a plus. Apply by Nov. 9.