



# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### ToY special to air Oct. 7

The Maryland Teacher of the Year special will be aired on MPT2 at 8 p.m., Oct. 7. The Maryland State Department of Education will showcase all 2021-2022 Maryland Teacher of the Year finalists.

### Fall chess tournament

The fall chess tournament is Oct. 16 at Thomas Stone High School. The event is free and open to Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students in Grades 4 to 12. It is also open to students in Grades 4 to 12 who are homeschooled and in private school. Students compete in divisions based on grade level. They will use chess clocks and are allotted 15 minutes per game. Sign-in for registered players begins at 8:15 a.m. The first round of play begins at 9 a.m. Students must check-in by 8:45 a.m. in order to be paired for play in the first round. An awards ceremony follows the fourth round match, and trophies, medals and/or certificates awarded. Registrations close after Oct. 13. Walk-in registrations cannot be accommodated. Due to COVID-19 precautions, spectators will not be permitted, but the tournament can be viewed via Zoom. To register, [click here](#).

### Apply for MRSPA mini grants

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. Six mini grants of up to \$300 will be awarded. For more information about the mini grants and an application, visit [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org).



### Music in the air

Members of North Point High School's band in David Monk's class practice their sound outside. Above, freshman Aminah Wright, left, demonstrates on the flute. Left, freshmen Darren Zhang, left, Leonard Simmons, right, and sophomore Nicholas Sapp, back center, play their parts of the arrangement.

## State association honors six CCPS school librarians

Six Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) school librarians were recently recognized as part of a School Librarians of the Year cohort by the Maryland Association of School Librarians (MASL).

Each year, MASL names one school librarian as its School Librarian of the Year for outstanding service and achievements in the field. This year, the association opted to recognize a group of school librarians. Out of 52 nominees from around Maryland, 38 were selected for special recognition. Six of the 38 are CCPS school librarians.

Those honored include Margaret Donahue of Henry E. Lackey High School; Karen Ferruzza of Arthur Middleton Elementary School; Heather Hartman-Jansen of Milton M. Somers Middle School; Dawn Murphy of J.C. Parks Elementary School; Lisa Smirlando of Piccowaxen Middle School; and Tim Steelman of Theodore G. Davis Middle

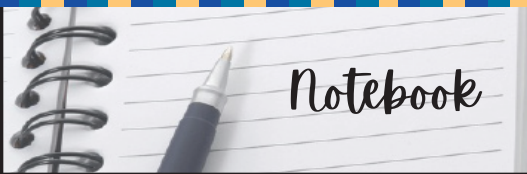
School.

"There are so many things that make someone a good school librarian," Dedra Van Gelder, library media content specialist for CCPS, said. "First, they need to be excellent teachers. Teaching is a big part of what we do." Leadership skills are another essential part of excelling in the position, as is being a team player. "You also have to be curious and have the spark to be a lifelong learner," Van Gelder said. "Librarians are information specialists. We may not have all the answers, but we know how to find them."

### Margaret Donahue, Lackey

Donahue began her teaching career with CCPS as an earth science and chemistry teacher at Westlake High School before moving to Lackey as a high school instructional resource teacher. However, her "dream job" was librarian and she began library certifica-

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## 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. Materials should be sent to Ramona DiBenedetto at [rdibenedetto@ccboe.com](mailto:rdibenedetto@ccboe.com). 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. The criteria for nomination includes at least five years of teaching and nominations must be a full-time classroom teacher. More information can be found at [MyCCPS](#) and nominations are due by Nov. 12. Nominations must be submitted electronically to [rdibenedetto@ccboe.com](mailto:rdibenedetto@ccboe.com). Call 301-934-7242 with questions.

## CCPS is now hiring

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) [Food and Nutrition Service](#) (FNS) is hiring part time and substitute staff. Three-to-five-hour position are open and for those who don't want to work every day, they can apply to be a substitute food service employee. Go to [www.ccboe.com/index.php/currentopenings](http://www.ccboe.com/index.php/currentopenings) to apply.

[CCPS Transportation](#) has bus driver and bus attendant applications on its website at <https://www.ccboe.com/transportation/>.

If being in the classroom is more your style, check out the [substitute teacher positions](#).

To see more current job openings with CCPS, click the [Careers tab](#) at [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com).

## Sign up for free COVID -19 preventative screening

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) offers free weekly COVID-19 preventative screenings for students and staff.

To participate, parents and staff must complete a one-time registration with the state health department contractor, 20/20 GeneSystems.

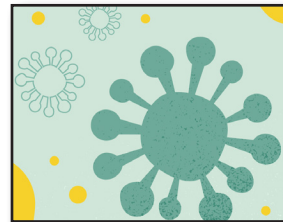
[Click here to access the registration portal](#). The test used is an anterior nasal swab PCR test. Results are provided to parents and staff in the portal within 48 hours.

Users can sign up for email notifications.

Only positive results are shared confi-

dentially with the CCPS Office of School Safety and Security for follow up to ensure sick students or staff are not coming to schools.

Testing at elementary and middle schools is done during lunch shifts to avoid instructional conflicts. Below is the testing schedule for high school students.



| School               | Lunch              | Afterschool |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Henry E. Lackey      | Monday & Wednesday | Wednesday   |
| La Plata             | Monday & Wednesday | Wednesday   |
| Maurice J. McDonough | Tuesday & Thursday | Thursday    |
| North Point          | Monday & Wednesday | Wednesday   |
| St. Charles          | Tuesday & Thursday | Thursday    |
| Thomas Stone         | Tuesday & Thursday | Thursday    |
| Westlake             | Monday & Wednesday | Wednesday   |

The licensed contractor oversees the testing program and processes all results.

The Maryland Department of Health is providing the testing program to local school systems. CCPS has now limited the administration of COVID-19 tests in schools.

The screening program provides an opportunity for free weekly testing.

CCPS is no longer COVID-19 testing students or staff who are quarantining. Rapid COVID-19 tests will only be administered by school nurses at their discretion for students or staff who display severe COVID-19 symptoms while at school.

The Charles County Department of Health offers free COVID-19 testing during the week. [Click here for a schedule](#).

## Drive Away the Cold coat drive held through Oct. 22

A coat drive benefiting Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students is coming up. The Drive Away the Cold coat drive is being coordinated by the Charles County School Bus Contractors Association.

Starting Oct. 1, community members can drop off new coats for children and teens at three Community Bank of the Chesapeake branches in the county. CCPS can only accept donations of new coats with tags attached due to COVID-19 guidelines.

The donations will be collected from the drop-off sites on Oct. 23.

From Oct. 1 to 22, drop off donations of new coats in children to adult sizes to:

- Community Bank of the Chesapeake, 101 Drury Drive, La Plata.
- Community Bank of the Chesapeake, 8010 Matthews Road, Bryans Road.
- Community Bank of the Chesapeake, 3035 Leonardtown Road, Waldorf.

For more information, call 301-752-0818 or email [driveawaythecold@gmail.com](mailto:driveawaythecold@gmail.com).

## CCPS high school students can 'Get Schooled' for college

Maryland State Department of Education, through its Maryland College Application Campaign, has partnered with Get Schooled to provide CCPS high school students the opportunity to get assistance with completing the FAFSA, college appli-

cations and finding scholarships. The free service is being piloted in Charles County. Students and parents can get more information about Get Schooled from the school's College and Career advisor or go to <https://tinyurl.com/cvzh3h4w> to sign up.



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tion courses at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland, now known as Notre Dame of Maryland University.

"Transitioning from resource teacher to the media specialist role was extremely advantageous," she said. "It provided me with a wealth of knowledge regarding curriculum across content areas and continues to be a great backbone for my instruction knowledge." Donahue has been the school librarian at Lackey for seven years with the past couple pushing her to better develop technology expertise. "I can attest that there has not been a dull moment," Donahue said.

## Karen Ferruzza, Middleton

Ferruzza has been the school librarian at Middleton for 18 years. She earned a Bachelor of Science in elementary education from Salisbury University and a master's in Technology for Educators from Johns Hopkins University. She received a library certificate from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. Ferruzza taught fourth and fifth grade before becoming a school librarian. "I like teaching all grade levels," she said. "I learn from all of them." Ferruzza said she enjoys working in a school because she can combine her love of children's literature with technology. "I work in a school because kids bring so much joy and inspiration to the world," she said.

## Heather Hartman-Jansen, Somers

Hartman-Jansen has been a school librarian since 2005. She received a Bachelor of Arts in history and English literature from the University of California, Irvine, and a master's in library science from San José State University. Before becoming a school librarian, she taught students in elementary, middle and high school. "I went into the library field because it was a way to work with and engage all students," Hartman-Jansen said. "Understanding information and resources are key life skills, as well as reading." As a school librarian, Hartman-Jansen can tap into her teaching skills, as well as her information, research and technology know-how. "Every day is creative and new," she said, adding that students in middle school are curious, earnest and fun. "And for the most part, they get my jokes," Hartman-Jansen said.

## Dawn Murphy, Parks

After earning her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Towson University, Murphy began teaching first grade at J.C. Parks. She also taught fourth grade at Parks and sixth grade English language arts at Theodore G. Davis Middle School. As a middle school teacher, Murphy felt that students were not as invested in reading as they could be. "I was losing the enjoyment of reading with students," she said. Murphy earned a master's in instructional technol-



Donahue



Ferruzza



Hartman-Jansen



Murphy

ogy from Towson and a certificate in library science from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. In 2016, she became the school librarian at Parks. "I thoroughly enjoy reading with students and getting them excited about reading," she said. Murphy likes to change her voice for different characters when reading picture books to younger students. With older students, she strives to teach them to be critical thinkers when reading and using media.

## Lisa Smirollo, Piccowaxen

Smirollo has been a school librarian for 21 years — eight years at the elementary-school level and 13 in middle school. She has a bachelor's in communications — radio, television and film, and a master's degree in educational leadership — library media. Smirollo went into the school librarian field out of the love for books and reading. "Promoting the love of reading with students and matching their interests with books is very rewarding — especially when students come back asking for more suggestions," she said. Smirollo also teaches students about media and digital literacy. "[It] helps them to become productive users of technology and more aware of making decisions based on what they have learned, not just believing what they see on social media," she said. "I do enjoy being in middle school because of the conversation you can have with the students, and the personal growth you can see in them from sixth to eighth grade."



Smirollo

## Tim Steelman, Davis

Steeleman has a bachelor's degree in biology, a Master of Arts in education and Master of Science in library science. He has been the school librarian at Davis since 2010. He worked at a biological resource facility before becoming a classroom teacher. As a new teacher, he was assigned a mentor. Mary Gerrity, a school librarian, was his. Over the years, they talked often. "Ms. Gerrity was very effective in teaching me that many of my interests matched well with the field of librarianship without knowing that was what she was accomplishing," Steelman said. A former science, math and computer programming teacher, Steelman sponsors STEAM-focused clubs at Davis and oversees a library aide program to introduce the librarian profession to students. "Middle school students creatively use their knowledge base to learn through exploring new ideas and concepts," he said. "My favorite [thing] is listening to them talk about how great their newly discovered fiction or nonfiction book is as they read it or finish it."



Steeleman

Over the summer, a MASL selection committee named Donahue, Ferruzza, Hartman-Jansen, Murphy, Smirollo and Steelman as part of a cohort that exemplify the characteristics of a high-quality school librarian as set forth in the American Association of School Librarians National School Library Standards for Learners, Librarians, and Libraries.

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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).



## Bam! CCPS receives book donation from local bookstore

Above, Kim Hudler, right, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) lead reading teacher, picks up a donation of books from Books-a-Million. The store holds a book drive for local students each year. During the drive, customers are asked to buy a book for the drive that benefits students in prekindergarten to 12th grade. Hudler said the books will go to CCPS students who are experiencing homelessness or who don't have books at home.



## Personnel

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

### Job Openings

**Kindergarten Instructional Assistant** — Indian Head Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma and minimum of 48 college credits, associate's degree, or passing score on ParaPro test required. Experience working with children preferred. Apply by Oct. 4.

**Educational Interpreter** — Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School, 10-month position. Must hold a degree in sign language interpretation preferably with an emphasis on the educational setting. An appropriate score on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) required. Apply by Oct. 6.

**Building Service Worker** — St. Charles High School, 12-month position. A high school diploma or GED is required. Applicants must

have the ability to read and write effectively, and be physically capable of performing manual labor. Apply by Oct. 8.

**Building Service Manager** — William A. Diggs Elementary School, 12-month position. A high school diploma is required along with one to five years (depending on the size of the school) of supervisory experience. Apply by Oct. 8.

**Administrative Instructional Assistant** — Indian Head Elementary School, 10-month position. High school diploma and minimum of 48 college credits, associate's degree, or passing score on ParaPro test required. Apply by Oct. 13.

**Specialist in Research and Assessment** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree and Advanced Professional Certificate from the Maryland State Department of Education required. Apply by Oct. 13.

**Temporary Computer Analyst** — Jesse L.

Starkey Administration Building — A high school diploma and one year of current work experience in information networks and user support desired. Applicable industry certifications desired and knowledge and experience in configuring Microsoft Windows Workstation 10 required. Position is open until filled.

**Temporary Secretary** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. A high school diploma is required with previous secretarial experience preferred. Knowledge of efficient office practices and procedures required, along with computer literacy skills. Position is open until filled.

**Prekindergarten Instructional Assistant** — All Elementary Schools, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required and the ability to work in an instructional support role with pre-kindergarten children. Position open until filled.