



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Vision benefits

CareFirst has identified a technical issue with the Davis Vision enrollment files which have caused vision coverage to terminate in error. The error only affects members enrolled in the CareFirst Blue Choice Open Access Medical Plan. CareFirst is working with its IT team to correct the error. Members who need to see a provider and/or the provider has advised that the coverage is terminated, can contact the Employee Benefits team in human resources. The employee benefits team will coordinate a manual enrollment with Davis Vision.

New look for ccboe.com

A new www.ccboe.com launched earlier this week. School sites also feature a new design. The redesign has transitioned the sites to a cloud-based platform, with the site designs more modern, ADA compliant and device responsive along with improved navigation and search capabilities. To view quick videos on general navigation of the site, [click here](#). A more staff-centric video on navigation can be [found here](#).

Weather information

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) inclement weather procedures are [posted online here](#). CCPS generally follows four inclement weather codes. Information about employee codes is [posted here](#). Inclement weather announcements are generally posted by 5 a.m. at www.ccboe.com, on CCPS social media, sent to staff and parents by email, and recorded on the 24-hour information line at 301-934-7410/301-932-6656. Check your email, the CCPS website at www.ccboe.com, the 24-hour information line at 301-934-7410/301-932-6656 or CCPS social media in the morning for any inclement weather announcements.



Barnhart named a National ESEA Distinguished School

C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School was recently honored as a National ESEA Distinguished School. Only two schools per state are chosen for the annual nationwide recognition. Top, fourth-grade teacher, Rebecca Wheaton, discusses a writing assignment with Malasya Carroll. Right, prekindergarten students Emily Rodas Molina, left, and Nasir Barnes, who are students in Melissa Atala's class, settle in for story time with Kirstin Fedeli, the school librarian. Read more on Page 3.



Board elects Lukas chairperson, Wilson as vice chairperson

The Board of Education of Charles County elected Michael Lukas as its chairperson and Latina L. Wilson as its vice chairperson at the start of the Jan. 11 meeting. The Board votes annually in January to elect a chairman and vice chairman. Both the chairperson and vice chairperson serve a one-year term.

The current Board was elected to office in November 2018. Lukas was first elected to the Board in 2010 and has served three terms. He has held the positions as its chairperson and vice chairperson in the past. Wilson has served one term as chairperson, and two as vice chair.

"It is indeed an honor to serve in any public office," Lukas said. "No one has been a stronger supporter of public schools than myself." Lukas pointed out that he has served on several committees, including the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) legislative committee and another focused on the Blueprint, a statewide education plan to expand opportunities with new resources,

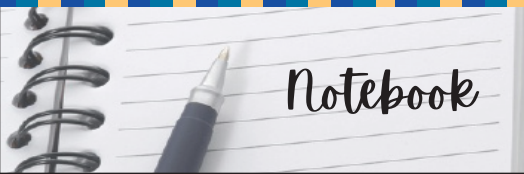


Michael Lukas

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On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County at its Jan. 11 meeting honored outstanding employees including Joyce Dorsey, left, building service worker, Thomas Stone High School. To read more about staff honored at the January Board meeting, [click here](#). At its Dec. 14 meeting, the Board honored employees including Scheherazad “Sherry” Mistry, instructional assistant, North Point High School; and Logan Berchtold, school counselor, Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School. To read more about December’s outstanding employees, [click here](#).

Read Across Charles County

Read Across Charles County, an annual event dedicated to reading to and with children to nurture the love of reading, is set for Friday, Feb. 4.

Mental health workshop

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) department of student services is hosting a virtual workshop for parents and caregivers of middle- and high-school students. Sally Hight, school counselor at General Smallwood Middle School, will talk about motivation and how parents can better connect with their children who are in middle and high school about improved motivation. The meeting ID is 839 9688 3290, the passcode is 120590. To look at a schedule of upcoming workshops, visit <https://www.ccboe.com/ss/parentcaregiver-workshops/>.

Deer Oaks EAP Services

CCPS contracts with Deer Oaks EAP Services to provide staff with free programs that support their health and well-being. Among the services provided by Deer Oaks are those that involve emotional and psychological issues, stress, tension and grief, depression and anxiety, substance abuse and dependency and crisis management, among others. The EAP benefit is no cost to employees and their dependents, and services are confidential. To learn more, [click here](#).

programs and staff. What Lukas gleaned from those positions will serve the Board as it continues its work. “It is vital during this time as we are facing changes in public education,” he said.

Wilson was the Board chairperson during 2021 and served as its vice chair for two terms in 2019 and 2020, respectively. A Charles County native, Wilson said the education she received as a Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) student served her as she went on to college and then as a member of the U.S. Army. The Gulf War veteran said it was never her intention to run for public office but realized how much she valued education. “Regardless of how you serve, or what degree of commitment you give to being a Board member, we are a Board,” Wilson said. “It doesn’t matter who is chair or vice chair but how we work together in promoting and sustaining an excellent school system.”



Latina L. Wilson

Lukas retired as an engineer and branch

manager for the U.S. Department of the Navy where he has worked for more than 35 years. Lukas attended Prince George’s Community College and the University of Maryland, College Park where he earned a degree in electrical engineering. He completed graduate studies in systems engineering at George Mason University and the Naval Post Graduate School. Lukas has volunteered with the Greater Waldorf Jaycees where he served as the community vice president. He has lived in Charles County for more than 25 years with his wife, Kim, who is a teacher at the College of Southern Maryland, and their son who is a 2016 CCPS graduate.

Wilson retired from the Army after serving for 20 years. She is active in the community and serves as president of the Port Tobacco River Conservancy, vice president of the Southern Maryland Alumni Chapter for the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, a member of the McConchie One-room School House committee and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. She also served many years as the education liaison for the Charles County Branch of the NAACP. Wilson earned a Bachelor of Science in business from the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore.

Marking period date change, early dismissals added

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has made updates to the current school year calendar, including a marking period date change and the addition of early dismissal days to support staff.

The end of the second marking period for students moved from Wednesday, Jan. 19, to Wednesday, Jan. 26. Students missed four days of school dedicated to the second marking period: Nov. 12 (changed to school closure day and added at the end of the school year); and Jan. 3, 4 and 7 due to inclement weather. The start of the third marking period moves to Thursday, Jan. 27.

Friday, Jan. 28, will be a two-hour early dismissal for students. Teachers will use the afternoon of Jan. 28 for contracted grading time.

Additionally, Wednesday, Feb. 16, and Wednesday, March 23, have also been

changed to two-hour early dismissal days for students.

The prekindergarten attendance schedule for these days is as follows.

- Friday, Jan. 28: morning prekindergarten students attend.
- Wednesday, Feb. 16: afternoon prekindergarten students attend.
- Wednesday, March 23: morning prekindergarten students attend.

The additional early dismissal days were put in place by Superintendent of Schools Maria Navarro in recognition of the continuous impact of COVID-19 on staff workload and teacher requests for additional time to grade, plan and collaborate with other teachers.

The Parent Handbook/Calendar posted to the school system website has been updated to reflect the changes. [Click here](#) to view the calendar.

'Hidden gem on Lancaster Circle' — Barnhart named a National ESEA Distinguished School

C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School — known to some as “the hidden gem on Lancaster Circle” — is a community school where staff and parents work together to ensure students get the most out of their education. “We make the building a really positive environment and a place full of support for all students,” Principal Brian King, Ed.D., said. “We pride ourselves on building relationships between the adults who work here and building great relationships with our students and with their parents and guardians. We try to create a culture with everybody being on the same team to provide our students whatever supports they need to fulfill their potential.” That teamwork is getting high scores.

Barnhart 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. Barnhart is the third Charles County public school to receive the honor. Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy and Dr. Samuel A. Mudd elementary schools have earned the honor in 2018 and 2020, respectively.

Barnhart was recognized for its efforts in providing excellent supports to special populations of students, particularly English Learners (EL). At Barnhart, equity is centered around the notion that every learner will receive the necessary resources they need individually to thrive in school no matter their background.

School staff study data to determine how students are achieving and where improvements can be made. From there, staff narrows the scope to study specific student groups. “English Learners were one specific group that we looked at a few years ago. We noticed some concerning trends and gaps when we looked at their performance compared to other student groups,” King said.

Once the need was identified, Barnhart staff got to work securing the resources they needed for students and finding professional development opportunities for staff. Staff also reached out to families — through fliers, emails and messages— translated to a parent’s preferred language using the

TalkingPoints and Class-Dojo apps — to ensure students were getting the support at home they would need to achieve in school. “Parents and guardians of EL students are continually telling our office they feel welcomed and supported at the school,” Michele King, ESOL specialist, said.

“Barnhart has strong family engagement and support from families and community partners,” Kristin Shields, Title I program director for CCPS, said. “The staff at Barnhart works hard to ensure that all students have access to the support they need to be successful and leverage Title I funds to support these efforts.”

King said the staff at Barnhart are a solid team. “Everybody is working toward one goal,” King said.

Guiding newcomers

When an EL student first arrives at a school, they are given a WIDA assessment which scores a student’s overall English language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening. The WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework provides a foundation for curriculum, instruction and assessment for multilingual learners in kindergarten to 12th grade, according to the WIDA website.

“It is a collective effort with the classroom teachers really knowing their students and making those modifications so they can be successful in the classroom,” Laura Verga, ESOL teacher, said. Modifications can be used for any student who needs extra support in the classroom and can come in the form of graphic organizers, word banks, sentence frames, chunking the text and other tools. Verga visits classrooms during language arts to help students with grade-level content.

The school staff has built a solid partnership with the CCPS English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) department, allowing English learners to flourish at Barnhart,



C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School Principal Brian King, Ed.D., right, talks with third grader Alex Mallari.

Michele King said. “The Barnhart teachers consistently embrace initiatives with fidelity like Imagine Learning that supports EL language development while maintaining rigorous literacy instruction,” she said.

Students are not the only ones who are learning. Barnhart staff jumped at professional development opportunities to better serve their students. “Barnhart teachers are always willing to learn strategies to benefit their students,” King said. “They are open-minded and willing to learn new things. Teachers here have a staff culture where they support each other.”

Verga and Ayesha Williams, Barnhart’s reading resource teacher, attended professional development sessions hosted by the CCPS office of world languages/ESOL and then put together sessions for others at Barnhart. Professional development for classroom teachers focused on reading strategies, vocabulary development, math content knowledge, instructional programs, diversity training and culturally responsive teaching. Williams focused on building up teacher toolboxes with tips and tricks that supports learning. Through a grant, the school was able to offer English classes for EL families at the Lifelong Learner Center and Spanish classes for teachers.

“This school staff is very collaborative and very open to trying new things,” Williams said. “This award shows how everybody — in their own roles — supports the students in the school, no matter if

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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).

BARNHART

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they're EL or not." Luanne Cochran, the instructional resource teacher at Barnhart who works closely with Williams, agreed.

For staff at Barnhart — teachers, administrators and support staff — “We want what’s best for the students,” Cochran said. “We’re a very student-driven school.”

Schools are nominated for the honor by their respective state education agency. Barnhart is one of 37 schools in the United States to receive the honor this year. Across the country, 532 schools have earned the ESEA designation since 1996.

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. Barnhart has an enrollment of 606 students this school year.

Barnhart’s nomination was submitted through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on behalf of the school and the CCPS Title I office. “C. Paul Barnhart Elementary school has been a high achieving Title I school for many years,” Shields said. “Barnhart has been consistent and strategic in how they serve student groups to increase academic achievement.” The 2022 National ESEA Conference is scheduled for next month.

Scholarship Fund open

[The Charles County Scholarship Fund](#) offers

more than 60 scholarships to Charles County high school seniors. Interested students can visit the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) website, www.ccboe.com, to view available scholarships, eligibility criteria and additional requirements. All applications must be completed and submitted online by Tuesday, March 1.

Students need only to submit one application and late submissions are not accepted.

The application is [posted here](#). Application requirements include a resume, personal statement that details academic and career goals, two letters of recommendation, a high school transcript and copy of the first semester senior year report card.

The application progress cannot be saved; interested students should have the required documents ready prior to completing the application.

Seniors should see their counselor or college and career advisor with questions about the Scholarship Fund.



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

ACHIEVE Instructional Assistant — Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 24.

Building Service Worker — Billingsley Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Jan. 24.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 24.

Technology Facilitator — Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 24.

Building Service Worker — Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 12-month position.

Apply by Jan. 25.

Instructional Assistant (Literacy) — Milton M. Somers Middle School, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 25.

Main Office Secretary — Thomas Stone High School, 12-month position. Apply by Jan. 25.

Business Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Computer Science Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

English Teacher — All high schools, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

ESOL Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Family and Consumer Science Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Apply by Jan. 31.

French Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Instrumental Music Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Language Arts Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Library Media Specialist — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Mathematics Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.

Physical Education Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Jan. 31.