



# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### 1095-C forms

The 1095-C form is required by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and must be sent to all active and retired employees who were enrolled in the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) sponsored CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield non-Medicare (under 65) health benefit plans during 2021. The deadline to send out the form is March 2. This form indicates the months an employee/retiree, spouse and/or dependents had health coverage through the CCPS health benefit plan. Employees do not need a Form 1095-C to file their 2021 tax return. If you file your 2021 tax return prior to receiving the Form 1095-C, the IRS has instructed that you keep the Form 1095-C with your tax records. You do not need to amend your 2021 tax return or send the form to the IRS.

### COVID-19 home kits

The federal government announced last month that private health insurance companies will be required to cover up to eight at-home COVID-19 tests per month. Individuals covered under health insurance plans sponsored by CCPS are now able to obtain COVID-19 home tests for free. CVS Health, provider of the CCPS health benefit prescription plan through CVS Caremark, now provides coverage for CCPS healthcare plan members to purchase over the counter COVID-19 at-home test kits at no cost. To be eligible, staff must purchase the tests from a pharmacy (through the pharmacy and not the regular store checkout). Tests are covered under the pharmacy benefit. Quantities are limited to the coverage of eight test kits every 30 days for each covered individual. Staff can also submit a reimbursement claim for any test kit purchased on or after Jan. 15. Visit the Caremark website at <https://www.caremark.com/> to start the claims process.



### CCPS, CSM pen agreement to partner for Early College Program

Jay Webster, board of trustee chairman of the College of Southern Maryland, left, looks on as Maureen Murphy, Ph.D., president of CSM, center, and Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., superintendent of Charles County Public Schools, sign paperwork sealing the deal on an Early College Program for CCPS students at Henry E. Lackey, St. Charles, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools. To read more about the program that will help high school seniors get an early jump on college, go to Page 2.

### CCPS moves to 50 percent spectator capacity, eyes 100 percent soon

CCPS allowed a 50 percent maximum spectator capacity starting Jan. 31 for in-person athletic and extracurricular activities. Capacity levels will be based on the venue or event location, and tickets to events will be sold online only on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tickets for high school athletic events can be purchased directly on individual high school athletic websites. Any visitor or spectator to a CCPS building or event must wear a face mask at all times and social distance when possible. Additionally, concession sales will be allowed at events. However, no food or concession items may be consumed in school gymnasiums or auditoriums.

If Charles County COVID-19 positive



Westlake High School chorus teacher, Mark Pavlecic, center, and his students prepare for the Tri-County Chorus concert. The concert was held last month.

case data continue to trend downward, CCPS will lift the 50 percent maximum capacity and allow 100 percent capacity limits to athletic and extracurricular activities starting Monday, Feb. 7. All COVID-19 safety guidelines will remain in place. CCPS posts the most up-to-date COVID-19 information on its website at [www.cbcoe.com](http://www.cbcoe.com).

# Giving it the old college try

## ■ CCPS rising seniors at select high schools can get a head start in college

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) have partnered to offer high school students a tuition-free early start to higher education by piloting a new Early College Program. As part of the joint program, CCPS will offer 150 total spaces to high school juniors from four high schools: Henry E. Lackey, St. Charles, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools.

Accepted students will be enrolled in both CSM and their zoned high school their senior year. Students will attend classes at the CSM La Plata campus and receive both high school credit and CSM credits for those courses. These students will work toward a 34-credit certification program that allows them to complete transferable college credits and their high school diploma requirements at the same time.

As both a CCPS and CSM student, the program offers enrolled students one year of free college credits. The 2022-2023 pilot phase may expand to include high school juniors and seniors at all CCPS high schools starting with the 2023-2024 school year.

CCPS is covering tuition for all participating students and associated course fees for eligible students in the Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) program. Cost of the pilot program for CCPS next year is estimated at \$695,000, which includes tuition, instructional materials, meals and transportation.

Members of the Board of Education of Charles County and the CSM Board of Trustees recently met to finalize and sign the program memorandum of understanding. Superintendent of Schools Maria Navarro said she is excited to provide students with an opportunity to explore their academic potential after high school.

“Through this partnership program, Charles County high school students who may not have had supports in place or financial help for college now have an opportunity to explore their potential,” Navarro said. “Early College Program students will take 11 college classes as seniors and graduate high school with the first year of a general studies college program completed. Not only is this program free for our families,

but CCPS will provide transportation to and from CSM for accepted students. These students will also have two avenues of academic and well-being supports through resources available at their home school and CSM.”

Early College makes college possible for young adults who otherwise have few opportunities to continue with higher education and gives students an opportunity to experience college-level courses, accelerate the path to degree completion and the workforce, and save money on tuition.

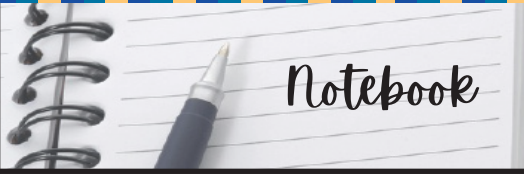
Upon completion, the partnership pilot between CSM and CCPS will earn Early College students their high school diplomas, 34 college credits and a General Studies Transfer certification. It will also save the students and their families \$4,556 in tuition costs.

Students must apply for program consideration and high schools will encourage students who meet the following criteria to apply: students who do not see college as an option; students with potential for enhanced academic achievement; and students from underrepresented and underserved populations.

Later this month, CSM will host parent information sessions for interested families at the pilot schools that may include a mix of virtual and in-person meetings. The application process and program timeline will be announced soon.

Counselors at the pilot high schools will also review student applications to ensure the schedule of classes meets graduation requirements.

Students must be a rising CCPS senior, have a minimum of 20 credits at the end of their junior year, have met the Algebra I, English 10, LSN Government and Science assessment and student-service learning graduation requirements and have demonstrated an unweighted 2.75 GPA at the time of the application. Part of the application also includes the completion of an open-ended writing sample. The application will be posted on the school system website at [www.cbboe.com](http://www.cbboe.com). Students and parents with questions should contact their child’s junior class counselor.



### On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County at its Jan. 11 meeting honored outstanding employees including Jordan Combs, left, special education teacher, William A. Diggs Elementary School; Valerie Morris, guidance secretary, General Smallwood Middle School; and Michelle Garcia, prekindergarten instructional assistant, J.P. Ryon Elementary School. To read more about staff honored at the January Board meeting, [click here](#).

### Social media guidelines

CCPS recently updated its social media guidelines. All CCPS platforms now feature the updated language, which is also posted to the [CCPS website here](#).

### Staff directory not found

Due to recent security issues with CCPS staff email accounts, a full staff email directory is not publicly available on the school system website. Parents who wish to reach their child’s teachers can locate email addresses in ParentVue.

### Return to school/work chart

CCPS has reporting processes in place for parents and staff to report a positive COVID-19 test result. Any CCPS staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 should send an email to [covid@cbboe.com](mailto:covid@cbboe.com) and report the result to their immediate supervisor. Parents should report any positive COVID-19 student results directly to their child’s school. CCPS has published return-to-school/work charts information at <https://www.cbboe.com/quick-links/covid-19-resources>. The charts include recommendations based on symptom onset or date of positive test results (when no symptoms are present), and when the individual should return to school or work. The recommendations follow procedures outlined in the CCPS COVID-19 standard operating procedures. The information also includes what to do if a staff member or student is exposed to COVID-19.

# St. Charles High School receives AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award

How many times is the computer whiz kid in movies and television shows a woman? In recent memory, there's Shuri in "Black Panther," there's a girl with a dragon tattoo and a couple who halted and caught fire in a period drama set in the 1980s depicting the early days of the Silicon Prairie in Texas. By and large the person who cracks the code using coding is a guy.

But there are female pioneers of computer science — Dona Bailey, Annie Easley, Grace Hooper, Ada Lovelace, Marsha R. Williams among others — who paved the way for women in computer science and STEM fields while serving as role models. Like those at St. Charles High School, a school that recently earned a 2021 Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science Female Diversity Award from the College Board. The award was given in recognition of expanding access for girls to the class AP Computer Science Principles and engaging them in the subject. St. Charles is one of only 760 schools to be recognized for the achievement.

AP Computer Science Principles introduces students to the foundational concepts of the field and challenges them to explore how computing and technology can impact the world. "The College Board and the industry noticed that it was dominated and represented by one gender of one race. They wanted to change that," Terence Stone, computer science teacher at St. Charles, said. "They want the industry to represent what the country looks like. Principles is a class for everybody. There are no prerequisites and students have option if they want to take the AP exam or not."

At the start of the year in Principles, students learn how to send and receive a message via computer. From there they touch on understanding machine languages, but don't do a deep dive into that, Stone said.

"We make the connection to the computer and scaffold from there to how the internet works, he said. "This makes a good connection to the students, because they stay on their phones."

St. Charles junior Nevaeh McKinney and sophomore Takai Scroggins are among the girls who are taking computer science classes



**Above, Nevaeh McKinney, left, junior, and Takai Scroggins, sophomore, work on an assignment for their computer classes. Right, Terence Stone, computer science teacher, talks with students during AP Computer Science Principles class.**



and likely to continue those studies in college. For McKinney, computers are the family business. Her grandmother owns and runs a tech support company where McKinney's father and uncles work. Or maybe she was born to figure out how things operate. "When I was little, I used to love taking things apart and putting them back together," she said. "I just find it interesting how things work, how our phones are literally computers." She is interested in software development and code reviewing. Scroggins took computer science as a freshman and liked it. "I've always wanted to learn how to make my own website — I'm taking web design right now — and it's just really interesting," she said. "Being able to do my own thing, making a site how I want to make it."

Both McKinney and Scroggins would like to see more females in computer science and STEM classes. "I definitely think we need more girls in those classes," McKinney said.

"I think it's society that makes girls feel like they can only go so far," Scroggins said. "And some girls don't try to go beyond that because people make them feel like 'This is

not a girl's job.'" That's why representation is important, she said. "Not just [to reach] girls, but Black girls as well. People underestimate females," Scroggins said.

McKinney would like younger girls encouraged to take computer science classes. "Girls might be told they can't do this, but they can," she said. "Because they are told that, they don't try. And if you don't try, you don't know."

Stone and faculty members at St. Charles pitch computer science and related clubs to students to drum up interest.

"I think people from different backgrounds bring fresh ideas, different ideas. It's important we have a diverse group of people who are making decisions and creating these things because they understand what people from their backgrounds may need," Stone said. "I think the more diversity you have in the industry the more groundbreaking things are going to happen."

## COVID-19 Dashboard

For the latest COVID-19 information, visit the [CCPS COVID-19 Dashboard](#) and the [Resources](#) page at [www.ccboc.com](http://www.ccboc.com).

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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).



## Hanson celebrates conditional teachers

John Hanson Middle School recognized conditional teachers during a recent staff meeting. Pictured from left, Abdul Yilla and Patricia Lunsford are special education teachers and Markael Jenkins and Leon Burton Jr. are math teachers. Timothy Watts, a special education teacher, is not pictured. The group is studying to earn their certifications through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

## Watch the latest video from CCPSTV

Seven Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers were recently honored by the Maryland State Department of Education for using formative assessments in classrooms. The practice gives students ownership of their education and is a tool that allows teachers to do on-the-spot assessments and make adjustments if needed. “It’s intensive at times,” Nina Capuano, third-grade teacher at T.C. Martin Elementary School, said. “Worthwhile for sure.”



## Personnel

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

**Job openings**

**Chief of Schools** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A master’s degree in educational leadership or a related area is required, doctorate preferred. Advanced Professional Certificate with Admin II endorsement required with at least five years of supervisory and/or administration experience required. Apply by Feb. 11.

**Director of Community Engagement and Equity** — Jesse L. Administration Building, 12-month position. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in education with coursework in special education, ad-

ministration and supervision, school law, multicultural education or English for Speaker of Other Languages. Master’s degree preferred. Apply by Feb. 11.

**Building Service Worker** — Westlake High School, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required. Apply by Feb. 11.

**Food Service Assistant Manager (7-hour)** — All schools, 10-month position. High school diploma or equivalent required and a minimum of three years of experience in food service. Apply by Feb. 11.

**Building Service Worker** — Westlake High School, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required. Apply by Feb. 11.

**Special Education Instructional Assistant** — Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma and

passing score on the ParaPro assessment or minimum of 48 college credits are required. Apply by Feb. 11.

**Secretary** — William A. Diggs Elementary School, 11-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by Feb. 14.

**Literacy Instructional Assistant** — John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position. A high school diploma required, along with experience working with children. Apply by Feb. 15.

**SOAR Instructional Assistant** — Eva Turner Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Feb. 15.

**Building Service Worker Floater** — Location to be determined. A high school diploma or GED is required. Apply by Feb. 25.