



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Schools, offices closed Feb. 21

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) schools and offices are closed on Monday, Feb. 21, for Presidents Day.

Board notes — Feb. 8, 2022

The Board of Education of Charles County met Feb. 8, 2022, for its regular meeting. A meeting agenda is posted on Board Docs [here](#). At the meetings, inclement weather make-up days were discussed, as well as the FY 2023 budget and other topics. To read more, click here.

Board meetings are streamed live at www.cboe.com and archived on the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/c/ccpsmd>.

I Love my School Library

The Maryland Association of School Librarians (MASL) is holding a contest for elementary and secondary students. Entries for the I Love My School Library contest are due by Feb. 28 and can be submitted in a variety of formats. For the contest, students can share what they love about their school library in the form of images, artifacts, videos and other formats like a digital poster, mp4, PowerPoint presentation and/or Flipgrid. Entries are due by 11:59 p.m. Feb. 28. To learn more about the criteria for elementary and secondary student entries, [click here](#).

Tech Talk Series

Charmaine Thompson, chief of instructional technology, and Lora Bennett, executive director of IT strategy, will host the first of a Tech Talk Series at 5 to 6 p.m. Feb. 24. The virtual event's topics will focus on Protecting Your Kids Online. Learn how CCPS safeguards students' safety while they are using the CCPS network. To register, [click here](#).



Let's roll — All Kids Bike

All Kids Bike is an 8-week course at William A. Diggs and William B. Wade elementary schools that teaches kindergarten students how to ride a bike. Clockwise from top left, Wade kindergartner Cameron McIlwain is already on pedals. Wade physical education teacher Kellee Shoemaker gives Hannah Powell a pep talk and pointers before she tries pedals for the first time. Cyrus Larke, a kindergartner in Alyssa Wheeler's PE class at Diggs, helps hand out helmets to classmates. Read more on Page 3.



Information sessions set for Early College Program

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) in partnership with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is launching an Early College Program for high school students.

The pilot program begins in fall 2022 and provides high school students with a tuition-free early start to higher education.

CCPS will pilot the program for the 2022-2023 school year. As part of the pilot, CCPS will offer 150 total spaces to current high school juniors from four high schools: Henry

E. Lackey, St. Charles, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools.

Interested students and families should attend one of the five upcoming planned information sessions.

During the information sessions, staff will share details about the application process and program deadlines. The following sessions are available.

- Tuesday, Feb. 22, 6 p.m., Westlake High School cafeteria.

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CTE students show off their skills

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students earned medals in the recent regional SkillsUSA competition and advance to the state championship set for April 1 and 2. Career and Technical Education (CTE) students from North Point High School and the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center compete annually in the event.

Each year, the state championship showcases more than 1,000 Maryland CTE students who compete in over 90 skilled, occupationally related and leadership events. The first-place winners qualify to represent Maryland at the National SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC) the week of June 20-24. The following students placed at the regional event:

Advertising Design

- Alena Gray, North Point, senior, gold medal; and
- Arielle Bruce, North Point, senior, silver medal.

Automotive Maintenance and Light Repair

- Christopher Blackwell, North Point, sophomore, gold medal; and
- Jordan Kassem, Stethem, junior, silver medal.

Automotive Service Technology

- Nathaniel Grapes, Stethem, senior, silver medal.

Crime Scene Investigation

- Alejandra Luna, North Point, sophomore, gold medal;
- Kelsea Misko, North Point, senior, gold medal;
- Aubrey Quiambao, North Point, sophomore, gold medal;
- Janiella Batin, North Point, freshman, silver medal;

man, silver medal;

- Aaliyah Davis, North Point, sophomore, silver medal; and
- Emma Everett, North Point, senior, silver medal.

Culinary Arts

- Steven Tran, North Point, senior, gold medal; and
- Jayla Smiley, North Point, senior, silver medal.

Electrical Construction Wiring

- Marcos Elias-Galan, North Point, senior, silver medal; and
- Victor Pena, North Point, junior, bronze medal.

First AID/CPR

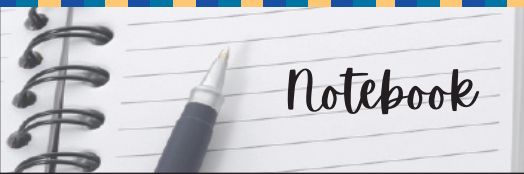
- Nevaeh Kendall, Stethem, junior, silver medal.

Internetworking

- Amulya Akula, North Point, junior, silver medal.



Jordan Kassem, a junior in the automotive technician program at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, competes in the regional SkillsUSA competition. He earned a silver medal maintenance and light repair.



On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County at its Feb. 8 meeting honored outstanding employees including Sarah Fleck, left, reading resource teacher, Indian Head Elementary School; Barry Myles, special education teacher, Theodore G. Davis Middle School; and Michele Bell, special education teacher, Billingsley Elementary School. To read more about staff honored at the February Board meeting, [click here](#).

Math resources, barber text

New mathematics resources are being proposed by CCPS for middle- and high-school students. The first text will be implemented in the 2022-2023 school year and is available for review online at im.kendallhunt.com. Parents, students and community members can leave feedback on the proposed texts by March 8. To complete the feedback form, [click here](#).

A new barbering textbook is being proposed by CCPS for Career and Technical Education (CTE) students enrolled in the Principles and Practicing of Barbering course. Milady Standard Barbering, 6th Edition, will be implemented in the 2022-2023 school year, and is available for review at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata, and the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center in Pomfret. Parents, students and community members can review the book and provide comments to the Board of Education. Written comments can be mailed to the Board of Education, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, MD, 20646; through email at boardmail@ccboe.com; or at public forum 6 p.m. March 8 at the Board meeting at the Starkey building.

Special Education Expo

CCPS, the Charles County Parent Center and the Parents' Place of Maryland are hosting a free, virtual Special Education Expo conference 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. March 26. A Zoom link will be sent for each registered session before the time of the event. Participants must register by Saturday, Feb. 26, online, by phone or by mail. For registration links, [click here](#).

COLLEGE

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• Wednesday, Feb. 23, 6 p.m. virtual meeting. Click here to register for the virtual meeting.

Parents and students can also learn more about the program at <https://www.csmd.edu/apply-register/credit/high-school/early-college/index.html>. 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 \$694,000, which includes tuition, instructional materials, meals and transportation.

To read more about the program, [click here](#).

Pedal Pushers — All Kids Bikes teaches kindergartners to bike safety, how to ride

You crawl before you walk, walk before you run, glide before you pedal. Kindergarten students at William A. Diggs and William B. Wade elementary schools are learning to ride bikes through an eight-week All Kids Bike program during physical education class. And there's not a training wheel in sight. Instead, students use balance bikes, a two-wheel bike with no pedals.

Designed to teach balance, the bikes are powered by the child using their feet to advance. Once they gain a bit of speed, they lift their feet and glide. If they can glide for a while without falling, pedals can be put on the bike and the kids never look back.

"If you think about riding a bike, the hardest part is just holding it up and not falling side to side," Kellee Shoemaker, PE teacher at Wade, said. Each student goes at their own pace. "Some students may stay on the balance bike for all eight weeks, some get pedals after a few classes," she said.

"Learning how to ride a bike provides an opportunity to implement skills such as balance, speed and pathways in a different but highly effective way," Matt Golonka, content specialist for health and physical education, said. "Teaching the skill of bike riding, while teaching the necessary safety precautions along with it, will set our students up for success as they grow older."

The program, which is overseen by Strider Bikes, is at schools in all 50 states — five of which are in Maryland, according to information provided by All Kids Bike. The All Kids Bike program is brought to schools through a fundraiser.

The program — which comes with child-size balance bikes and helmets, pedal conversion kits, a balance bike and helmet for the teacher, along with lesson plans for eight weeks and support from All Kids Bike for five years — is \$5,000.

When Shoemaker pitched the All Kids Bike program to Golonka and how the curriculum is tied to national and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) PE standards, he was able to purchase two sets of equipment through grant funding for his department.



Alyssa Wheeler, right, physical education teacher at William A. Diggs Elementary School, makes sure Sofia Bonilla Sanchez's helmet is secure at the start of an All Kids Bike lesson.

Shoemaker and Alyssa Wheeler, PE teacher at Diggs, assisted in the grant rewriting process. Diggs and Wade are piloting the program and keeping data on the students' progress. "Once we see success, hopefully more programs can be put in place at other schools," Shoemaker said.

As easy as riding a bike

Skills learned through bike riding build confidence and foster a sense of independence. The experience can also be a humbling one. Students might think they know how to ride a bike but quickly realize they must focus. "It gives them confidence when they see they are getting better at something," Shoemaker said. "I think students like to have something to work for."

Robert Crowley, a Wade fourth-grade teacher and parent of a child in kindergarten at the school, said his son rides bikes for fun at home and has a good time riding with his friends in PE. "I think it's important for kids to learn how to ride a bike, so they have a different way to exercise," Crowley said. "Having a variety of ways to stay healthy keeps us

"Riding a bike builds skills like balance," Wheeler said. "But it also gives students confidence and a sense of independence and determination."

Alyssa Wheeler, physical education teacher, William A. Diggs Elementary School

motivated to stay fit."

He also likes knowing that young students are learning to ride a bike safely. "Not many kids around here can ride a bike safely without worrying about the cars driving by," Crowley said.

Safety is paramount in the All Kids Bike curriculum. Each class starts with the proper way to wear a helmet. Then kids grab a bike — one with pedals if they know how to ride, or one without if they are still working on their balance while gliding. They know to keep their eyes up to watch ahead of them, and that everyone goes at their own pace. Don't get frustrated if you fall off. You just get back up. Don't get upset if a friend gets pedals and you don't. Your day will come. Just keep practicing. A lesson can be simply gliding around the gym in a circle, weaving in and out of cones or other obstacle course-like activities. All the while, the teacher is watching to see who might be ready to get pedals.

During a recent class, Shoemaker called out to Hannah Powell, a kindergartener in Kelly Carlson's class at Wade. "I think you're ready to try pedals," Shoemaker said. Powell traded her balance bike with K.J. Barry who rides dirt bikes afterschool and has been on pedals almost from Day 1.

Balancing on the bike, Powell tentatively pedaled with Shoemaker letting go of the seat on the count of three. Within a minute, Powell was zipping around the gym, cheered on by instructional assistant Mylia Poole and the class.

"Riding a bike builds skills like balance," Wheeler said. "But it also gives students confidence and a sense of independence and determination."

Redistricting information

Stay up-to-date with the middle school redistricting process at the Redistricting webpage at <https://www.ccboc.com/index.php/redistricting-middle-school-ql>.

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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).



Snacks for health care heroes

CCPS principals collected and donated snacks to health care workers at UM Charles Regional Medical Center (CRMC). The CRMC Foundation is organizing the collection. Principals pictured from left are Christina Caballero of Matthew Henson Middle School, Michelle Beckwith of Dr. James Craik Elementary School, Carrie Richardson of Mary H. Matula Elementary School, Louis D'Ambrosio of Berry Elementary School, Shane Blandford of Indian Head Elementary School and Diane Roberts of Westlake High School.



Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.cboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job openings

Barbering Teacher — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. Applicants must be a current licensed master barber in Maryland and meet the certification requirements or able to earn certification within two years as established by the Maryland State Department of Education. Apply by Feb. 21.

Student Data Technician — Piccowaxen Middle School, 12-month position. A high school diploma or equivalent is required. Apply by Feb. 22.

Transportation Associate — Annex 1, 10-month position. A high school diploma or equivalent required. Experience managing communication in a busy environment preferred. Apply by Feb. 22.

Computer Analyst II — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Associates degree in information technology or related field is preferred with a minimum of one year of experience or three years of technically progressive current work experience in local and wide area networks, user and help desk support. Apply by March 1.

Attendance Secretary — Billingsley Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required and the ability to type accurately. Apply by March 1.

Bus Driver — Annex 1, 10-month position. A high school diploma required. Five years of experience as a school bus driver in Maryland preferred. Position open until filled.

Food Service Worker (6-hour) — Location to be determined, 10-month position. A high school diploma or equivalent is required. Position open until filled.

Staff Accountant - Restricted Programs — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or related field is required. A master's degree or CPA is preferred. Position open until filled.

Inventory Auditor — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A high school diploma is required, along with one to three years of technically progressive current work experience in information networks and user support. Position open until filled.

Kindergarten Instructional Assistant — Eva Turner Elementary School, 10-month position. High school diploma is required with an associate degree preferred. Position open until filled.