

# School News



## Notebook

### Calendar notes

A two-hour early dismissal for students is Thursday, Nov. 3. It is also the first day of the second marking period. Schools are closed for students only on Tuesday, Nov. 8, for Election Day.

### Mental health session

The Office of Human Resources is hosting a virtual session on suicide prevention at 2:30 p.m., Nov. 3. The course will demystify suicide through discussion of why it occurs, the risk factors associated with suicide and how to intervene with those who are suicidal or potentially suicidal. To sign up, [click here](#). If you are in crisis, visit <https://988lifeline.org/talk-to-someone-now/> or dial 988.

### Small Bites

Small Bites: Laughter, Humor, Play to Reduce Stress, a short professional learning opportunity for support staff, is 2:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 8, in the staff development room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, La Plata. To learn more, email [rsvites@ccboe.com](mailto:rsvites@ccboe.com) or [sogburn@ccboe.com](mailto:sogburn@ccboe.com). To register, [click here](#).

### Open enrollment

The annual Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) health benefits open enrollment period is Oct. 19 through Nov. 15. During open enrollment, CCPS benefit eligible employees can make changes to their current benefit elections. Employees should review their personal information, benefits offered by CCPS, and the plans that they are enrolled in to determine if they would like to make any changes. Any benefit change made during open enrollment is effective Jan. 1, 2023.



### Turning into a (story) pumpkin

J.C. Parks Elementary School students took inspiration from their favorite stories to create characters from pumpkins. Above, Arden Horne, a fourth grade student in Marisa Clements's class, incorporated the stem into his design of Pinocchio. Clockwise from top right, Elias Browder revved up a design based on "Little Blue Truck's Halloween," Yazmin Young created Izzy Moonbow from "My Little Pony — Tattle Tales," "Pete the Cat" inspired Madison Clapsaddle's project, and sisters Stephanie and Emily Jimenez-Poblano turned in the Lorax based on the Dr. Seuss character. Right, Eric Young, a fourth grader in Clements's class, painted a double sided design based on the comic "Venom vs. Carnage."



### CCPS to hold virtual meeting on Blueprint plan

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is holding a virtual town hall 5:30 p.m., Nov. 7, to discuss the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The town hall allows parents, students and community members to provide feedback on a draft plan created by a board working as an independent unit of the state government.

Made up of members appointed by the governor, the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) was tapped to develop a comprehensive implementation plan for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The AIB's draft compre-

hensive plan will be sent to Maryland school boards this month outlining what Boards of Education — called Local Education Agencies (LEA) by the AIB — will need to include in county-based Blueprint plans.

Throughout the past summer, the AIB held public sessions to gather information about crafting its draft comprehensive plan. CCPS is continuing the practice with the Nov. 7 town hall. The upcoming town hall will showcase the AIB's draft comprehensive plan to solicit comments about what it includes. Partici-

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# Kickin' it with Coach Parker



**Thomas Stone High School's Tom Parker retires after 47 years of coaching**

As the former boys' and girls' soccer and tennis head coach at Thomas Stone High School, Tom Parker has been a trailblazer of the soccer program at the school and in the county for the past 47 years. He retired recently after being a well-loved coach among students, staff, and the Southern Maryland community.

Parker discovered his love for soccer at an early age influencing him to pursue the sport further by playing at Orange County Community College in New York and at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania. After his studies he began working at Stone as a gym teacher and realized that there was no soccer team. "I went to the athletic director and said 'Hey, I want to start soccer,' and begrudgingly he agreed to let me start a team," Parker said.

Parker was honored this month by Stone for his dedication to the school after one of the regular scheduled soccer games. Former players, staff and Parker's family gathered to honor the coach for his hard work and longevity to the program.

His success as a coach was not inherited through a bloodline of coaches in his family, rather he started the trend of coaching among his community. "If you go to other schools in the county, you will find that a lot of people played for me," Parker said. "Now my former players are running soccer groups and organizations." The influence that Coach Parker has goes beyond Charles County. "I drove all the way to Anne Arundel County on a Saturday to see my granddaughter play and I heard someone say, 'Coach Parker, Coach Parker.' I turned around and it was my former player as the referee."

In his role, Parker was known for his dedication to coaching by showing support to other sports and coaches as well. "During my first time as athletic director, Coach Parker was always here, never missing a



**Tom Parker, the former head coach for Thomas Stone High School's soccer and tennis teams, recently retired after 47 years at the school.**

day. He just showed tremendous dedication to the sport and the athletes," Kevin Heider, athletic director at Stone, said. "While I was serving as a football coach, Coach Parker was always supportive and encouraging to the other coaches on the staff here at Stone."

Over the years, Heider worked closely with Parker. "When I arrived here in 1996 Coach Parker was already an icon in the Southern Maryland coaching scene. He was about to win his first state championship, and his second two years later," Heider said. Seeing the results of his hard work over the course of the 47 years and the impact that he has made is what Parker is mostly proud of. "To revisit the past by opening the yearbooks and seeing the accomplishments made is one of the most rewarding parts of being a coach." Parker saw a need, filled it and continued for decades. "When I needed a tennis coach back in 2001, Coach Parker did so happily, then continued for 21 years," Heider said. At Stone's dedication to Parker, "Over 100 former players and coaches, some from as far back as 1982, were here to honor and thank Coach Parker for everything he had done for them, for Stone and the soccer community in Southern Maryland," Heider said.

To view a video featuring Parker, [click here](#).



## Design award

The CCPS office of operations and supporting services was recently honored by the Chesapeake Shores chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors for the renovation of Eva Turner Elementary School. Builders Scheibel Construction and the project were recently honored with the Merit Award in its 2022 Excellence in Construction category.

## On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County honored outstanding employees at its Oct. 11 meeting. From left are Tina Fullerton, SOAR instructional assistant, J.C. Parks Elementary School; Samantha Krueffel, technology facilitator, Dr. James Craik Elementary School; Ki'Tira Shorter, first grade teacher, Malcolm Elementary School; and Kevin Clancy, language arts teacher, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School. To read more about their accomplishments, [click here](#).

## Mini grant deadline is Nov. 1

Classroom teachers can apply for one of six mini grants offered by the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRS-PA). Mini grant applications are due by Nov. 1. To learn more about the program, visit [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org).

## Take calendar survey by Nov. 11

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the Board of Education of Charles County would like input on the 2023-2024 calendar. The Board of Education approves the school calendar one year in advance. Both options are posted on the CCPS website at <https://www.cbboe.com/parents/school-calendar-survey>. [Click here](#) to learn more.

# CCPS partners with community organizations for healthy children initiative

For the 2022-2023 school year, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is once again partnering with the United Way of Southern Maryland. Prior to the pandemic, CCPS had a partnership with the United Way of Charles County for more than 30 years. Since then, the organizations of Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties integrated, becoming the United Way of Southern Maryland to serve the tri-county community in a more effective and cost-efficient manner.

The United Way of Southern Maryland supports 76 local human service agencies with 36 in Charles County. These services support families, adults and children in Charles County.

The United Way Campaign provides an opportunity for CCPS employees to give back to the community and make a difference in the lives of people in need. One of the campaigns United Way donations support is the Snack Sak program in which students in need of additional food for themselves and their families receive backpacks of food and



Pictured from left are Kelli Whalen, technical assistant, CCPS Office of Accountability, Mel V. Brennan, United Way of Southern Maryland Chief Executive Officer, and Superintendent of Schools Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D.,

other items. The Snack Sak program directly supports many CCPS students and their families.

CCPS staff can set up a donation to United Way and the agencies it serves through a one-time donation, or a pledge made through CCPS payroll deduction. Anyone can make a

one-time donation online at <https://www.unit-edwaysouthernmaryland.org/fund-cause>.

CCPS staff can set up United Way donations through payroll deduction. Payroll deduction through United Way would begin in January 2023, with the Jan. 6, 2023, paycheck. Staff from United Way will be visiting schools and centers to provide employees with information, and also provide pledge forms for payroll deduction. A schedule of dates and times will be posted soon to the school system website, [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com).

Limited copies of the pledge form can be requested through Kelli Whalen in the CCPS Office of Accountability at [kwhalen@ccboe.com](mailto:kwhalen@ccboe.com). Whalen is the CCPS program point of contact for United Way donations. Completed pledge forms should be sent to Whalen through the pony. Please mark your envelope to the attention of Kelli Whalen, Office of Accountability, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building.



## Food for thought

Members of the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) staff participated in a Healthy Kids Fun Fest. They gave away fresh fruit, vegetables and water to children and their families during the event. From left are Akira Moss, acting FNS manager at J.C. Parks Elementary School, Crystal Richardson, CCPS supervisor of food service, Susan Patterson, FNS manager at North Point High School and Renee Liddell, FNS field operations manager.

## BLUEPRINT

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pants are encouraged to review the CCPS Blueprint website at <https://www.ccboe.com/quick-links/blue-print-for-marylands-future> prior to the meeting.

The Nov. 7 Zoom meeting will give a brief overview of the AIB's comprehensive draft plan with time allotted for questions. CCPS staff is accepting advance questions about the draft comprehensive plan to be answered during the town hall.

To submit a question, [click here](#). For the form in Spanish, [click here](#). During the Nov. 7 meeting, an interpreter will be available to provide translation for Spanish speakers.

The meeting will be held on the Zoom platform and is open to any CCPS parent, staff or community member. Anyone joining the meeting will need an active Zoom account to participate.

**Meeting details are below.**

Link to join — <https://ccboe.zoom.us/j/86973085644?pwd=Nkc1bko0MDd3dnl3Ym15dnpBaVJlUT09>

Passcode — 214100

Webinar ID — 869 7308 5644

Following the Nov. 7 meeting, frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the Blueprint and plans will be added to the [CCPS Blueprint for Maryland's Future website](#). (The page is in the process of being translated in Spanish.)

The AIB is set to hold a public meeting virtually on Nov. 10 and is planning to adopt the final Blueprint Comprehensive Plan on Dec. 1. Each Maryland school system is required to submit its own implementation plan to the AIB for approval. The AIB could withhold funding to any agency without an approved implementation plan.

The Blueprint of Maryland's Future was legislation passed in 2021. Aiming to accelerate student outcomes while improving the overall quality of education in Maryland, the Blueprint increases education funding by \$3.8 billion a year over the next decade. To learn more about the Blueprint, [click here](#).

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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).



## Unity Day

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) principals wore shades of orange to their monthly Principals' Meeting on Oct. 19 in observance of Unity Day. Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center encourages people to wear orange to stand united against bullying.



## Out of the Darkness walk

Beila Lugo, left, mental health coordinator for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), and Katrina Spriggs, school counselor at Arthur Middleton Elementary School, represented CCPS at the Oct. 23 Southern Maryland Out of the Darkness Walk. Organized by the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention, the region's walk raised more than \$43,300 for the foundation. If you are in crisis, visit <https://988lifeline.org/talk-to-someone-now/> or dial 988.

## 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

**Secretary** — St. Charles High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required, knowledge of Word, Excel and PowerPoint preferred. Apply by Oct. 31.

**Secretary to the Principal** — Berry Elementary School, 12-month position. A high school diploma or GED is required and a minimum of two years of experience in bookkeeping or office management. Experience with budgets, payroll and cash handling preferred. Apply by Nov. 3.

**Parent Liaison** — Indian Head Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school di-

ploma or GED is required. Knowledge of Title I, Part A and Microsoft Office 365 preferred. Apply by Nov. 4.

**Computer Analyst II** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. An associate's degree in information technology or related field is preferred. 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 Nov. 8.

**Guidance Secretary** — John Hanson Middle School, 11-month position. A high school diploma is required, knowledge of Word, Excel and PowerPoint preferred. Apply by Nov. 8.

**IEP Facilitator** — All Schools, 11-month position. A bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. The candidate should hold

or be eligible for a Maryland Standard Professional Certificate with special education endorsement. Three years of satisfactory special education classroom teaching experience required. Apply by Nov. 11.

**HVAC Teacher** — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. A minimum of three years of experience working in the HVAC operations industry is required and candidates must be a current licensed HVAC technician in Maryland. Position open until filled.

**Navy JROTC Instructor** — La Plata High School, 11-month position. A bachelor's degree is required along with having served a minimum of 20 years of active duty or have retired under the Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA). Position open until filled.