

School News



Notebook

Tri-county band concert

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students named to the tri-county band will perform with their peers from the public school systems of Calvert and St. Mary's counties at 2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 8. The concert will be held at Calvert High School, 600 Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick.

Board meeting

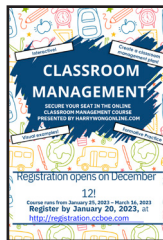
The Board of Education will meet 1 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 10, in the boardroom of the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. The Board will elect a new chairperson and vice chairperson at the start of the meeting. Recognition starts at 4:30 p.m., with public forum at 6 p.m.

Mark your calendar

CCPS schools and offices are closed Monday, Jan. 16, in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Schools will be closed for students only on Friday, Jan. 20, for semester break.

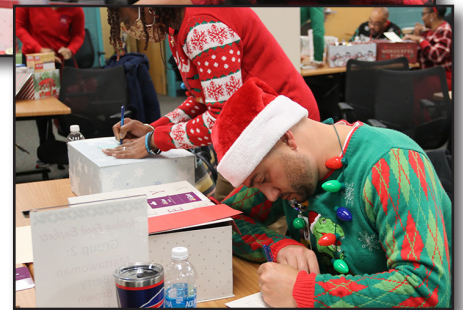
Professional learning

Professional learning opportunities in January are highlighted on [MyCCPS](#), the staff webpage for CCPS employees. Click the images under the January Professional Learning Opportunities section to expand the flyers to learn more. Registration is open in PowerSchool at <https://registration.ccboe.com>. To access the professional learning opportunities SharePoint site, [click here](#).



Boxing Day

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) principals took part in a community service activity last month to benefit a family at their respective schools. Each principal (or an assistant principal filling in) put together a care package of food items that could be used by a family for a holiday meal. The nonperishable items were donated by staff members at Starkey with a grocery store gift card and personalized card with each food basket. The principals — divided into groups of four or five — delivered the care packages to the homes of their students' families. Families were selected to receive the food baskets by CCPS pupil personnel workers (PPW). Pictured at top, Orlena Whatley, left, principal of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, and Daphne Burns, principal of the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, pack boxes. Top right, Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School Principal Karen Lewis, left, and Ben Harrington, principal of William A. Diggs Elementary School, pen notes to families.



Shaping minds — state group honors PE teachers

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) physical education (PE) teachers were recently honored by SHAPE Maryland, an organization that promotes and supports health and wellness.

The state chapter of the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) named Marty Margolis of Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School Elementary School Physical Education Teacher of the Year. To read more about Margolis, [click here](#).

Four other CCPS PE teachers each received the Simon McNeely Award for outstanding

teaching and service in health, physical education, recreation or dance. Honored were Jonel Barnes of Henry E. Lackey High School, Kristin Jones of Mattawoman Middle School, Seth Rak of the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center and Kellee Shoemaker of William B. Wade Elementary School.

SHAPE Maryland held a convention in November in Ocean City that allows PE educators an opportunity to network and share ideas.

Next step after graduation

See SHAPE, Page 3

Information sessions set for Early College Program

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) continues its partnership with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) in the 2023-24 academic year by offering the Early College Program to high school students.

Upcoming information sessions are planned for students and parents interested in learning more about the program and registration process.

The pilot program launched in Fall 2022 providing 150 students from Henry E. Lackey, St. Charles, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools with a tuition-free early start to college courses. For the 2023-24 academic year, the program will accept 200 students and has been expanded to rising high school juniors and seniors at the seven CCPS high schools who want to complete college credits while attending high school.

All college classes will take place on the La Plata campus of CSM with the cost of tuition and books covered by CCPS. Boxed lunches provided by the school system will be available daily for students in the Early College Program and they will be provided transportation through CCPS.

Six information sessions are set for students and families interested in learning more about the Early College Program. During the information sessions, staff will share details about the application process and program deadlines. The following sessions are available.

Virtual sessions:

- Wednesday, Jan. 11, 6-8 p.m. [Click here to register.](#)
- Wednesday, Jan. 25, 6-8 p.m. [Click here to register.](#)

In-person sessions:

- Tuesday, Jan. 17, 6-7:30 p.m., La Plata High School auditorium.
- Wednesday, Jan. 18, 6-7:30 p.m., Maurice J. McDonough High School auditorium.
- Thursday, Jan. 19, 6-7:30 p.m., North Point High School auditorium.
- Monday, Jan. 23, 6-7:30 p.m., Thomas Stone High School media center.

Parents and students can also learn more about the program at <https://www.csm.edu/apply-register/credit/high-school/early-college/>.

Accepted students will be enrolled in



both CSM and their zoned high school during the 2023-24 school year. Students in the Early College Program will attend classes on the La Plata campus of CSM from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

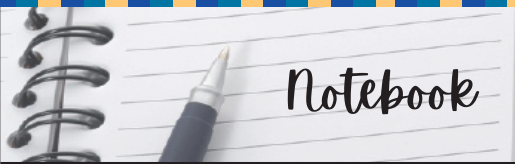
Eligible CCPS students must be a junior or senior in a public high school during the 2023-24 academic year and have an unweighted high school GPA of 2.75 or higher. Rising juniors must have completed geometry with a C or higher by the end of the 2022-23 academic year with rising seniors having completed Algebra II with a C or higher at the end of the 2022-23 academic year.

Applications are reviewed by a selection committee that includes CCPS and CSM representatives. Selected students will receive an acceptance letter and are required to participate in a CSM new student orientation. Depending on selection criteria, some students may be required to take part in a writing improvement bootcamp over the summer.

Participating juniors will be on track to earn an Associate of Applied Science in Business Management degree which carries 60 credits. Enrolled seniors will study to earn a General Studies: Transfer Certificate that carries 31 credits.

The cost of the program for CCPS for the 2023-24 academic year is estimated at \$735,000, which includes tuition, instructional materials, meals and transportation. The Early College Program is part of the school system's implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, an educational plan to enhance schools in Maryland and prepare each student for life after graduation.

For additional information and guidance, students and families should contact their school guidance counselor.



On the cover

[CCPS employees were honored by the Board](#) at its Dec. 13 meeting. Pictured on the front cover from left are Alexandria Bumb, learning resource teacher, Matthew Henson Middle School; and Charlene Woods, third grade teacher, William B. Wade Elementary School.

Retirement webinars

A live webinar on Jan. 17 will address retirement myths and topics such as account security, withdrawals, consolidating accounts and loans. Webinars in English are set for noon and 3 p.m., a webinar hosted in Spanish will be 6 p.m. Staff can schedule a coaching session on 1 and 4 p.m. Jan. 19. For more information and QR codes to join, [click here](#). [A list of upcoming seminars](#) is available at MyCCPS.

High school art show

The Mattawoman Creek Art Center will hold a reception and awards program for the Seven Up+ High School Art Show on Jan. 22 at the center in Smallwood State Park, 2750 Sweden Point Road, Marbury. The center is open from 1 to 4 p.m., Friday-Sunday. The high school exhibit will be on display from Jan. 13 to Feb. 5. For more information, visit www.mattawomanart.org/

EAP benefit for staff

CCPS has an employee assistance program through ComPsych, a national employee assistance and work/life company. The EAP benefit is free to employees and their dependents, and it is also confidential. ComPsych representatives have expertise and clinical knowledge and are well versed in helping clients from young children to the elderly. The EAP can assist with managing and addressing stress, depression, anxiety, workplace difficulties, substance abuse, marital problems, family or parenting conflicts, grief, violence, unhealthy lifestyles and other issues. To learn more about the EAP benefit, [visit the Staff page](#) at www.ccboe.com.

Jonel Barnes has been a PE teacher for the past eight years. Starting her career as a middle school PE teacher in North Carolina, she has been at Henry E. Lackey High School for the past six years.

While at Fayetteville State College in North Carolina, Barnes debated majoring in education or forensic science. Teaching won out. “I come from a family of educators,” she said. “My mom is a librarian; my brother is currently a principal in Howard County.”

An athlete growing up, Barnes knew she wanted to incorporate her love of sports into a teaching career. “I always loved sports and always loved kids, so putting the two together just worked for undergrad and I’ve been doing it ever since,” she said. A big draw for teaching at the high school level was the chance to coach. At Lackey, Barnes coaches varsity volleyball and is the girls varsity basketball coach.

Outside of coaching, Barnes enjoys teaching high school students because they are in a crucial time in their lives. They are still kids but are on the cusp of heading out into the “real world.” The more they learn now, the better off they will be when they find themselves having to make important decisions, she said. “To me — and I might be bias — but this is the most essential age. We have kids coming in who are freshmen and trying to figure out who they are,” Barnes said. “We have kids who are getting ready to go out into the world. Getting to see that maturity shift, that cultivation of a kid ... that is something I enjoy being a part of.”

Rain delay relay

Eighth graders cooped up on a rainy day could lead to disaster, but the students in Kristin Jones PE class at Mattawoman Middle School were too busy dribbling basketballs, hula hooping, crab walking and cup stacking to mind the rain. Students lined up in five-person teams to take part in relay races. Throwing, balancing, dexterity and movement were all put to the test.

“When you see them huffing and puffing, you know they got the physical activity in,” Jones said. “But they also had to work together, and they were into the activity. I checked three boxes today. Success!”

Jones grew up playing sports with soccer, basketball and softball being the big three she

played in high school. But there has been a culture shift in society and kids aren’t as physically active anymore. “We used to go outside after school. After homework was done, we played sports and did things,” Jones said. “Some students do play organized sports, but because they are on their phones so much it is good to give students that activity piece and that social piece.”

At the middle school level Jones is working with students she can talk to on a more sophisticated level, but they still retain some young childhood traits. In PE, students are engaged in activities where they often must pull together. It’s a skill that might not be honed as sharply anymore now that conversations are captured in texts rather than face to face. “It not about the sport or the score,” Jones said. “It’s about teamwork. They still have to work together and cooperate.”

Most important skills

Seth Rak became interested in the physical education field like many — he was an athlete in high school. A member of the football and wrestling teams, he wanted to continue participating in organized sports after graduation. “I wanted to wrestle in college, and I wanted to coach,” he said.

Following a summer job in college at a camp for children with disabilities — “I didn’t really know what I was doing, but I really enjoyed the experience,” he said — Rak delved further into the field, focusing on working with students with special needs.

As an adapted physical education resource teacher for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), Rak travels to schools teaming up with other teachers to ensure all students have access to PE. “In adapted PE, students are not going to be able to access all the PE curriculum, so we adapt the curriculum to meet their needs,” Rak said.

There are several models that can be used to adapt PE lessons for students with disabilities. Students can be in a self-contained PE class working on a skill like throwing and catching. “We work on that skill, developing it and then try to transfer that into a general PE class with their peers in a modified or specific role that’s meaningful. There are endless possibilities,” Rak said.

Adapted PE lessons parallel what students in general education classes are learning —

“With the understanding that we’re looking ahead and developing skills students are going to use the rest of their lives,” Rak said. “It’s my opinion — especially for my students — PE is the most important [class]. In PE, students are learning how to work with their peers, they learn skills that help them access activities with their parents. There’s a fitness component and there’s a quality-of-life factor. I do feel it’s the most important subject specially for students with disabilities with social and cognitive disabilities.”

Battleball royale

Since she was a child, Kellee Shoemaker knew what she wanted to be when she grew up. “I’ve known I wanted to be a PE teacher for as long as I can remember,” she said. “I had fun interactive PE teachers when I was younger, and it made me want to do the same thing.” As the physical education teacher at William B. Wade Elementary School, Shoemaker is emulating her role models by encouraging students to be active and take an interest in their overall health. “I want them to know that being active isn’t just doing pushups or running,” she said. “It can be playing a game with your friends.”

During a recent morning at Wade, fourth grade students in Robert Crowley’s class practiced overhand throwing and hitting a large target. This was accomplished by splitting into two teams to face off for a game of Battleball. Armed with Nerf balls and pompoms made of yarn, students were given the objective to knock over the opponent’s castles (a structure made of hula hoops) and sink them in a “tower” made of upturned gym mats. Each student — regardless of skill level — was engaged and helped their team. “I tell them when they come into the gym, they are only expected to give their best and are expected to have fun,” Shoemaker said. “We really don’t have a problem with kids not wanting to participate because they don’t feel that they are good enough. I think that’s a result of the learning environment. I teach them the importance of having fun while being active. That’s really the focus.”

To read the full story, [click here](#) or go to www.ccbocoe.com.

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Food service job fair

Mateo Alcantara Cruz, a sixth grade student at John Hanson Middle School, enjoys a sample of kiwi during a recent lunch period.

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is holding a food service job fair with open interviews from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 3 to 5 p.m., Jan. 11, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building at 5980 Radio Station Road in La Plata.

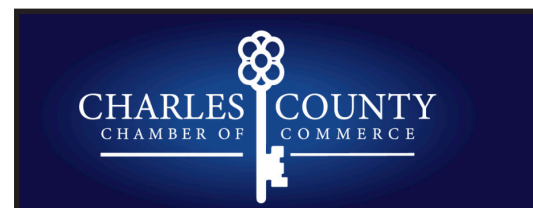
CCPS, chamber mixer set

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has partnered with the Business and Education Committee of the Charles County Chamber of Commerce to host a mixer event on Thursday, Jan. 12, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Thomas Stone High School in Waldorf.

The goal of the event is to increase the number of apprenticeship and internship sites for high school students in Charles County.

Interested participants must register for the event in advance on the Chamber website here. The mixer will feature booths and tables in which local employers can talk with Chamber members about becoming an apprenticeship or internship site. Cost to attend is \$15 for non-Chamber members. The recommended deadline to register is Wednesday, Jan. 11.

A flyer with additional information is posted on the Chamber of Commerce website. Questions about the event should be directed to Jessica Richards at jrichards@charlescountychamber.org or Rebecca Pearson at rpearson@ccboe.com.



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

Counseling Secretary — Westlake High School, 11-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by Jan. 15.

Financial Secretary — Thomas Stone High School, 12-month position. A high school diploma is required. Computer literacy in Word, Excel, Quicken and Quick Books is required. Apply by Jan. 15.

Instructional Assistant for Literacy — North Point High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma and experience working with children are required. Apply by Jan. 15.

Culinary Arts Instructional Assistant —

North Point High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required as well as five or more years of previous experience in the food service field. Apply by Jan. 17.

Principal Pool 2023-24 — Location to be determined, 12-month position. A master's degree from an accredited college or university is required and applicants must hold a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate with Administrator II endorsement by March 1, 2023. Three years of satisfactory teaching experience and three years satisfactory experience as an assistant principal are required. Apply by Feb. 1.

Assistant Principal Pool 2023-24 — Location to be determined, 12-month position. A master's degree from an accredited college or university is required and applicants must have a Maryland Advanced Professional Cer-

tificate with Administrator I endorsement by March 1, 2023. Three years satisfactory teaching experience is required. Apply by Feb. 1.

Fifth Grade Water Safety Instructor and Summer Camp Assistant — Henry E. Lackey and North Point high schools, temporary position. Applicants must be at least 16 to work at the summer camp and 17 to work in the water safety program. Applicants must have American Red Cross lifeguard certification and instructional experience. Apply by June 30.

Title I Nonpublic Tutor — Location to be determined, temporary position. Bachelor's degree and professional certificate in early childhood or elementary education required. Ability and willingness to work evenings. Position open until filled.