

School News



Notebook

Dance concert set

Maurice J. McDonough High School is holding a Spring Dance Concert April 28 featuring students in the dance program. Doors open at 6 p.m., the show starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 at the door. The dance program is under the direction of Sheryl Pollard-Thomas. McDonough is at 7165 Marshall Corner Road, Pomfret.

SECAC nominations

Nominations for the 16th annual Special Education Citizen Advisory Committee (SECAC) Appreciation Awards are due by Monday, May 8. Parents and guardians can nominate a person or team who has made a difference in the life of a child with special needs. [To use the English version of the nomination form, click here.](#) [The Spanish submission form can be found here.](#)

The third annual SECAC Buddy Recognition Awards honors students who make a difference in the life of a child with special needs. Teachers, staff, parents and guardians can nominate a youth for the award. [Click here](#) for an English version of the Buddy nomination form, and [click here](#) for the Spanish version. To ensure consideration, nominations should be received by Monday, May 8. Forms can be emailed to charlescountysecac@gmail.com or dropped off at the Charles County Parent Center, F.B. Gwynn Center, 5998 Radio Station Road, La Plata, MD 20646. The awards ceremony is 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 18, at North Point High School. RSVP to charlescountysecac@gmail.com by Monday, May 15.



Brain games

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students Lorenzo Williams, above, a sixth grader at Matthew Henson Middle School, and Jax Laciny, a junior at Henry E. Lackey High School, were among those who participated in the regional Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) showcase on March 31 at North Point High School. Students and teams placing in last month's competition advance to states. [Click here](#) to read more.

Share your opinion on the 2024-25 school calendar

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the Board of Education of Charles County would like input on the 2024-2025 school calendar.

The Board of Education approves the school calendar one to two years in advance.

At the April 11 Board meeting, staff presented three draft calendar options for the Board's consideration. The options are posted on the CCPS website at <https://www.ccboe.com/parents/2024-2025-school-calendar-survey>. The website also includes a link to a calendar survey. CCPS encourages parents, staff, students and community members to provide feedback through the survey on the proposed calendar options.

The Board will review survey feedback at its May 9 meeting and is expected to take action on the 2024-2025 calendar proposals at its meeting in June.

The options include an August start date for students, winter and spring break days, and early dismissal dates for students. Early dismissal dates in both options are scheduled for contracted

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On the cover

Employees honored April 11 by the Board of Education include Christian Mendoza, SOAR instructional assistant, Eva Turner Elementary School; Nicole Deavers, test coordinator, La Plata High School; and Melissa Scott, reading resource teacher, Piccowaxen Middle School. [Click here](#) to read more.

Fitness, wellness classes

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is holding spring fitness classes and webinars. The six-week sessions kicked off earlier this month with registration open through [PowerSchool](#). The free fitness are classes provided by CareFirst. In addition to the wellness classes, employees who are enrolled in the school system's health care insurance are eligible for discounted fitness plans offered by CareFirst. The Fitness Your Way plan has packages with access to gyms and discounts for visits to health and well-being specialists.

Get tix to Baseball Bash

The 2023 Back-to-School Baseball Bash is set for Aug. 26 at Regency Furniture Stadium. Sponsored by the Education Association of Charles County (EACC), CCPS and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the event is open to all CCPS employees and their families. Tickets are \$10 each for the picnic pavilion which includes an all-you-can-eat buffet from 6 to 8 p.m. Only 350 pavilion tickets will be sold and are on a first-come, first-served basis. General stadium seating is \$10 per ticket (food is not included in the ticket price). Tickets are available for purchase through Aug. 1. To purchase tickets to the Baseball Bash, [click here](#).

Special education survey

Parents of students ages 3 to 21 who receive special education services can take the [Maryland Special Education Parent Involvement Survey](#) by May 19.



Pupil personnel workers (PPW) with Charles County Public Schools will host a Community Day on May 18. PPWs Lisa Glenn, left, and Pam Jenkins man a table at last year's event.

PPWs plan Community Day for May 18

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) pupil personnel workers (PPW) will host a Community Day next month.

The event — held rain or shine — will be from 3 to 6 p.m., Thursday, May 18, at St. Charles High School.

The May 18 event will link students and their families with supportive services and resources including a clothing giveaway, immunizations clinic, door prizes and health and dental information.

Other services set to be highlighted at the event are family support services, personal hygiene services and resources, housing and utility financial support, employment opportunities, skills training information,

information about summer camps, mental wellness supports, a school supplies giveaway and assistance with prekindergarten applications and international registration.

PPWs are assigned to every CCPS school and work with students and parents, along with community agencies and school system staff to ensure students are receiving the best services and education.

To learn more about the role of PPWs with CCPS, visit www.ccboe.com.

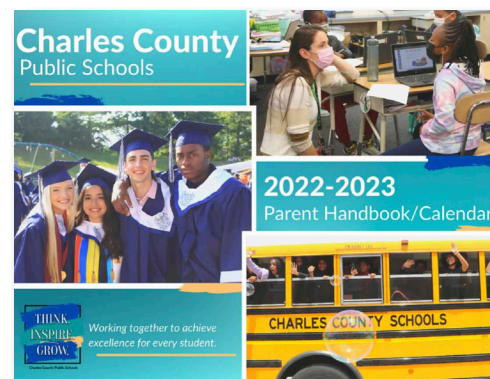
For more event information, contact Neal Bankenstein at 240-682-2263 or nbankenstein@ccboe.com or Garcia Dixon at 301-934-7333 or gadixon@ccboe.com.

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teaching planning, interim and report card preparation time. None of the options include the addition of inclement weather dates. A question on the survey features preferences on inclement weather dates.

The calendar proposals also include 180 student attendance days and 190 contracted teacher workdays. [Click here to review the calendar options and take the survey](#). The calendar drafts, as well as the survey, are available in both English and Spanish. Deadline to complete the survey is 11:59 p.m., Monday, May 1.



NPHS's Burton nominated for LifeChanger of the Year Award

Tutoring eighth-grade math as a high school student turned into a calling and successful career for North Point High School mathematics teacher, Joseph Burton. Burton has been a long-time educator with Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), centering his career around his impact as a math teacher at North Point since 2009. Burton graduated from Ohio University in 2009 with a bachelors in education, took a job as the math teacher at North Point the same year and has not looked back. Burton was recently named a nominee for the 2023 LifeChanger of the Year Award through the National Life Group and the National Life Group Foundation.

According to the National Life Group LifeChanger of the Year website, "the LifeChanger of the Year is an annual program recognizing K-12 educators and school employees across the country."

Burton is known for his impact on students in the classroom and beyond. "As a now college student, Mr. Burton is the reason I decided to pursue a math degree," Amara Gammon, North Point graduate, said. "His dedication to each and every student plus his passion for mathematics continues to inspire high schoolers just like I was inspired."

His dedication to see students succeed is what sets him apart from the average educator. "He is concerned about the whole student and



Joseph Burton, left, goes over a math assignment with North Point High School senior, Jordyn Riley, during class. Burton has been teaching at North Point since 2009.

every student, rather he has those students in his class or not," North Point Assistant Principal Cheryl Davis said.

Not only is he an influential teacher, but he has also made his mark in other areas at the school. Burton has served as a new teacher

mentor, gradebook coordinator and a leadership teacher. He has also been an assistant coach for the junior varsity (JV) baseball team, the assistant coach for varsity golf, a Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) coordinator and a public relations liaison for the school.

Burton's passion for teaching math began when he was in high school as a tutor for his eighth-grade algebra teacher. "She asked me if I had ever considered teaching," Burton said. "She commented on how I was able to explain the information and break it down for her students." It was on that day that he explored the idea of becoming a math teacher. Since then, he has been nominated and received awards. Burton has been named the 2018 Academic Eagles Most Inspirational Teacher, North Point's Exemplary Employee in 2019 and a 2021-2022 CCPS Teacher of the Year nominee. When he received notice that he was nominated for the LifeChanger of the Year Award he was excited, honored and humbled. "It is always amazing to be recognized for the hard work that I do, but it is humbling to know I am just one of the numerous teachers in this building and in this county who are doing amazing things every day," Burton said.

To learn more about Burton, check out the [video feature on CCPS' vimeo channel](#).

Superintendent announces administrative changes, effective July 1

The Board of Education of Charles County at its April 24 work session approved four administrative appointments. The appointments include two new Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) elementary principals, and the approval of two current CCPS acting principals to principals.

The Board was also briefed on a few administrative moves and the selection of the coordinator for the new Early Learning Center. All appointments and moves take effect July 1, 2023. The Board approved the following appointments.

New principals for the 2023-2024 school year:

- T.C. Martin Elementary School: Ethel Hosendorf.
- Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School: Portia Parker.
- Arthur Middleton Elementary School: Nicole Hawkins (moves from acting principal to principal at Middleton).
- Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School: Diedra Barnett (moves from acting principal at J.P. Ryon Elementary School to principal at Mitchell).

Administrative changes for the 2023-2024 school year:

- Candice Vallandingham-Adam, assistant principal at Mary B. Neal Elementary School, moves to the position of coordinator of the CCPS Early Learning Center.
- Nicholas Adam, principal at Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, moves to the principal role at J.P. Ryon Elementary School.
- Orlena Whatley, principal at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, moves to the principal role at General Smallwood Middle School.
- Todd Wonderling, principal at T.C. Martin Elementary School, moves to the principal role at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center.

Ethel Hosendorf begins her tenure as principal at T.C. Martin July 1. She is currently an assistant principal at Theodore G. Davis Middle School. Prior to beginning a career in administration, Hosendorf was a 10-year financial literacy and business education teacher at North Point High School. As an administrator, she has also held positions as an administrative intern and assistant principal at John Hanson Middle

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School. Hosendorf is a native of New York and has been an employee with CCPS since 2008.

Portia Parker starts her principalship at Dr. Mudd on July 1. She is currently an assistant principal at Mattawoman Middle School. Parker has been a CCPS administrator since 2017 when she first served as an administrative intern at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School. Parker was appointed as an assistant principal at Stoddert in 2018 and transitioned to her current role at Mattawoman in 2019. Prior to pursuing a career in administration, Parker was a math teacher at Mattawoman. Parker also taught math in North Carolina for several years before joining CCPS as a teacher in 2014.

Nicole Hawkins was named acting principal at Arthur Middleton last year. Hawkins' appointment moves her from an acting role to a principal role. She remains at Middleton as its principal and previously served as an assistant principal and teacher with CCPS for several years.

Diedra Barnett was named as acting principal at J.P. Ryon Elementary School last year. Her appointment to principal moves her from an acting principal role, and Barnett will begin her role as principal at Mitchell July 1. Prior to being named as Ryon's acting principal in 2022, Barnett was an assistant principal at Ryon for four years and taught at several CCPS schools prior to pursuing a role in administration.

As its coordinator, Candice Vallandingham-Adam will help to open the new CCPS Early Learning Center. The center is located on the La Plata campus of the College of Southern Maryland and CCPS is leasing the facility to expand

its current prekindergarten program enrollment. Vallandingham-Adam is currently assistant principal at Mary B. Neal Elementary School, a position that she has served in since 2018. Prior to her career with CCPS in administration, Vallandingham-Adam was an instructional resource and classroom teacher at various CCPS schools.

Nicholas Adam has been a CCPS principal since 2019. He was named principal at Mitchell in 2019 when the former principal was assigned to open the then new Billingsley Elementary School. Prior to his appointment as a CCPS principal, Adam was an assistant principal and teacher with CCPS.

Orlena Whatley has been a CCPS principal since 2014. She was first appointed as principal at Eva Turner Elementary School. She was named principal at Dr. Mudd in 2017 and was the 2020 CCPS Principal of the Year. Prior to joining CCPS, Whatley was a principal, assistant principal and teacher in Texas. Effective July 1, Whatley replaces General Smallwood Middle School Principal Brenda Tillotson, who announced she will retire at the end of the school year.

Todd Wonderling, current principal at T.C. Martin Elementary School, moves to the principal role at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center. Prior to his career serving as an elementary school principal, Wonderling taught at the Gwynn Center and served as its coordinator of programs for several years. Daphne Burns, principal at the Gwynn Center, has announced her retirement from CCPS at the end of this school year. Wonderling's new role takes effect July 1.

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

Instructional Assistant — All middle schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — All middle schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — All high schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

Kindergarten Instructional Assistant

— Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, 10-month position. High school diploma required, associate degree preferred. Apply by April 30.

Computer Analyst I — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. High School diploma and one to three years of technically progressive current work experience in information networks and user support. Applicable industry certifications desired. Apply by May 2.

Secretary to the Principal — Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required, and a minimum of two years of experience in

bookkeeping or office management. Apply by May 5.

Secretary to the Principal — Indian Head Elementary School, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required, and a minimum of two years of experience in bookkeeping or office management. Apply by May 5.

Building Service Assistant Manager — T.C. Martin Elementary School, 12-month position. High school diploma and one or more years of experience. Apply by May 9.

Mathematics Intervention Instructional Assistant — All elementary schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required, associate or bachelor's degree preferred. Apply by July 1.