



School News

Notebook

iRecycle Smart

CCPS will kick off the iRecycle Smart program Friday, Sept. 15, during the Charles County Fair.



A partnership with the Charles County Government, iRecycle Smart program aims to simplify the recycling process while making it more robust. Learn more at www.ccboe.com.

Staff appreciation days

National IT Professionals Day is Tuesday, Sept. 19, and Human Resources Professionals Day is Tuesday, Sept. 26.

Homecoming games

CCPS high schools are holding homecoming games this month and in October.

- **Thomas Stone High School** — 7 p.m., Friday, Sept. 22;
- **St. Charles High School** — noon, Saturday, Sept. 23;
- **Henry E. Lackey High School** — 7 p.m., Friday, Sept. 29;
- **La Plata High School** — 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 6
- **Westlake High School** — 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 6;
- **Maurice J. McDonough High School** — 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 13.
- **North Point High School** — 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 20.

Football previews are available on the [CCPS YouTube page](#).



A celebration

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. This year's theme is **Latinos: Driving Prosperity, Power and Progress in America**. Top, Berry Elementary School students welcome Board members and Superintendent Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., to kick off Hispanic Heritage Month. Top right, a group of CCPS students and their families, joined Board members and staff on Tuesday, Sept. 12, at the Board meeting to accept a resolution. Bottom right, Berry kindergarten students, Julian Ortiz, left, Aitana Lopez Garcia and Marvin Hernandez Martinez wear traditional garb and the jersey of a favorite fútbol team.



Early Learning Center, La Plata opens CCPS staff, elected officials attend ribbon cutting for new PreK

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) recently opened its newest facility dedicated to expanding early childhood program access for young learners. In an Aug. 24 ribbon-cutting ceremony, CCPS staff was joined by elected officials, teachers, students and College of Southern Maryland (CSM) representatives to celebrate the opening of the new Early Learning Center, La Plata..

Superintendent of Schools Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., said she is excited to officially welcome students to the center. "One of our strategic plan focus areas is expanding prekindergarten access for more families. With the opening of this center, we were able to accept an additional 90 prekindergarten students to our program this school year. CCPS will continue to explore ways in which we can offer

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Notebook

Early dismissal

A two-hour early dismissal for students is Wednesday, Sept. 27.

Redistricting committee

Parents and community members can apply for a chance to be selected for a spot on the Elementary School Redistricting Committee. The group will be responsible for developing an attendance zone for Elementary School No. 23. The deadline to apply is 5 p.m., Oct. 5. For more information and a link to the application, [click here](#).

Save the date, Oct. 12

Superintendent of Schools Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., is hosting a State of the Schools event at 6 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 12 at St. Charles High School in Waldorf. Navarro will open the event with a full group presentation in the school auditorium to share the state of the school system and how it relates to the three focal areas of the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Strategic Plan.

Attendees will then transition to pre-established breakout rooms, designated by school/center, where they will be able to hear more about their child’s school improvement plan, how it ties to the CCPS strategic plan, ask questions, and give any feedback. Please save the date on your calendars.

EAP benefit available

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through ComPsych is dedicated to helping CCPS employees improve their health and well-being through quality services. The EAP benefit is no cost to employees and their dependents, and it is also confidential.

ComPsych representatives have considerable expertise and clinical knowledge. They are well versed in helping clients of all ages, from young children to the elderly. The EAP can assist with many issues, including stress, depression, anxiety, workplace difficulties, substance abuse, marital problems, family or parenting conflicts, grief, violence and unhealthy lifestyles. To learn more visit the Employee Assistance Program page at www.cbboe.com or go to the website for [ComPsych](http://ComPsych.com).

Community Pride

Community schools provide services to students, families

The Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Community Schools program focuses on connecting students, families and surrounding communities to the resources needed in order to survive. Some of these resources include providing additional mentors and restorative coaches, expanding school-based health center services, providing healthy meals in and out of school, and access to mental health practitioners. With nearly 360 community schools throughout Maryland, CCPS currently has five schools that receive supports from the program.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) describes the Community Schools program as one that is supported by the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future which is designed to “improve the quality of education for Maryland students and close achievement gaps,” according to the MSDE website.

Since the establishment of the first CCPS community school, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School during the 2021-2022 school year, four other schools have become eligible for services provided by the program. Andrill Harris was the first CCPS community school coordinator serving at Dr. Mudd. Indian Head Elementary School was the second CCPS community school during the 2022-2023 school year. During 2023-2024 school year, Dr. Gustavus Brown, J.P. Ryon and Eva Turner elementary schools also receive support as CCPS community schools.

“Our Community Schools program is entering our third year in Charles County Public Schools. MSDE identifies eligible schools each school year and notifies our school system which schools are eligible to receive Concentration of Poverty grant funds through the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future Fund,” Bethany Goodwin,



Jessica Gray, community school coordinator at Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School, back left, Marissa Ackerman, community school coordinator at Indian Head Elementary School, left, Andrill Harris, community school coordinator at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, Wanda Proctor, community school coordinator at J. P. Ryon Elementary School and James Blakeney, community school coordinator at Eva Turner Elementary School, attend a community schools event at St. Charles High School.

CCPS Community School District Liaison, said. “MSDE is encouraging the growth of community schools throughout the state of Maryland.”

Each CCPS Community School has a Community School coordinator (CSC), one who serves as a leader and liaison within a community school. “I look forward to working collaboratively to build a strong school community that knows and understands how to rely on and trust each other because we genuinely care,” Marissa Ackerman, coordinator at Indian Head, said.

Coordinators ensure that families’ social, emotional, physical and academic needs are being met. “This year I am excited that our team was able to bring an on-site food pantry and a school-based health center that will open next year. Most of all, I look forward to watching our students grow in every way knowing they are safe, loved, and cared for at Indian Head,” Ackerman said.

“I anticipate continued growth of this program that will extend to additional schools within the next few years,” Goodwin said. Read more about the community schools program at www.cbboe.com.



Members of the Board of Education of Charles County, Superintendent Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., CCPS staff and representatives of Charles County Government joined staff of the Early Learning Center, La Plata, last month for a ribbon cutting. The ELC expands the prekindergarten program in the county.

ELC

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early education and support to our youngest learners,” Navarro said.

The Early Learning Center, also known as ELC, is located on the CSM La Plata campus and features five prekindergarten classrooms that can serve between 80 to 100 students. The first day of school for all CCPS prekindergarten students is Tuesday, Sept. 5.

Last fall, CCPS and CSM partnered to explore ways in which the college’s vacant St. Charles Children’s Learning Center space could be utilized for education.

The prekindergarten program at the center is the same as those held in CCPS elementary schools, with students completing the program and advancing to kindergarten at their zoned school.

Students attending the center are zoned for the location through their home address. Some classrooms are inclusion classrooms

with preschool-aged special needs students as well as typically developing peers. The CCPS prekindergarten curriculum will be followed and CCPS is providing bus transportation and meals for all students.

Through an agreement signed with CSM in 2022, CCPS is set to lease the Early Learning Center on the CSM La Plata campus for two consecutive years with an option for an additional lease after June 2026.

The building will be used by CCPS for its prekindergarten program as part of the school system’s expansion of early learning opportunities, as well as to fulfill the early childhood education requirement found in the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation.

One of the pillars of the Blueprint is the expansion of early childhood education program access.

By expanding access to high-quality early

education programs, CCPS is preparing students for school readiness.

“CSM is excited for Charles County Public Schools to be leasing this center to support launching this PreK programming,” said CSM President Yolanda Wilson, Ed.D. “Access to early learning is so important. This Early Learning Center will help develop bright futures for our community’s youngest learners by preparing them for kindergarten – socially and academically as well as emotionally and physically. And through the guidance of their Charles County Public Schools teachers, these children will begin to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning as they achieve early educational milestones.”

To learn more about the CCPS prekindergarten program, visit the school system website at <https://www.ccboe.com/departments/prekindergarten>.

CCPS introduces Canvas Learning Management System for SY 2024-25

Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will launch Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) across all grade levels. The web-based LMS will revolutionize the way staff engage with course materials, assessments and collaborations.

Canvas trainings will be offered throughout the current school year via CCPS Professional Learning starting on Sept. 15 and Nov. 10.

CCPS technology staff created a dedicated support network for staff including:

- The email CANVAS@ccboe.com for CCPS specific questions regarding Canvas including log in issues.
- A dedicated phone and chat are available within the Help Menu inside of the [Canvas instance](#).
- Training materials and news posts will be available through the [CCPS Canvas LMS SharePoint Site](#).

Staff members who would like to share ideas or take part in a volunteer pilot group this year, can complete an interest form before Sept. 30. To access the Microsoft form, [click here](#).

CCPS students bring talent, skill to ACT-SO competition

Two Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students took home medals from the National NAACP ACTO-SO competition held earlier this summer in Boston. ACT-SO — the NAACP’s Afro-Academic, Culture, Technological and Scientific Olympics — is an achievement program open to high school students of African American descent who are in Grades 9 to 12.

Isaiah DeLeonard, a rising junior at La Plata High School, earned a gold medal in the music composition category and a silver in the architecture category. Jonathan Haralson, a rising senior at North Point High School, nabbed the bronze medal in the engineering category.

DeLeonard and Haralson competed in the national competition after earning a top spot at the local contest held this spring hosted by the Charles County branch of the NAACP. Four other CCPS students who won gold medals at the local competition also attended and competed at the nationals.

Niya Cox, a rising senior at Westlake High School, competed in the drawing category; Kaylee Davis, a North Point graduate who attends Bowie State University, competed in the classical music instrumental category; Shaniyah Hall, a rising junior at North Point, took part in the photography and poetry performance categories; and Haili Powell, a rising senior at La Plata, competed in the contemporary music vocal performance and written poetry categories. Powell also performed during the national competition’s award ceremony.



Isaiah DeLeonard, left, of La Plata High School, and Jonathan Haralson of North Point High School placed in the national ACT-SO competition.

Designed to recruit, stimulate and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among Black high school students, ACT-SO is a yearlong program culminating in a national competition held in July in conjunction with the NAACP National Convention.

With more than 30 fields in six categories, there is an ACT-SO competitive area for almost every interest. Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), performing arts, humanities, visual arts, business and culinary arts are the categories with various fields nested in each.

To learn more about ACT-SO, visit the program's website at naacp.org.

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Personnel

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

Job openings

Early Childhood Instructional Assistant — Early Learning Center, La Plata, 10-month position. A high school diploma and experience working with children are required. Apply by Sept. 18.

Front Office Secretary — J.P. Ryon Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by Sept. 18.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — Billingsley Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma and experience working with children are required. Apply by Sept. 21.

Academic Mentor — Location to be determined, 10-month position. A Maryland Standard Professional Certificate II (SPC II) is required with a master's degree or an advanced professional certificate preferred. Apply by Dec. 31.

Art Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Aspire Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Dual Language Immersion Elementary Teacher — Arthur Middleton Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Elementary Science Teacher — All elementary schools, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

English Teacher — All high schools, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

JROTC Instructor — St. Charles High School, 11-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

JROTC Instructor — Henry E. Lackey High School, 11-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Special Education Teacher (secondary transition) — Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Social Studies Teacher — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Spanish Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Extra Pay Positions

Unified Tennis Coach — Henry E. Lackey High School. Apply by Sept. 29.