

School News

Notebook

Thanksgiving break

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is closed for Thanksgiving break from Wednesday, Nov. 22, to Friday, Nov. 24. [A Day of Thanksgiving and Service](#) is Thursday, Nov. 23, at St. Charles High School. A Turkey Trot 5K starts at 9 a.m. Registration for the run/walk is from 8 to 9 a.m. Chef Kendall Selby will cater a free Thanksgiving meal from noon to 3 p.m. Dinners are available for dine-in or to go. St. Charles is at 5305 Piney Church Road in Waldorf.

Teacher of the Year

Nominations for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Teacher of the Year are due by 2 p.m., Dec. 15. For more information about the nomination process, visit the [Latest News](#) section of www.ccboe.com.

Principal of the Year

CCPS Principal of the Year nominations are due by 2 p.m., Dec. 15. The principal chosen for the honor will also represent CCPS as the county finalist for *The Washington Post* Principal of the Year award. For nomination criteria, visit the [Latest News](#) section of www.ccboe.com.

Play schedule

CCPS high schools will continue staging [fall plays](#) after Thanksgiving break. Maurice J. McDonough High School is preparing "[Curtains](#)," a musical comedy whodunit. The shows are 7 p.m., Dec. 1 and 2, and 2 p.m. Dec. 3. The show is a teen edition of the show and is rated PG. Get tickets at mhsdrama303.booktix.net. La Plata High School takes a trip "[Into the Woods](#)." Shows are 6:30 p.m., Dec. 7 to 9. La Plata is at 6035 Radio Station Road in La Plata. Visit St. Charles High School and meet some pig in "[Charlotte's Web](#)," Dec. 8 through 10. Shows are at 7 p.m., Dec. 8 to 9, and 2 p.m. Dec. 9 to 10. For tickets, go to www.gofan.co.



Giving is a lifestyle

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building recently held its annual Thanksgiving food drive to benefit LifeStyles of Maryland Inc. and CCPS Community Schools. A week from Thanksgiving, LifeStyles staff stopped by Starkey with two large buses to collect the donation. Pictured top, Michele Grassinger, Kim Hudler and Megan Scholten prepare to help transfer items to LifeStyles buses.



Pictured above right, LifeStyles CEO Sandy Washington, left, greets Marissa Ackerman, Community School coordinator for Indian Head Elementary School. To read more about the donation visit the [Latest News](#) section of www.ccboe.com.

CCPS continues tradition of supporting United Way

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has a long-standing history as a United Way partner. Prior to the pandemic, school system employees supported the annual United Way giving campaigns. As recent as 2010, CCPS staff donated almost \$100,000 for the campaign year.

This year's campaign between CCPS and United Way of Southern Maryland kicked off earlier this month with an introduction of the program to school principals. Between now and Dec. 15, CCPS staff can opt to donate through a one-time pledge or payroll deduction. The United Way of Southern Maryland supports more than 30 local human service agencies in Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties. These agencies directly support families, adults and children, many of whom are connected to CCPS through a student.

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 programs United Way donations support is the Snack Sak program. Through the program, children receive backpacks of food and additional items for themselves and their families. The Snack Sak program directly supports many CCPS students and families.

CCPS staff can make a one-time donation or pledge through CCPS payroll deduction. One-time donations can be made online at <https://www.unitedwaysouthernmaryland.org/pledge-card-charles-county-public-schools>. Staff can also use the online form to set up payroll deductions. The CCPS donation campaign runs through Dec. 15. Payroll deduction through United Way will start in January with the Jan. 5, 2024, paycheck. To learn more, visit [MyCCPS](#) at www.ccboe.com.

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The Charles County public school system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices. For inquiries, please contact Kathy Kiessling, Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator (students) or Nikial M. Majors, Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator (employees/ adults), at Charles County Public Schools, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, MD 20646; 301-932-6610/301-870-3814. For special accommodations call 301-934-7230 or TDD 1-800-735-2258 two weeks prior to the event. 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).



Mt. 'Hopeful' tradition

For 34 years, [Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School](#) has invited community members to a Thanksgiving Community Dinner. What started as bringing parents into classrooms for early Thanksgiving celebrations has grown into a

schoolwide event with entertainment provided by Mt. Hope students and Henry E. Lackey High School students volunteering. Invitations are sent home with students and to local churches and senior centers. The dinner was the brainchild of Mt. Hope guidance counselor, the late Elvira Barnes, and kept up by retired secretary Connie Bannister. This year's event was coordinated by parent liaison Betty Clark and secretary Ellen Dobry. Clockwise from top left, Lackey freshman Sadie Davis, left, chats with Pastor Mark Hashagen of the First Baptist Church of Welcome, twin brothers and fifth graders Malachi, left, and Micheal-Angelo Daniels perform "Ode to Joy" on the violin, and the Crimson and Violet Circle of Friends attend the celebration.

CCPS staff earns Global Seal of Biliteracy

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff members recently earned the Global Seal of Biliteracy.

The Seal of Biliteracy is a credential that was first established in 2008 in California and adopted by Maryland in 2016.

The recognition is given to educators and students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages and can be used as a credential for academic and employment purposes.

Thirty-four CCPS staff members recently earned the seal for proficiency in American Sign Language, French, Italian, Korean or Spanish.

American Sign Language (ASL)

Niya Costley.

French

Guilene Sitchom-Kamdem.

Italian

Maria Kayes.

Korean

Terri Berger.

Spanish

Jacqueline Alcantara-Gore, Glorynel Alicea, Perla Arnold, Nelcy Avila, Samuel Carter, Luis Daboin, Nancy Dennehy, Inmaculada Dove, Isabel Dunbar, Maggie Fitzgerald, Wendy Golder, Jenny Herrera, Maria Higginbotham, Evelin Iraheta, Christina Johnson, Pilar Lepe, Vanessa Evangelista Medina, Jennifer Mikula, Luciano Morales, Romaira Moss, Maria O'Connor-Buckingham, Viridiana Reyes-Oscana, Tania Saguid, Jahan Savage-Spriggs, Danielle Smith, Deborah Spencer, Rose Trinidad-Lopez, Patricia Valle, Keara Watkins and Dina Willet.

EAP available for staff

The [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) provider, ComPsych GuidanceResources, can assist staff who are having issues with stress, depression, anxiety, workplace difficulties, substance abuse, marital problems, family or parenting conflicts, grief, violence unhealthy lifestyles, along with every day issues. For additional information call toll-free at 877-465-0865. The TTY phone number is 800-697-0353.

Paperless tix start Dec. 5

Spectators of Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) athletic events will gain admission starting Dec. 5 solely through the [gofan.co](#) app. Tickets must be purchased digitally with no cash or other forms of payment accepted. The CCPS Senior Citizen Event Card will continue to be honored for guests 60 and older for certain events. CCPS employee badges will be honored for one free admission. Anyone leaving the event without authorization will have to pay to re-enter the venue. Learn more at [www.ccboe.com](#).