

School News



Notebook

Report card released

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recently released new student performance data for the [Maryland Report Card](#). The state report card features information about school accountability measures including student performance, academic growth, school quality, student attendance and school climate. Data included is from the 2022-2023 school year.

Board meeting Jan. 9

The Board of Education of Charles County will meet 1 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 9, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. Student and staff recognition starts at 4:30 p.m. with public forum beginning at 6 p.m. A meeting agenda will be posted at www.cboc.com after winter break.

Inclement weather

If weather conditions pose a potential hazard to students, school officials may dismiss students early, delay the opening of schools or close schools for the day. The most reliable sources of [school closing information](#) are the school system's 24-hour information line and website. The 24-hour information line is 301-934-7410 or 301-932-6656. Television stations do not always run the most reliable information regarding delays and closures.

On the cover

Tammy Dudley, left, kindergarten instructional assistant (IA), J.C. Parks Elementary School, and Charles McCoy, computer teacher, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, were among the [staff members who were honored by the Board of Education](#) at its Nov. 14 meeting.



Happy holidays are in the cards

Each year, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students submit card entries for the Superintendent to use for various seasonal messages to staff and the community. Each winner has 25 cards made using their design to distribute to family and friends. Clockwise from top left are designs by Evelyn Holt of Piccowaxen Middle School; Praise Nkwo of William B. Wade Elementary School; and Heidi Yauch of North Point High School.

CCPS winter break operating schedule

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) administrative offices are closed for winter break, Monday, Dec. 25, 26 and Jan. 1. Schools are closed Monday, Dec. 25, through Monday, Jan. 1, for winter break.

Schools, offices and buildings reopen on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024, as noted in the Parent Handbook/Calendar.

During winter break, some CCPS high schools may have athletic events such as games or practices planned during the day. These events will occur as planned.

A list of planned athletic competitions for December is posted online at www.smacathletics.org.

Additionally, the indoor pools at Henry E.

Lackey and North Point high schools, as well as the Donald M. Wade Aquatic Center at St. Charles High School, will be open during winter break through Charles County Parks and Recreation.

The following is the winter break operating schedules for all three pools.

- Closed Dec. 22-26.
- Open Dec. 27-30, noon to 5 p.m.
- Closed Dec. 31-Jan. 2.

Pools will reopen on Jan. 3 at normal time.

Pool schedules are subject to change and are posted at <https://www.charlescountyparks.com/recreation/aquatics>.

CCPS posts calendar information on the school system website at www.cboc.com.

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Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.cbboe.com/jobs/current-openings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job openings

Student Data Technician
— St. Charles High School, 12-month position. Apply by Jan. 5.

Human Resources Specialist
— 12-month position, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Apply by Jan. 12.

Bus Driver — Annex 1, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Door decor

Staff at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School are getting into the holiday spirit with decorated doors featuring Winter Wonderland themes.



EAP services available for CCPS staff

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has an [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) provider, ComPsych GuidanceResources, that can assist staff members who are having issues with stress, depression, anxiety, workplace difficulties, substance abuse, marital problems, family or parenting conflicts, grief, violence and unhealthy lifestyles.

The EAP can also help staff members who need assistance with finding child and elder care, hiring movers or home repair contractors, divorce, adoption, family law, wills and trusts, retirement planning and taxes, relocation services, mortgage and insurance, and budgeting, debt and bankruptcy.

A [video detailing benefits of the EAP program](#) can be found at MyCCPS.

CCPS partners with Hazel Health for teletherapy services

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is partnering with [Hazel Health](#) to offer short-term telemental health services for students in sixth through 12th grade. The service is free and offered to all students regardless of insurance and/or immigration status, or a family's ability to pay.

Initially the service will be offered at middle and high schools. It may be offered to elementary schools in the future. Hazel Health offers two ways students can receive virtual counseling — at home or at school. The at-home visits will be available prior to, and during winter break, while school appointments will start in mid-January.

For children to receive at-home virtual visits, they must have access to a web-enabled device and a person 18 and older must be in the vicinity of the child during the visit. At-school visits take place during school hours on a Hazel Health-provided iPad in an area designated for the sessions and coordinated by a trained staff member. Students are afforded privacy during at-school visits.

“Hazel Health is a leader in the field of telemental health services,” Michael Blanchard, PsyD, CCPS supervising school psychologist, said. “The advantage of using telemental health services is that equitable availability of service can be in place for

families with limited access to outside providers and resources.”

Students can be referred for services by parents/guardians or school staff members such as counselors, school psychologists or pupil personnel workers.

Parents must consent for their child to receive services if school staff refers them. Hazel Health employs bilingual therapists and half of its counseling staff identifies as Black, indigenous or people of color.

Licensed therapists meet virtually with students who are in school or at home and offer brief solution-focused therapy in six to 10 sessions following an intake visit. Most sessions take approximately 30 minutes with the student, their parents and the clinician determining how often the child will attend sessions. Hazel Health will continue to follow up with families for an additional six months following the last meeting to ensure the student is progressing. If it is determined that a child needs long-term mental health support, CCPS and Hazel Health staff can help the family find a local provider.

To learn more and sign up for services, visit Hazel Health's CCPS site at <https://my.hazel.co/ccboe/info>.