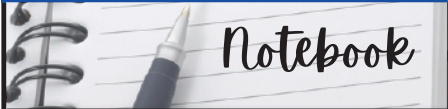




School News



Presidents Day

Schools and offices will be closed Monday, Feb. 19, for Presidents Day.

Retirement planning

Empower will hold virtual retirement planning sessions on “Building a Foundation of Financial Wellness,” at various times Feb. 20-22, with additional sessions set for Feb. 28. To learn more, [click here](#).

Thank a driver

Thank a bus driver and bus attendant on Thursday, Feb. 22, for School Bus Driver and Attendant Appreciation Day.

Teacher of the Year

The CCPS 2024 Teacher of the Year ceremony is 5 to 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 22, in the St. Charles High School auditorium. The event recognizes excellence in teaching and will honor those nominated for the 2024 Teacher of the Year program by their schools. From the six finalists, the CCPS Teacher of the Year will be named. The inclement weather date is March 7. CCPS also nominates one of the finalists for *The Washington Post’s* Teacher of the Year program. The *Post’s* nominee will be announced in the spring.

Black History Expo

Maurice J. McDonough High School’s Key Club will hold a Black History Expo 1-3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 24, at the school. Performances will be by McDonough students, shop from local vendors with food available for purchase. Tickets are \$3 for children ages 5-12 and McDonough students with student ID, and \$5 for people older than 12. McDonough is at 7165 Marshall Corner Road, Pomfret.

100 days of school

Top right, Berry Elementary School kindergarten teacher Anna Lahman, left, and Brenda Hill, an instructional assistant, get ready for a day of teaching young whippersnappers on the 100th day of school earlier this month on Feb. 6. Bottom right, kindergarten IAs at C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School Kandace Johnson, left, and Alaya Chang go gray for the 100th day. Elementary school staff makes a big deal out of the 100-day marker. “It’s a milestone,” Berry kindergarten teacher Li-ane Chan said. “We are 100 days smarter,” Johnson said. “And 100 days brighter.”



Black History Month event set for Feb. 20

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the Bel Alton High School Alumni Association are hosting a panel discussion Tuesday, Feb. 20, at St. Charles High School.

An Evening of Learning: The African American Experience — From Segregated to Integrated Schools in Charles County will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m., with panelists talking about their experiences as students.

Jean V. Wills, Robert L. Martin and Cora Marshall are slated to be panelists with Isaiah DeLeonard, a La Plata High School junior, fa-

cilitating the discussion.

Matthew Wills, chairman of the Bel Alton High School Alumni Association, will deliver special remarks.

Time will be allotted for audience questions and comments.

The panel discussion will be livestreamed at www.ccboe.com.

St. Charles is 5305 Piney Church Road in Waldorf. Attendees should park in the parking lot area located next to the school gymnasium entrance.

Notebook

On the cover

The Board of Education [recognized outstanding employees](#) at its Feb. 13 meeting. Eight staff members were honored due to January’s Board meeting held virtually because of inclement weather. The two additional staff members who were set to be honored at the January meeting will be recognized at the March meeting. From left are Leland Burns, building service assistant manager, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School; Caren “Christie” Carpenter, secretary, Mary B. Neal Elementary School; Holly Smigal, learning resource teacher, Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School; and Lauren Washington, social studies teacher, Phoenix International School of the Arts (PISOTA).

Work session set

The Board of Education will hold a work session on Monday, Feb. 26, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 5980 Radio Station Road, La Plata.

Calendar

Earlier this school year, the Board of Education voted to amend the 2024-2025 school calendar moving the first day of the next school year for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students from Aug. 19 — as printed in the 2023-2024 hardcopy of the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) [Parent Handbook/Calendar](#) — to Monday, Aug. 26, 2024. Teachers will return for the 2024-2025 school year on Monday, Aug. 19, 2024. Because the handbook/calendars must be printed in advance of the current school year, some information listed may be changed or amended. Parents, students and staff are urged to consult the online version of the calendar for the most up-to-date information at the [Calendar section of www.ccboe.com](#).

EAP benefit

Visit www.guidanceresources.com for more information about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider, ComPsych GuidanceResources. [Learn more on MyCCPS](#).



Top, Westlake High School juniors A.J. Cruz, left, and Eric Ghrist launch into a game during the winter chess tournament. Left, Henry Hernandez, a second-grade student at William B. Wade Elementary School, maps out his next move.

CCPS students participate in chess tournament

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) held its annual winter chess tournament Feb. 10 at Henry E. Lackey High School.

There were 165 students competing in the tournament which was under the direction of Felix Cummings. Students in kindergarten through 12th grade participated and received a certificate and medal for taking part in the tournament. Each division had a top scorer — or champion.

The following students earned the champion award for their respective grade-level division.

- Maia Rivera, kindergarten, Dr. James Craik Elementary School.
- Shivam Nayak, first grade, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School.
- Alexander Trout, second grade, William B. Wade Elementary School.
- Janieffer Grace Silva, third grade,

Indian Head Elementary School.

- Alex Butson, fourth grade, Malcolm Elementary School.
- David Trout, fifth grade, Wade.
- Carlos Borders, sixth grade, Theodore G. Davis Middle School.
- Lionel Saravia, seventh grade, Mattawoman Middle School.
- Riley Kim, eighth grade, Mattawoman.
- Jonathan Fitzhugh, freshman, North Point High School.
- Mason Truesdell, sophomore, Maurice J. McDonough High School.
- Alfred Johann “A.J.” Cruz, junior, Westlake High School.
- Jason Evans, senior, Thomas Stone High School.

Special Education parental involvement survey

Parents and guardians of children who receive special education and related services will soon be mailed a parent involvement survey from the special education/early intervention division of the Maryland State Department of Education. The feedback provided will help guide efforts to

improve special education and related services in local school systems. The surveys are expected to be mailed this week and are due back by May 24. The mailed surveys will include a postage paid return envelope. The survey can also be completed online at <https://www.mdparentsurvey.com/>.

Stethem's Poole earns National Technical Honor Society honor roll status

Monique Poole, job placement coordinator and National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) advisor at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, recently was placed on the January NTHS Honor Roll for her hard work and dedication to Charles County Public Schools (CCPS).

Students in the Pharmacy Technician program and NTHS at the school nominated Poole for the recognition. Every month NTHS highlights an outstanding staff member, student, community member, advisor or administrator across the U.S. for their impact on student success in the technical society and Poole received the recognition in January.

Poole has been with CCPS for 16 years, first starting at Maurice J. McDonough High School as a teacher. At McDonough she taught English, language arts, theater, sports management, supplemental reading and the Maryland's Tomorrow program, a program to help increase the number of students that graduate from high school. She left teaching at McDonough to focus on her own kids but shortly after was asked to return to CCPS, but this time at Stethem as the job placement/work-based learning coordinator with the career and technical education (CTE) department.

"I was absolutely thrilled for her and so happy that she got the recognition that she deserves," Debra Koepper, Stethem office secretary, said about Poole's recognition. "The students are drawn to her. She is a very loving and caring person to all the kids, and they know that she cares about them. It's not just the CTE students, it's everyone," Koepper said. Poole



Monique Poole, far right, is pictured with students who are seniors in National Technical Honor Society and the Pharmacy Technician program at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center. From left are Caila Strickland, Sumia Eddie, Zoie Johnson and Ke-Nya Butler.

is known at the school as someone that others can depend on. "Mrs. Poole has positively impacted the community at Stethem through her relationship building with students and business partners," Stethem Principal Louis D'Ambrosio, said. "Her actions and connections enable students to achieve excellence."

Poole and Ava Morton, college and career advisor at Thomas Stone High School, helped students in NTHS get full ride scholarships to Coppin State University. Students in the program nominated Poole for the award because of how she "goes above and beyond" for the students in the program. "She is really the best person ever and she tries really hard to make

sure that this whole program continues in the future," NTHS President Makenna James, a senior, said. James along with other students in the Pharmacy Technician and NTHS program want to enter the medical field in the future. "I want to go to medical school and become a doctor," James said.

"I wish all kids could experience something like this," Poole said about the NTHS and CTE opportunities at the school. Her dedication to seeing students succeed is one of the many reasons why she was nominated for the award. "I'm used to giving the awards. I'm not good at receiving them and I am still surprised and humbled," she said.

State council to honor CCPS staff for contributions to gifted & talented programs

Several Charles County Public School (CCPS) teachers, content specialists, directors and students will be recognized during a Feb. 27 ceremony for their accomplishments in gifted education. The Maryland State Gifted & Talented Advisory Council is hosting the ceremony at North County High School in Glen Burnie.

Learning resource teachers were nominated by the CCPS Office of Gifted Education and teachers were nominated by the learning resource teachers at their schools. Teacher criteria for recognition includes working directly with gifted and talented students, ad-

ressing the needs of gifted and talented students beyond the required expectations, pursuing ongoing professional learning, and demonstrating peer leadership in gifted and talented education. Each teacher will receive a Teacher Accomplishment in Gifted and Talented Education Award. They are Nicholas Gardiner, a fifth-grade teacher at T.C. Martin Elementary School, Sherrie Gibney, a sixth-grade science teacher at Piccowaxen Middle School, Gemma Phillips, learning resource teacher at Martin, Joseph Rubilotta, learning resource teacher at Billingsley Elementary School and Fara Walent, seventh-grade lan-

guage arts teacher at Milton M. Somers Middle School.

Content specialists were nominated by the CCPS Office of Gifted Education. Criteria for recognition includes supporting access and implementation of gifted and talented, and/or advanced curriculum, pursuing professional learning, and demonstrating peer leadership in gifted and talented education and/or advanced curriculum. Each content specialist will receive a Non-Classroom Based Educator Accomplishment in Gifted and Talented Edu-

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Gifted con't from Page 1

cation Award. They are Leigh Ann Anderson, a science resource teacher for Grades kindergarten through eighth, Ian Buter, a content specialist for science, Latisha Burks, a content specialist for high school English, Laura Buzzell, a content specialist for high school mathematics and Allen Hopkins, a social studies resource teacher for Grades kindergarten through eighth.

Meighan Hungerford, director of elementary education, and Melissa Miesowitz, director of secondary education, were nominated by the CCPS Office of Gifted Education for their leadership in expanding and improving programs and services for gifted and talented students while allocating resources to gifted and talented programs and leading the expansion or improvement of parent and community partnerships in support of GT students and programs.

The awards ceremony will be 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 27, at North County High School in Glen Burnie. Tamlyn Hopkins of Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, and Alelia Pirrella of Berry Elementary School, will lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of the awards ceremony. [To read a list of the students who are being honored this year, click here.](#)

Movies at Science Center

The James E. Richmond Science Center has a slate of full-dome shows playing this month. James Hood's "Mesmerica" will play on Feb. 24 at 5, 6:15 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12 per person.



Other full-dome shows this month are "The Accidental Astronauts," "The Weather," "Follow the Drinking Gourd," "Saturn: Jewel of the Heavens," "Still We Rise," "Dream to Fly," "Civil Rights to Star Wars," and "Wonders of the Arctic."

Along with a movie viewing, guests can participate in interactive exhibits and see the NOAA Science on a Sphere.

Tickets are \$8 for adults and children four and older with children younger than four admitted free. CCPS staff members are admitted free with staff ID.

The Science Center is at St. Charles High School at 5305 Piney Church Road in Waldorf. Learn more about the center and its events at www.ccboe/sciencecenter.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

General Maintenance Worker — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A high school diploma or general education degree required with four years of work experience in similar and/or related field. Apply by Feb. 21.

Staff Accountant — Internal Controls and Audit — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or related field required. Master's degree and/or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) preferred. Apply before Feb. 22.

Student Data Technician — Piccowaxen

Middle School, 12-month employee. High School diploma or GED required. Apply by Feb. 22.

Community School Coordinator — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A master's degree in social work, counseling, pupil personnel or psychology/sociology, administration and supervision, or a related human service field is required with a minimum of three years of experience working in an educational setting. Apply by Feb. 26.

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

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

Technology Education Teacher — Loca-

tion to be determined, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

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

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

English/Language Arts Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Secretary — Office of Teaching and Learning — Starkey building, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Interpreters — Starkey building, part-time position. Must be fluent in English and have strong verbal/written communication skills in second language of need to CCPS. Position open until filled.