



Women's History Month

Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., talks about the [importance of advocating for equity, diversity and inclusion](#) for

women and girls in Charles County Public Schools in a video celebrating Women's History Month.



Redistricting hearing

An elementary school redistricting hearing is 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, April 2, at St. Charles High School, 5305 Piney Church Road, Waldorf. For more information, [click here](#).

Lightning Thief

"The Lightning Thief — The Percy Jackson Musical," — is 7 p.m., April 4 and 5, and 1 and 7 p.m., April 6, at North Point High School at 2500 Davis Road in Waldorf. For tickets, go to [nphs7040.ludus.com](#).

On the cover

Employees pictured above on the cover were honored by the Board of Education at the March 12 Board meeting. From left are Kelly Rodriguez, learning resource teacher, J.P. Ryon Elementary School; Shannon Elder, instructional assistant, General Smallwood Middle School; Lewis Young, building service manager, Thomas Stone High School; and Donna Depamphilis, IEP facilitator, William A. Diggs Elementary School. To read more, [click here](#).

Charles County Public Schools

School News



Above, Theresa Mitchell Dudley, right, vice president of the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), huddles with Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School fifth graders Vincent Hardesty and Emily Coblentz. Right, MSEA representatives visited Higdon as part of its Read Across America campaign. From left are Julie Rankin, reading resource teacher, Jacob Gerding,

What's in a name? Turns out — quite a lot



school librarian, Shannon Finnegan, Ed.D., Higdon principal, Dudley, Sean Heyl, president of Education Association of Charles County (EACC), and Dedra Van Gelder, content specialist for library media.

Theresa Mitchell Dudley, vice president of the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), recently visited Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, as part of MSEA's Read Across America's campaign to donate 20 diverse and engaging books to school libraries across the state to encourage reading among children and teens. Dudley was joined by Sean Heyl, president of the Education Association of Charles County (EACC) and Dedra Van Gelder, content specialist for library media for Charles County Public Schools who also read and played the ukulele prior to Dudley's visit. Dudley, who started her career in education as a substitute teacher in Prince George's County

Public Schools before becoming an elementary and middle school teacher eventually leading to her becoming active in teachers' unions, told Amy Segars' students she was once a fourth-grade student with ADHD who had a tumultuous home life. Her parents had their own issues and if it wasn't for teachers who took her under their wings and saw something in her and fostered her gifts and intelligence, she doesn't know where she might have ended up. Dudley read "What's Your Name," written and illustrated by Bethanie Deeney Murguia and reminded students that their name was an important part of who they are.

Calendar change reminder about 2024 first day

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](#).

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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

Coordinator — Early Learning Center, Waldorf, 12-month position — A master's degree and Advanced Professional Certificate with Administrator II endorsement required, and Early Childhood Certification preferred. Apply by April 11.

General Maintenance Worker — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required. Four years of experience in similar or related field required. Apply by April 10.

CCPS welcomes Lewis as Director of Elem. Education

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) recently announced the administrative appointment of McKenna Lewis, Ed.D., as the Director of Elementary Education.

The Board of Education of Charles County at its March 12 meeting approved the appointment of Lewis to the role. Her appointment is effective July 1.

Lewis is currently principal at Heather Hills Elementary School with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS). She will replace current Director of Elementary Education Meighan Hungerford, who has announced her plans to retire at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

In accepting the appointment, Lewis told the Board she is excited to join the CCPS leadership team.

"I could talk forever about my excitement in joining Charles County Public Schools. I am passionate about students, student outcomes and seeing students grow. I am also dedicated to taking care of the adults that I work with and want to make sure I can provide that support, too. I look forward to my role in telling part of the student story and am excited to delve deep into the data and do the work with you all to support the community," Lewis said.

Lewis has been an elementary school principal with PGCPS since 2018. Under her leadership at both Heather Hills and James H. Harrison elementary schools, student performance and achievement has grown on county and state assessments. Lewis strives to collaborate with education stakeholders to ensure increased services



**McKenna
Lewis, Ed.D.**

and resources for students are available and facilitates professional learning to build knowledge and skills among school administrators, teachers, staff, parents and families.

During her tenure as a principal with PGCPS, Lewis has been committed to ensuring equitable practices among staff to ensure students with disabilities, advanced learners, English language learners and students in poverty receive the same education as their peers. Lewis was also integral in developing a talented and gifted learning community during her time as an assistant principal and academic facilitator with Imagine Foundations charter school, also located in Prince George's County.

Her administrative career in education also includes an assistant principal role with The SEED School of Maryland in Baltimore, and Dean of Student Support at KIPP-Ujima Village Academy with Baltimore County Public Schools. Lewis began her career in education as a sixth-grade math teacher with the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Hungerford will work with Lewis until she retires to help her transition into the role.

Lewis is a School Improvement Leadership Academy Fellow with the University of Maryland. She is also certified through the National Association of Elementary School Principals as a national principal mentor.

Lewis obtained her Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership, K-12, from Grand Canyon University. She has an Education Specialist certification in special education from The George Washington University. Additionally, Lewis obtained her Master of Arts in Teaching with a focus on elementary education from American University, and a Bachelor of Arts in mass media arts from Hampton University.

Hazel Health comes to elementary schools in April

[Hazel Health](#), an online telemental health service available free to Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) middle and high school students, will soon be offered to elementary school students.

Hazel Health therapists are currently serving more than 100 middle and high school students.

Starting April 15, appointments will open for elementary school students who are in need short-term mental health support from licensed medical professionals. Hazel Health offers two ways stu-

dents can receive virtual counseling — at home or at school.

Elementary school principals are preparing for the program and school staff will be trained the week of April 8 to prepare for the launch on April 15. Parents and guardians can complete a consent form for their child to receive Hazel Health services at school. On April 15, parents and guardians will be able to begin signing up their children for appointments with Hazel Health. [Read more at \[www.ccboe.com\]\(http://www.ccboe.com\)](#).