



Charles County Public Schools

# General Smallwood Middle School

Community Engagement – School Renaming Overview

# Background



- Over the past several years, the Board of Education of Charles County has received requests to rename schools named after individuals presumed to have been slave owners.
- In 2023, the Board revised its school name policy (Policy 7230) to include a process to follow regarding the renaming of a school or facility.
- In February 2024, the NAACP made a request during public comment for the Board to rename schools named after individuals who were slave owners and requested the Board start with Smallwood M.S.
- Following Policy 7230, the Board requested and was provided at its April 2024 meeting an overview of the reasons for the naming of the school, a brief history of General Smallwood, and an estimate for costs related to renaming the school.

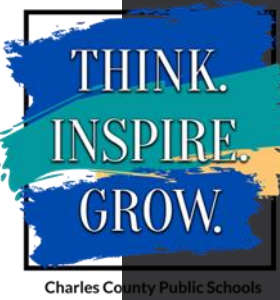
# Purpose

Prior to deciding whether to rename Smallwood M.S., the Board requested the Smallwood community be provided with opportunities to share feedback about possibly renaming the school.

- Excerpt from Policy 7230:

The Board may not vote on the decision to rename a school until holding at least three intervening Board meetings after notification to the specific school community... The Superintendent shall implement a process for developing recommendations to the Board on the new name of the school facility.

# Who was General William Smallwood?



- William Smallwood was born in 1732 and grew up in Charles County, Maryland
- The Smallwood family had been wealthy plantation owners for several generations prior to William Smallwood's birth.
- In 1761 he took over his father's old position as a Charles County delegate to the assembly and served for eleven years prior to the Revolutionary War.
- He joined Charles County's committee of correspondence in 1774, a united political organization working against the British and spreading information to the public.
- In 1776, he began service in the Revolutionary War, as colonel and then brigadier general of the First Maryland Regiment.
- He advanced to major general based on military campaigns in New York, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas and Virginia.
- Smallwood's role in the Revolutionary War left behind a mixed legacy.

*Source: Archives of Maryland – Biographical Series*

# General William Smallwood



- In 1783, Smallwood and other Maryland officers founded the Maryland Society of the Cincinnati and Smallwood was elected the society's first president.
- By 1790, Smallwood owned 4,350 acres in the county. General Smallwood was a slave owner and much of the work was accomplished by the 56 enslaved persons living on the plantation.
- Smallwood served as Maryland's governor between 1785 to 1788.
- After his governorship, Smallwood continued to maintain his plantation and later became a member of the Maryland Senate in 1791.
- William Smallwood died on February 12, 1792. He never married and never had children.
- Despite being the wealthiest resident in Charles County at the time of his death, Smallwood was in debt, a burden which fell upon his surviving relatives.
- Smallwood's reputation and Revolutionary War record persisted, allowing his family to receive 1,100 acres of bounty land from the federal government in 1816.
- His house, called Smallwood's Retreat, and the remaining 984 acres were established as a state park in 1958.

*Source: Archives of Maryland – Biographical Series*

# Chronology of Naming General Smallwood Middle School



- **July 1953** – Board hears presentations to name the school as either Lackey High School or Potomac Heights Junior/Senior High School
- **August 1953** – Board approves the school's name as Lackey Junior/Senior High School
- **July 1968** – Board approves a five-member committee designated to research and recommend a new name for Lackey Junior/Senior High School
- **August 1968** – Board report that committee had met and would “...run an article in the local newspapers requesting suggested names.”
- **January 1969** – Board report that the committee chairman, “was going to suggest, in writing, the name of General Smallwood for the old Lackey High School.”
- **February 1969** – Board approves the renaming of the old Lackey High School as “General Smallwood Middle School” by unanimous vote.

# Why the School was Named General Smallwood Middle School



Below is a list of reasons why General Smallwood Middle School received its name, according to Mr. John H. McWilliams. Mr. McWilliams is the son of the Committee Chairman that facilitated the renaming of the school in 1968-69. He has completed extensive research on the life of General Smallwood.

- Revolutionary War Heroism (Old Line State).
- Close relationship with George Washington.
- Governor of Maryland.
- Membership and support of Christ Church – Durham Parish.

# CCPS Mission/Board Values



## Mission and Core Values

The mission of Charles County Public Schools is to provide an opportunity for all school-aged children to receive an academically challenging, quality education that builds character, equips for leadership, and prepares for life, in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

1. The Board values collaborative, meaningful relationships with all stakeholders to include parents/legal guardians, students, teachers, staff, administrators, Board members, state and local elected officials, and members of the community at large.
2. The Board believes in equity for all students, understanding that some students require additional resources in order to receive a quality education.
3. The Board values equity as a personal and professional responsibility and will strive to create inclusive learning environments in which every child is able to achieve her/his highest potential.
4. The Board will maintain rigorous standards and high expectations for all students as keys to academic excellence and lifelong learning.



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## Mission and Core Values

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5. The Board believes there is value in diversity and all students and staff members are endowed with unique talents and entitled to mutual respect.

6. The Board values and promotes practices that ensure a safe and orderly learning and work environment.

7. The Board will responsibly advocate for funding to operate an outstanding school system and expects to be held accountable for allocating that funding to meet system needs.

# GSMS Mission/Core Values



Charles County Public Schools

## Mission and Core Values

Our mission is for all students to receive a rigorous, high-quality education in a positive environment in which all students are respected and supported. We will be guided by the following beliefs:

1. We are student centered.
2. We strive for academic excellence and have high expectations for all staff and students.
3. We encourage an open line of respectful communication between leadership, staff, students and parents.
4. Staff is professional, prepared and planned every day.
5. We create a safe and orderly environment, which is fair, and ethical that supports diversity and we are a bully free zone.
6. We work as a team. As they say, "Teamwork makes the dream work!"
7. We believe in developing the whole student by providing opportunity and encouraging students to participate in extracurricular activities.
8. We believe that students are most successful when parents are involved in their child's education. The educational program should be the shared responsibility of all stakeholders: the school, home, community and the student.

# Cost Analysis of Renaming GSMS

- **School marquee:** \$10,000 for a traditional sign, \$70,000 for an LED Digital Sign
- **Exterior school lettering:** \$35,000, lettering on two sides of the building
- **School graphic window film:** \$3,000
- **School plaques:** \$10,000
- **School banners:** \$1,000
- **Athletic uniforms (middle school tournaments):** \$5,500
- **Total estimated costs:** \$64,500 - \$124,500 depending on selection of the sign

# Community Engagement/Outreach



- **Who are our stakeholders?**
  - Students, staff, families, alumni, Smallwood feeder school communities, faith-based organizations, service providers, elected officials and advocacy groups.
- **How CCPS will engage.**
  - Online feedback survey.
  - In-person and virtual community meetings.
    - Virtual meeting recording shared with stakeholders.
  - Class presentation and survey for Smallwood students.
- **Feedback outreach timeline.**
  - May-June 2024.
  - Present summary of feedback to Board at its June 11 meeting.

# How can I provide feedback?



- Monday, May 20, In-person community meeting, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Smallwood M.S.
- Thursday, May 23, Virtual community meeting, 6 p.m., on Zoom.
  - [Register here.](#)
- Virtual meeting recording to be posted to CCPS website, [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com).
  - Presentation will be posted May 24.
  - Meeting recording and presentation will also be posted to <https://smallwood.ccboe.com/>.
- Provide survey feedback. Scan the QR code or visit [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com) between May 21 and June 4.
- Send questions, comments or feedback to [boardmail@ccboe.com](mailto:boardmail@ccboe.com).



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Thank you for viewing this presentation to learn about the school renaming process. CCPS would appreciate any feedback you have.