

# School News



## Memorial Day

Schools and offices will be closed on Monday, May 27, for Memorial Day.

## Graduation schedule

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will celebrate the Class of 2024 with graduations May 28 through 31 with outdoor ceremonies held at the Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf at 11765 St. Linus Drive in Waldorf.

**St. Charles High School** will graduate at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 28 with **Thomas Stone High School** holding commencement exercising at 1 p.m. on May 28. **La Plata High School** will graduate at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 29, and **Westlake High School** will graduate at 1 p.m. on May 29. At 9 a.m. on Thursday, May 30, **Henry E. Lackey High School** will graduate with **Maurice J. McDonough High School** holding its commencement ceremony at 1 p.m. on May 30. **North Point High School** will close out the 2024 graduation season with a 9 a.m. ceremony on Friday, May 31.

If inclement weather causes a change to the start time of any ceremony, the following inclement weather dates and times have been identified: May 28, 5 p.m.; May 29, 5 p.m.; May 30, 5 p.m.; May 31, 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.; and June 1, 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Schools will be closed on the day in which its senior class graduates. Students in Grades 9-11 will not have school on the day their school is closed. For more information about CCPS graduation ceremonies, visit <https://www.ccboe.com/quick-links/graduation-2024>.



## PARADES OF SUCCESS

It has become a Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) tradition — the Parade of Success. CCPS high school soon-to-be graduates return to elementary and middle schools they or their peers once attended one last time to show younger students what they are working toward. Clockwise from top, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School students cheer on St. Charles High School graduates; a Thomas Stone High School senior embraces her younger brother at J.P. Ryon Elementary School; J.C. Parks Elementary School students warmly welcome Maurice J. McDonough High School graduates; Mary H. Matula Elementary School students show signs of support for La Plata High School graduates; a Henry E. Lackey High School graduate documents his tour of General Smallwood Middle School; and North Point High School graduates visit Theodore G. Davis Middle School. Westlake High School's parade is scheduled for May 28.



## On the cover

The Board of Education honored outstanding employees at the May 21 meeting including Devette Price, school counselor, Eva Turner Elementary School; Tricia Harrington, special education teacher, Dr. Thomas Higdon Elementary School; and Matthew Walker, instructional assistant for the in-school retention program, Piccowaxen Middle School.

[To read more, click here.](#)

## Start, end dates

Start and end dates for certificated, support and food service staff are now available on the [front of MyCCPS at www.cbcoe.com](#).

Charts for FY 24 and FY 25 for staff can be found by scrolling midway through the page. Toggle from the Certificated, Support and Food Service options at the top of each chart to find the correct employment classification. Note that the dates are subject to change depending on inclement weather days.

## Canvas sessions

Teachers can sign up for Canvas microlearning sessions this summer. The 20-minute virtual sessions are offered over Zoom and are accessible over Canvas Commons. The sessions are recorded, so they can be played back. [For more information, head to MyCCPS](#). Look for the banner on the front page with a high-kicking panda (you'll know it when you see it.)

## EAP benefit

ComPsych is a national employee assistance and work/life company dedicated to helping CCPS employees improve their health and well-being through quality services. [The EAP benefit](#) is no cost to employees and their dependents, and it is also confidential. The EAP can assist with many issues, including stress, depression, anxiety, workplace difficulties, grief, violence, unhealthy lifestyles and other situations.

## Baseball Bash Aug. 23

The Education Association of Charles County (EACC), CCPS and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) will hold a [Back-to-School Baseball Bash](#) Friday, Aug. 23, at Regency Furniture Stadium. Tickets are on sale through Aug. 9 and can be purchased at <https://www.teameacc.org/events/>.



**North Point High School senior Maize Wimburgh is set to graduate on May 31. She has set a goal to make it to the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles as a road racer. Wimburgh has been a competitive cyclist since the age of 9.**

## 'Maizen' senior hopes to ride to Olympics

For Maize Wimburgh, the wheels started turning early in her life. Almost literally.

"I don't know if I can take credit for it," her father, Mark Wimburgh, said. "I was riding my bike and she kept wanting to ride with me. She was so persistent about it."

Wimburgh was only around 6 years old at the time — her father was a road cyclist. He was riding the kind of bicycles that are best suited for long distances and racing, not the sort that is for tooling around a neighborhood like a little kid was used to.

But Wimburgh didn't let up and eventually her father gave in. She got her first road bike for her seventh birthday. By the time Wimburgh was 8, she was riding 20 to 30 miles with her dad each time they went out. "Now when she goes out, it's nothing for her to do 100 miles," Mark said.

Wimburgh was introduced to road racing by a fellow rider. She won her first race, the Dawg Days of Summer in Crofton, when she was 9. At 10, she won the Mid-Atlantic Bicycle Racing Association (MABRA) BAR for Girls ages 9 and 10 and placed third the following year in the MABRA BAR. By the age of 13, she was recruited by the women's cycling team, Twenty20, to join its junior development program and started to race adult women. In 2021, Wimburgh made history when she became the first Black female to win the junior women's category at the USA

Cycling Amateur Road National Championships in Florida.

In some circles, she's known as "aMAIZEn," and now at 18, Wimburgh is on the precipice of graduating from North Point High School on May 31 and moving on to even bigger goals. Wimburgh is a member of Twenty24 Pro Cycling, one of the top women's cycling teams in the U.S. Twenty24 is known for developing and supporting female cyclists who have their sights set on making it to one of — if not the biggest — international stage.

"The goal is the Olympics," Wimburgh said of the 2028 LA summer games. "Who wouldn't want to qualify for the Olympics?"

To get there, Wimburgh continues to train, and train, then train harder. "Race harder than you train," she hears her father's voice telling her. "You should be training harder than you race."

She cycles every chance she gets which helps with her fitness goals and gets up well before school starts at 8:05 a.m. each morning to work out.

Cycling has given her more than a past time or active outlet. The sport offers a sense of community. "The community is great, it's diverse. There are people from different backgrounds," Wimburgh said.

To read more, visit the [Latest News section of www.cbcoe.com](#).

# School nurses — keeping schools healthy and strong

Band-aids, ice packs and mints are what most school nurses are known for, but this description could not be further than the actual function of their role. School nurses are the voice of the health expert in the building,” Shauna Simpson, school nurse at Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School, said.

School Nurse Day is Wednesday, May 8. The day was established to relay a better understanding of the role of nurses in schools, according to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). The week of May 6 through 12 is recognized as National Nurses Week with inclusion of National School Nurse Day introduced in 2003, according to the American Nurses Association (ANA). Through a partnership with the Charles County Department of Health, each CCPS school and center has a school nurse on site.



**Shelley  
Rutkai**

Shelley Rutkai, school nurse at John Hanson Middle School, has been with Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) for over 25 years and is of the longest standing nurses in the school system. She started her nursing career at United Medical Center, formerly known as Greater Southeast Community Hospital, in 1980, but her

journey in the medical field did not start there. At age 10 she witnessed the care that nurses gave toward her family member who was in the intensive care unit (ICU) at Greater Southeast. She was moved by it and wanted to do the same in the future.

“I remember thinking, ‘I want to grow up and do this’,” Rutkai said.

As soon as she graduated high school, she joined the nursing program at Catholic University of America. Her aunt attended the school as well and encouraged Rutkai to join the nursing program’s externship program. When she joined the program, she worked in the ICU at the hospital and noticed a familiar face. One of the nurses that tended to her family member was now her coworker in the same unit.

At Greater Southeast, Rutkai became a regular staff nurse and worked there until 1996. She noticed over time that a few of her work friends at the hospital were leaving. She

asked one of her friends where she was going, and she said that she started working for CCPS in the nursing department. Not too long after Rutkai joined her.

Rutkai started her journey with CCPS in 1996 at Mattawoman Middle School. She spent a short amount of time at the school when a need opened for a full-time school nurse position at Hanson. At the school, she turned an old assistant principal’s office into her nurse’s office. “I got an old bed from the gym, old desk full of papers, paper clips and pennies from the previous owner and rearranged the office to turn it into a nurse’s office,” Rutkai said. “I really love the job. It was a breath of fresh air to start working with students,” she said.

Rutkai also serves as the camp nurse with the Charles County Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism during Camp Co-op, a summer camp designed for CCPS students who are receiving special education services.

She has spent almost her entire school nursing career at Hanson and this year makes it her last as she plans to retire after the 2023-2024 school year ends. “The entire John Hanson community knows nurse Shelley and will miss her terribly,” Hanson Principal Ben Kohlhorst, said. “She cannot be replaced.”

Lisa Bazzarre, school nurse at North Point High School is no stranger to CCPS. She has been with the county since 1999 following her older sister, Rutkai, after both working at Greater Southeast Hospital. “I kind of followed my sister and I’m glad that I did because I loved helping people,” Bazzarre, said. Her and her sister are close in relation and in age being 10 months apart, making them Irish twins – siblings born within 12 months or less of each other, she said.

She also got her nursing degree at Catholic University of America and then worked at Greater Southeast with her sister, sometimes working right next to each other, for 15 years. Bazzarre started working for CCPS as the school nurse at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, when it was the Charles County



**Lisa  
Bazzarre**

Career and Technology Center, right before she moved to North Point as the school nurse in 2005.

“I love the staff, the administration and the kids keep me young,” Bazzarre, said. Her favorite part about the job is helping people. “With the students I do a lot of teaching and educating. I enjoy it,” she said. Bazzarre remains among the few who are original staff members at North Point when the school first opened in 2005.

“She’s a lot like me — we are both dedicated,” Bazzarre said about her sister’s retirement. “She has been a good resource. I’m going to miss her.”

If you walk into the nurse’s office at Brown, you will likely see Simpson helping a student with a medical issue. “I like that every day is different, I like watching them grow up,” she said. “Some of the kids that I helped are in their 20s and now their kids go here.” Simpson has been at Brown for nearly 16 years. She started with the county as a floating nurse assisting at multiple schools. She then transitioned into a job share where one of the nurses worked three days at the school and she worked two.

Once she finished her associate degree in nursing (ADN) and the former school nurse retired, she became the full-time nurse at Brown. “I love this school, the staff, population and community,” Simpson said.

She first attended college to major in early childhood education and quickly realized that she wanted to switch to nursing. For Simpson it was the best of both worlds, “a bit of teaching and the medical portion,” she said. “It was a really good fit.” She attended the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) to start her nursing school journey and received her BSN at University of Maryland Global Campus.

“We don’t just take care of students; we take care of everybody, whether you are a staff member, parent or person delivering milk to the school,” Simpson said. “We play such a big role and I wish that people understand the depth of the school nurse, everything that we do and why we are important in schools.”



**Shauna  
Simpson**

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## Board welcomes Virt as SMOB

Samarjeet “Sam” Virk, a North Point High School junior, is the Student Member of the Board of Education of Charles County for the 2024-2025 school year. A total of 2,408 student votes were cast in the election held April 15 through May 17. Students in Grades 6-12 were eligible to vote in the election.



**Samarjeet  
Virk**

Virk received 63% of votes, with 1,513 ballots cast, in the election. His opponent, La Plata High School junior Lauren Compton, received 37%, or 895, votes in the election. The Charles County Association of Student Councils (CCASC) Election Oversight Committee verified the election results.

Both students participated in a primary election and advanced to the final ballot. Virk will be sworn into the position at a June Board of Education meeting. Details outlining the election process are posted on the CCASC website.

Student Board Members serve one-year terms. Virk takes over in the role, also known as SMOB, from Treasure Perkins, the 2023-2024 Student Member of the Board of Education. Perkins is a junior at Westlake High School. Virk shadowed Perkins at the May 21 Board meeting.

## NP childcare now enrolling

The North Point Early Childhood Training Program childcare is enrolling for the 2024-2025 school year. North Point students enrolled in the Child Development Professions career and technical education (CTE) program plan and carry out lessons with children ages 2 to 5.

Students in the CTE program plan daily activities to meet the individual and group needs of children.

The childcare runs from August to June, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The childcare follows the CCPS calendar for holiday closures.

Tuition for 2-year-olds are \$185 a week and \$175 a week for 3-year-olds.

The holding fee is \$100 and payments are due bi-weekly. CCPS employees have priority for placement.

Parents who would like a tour of the childcare, must schedule a time and date.

For more information, go to [www.npectp.org](http://www.npectp.org) or contact Lisa Willett at [lwillett@ccboe.com](mailto:lwillett@ccboe.com).

Information forms are also available in the main office of North Point. North Point is at 2500 Davis Road in Waldorf.

## Personnel

Apply for positions online at [www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php](http://www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php). All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

### Upcoming job fairs

**Teacher, Counselor and Related Services job fair** will be 9 a.m. to noon, July 10 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 5980 Radio Station Road, La Plata. [Click here to register.](#)

**A Food Service Job Fair** is set for 9 to 11 a.m., June 10 at the Starkey building, 5980 Radio Station Road, La Plata. [Click here to register.](#)

### Job openings

**Coordinator of the Aspire and Behavior Support Program** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A master's degree and valid certification as a School Psychologist or master's degree

in related field with BCBA certification required. Experience working with elementary-age children preferred. Apply by May 31.

**Instructional Assistant** — F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 10-month position. High school diploma and experience working with children required. Apply by June 3.

**Elementary Education Family Case Manager** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. An associate's degree or combination of education and experience in the field from an accredited college or university preferred. Bilingual preferred. Apply by June 4.

**Building Service Manager** — William B. Wade Elementary School, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED is required, and one-to-five years of (depending on size of school) of supervisory experience in this or a related field. Position open until

filled.

**Building Service Assistant Manager** — Berry Elementary School, 12-month position. High school diploma one year of experience are required. Position open until filled.

**Computer Science Teacher** — Westlake High School, 10-month position. Bachelor's degree or higher, and meets MSDE licensure requirements. Position open until filled.

**Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE) Teacher** — Maurice J. McDonough High School, 10-month position — Bachelor's degree environmental science, environmental studies, natural sciences, science education, elementary/secondary education, agricultural science, natural resources and meets MSDE licensure requirements. Position open until filled.