

# School News



## Last day dates

The last day for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students is Monday, June 10, which will be a two-hour early dismissal for students. The last day for teachers is Tuesday, June 11.

## Board meeting

The Board of Education will meet 1 p.m., Tuesday, June 11, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 5980 Radio Station Road in La Plata.

## Little Eagles Childcare

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 is \$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.



## Retirement ceremony June 6

Board of Education members Samichie K. Thomas, left, Michael K. Lukas, Vice Chairperson Nicole M. Kreamer and Chairperson Yonelle Moore Lee, Esq., congratulate Sandra Taylor, principal of Milton M. Somers Middle School, at the June 6 Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Retirement Ceremony held at North Point High School. The event honored 85 staff members who have retired this year or who have indicated they will retire by July 1. Right, Meighan Hungerford, director of elementary education, is pictured with Superintendent Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., at the ceremony. To read more, [click here](#).



## Class of 2024 earns \$184 million in scholarship offers

The Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Class of 2024 held graduation ceremonies the week of May 28 at Regency Furniture Stadium.

The 2,102 graduates earned more than \$184 million in scholarship offers with that total likely to increase as graduates report more offers as they come in.

The valedictorians for the Class of 2024 were Isabel Raleigh of Henry E. Lackey High School, William Alcorn of La Plata High School, Noah Cusack of Maurice J. McDonough High School, Samuel Stine of North Point High School, Miracle Washington of St. Charles High School, Charlie Bowie of Thomas Stone High School and Margareth Dagamac of Westlake High School.

Salutatorians were Anna Martin of Lackey, Alan Sebastian of La Plata, Aiden Gibney of McDonough, Shreeya Chada of North Point, Chloe Del Rosario of St. Charles, Noah Prado of Thomas Stone and Mason Wheeler of Westlake.

The week's weather held out with temperatures in the upper 70s most days and sunny.

The only glitch came Wednesday, May 29, when the threat of an afternoon rainstorm caused graduation organizers to push Westlake's 1 p.m., ceremony up by 15 minutes. The Wolverine's commencement concluded without disruption.

Student speakers shared words of wisdom with family and friends, many addressing their classmates for the last time.

"Let's not peak here. These shouldn't be the good ol' days," Martin said to her Lackey peers.

"Call your family. Work harder than who's next to you. Try something new. Say yes more than you say no. Be honest. Take more pictures. And have a positive attitude in everything you do."

To view ceremonies, hear remarks and learn more about the CCPS Class of 2024, visit <https://www.ccboe.com/quick-links/graduation-2024>.

## On the cover

The Board of Education honored outstanding employees at the May 21 meeting including James Swann, building service manager, La Plata High School, left, and Amy Clements, instructional specialist, Berry Elementary School.

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

## Baseball Bash

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/>.

## Start, end dates

Start and end dates for certificated, non-certificated and food service staff are now available on the [front of MyCCPS at www.ccboe.com](#). Charts for FY 24 and FY 25 for staff can be found by scrolling midway through the page. Toggle from the certificated, non-certificated and food service at the top of each chart to find the correct employment classification. Note that any use of the dates are subject to change depending on inclement weather days.

## Professional learning

Visit MyCCPS to learn more about professional learning opportunities this summer including classroom management, introduction to Canvas, Teaching Science to English Language Learners and other courses. To learn more scroll to the Professional Learning Opportunities section of the page and click through the options. [For more information, head to MyCCPS.](#)

## 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.



## History Day

Theodore G. Davis Middle School social studies teacher Sydney Houdeshell, left, pictured with Jack Tuttle, social studies content specialist, was honored as the 2024 History Day Teacher of the Year. Houdeshell has worked with CCPS since 2022. She is completing her second year as a seventh-grade world cultures and geography teacher at Davis. Her passion for watching students grow and progress motivates her to show up for her students every day. “There is nothing better than knowing you’re instilling knowledge every day and sending the students off to their next chapter ready and confident,” she said. At Davis, she also tutors social studies students in the grade recovery program and is the History Day coordinator.

## CCPS receives rebate funding for electric school buses

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has been awarded a \$1.2 million rebate through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2023 Clean School Bus Program.

The funding will support the replacement of six CCPS school buses with zero emission, clean electric school buses.

CCPS will receive two of the electric buses, with the remaining four electric buses to be designated to Charles County bus contractors.

Through the EPA Clean School Bus Program, nearly \$3 billion has been provided to school systems to fund school bus replacements.

Since the 2021 launch of the program, about 8,500 school buses have been replaced. With funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the EPA Clean School Bus Program provides \$5 billion over five years (fiscal year 2022 through fiscal year 2026) to replace existing school buses with zero emission and clean school buses.

School systems must apply for the funding annually. For the 2023 rebate program,



the EPA selected 530 applicants for funds totaling nearly \$900 million to support the purchase of about 3,400 buses, of which 92% will be electric.

This is the first year CCPS was awarded funds through the program. The buses are likely to be in operation by the end of next school year. Routes will be selected by mileage range, but the electric buses will most likely operate in Waldorf, La Plata and Indian Head. To learn more about the program, visit <https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus>.



# SMECO honors outstanding CCPS math, science teachers

Five Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers were recently named 2024 Outstanding Teacher Honorees by Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO). The annual awards program recognizes teachers for outstanding achievements in teaching science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

The CCPS teachers honored for mathematics were Jennifer Decker of Westlake High School; and Marissa Ellis of Dr. James Craik Elementary School.

The teachers honored for science were Delacy Craig of Westlake; Hector Telford of Benjamin Stoddert Middle School; and Sarah Wustner of Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School.

Teachers were nominated by staff, students, principals, educators, community members or administrators. Entries were evaluated by a panel of judges. Outstanding teachers are chosen for their inspiration to students and their ability to motivate them to become innovators.

According to SMECO, outstanding teachers are “employees who are essential to the continued success of tech-driven businesses because they bring valuable mathematics, science, and technology skills to the workplace.”

After 10 years of volunteering as a parent in elementary school classes, being a middle school chaperone and a high school team parent or coach, Decker found her passion teaching Algebra at Westlake.

She has been a math teacher at the school for eight years and feels that the career shift contributes to her fulfilling her destiny. She strives to give her students a new perspective on math hoping that they finish the year no longer hating the subject and maybe even liking it a little. “It is important that my students know that they have a trusted adult in the building who sees them, cares about their wellbeing and will be there for them if they need something or someone,” she said.

She was humbled and in disbelief to be a recipient of the SMECO award. She said that her motivation for teaching comes from the

call that was placed on her heart eight years ago.

Ellis has been with CCPS for 15 years and has been a fifth-grade teacher at Craik for seven.

Her motivating factor for showing up for her students every day stems from her passion for helping others. “I hope to make a difference in each of their lives and help foster a love for learning,” she said. She was completely surprised to learn that she had received the SMECO award recognition. “I know there are amazing educators within the tri-county area and was I humbled to be picked amongst them,” Ellis said.

Craig has been a science teacher at Westlake for five years and the science department chair for six. She enjoys the relationships that she has built with her students. “We are family and I love them deeply.

Seeing them grow through their years and mature is the best feeling ever,” she said. She among the other SMECO award recipients who were happy about receiving the recognition. Craig said that she felt she deserved it given her work ethic in her role.

Telford, a science teacher at Stoddert, has been teaching at the school for nearly five years. He has served as the VEX Robotics coach for three years and head of the science department at the school for two.

He enjoys interacting with his students and seeing them grow in their knowledge and understanding. “I am always thrilled when I observe them applying what they learn in science to their own lives and everyday activities,” he said. Telford said that he not only received the award as a teacher but on behalf of the “amazing work” that is done at the school. His motivation comes from his strong belief that he can help students to develop the knowledge and skills required to think, learn and solve problems. “That knowledge can help them make informed decisions or even become future scientists,” he said.

Wustner has been working with CCPS since 2007. She taught first and fourth grade before entering her current role as a second-



**CCPS math teachers Marissa Ellis of Dr. James Craik Elementary School, left, and Jennifer Decker of Westlake High School, were recently honored by SMECO.**



**CCPS science teachers were recently honored by SMECO. Pictured left are Delacy Craig of Westlake, Hector Telford of Benjamin Stoddert Middle School and Sarah Wustner of Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School.**

grade teacher at Higdon for the past six years. As an educator she enjoys watching the growth that her students make as learners and how they communicate with others. “I was so excited and honored when I found out that I was named a 2024 SMECO Outstanding Teacher,” she said. Wustner said that she enjoys working with students daily and instilling a positive impact on their lives.

Find back issues of *School News* in the archives at MyCCPS. Look under the Documents tab on the menu on the left-hand menu (on a cellphone, turn the device horizontally to access the menu.) From Documents, click [School News Archive](#).

**School News** is published by  
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## Summer meal programs back on the table this month

Lunch on Us, the free summer meal program Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) holds for children ages 2 to 18, returns June 24. It will be held Monday through Thursday at designated locations through Aug. 8 — except for July 4 when sites will be closed in observance of Independence Day.

Lunch on Us provides hot meals for children to consume on site.

Children do not have to be CCPS students to receive a meal and do not have to show any form of identification at the meal sites.

However, in order to receive a meal, the child must be present. CCPS food and nutrition services

staff members will oversee the operation of each meal site.

Meal sites open from June 24 through Aug. 8 (closed July 4).

- Indian Head Elementary School — 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- J.C. Parks Elementary School — 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School — 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School — 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Eva Turner Elementary School — 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Milton M. Somers Middle School — 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- St. Charles High School — 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School — 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Meal site open from June 24 through July 3.)

For more information about the Lunch on Us program, visit <https://www.ccboe.com/departments/student-services/community-resources/summer-meals-2024>.

CCPS is rolling out a new summer meals program starting June 25. Meals on the Move will provide children ages 2 to 18 with free cold breakfasts and lunches for multiple days. The CCPS food truck will visit designated sites on specific days to distribute meals in rural areas as determined by the USDA. The Meals on the Move food truck will operate from June 25 to Aug. 8.

To receive the meals, children must be present, or parents must be required to present identification for the children such as a student ID from school or a copy of a birth certificate.

All children are eligible to receive the meals, not just CCPS students.

The Meals on the Move schedule is as follows:

- **Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School**  
Noon-1 p.m., Tuesdays, June 25-Aug. 6  
9275 Ironsides Road  
Nanjemoy, MD 20662
- **Thunderbird Motel**  
Noon-1 p.m., Wednesdays, June 26-Aug. 7  
11050 Crain Highway  
Newburg, MD 20664
- **Free Gospel Church of Bryans Road**  
Noon-1 p.m., Thursdays, June 27-Aug. 8  
180 Livingston Road  
Bryans Road, MD 20616

To learn more about Meals on the Move and the CCPS summer meals program Lunch on Us, visit <https://www.ccboe.com/departments/student-services/community-resources/summer-meals-2024>.

## 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.

### Job openings

**General Smallwood Middle School Teacher and Instructional Assistant Job Fair** is 9 a.m.-noon June 18 at the F.B. Gwynn Center. [Click here to register.](#)

**Food and Nutrition Service Manager** — F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 10-month position. High school diploma or equivalent required with three years of experience in food service. Apply by June 10.

**Human Resources Assistant in Data Quality Control** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required. Associate's degree with major coursework in human resources, business administra-

tion, information technology or a closely related field preferred. Apply by June 10.

**Infant and Toddler Speech Language Pathologist** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree in speech pathology and a Maryland state license in speech and language pathology. Apply by June 13.

**Instructional Specialist for Compliance and CIEP** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position — Master's degree in special education preferred or equivalent experiences in education. Apply by June 14.

**Secondary Transition and ACE Programs Coordinator Specialist** — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university required, with a master's and Admin I preferred. Apply by June 14.