



Notebook

Last day of school

The last day of school for students is Wednesday, June 17. The last day for teachers is Thursday, June 18. The change was made earlier this year as a result of school closures due to inclement weather. Learn more about the calendar change at www.ccboe.com.

Memorial Day

Schools and offices are closed on Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day.

Graduation schedule

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will celebrate the high school graduating Class of 2026 during ceremonies next month.

The ceremonies are set for June 2 through 4 at Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf.

Ceremonies set for Tuesday, June 2, are **Maurice J. McDonough High School** at 9 a.m., 1 p.m. for **Thomas Stone High School** and 5 p.m. for **North Point High School**.

Wednesday, June 3, ceremonies are **Henry E. Lackey High School** at 9 a.m. and **Westlake High School** at 1 p.m.

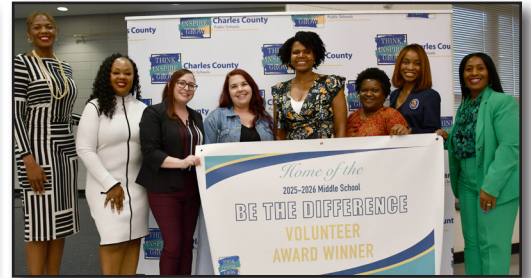
La Plata High School will graduate at 9 a.m. on Thursday, June 4, with **St. Charles High School** graduating at 1 p.m. that afternoon.

On the day of a school's graduation ceremony, the school will be closed to students in Grades 9 through 11. Staff of the graduating high school work the graduation events.

Any inclement weather changes to a school's graduation date and time will be communicated with families, students and staff at least three hours in advance.

To learn more, visit www.ccboe.com.

School News



Clockwise from top left, the Rev. Cynthia Baker, fifth from left, pastor of Shabach Evangelistic Ministries, receives the Elementary School Volunteer of the Year title at a recent Be the Difference ceremony. Ashley Robinson-Spann, Ph.D., fifth from left, was named the Middle School Volunteer of the Year. Westlake Principal Dana Fenwick, fourth from left, accepts the award of High School Volunteer of the Year on behalf of the Rev. Nelson Bowen, who was unable to attend the ceremony. Felix Cummings, who brought the chess tournament to CCPS, fifth from left, was named the Central Office Volunteer of the Year.

Honoring volunteers who make a difference

The Board of Education of Charles County and Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff celebrated school system volunteers earlier this month at the Be the Difference Awards ceremony.

Held May 13 at North Point High School, the ceremony honors the volunteer service of parents and families, community members and representatives of business and nonprofit organizations.

"We depend on our community," Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, said. "I want to personally thank every volunteer who has been nominated for the amount of time and work that you put in our schools. It is incredible and it is volunteers that make our school communities so much better."

Nicole M. Kreamer, Board chairperson, said the Be the Difference Awards program has grown over the years and echoed Navarro's

remarks. "We depend on our volunteers," she said, adding that reading over the nominations is uplifting. "It is heartwarming to hear all that [our volunteers] are pouring into our schools, our students and the staff."

Each school and center, and the CCPS administrative offices, can put forth a volunteer who deserves recognition. Four are then selected to represent the categories of elementary, middle and high school and the administrative offices.

The Rev. Cynthia Baker, pastor of Shabach Evangelistic Ministries, was named the Elementary School Volunteer of the Year. Baker is a retired educator who was named the CCPS Vice Principal of the Year in 2004 and CCPS Principal of the Year in 2010. For the past two years, Baker has been an active volunteer at Eva Turner Elementary School holding Family Markets, a food pantry, at the school at least

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Tracking accomplishments

Three CCPS Unified track teams are state champions

Three Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Unified track and field teams raced to the winner's circle this month at the Special Olympics Maryland Unified Track and Field state competition.

The teams each took home first place in their respective divisions which are based on the number of students on a team.

A combined team of 21 students from North Point and Westlake high schools placed first in Division 1; a combined team of 26 students from Maurice J. McDonough and Thomas Stone high schools placed first in Division 3; and La Plata High School, which is made up of 35 students, placed first in Division 4.

Special Olympics Maryland is a program that brings students with and without disabilities together to compete on the same team.

"Our school has an incredibly inclusive student body that warmly welcomes and supports all student-athletes," Stephanie Barry, La Plata social studies and special education teacher, said.

She has coached La Plata's Unified bocce and track and field teams for years. "Unified sports provide students with meaningful op-



Members of La Plata High School's Unified track and field team celebrate a first-place win at the state championships.

portunities to build acceptance, work toward shared goals and develop lasting friendships," Barry said. "These connections extend beyond practices and competitions, as students regularly interact in the hallways and cafeteria, helping to foster a truly inclusive school environment."

CCPS high school students can participate in Unified tennis in the fall, bocce in the winter with track and field held in the spring. Teams hold practices during the week and compete locally, before heading to divisional and eventually the state competitions.

On the cover

The Board of Education honored outstanding staff members at its May 12 meeting. From left are Christina Calacan, guidance secretary, Glymont Middle School; Dawn Reney, special education teacher, Thomas Stone High School; and Diane Bicknell, assistive technology facilitator, F.B. Gwynn Educational Center. To read more, visit the Staff page of www.ccboe.com.

Change to 26-27 calendar

The Board of Education last month approved a modification to the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) 2026-2027 school calendar.

The Board approved the calendar last year, which included four inclement weather make-up days noted in June 2027.

The calendar modification was necessary due to a resolution passed by the Maryland State Board of Education in March requiring additional inclement weather days in the school calendar. Learn more about the modification at www.ccboe.com.

Board meeting June 9

The Board of Education will meet 1 p.m., Tuesday, June 9, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. An agenda will be posted the week of June 1.

ICYMI — Board News

The Board of Education publishes a quarterly newsletter called Board News to keep staff and families updated on its work. The newsletter is sent by email but can also be viewed on the Board's page at www.ccboe.com at <https://www.ccboe.com/about/board-of-education/board-news>.

Rental help available

CCPS keeps a list of available houses, apartments and rooms for rent by school system employees. To learn more, contact Louise Evans at levans@ccboe.com or 301-934-7462.

Grant allows for teacher recruitment, retention

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) recently received a grant toward teacher recruitment and retention from the state's Grow Your Own Educators Grant Program.

The grant funding, awarded through Gov. Wes Moore's office, addresses teacher shortages by providing more opportunities for non-licensed school employees to become full-time teachers.

CCPS was awarded \$2,042,630 from the competitive grant, and was one of 13 Maryland school systems awarded funds. The grant awarded \$19 million to school systems across Maryland.

The funding supports the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program, also known as RTAP. "We recognized early on that the program offers a powerful opportunity to expand career pathways for support

staff who already play a critical role in our schools," Holly Dolan, CCPS staff growth and retention specialist, said. "With RTAP, CCPS can intentionally remove financial and structural barriers that have historically limited access to the teaching profession, allowing instructional assistants and other support staff to build on their experience and transition into professionally licensed teaching roles while remaining rooted in our district and community."

The Grow Your Own grant paves the way for current school employees to become licensed teachers while continuing to work in schools. CCPS will address educator shortages in specific subject areas including but not limited to special education, math and the English Language Development (ELD), through RTAP.

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Be the Difference

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once a month. Baker and her team of volunteers donate turkeys for Thanksgiving baskets given out to the families of students in need, they assist with food preparation for the school's Community Day and support events like the annual Black History Month celebration and DADvisory Men's Conference.

Ashley Robinson-Spann, Ph.D., was named the Middle School Volunteer of the Year for her work at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School. Robinson-Spann is dedicated to education and is the senior director of higher education with The College Board. At Stoddert, Robinson-Spann played a key role in creating and sustaining the Future Focus Academy, a Saturday program that helps students build academic skills, confidence and gives them opportunities to expand their knowledge. "She has made a lasting impact on students and staff," Stoddert Principal Marquelle Peavy said. Robinson-Spann gets bonus points from students for treating them to breakfast from Chick-fil-A during the Saturday program.

The Rev. Nelson Bowen, the pastor of iNgage Community Church, was named the High School Volunteer of the Year. Bowen and members of his church have been a community partner of Westlake High School for years. Church members have paid off students' meal balances, led campus clean ups and recently renovated all the teacher lounges at the school. Bowen was unable to attend the awards ceremony due to a previous commitment at church.

This is the first year that CCPS administrative office could nominate volunteers who help at the county level. Felix Cummings, who has organized the twice-a-year countywide chess tournaments for students in kindergarten through Grade 12, was named the Central Office Volunteer of the Year. Cummings — with the assistance of his wife, retired CCPS teacher Hattie Cummings, and a band of volunteers — have been championing the benefits of chess for decades, working with CCPS for nearly 30 years. "He transformed a void into a thriving, character-building competitive culture that teaches students strategy, discipline, integrity and respect," Kevin Lowndes, CCPS chief of teaching and learning, said.

Schools recognized the following volunteers for their service to CCPS students and staff.

Elementary school

- **Robert Snyder**, C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School.
- **Adeeb Parkar**, Berry Elementary School.
- **Junius Hanley**, Billingsley Elementary School.
- **Da'Net Sturdifen**, Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School.
- **Tiffany Goudie**, Dr. James Craik Elementary School.
- **Katie Tracz**, William A. Diggs Elementary School.
- **Lisa Anno**, Gale-Bailey Elementary School.
- **Sarah Teel**, Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School.

- **Becky Chick**, Indian Head Elementary School.
- **Tariq Majeed**, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School.
- **Christopher Harrington**, Malcolm Elementary School.
- **Tricia Hershfeld**, T.C. Martin Elementary School.
- **Sandra Fykes**, Mary H. Matula Elementary School.
- **Amy Dailey**, Arthur Middleton Elementary School.
- **Adrian Tewell**, Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School.
- **Cathy Holden**, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School.
- **Joyce Fuentes and Wendy Lopez**, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School.
- **Sabrina Mason**, Mary B. Neal Elementary School.
- **Kendra Thompson**, J.C. Parks Elementary School.
- **Danielle Skidmore**, J. P. Ryon Elementary School.
- **JaNae Lester**, Margaret J. Thornton Elementary School.
- **The Rev. Cynthia Baker**, Eva Turner Elementary School.
- **The Rev. Regina Banks**, William B. Wade Elementary School.

Middle school

- **Cherie Levy**, Theodore G. Davis Middle School.
- **James Tabourne**, Glymont Middle School.
- **Carolyn Wooster**, Matthew Henson Middle School.
- **Tanja Brown and Laval Brown**, Mattawoman Middle School.
- **Kaprece James**, Phoenix International School of the Arts.
- **Jessica Brueckner, Leah McConnell and Rashonda Williams**, Piccowaxen Middle School.
- **Heather Malkasian**, Milton M. Somers Middle School.
- **Ashley Robinson-Spann, Ph.D.**, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School.

High school

- **Amber Bowman**, Henry E. Lackey High School.
- **Tricia Rogerson**, La Plata High School.
- **Kristie Jarmusz**, Maurice J. McDonough High School.
- **Crystal Campbell**, North Point High School.
- **Sarafina Washington**, St. Charles High School.
- **Lorraine Jamison**, Thomas Stone High School.
- **The Rev. Nelson Bowen**, Westlake High School.
- **Chris Winkler**, Robert D. Stethem Educational Center.

CCPS administrative office

- **Tammy Wright**, Office of School Administration and Leadership.
- **Felix Cummings**, Office of Teaching and Learning.
- **Steven Baldo**, Department of Special Education.

Learn more about volunteering with Charles County Public Schools

To volunteer with CCPS, potential volunteers must undergo training and a background check that is valid for one school year. Volunteers include — but are not limited to — mentors, tutors, non-paid coaches or club sponsors, trip chaperones, reading and math partners

and parent group organization officers such as PTO members, boosters and team parents.

To learn more about volunteering with CCPS, visit <https://www.ccboe.com/parents/volunteer-information>.

North Point's Bazarre named CCPS School Nurse of the Year

Lisa Bazarre, school nurse at North Point High School, was recently named the 2026 Nurse of the Year for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS).

She has worked for CCPS for nearly 27 years, after working as the school nurse at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, formerly known as the Charles County Vocational-Technical Center, right before she moved to North Point as the school nurse in 2005.

"Every day, she leads with kindness, empathy and genuine care, creating a safe and welcoming space for everyone who walks through her door," Theresa Seide, physical education and health teacher at North Point, said. "Her compassion and dedication make a lasting impact on our entire school community."

Nursing services in CCPS are provided through a partnership between the school system and the Charles County Department of Health. Desiree Colvin, school health program manager, said the office solicited nominations from CCPS staff and others to name the CCPS Nurse of the Year.

"Lisa was the clear winner this year. She had so many nominations from nurses, CCPS staff and parents at the school," Colvin said. "The love that poured out made her a clear recipient of the award."

School nurses are an integral part of the school, from ensuring that students have the proper medicine during the school day, to tending to cuts and bruises, the role of a nurse continues to be an essential component of the daily success of the students. "I think it's important they get a shoutout each year for doing such an amazing job," Lynn Kane, CCPS school health nurse supervisor, said.

Bazarre got her nursing degree at Catholic University of America and started her career at United Medical Center, formerly Greater Southeast Community Hospital. She stayed there for 15 years. She worked at the hospital with her sister, a retired CCPS school nurse, before they both transitioned to CCPS.

She loves her job so much that she drives an hour to work after moving out of Charles County nine years ago. "It's the best place to work," she said. Bazarre has seen the growth and changes of North Point since the opening of the school. "Some of these people have



Lisa Bazarre, third from left, has been working as a school nurse for nearly 27 years. She was recently named the 2026 Nurse of the Year for Charles County Public Schools. She is pictured with, from left, Desiree Colvin, school health program manager, Dr. Dianna Abney, health officer with the Charles County Department of Health, Bazarre's sister Shelley Rutkai, a retired school nurse from John Hanson Middle School, and North Point Principal Daniel Kaple.

been here a long time and a lot of graduates come back to the school to teach," she said. "It tells you a lot about the school."

Bazarre is the second recipient of the annual award after Natasha Williams, retired school nurse at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, [received last year's inaugural award](#).

"Ms. Bazarre is an outstanding nurse who clearly cares deeply about the students she serves, and she is very deserving of this recognition," Jessica Davis, math teacher at the school, said.

For more information about CCPS school nurses and the services provided visit <https://www.ccboe.com/departments/student-services/school-health-services>.

School health program honors Brockmann for service to LPHS students, staff



Sheila Brockmann, school nurse at La Plata High School, has been a school nurse for 27 years. She was recently honored for her years of service to the school system.

Sheila Brockmann, school nurse at La Plata High School, was recently honored for her nearly three decades of service to Charles County Public Schools (CCPS).

Brockmann, who will retire at the end of the school year, first came to CCPS as a substitute nurse, sharing the job with another nurse at Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School. Being a school nurse fit much better into her family's busy schedule. Her husband was a pilot and their children were starting school.

A school nurse's schedule allowed for Brockmann to be home when her kids were home, and at school when they were. After substitute nursing for a bit, she took the full time job at La Plata. "I was in high school with my kids," she said of her two children, La Plata graduates.

Working with La Plata students meshes well with Brockmann's personality. "I love teenagers. I have a soft spot for them," she said. "You can talk to them a little more, joke with them," she said.

Read more about Brockmann at www.ccboe.com. CCPS celebrated National School Nurse Day on May 6. The school system has 56 part time and full time school nurses, contracted through the Charles County Department of Health, working in schools and centers.

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Grow

The program is a pathway that combines on-the-job training with mentorship and free coursework. Once an employee earns a teaching license through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), they must fulfill a three-year commitment to work as a teacher with CCPS.

“Through the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program, we are intentionally investing in our support staff — individuals who already know our schools, our students, and our values — by fully supporting their journey to becoming professionally licensed educators,” Dolan said. “This work strengthens a diverse, locally rooted teacher workforce and ensures that the future of teaching in Charles County is built by those who are truly connected to the communities we serve.”

CCPS is partnering with the College of Southern Maryland and Notre Dame of Maryland University for the apprenticeship program.

The state’s Grow Your Own was expanded through the recent Excellence in Maryland Public

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Schools Act which takes additional steps to address the teacher shortage by developing fully licensed teachers through recruitment campaigns and supporting debt-free pathways to teacher licensure.

Part of the plan

Grow your own initiatives are not new to CCPS. They are part of the 2025-2029 CCPS Strategic Plan which guides the work of the school system through the next four years, including employee recruitment and retention. Goal 3 of the plan focuses on attracting, developing and retaining education professionals to support student success.

To learn more about the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP) visit <https://www.ccboe.com/staff/myccps/benefits/registered-teacher-apprenticeship-program-rtap>.

To read more about the program, visit <https://bit.ly/4uymE4g>.

Additional administrative appointments, moves

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) recently announced two assistant principal appointments and five assistant principal transfers. The appointments and transfers take effect July 1 and include appointments at the elementary and middle school levels. The following appointments were approved by the Board of Education.

- Keir Lewis moves from assistant principal at Piccowaxen to assistant principal at Glymont Middle School.
- Daniel Mosey moves from assistant principal at Glymont to assistant principal at Hanson.
- Tavon Myers moves from assistant principal at Malcolm Elementary School to Indian Head.

Assistant Principal Appointments

- Melissa Griffith, instructional resource teacher at T.C. Martin Elementary School, to assistant principal at Malcolm Elementary School.
- Jennifer Pangborn, chief academic officer at Tapestry Charter School in Buffalo, N.Y., to assistant principal at J.P. Ryon Elementary School.

Additionally, the following administrative transfers take effect July 1 for the 2026-2027 school year.

Assistant Principal Transfers

- Janee Johnson moves from assistant principal at Indian Head Elementary School to assistant principal at Ryon.
- Philip Jones moves from assistant principal at John Hanson Middle School to assistant principal at Piccowaxen Middle School.

Last month, CCPS announced a principal transfer that moves Tammika Little from principal of St. Charles High School to the role of principal at Theodore G. Davis Middle School. Davis’s current principal, Robert Griffiths, will assume the principal role at St. Charles. The transfer takes effect on July 1. To read more, visit www.ccboe.com.

In April, the Board approved the appointment of Kayla Hawkins, assistant principal at J.P. Ryon Elementary School, as principal of Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School. Her appointment is effective July 1. Hawkins has been an administrator with CCPS since 2021 and moves into the principal role at Dr. Brown to replace current principal Karen Lewis, who will retire at the end of June.

The Board also previously approved the appointment of Tracey Harvey, assistant principal at Olympic High School in Charlotte, N.C., as an assistant principal at Mattawoman Middle School. To read more about Hawkins and Harvey, visit www.ccboe.com.

Personnel

Job Openings

Building Service Worker (evening shift) — J.C. Parks Elementary School, 12-month position. High school diploma or GED required. Apply by May 25.

Instructional Assistant for Special Education — Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, 10-month position. High school diploma or equivalent required. Apply by May 27.

Media Specialist (librarian) — T.C. Martin Elementary School, 10-month position. [Visit MSDE to view job requirements.](#) Apply by May 27.