



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Heritage celebration

National Hispanic Heritage Month honors the achievements, contributions, culture and history of Hispanic and Latino American people. The month-long celebration — through Oct. 15 — commemorates the independence anniversary of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. The commemoration started as a weeklong event in 1968. It expanded to a month in 1988 to reflect the Independence Days of Mexico, Chile and Belize. For more information, contact the CCPS Office of Equity and Diversity at 301-934-7257 or 301-934-7245.

Free meals added to sites

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is adding a free dinner meal and snack to its meal bags that already include a breakfast kit and lunch for all children 2 to 18. The additional meals will be distributed starting Oct. 5 at the school system's 17 meal sites. Parents picking up meals without their child present will need to show proof of a child's age — like a student identification badge or copy of a report card. To learn more, go to <https://www.ccboe.com/pr/ccps-program-offering-additional-meals-starting-oct-5/>.

Calendar changes

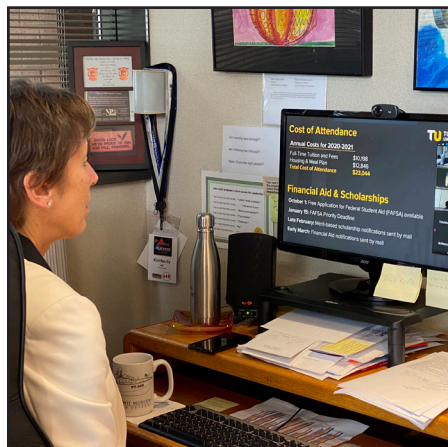
CCPS has canceled all early dismissal days for students during the first quarter, as all learning is virtual. Full day closures for students remain the same — the early dismissal day on Oct. 9 is canceled. Schools are closed for students Monday, Oct. 12. On that day, there will be school-based professional development, parent conferences and planning for teachers. For the most up-to-date school calendar, check out the 2020-2021 Parent Handbook/Calendar at <https://www.ccboe.com/images/calendar/202021CCPSCalendar.pdf>.



Celebrating school pride

Arnold Mason, left, building service manager at Maurice J. McDonough High School, takes a break with the school's mascot, Rammy (spoiler alert — Vice Principal Matthew Deegan was in the suit.) The school was a stop on the recent Torch Run for Special Olympics Maryland, which prompted staff to celebrate school spirit. Today, Oct. 2, is National Custodial Worker Day. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has dubbed the day Building Service Workers Day which is set aside to say "thanks" to some of the school system's essential workers. Read more on Page 3.

CCPS holds College Fair with a virtual twist



Superintendent Kimberly Hill drops into a presentation by Towson University during the virtual College Fair.

The 23rd annual Charles County College Fair went virtual this year with representatives of more than 100 colleges and universities connecting live with students via video conferencing tools, like Zoom, Google Meets and Webex.

Admission representatives of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and technical schools and representatives of the U.S. military attended.

High school juniors and seniors heard presentations about admission requirements, the application process and took virtual campus tours.

An evening session allowed parents to attend a virtual financial aid workshop presented by Christian Zimmerman, director of financial aid for the College of Southern Maryland. .

Volunteers process hotspots, web cameras

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students and teachers are receiving hotspots and web cameras earlier than expected this week with help from members of the Joint Base Andrews Office of Special Investigations (OSI).

Five members of the OSI team arrived at the CCPS warehouse Wednesday morning, ready to prepare more than 1,000 hotspots for students and nearly 2,000 web cameras for teachers to use once CCPS begins Phase 2 with in-person learning. The cameras will allow teachers to move around the classroom rather than sit behind a computer as they simultaneously teach children in the classroom and virtually.

The OSI volunteers labeled, inventoried and reboxed each device for shipping to CCPS schools, which have already begun distributing the equipment. The technology devices arrived earlier this week, and Lora Bennett, executive director of IT strategy, said the Andrews team completed in one day what it would have taken CCPS staff several days because of technology's daily volume of work.

"You saw a need and offered to help," said Superintendent Kimberly Hill as she thanked the volunteers. "The community needs us to get this done. Our children are missing out because they do not have the technology to engage. This infusion of help is a shot in the arm," Hill said.

Ramon Ramos said he has school-aged children and knows the school system still has thousands of technology pieces to process. "I figured I would do my part," he said.

Joshua Martin said he learned about the need for help while watching a technology report during the September Charles County Board of Education meeting. He said the report by Charmaine Thompson, chief of instructional technology, compelled him to ask if OSI could help the school system process equipment to expedite delivery.

CCPS delivered the hotspots to each school this week, and principals are distributing 965 devices to families identified through a CCPS survey as having unreliable internet or who previously filled out a request. The OSI team is on standby to help again as new technology shipments arrive.



Ramon Ramos, a volunteer from the Joint Base Andrews Office of Special Investigations, helps prepare hotspots and web cameras for Charles County Public Schools students and teachers to use in virtual learning.

"I am truly grateful for the support of the Air Force volunteers who helped unload and prep technology devices for our students. I cannot thank them enough and look forward to partnering with them in the future should we ever need their helping hands," Thompson said.

Since March, CCPS has provided more than 18,000 laptops to students for virtual learning. This week, CCPS delivered 1,400 laptops to schools to fill a backlog of requests for a device, Thompson said. CCPS expects an additional laptop shipment soon, which Thompson said would replace middle school laptops without cameras. Worldwide shipping delays have held up laptop orders.

Community engagement is important to members of the OSI. Sean Foster said he lives in Charles County and likes volunteering around the community. "We heard the call for the need to help, and I am happy to spend the day here in service to others," Foster said.

Notebook

On the front cover

Pictured on the front cover from left are Emily Shatley, eighth-grade Algebra I teacher, Theodore G. Davis Middle School; Florine Brawner, attendance secretary, Benjamin Stodert Middle School; and Susan Harris, fifth-grade teacher and team leader at William A. Diggs Elementary School.

Board meeting Oct. 13

The Board of Education of Charles County will meet 1 p.m. Oct. 13 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. The Board will meet in person, observing social distancing guidelines. Due to these guidelines, the public cannot attend the meeting in person. The meeting will be streamed live at www.ccboe.com and on the school system's YouTube page. Public comments and questions can be sent to boardmail@ccboe.com.

FARMS applications due

The application for free and reduced price meals is open. The carryover period for free and reduced price meals for the 2020-21 school year ends Oct. 14. The carryover period is the time the USDA allows students to remain on the prior year's meal status. For meal applications, go to <https://www.myschoolapps.com/Home/PickDistrict>.

Chess tournament Oct. 24

The Fall Charles County Chess Tournament is set for Oct. 24 at Thomas Stone High School. The tournament is open for fourth to 12th graders and will include several safety precautions due to guidelines in place to slow the spread of COVID-19. Among the precautions are no spectators will allowed — participants must be dropped off and picked up. Students will use the same chess pieces throughout the tournament and will be sanitized when necessary. Face masks will be worn and players will maintain a 6-foot distance. Register by Oct. 21 at <https://ccpsregistration.wufoo.com/forms/2020-ccps-fall-chess-tournament/>

Building service workers ensure schools, facilities are ready for opening

The COVID-19 pandemic has cast a spotlight on professions that often don't get to center stage. In the wake of closures and lockdowns, governors around the country deemed food service workers, healthcare providers, service industry employees and others "essential employees." Key workers provide services that focus on health and safety. One of the critical jobs was building cleaning and maintenance — Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has about 265 building service workers who are responsible for making sure schools and facilities are clean, sanitary and ready for reopening.

While sanitizing and cleanliness was always a focus, COVID-19 ramps up the number of times a day it's done. "It's changed how we do things," Victor Woodland, building service manager at North Point High School, said.

Woodland points out a log sheet posted on the outside of each door at the 311,000-square foot school. The log is a record of the date the room was cleaned, its surfaces wiped down and sanitized. "We don't have a choice but to do it daily," he said, adding that a staff member will revisit rooms about every 90 minutes to repeat the cleaning and sanitizing process.

It's the same process at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School where



Chantell Price is a building service assistant manager at North Point High School. She said the best building service workers are self motivated and good team players.

Karl Meyer has been the building service manager for three years. "We cover every square inch of the building," he said. "When people come out of a room, we go in — disinfecting chairs, desks, doorknobs; anything that people might have touched. I tell my guys 'Because you don't see it, treat [COVID-19] as if it is everywhere.'"

April Murphy, supervisor of operations for CCPS, said staff members are constantly keeping up with updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to ensure the school system is using the latest and best practices in cleaning and sanitizing protocols. "The current health issue has reminded building service staff of how important their jobs are in minimizing any disruptions to the teaching and learning process,"



Edwin Willie, a building service worker at Billingsley Elementary School, uses a ride-on buffer to clean and polish the cafeteria's floor.

Murphy said. "Having a clean and sanitary environment is always going to be a priority for CCPS."

Managers and current building service workers agree that the best candidates for the job are self-motivated, open-minded and willing to learn. Having the flexibility to tackle new challenges that arise helps, too. In addition to routine duties, team members are tasked with snow removal, mowing, even a little gardening from time to time, Meyer said.

At Billingsley Elementary School, building service manager, Charles Ford, and his team have had more time to devote to the exterior needs of the building. "Now my time is spent outside," said Ford, who has mostly worked at new schools in the system — Billingsley, which opened in 2019, Theodore G. Davis Middle School when it opened in 2007 and North Point which opened in 2005. He also worked at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center. While a new building has a certain panache, it also comes with concerns.

"A lot comes with a new building," Ford said. "You're trying to keep it looking new."

While most students remain out of schools during distance learning, building service teams have been able to tackle jobs that were put on the back burner. At North Point, a burned out light bulb is changed almost as soon as it goes out, parts of the building are getting power washed. "Let's get in there and take care of it," Woodland said of his philosophy.

A nearly vacant school allows for easier cleaning — the every-other-day mopping of the baseboards at North Point aren't interrupted by Converse or Nikes trampling the hallways, but it's not the same.

"We're looking forward to having the students back," Woodland said. "A lot goes on at North Point and we're ready for it."

Students and staff bring a school to life. "There's a lot of energy in this building," Meyer said of Stoddert. Before Stoddert, Meyer worked at Thomas Stone High School and Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School. "At high school, middle school, elementary school — any learning environment is going to have a lot of energy."

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CCPS provides nondiscriminatory equal access to school facilities in accordance with its Use of Facilities rules to designated youth groups (including, but not limited to, the Boy Scouts).

CCPS, health department team up to offer free vaccinations

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the Charles County Department of Health are collaborating to offer required vaccinations for students at no cost.

Maryland law requires students to have up-to-date immunizations, but with some physician's offices having altered schedules in effect to slow the spread of COVID-19, some students may not have received vaccinations yet.

Sites will be set up at four CCPS schools with vaccines offered for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), chickenpox (varicella), hepatitis B, Tdap and MCV4, the meningitis vaccine.

Students entering Grade 7 must have record of both a Tdap and meningococcal vaccine on file with the school system.

Parents must schedule an appointment and complete an online consent form at www.marylandvax.org.

To find a location in Charles County, type Charles County Health Department in the "Search by School Name or Location" bar. The four sites in Charles County will offer immunizations for children from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Click the blue "Sign Up for Childhood Vaccinations" button to schedule an appointment for childhood immunizations.

Each site will have drive-thru stations where parents will check in before nurses will administer vac-

cines to children who will remain in their vehicle.

Sites will be open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the following locations:

- Oct. 14 at Piccowaxen Middle School;
- Oct. 21 at La Plata High School;
- Oct. 28 at Westlake High School (enter from Smallwood Drive W); and

Nov. 4 at General Smallwood Middle School (enter from Glymont Road).

If a child does not have a primary care doctor or cannot make it to an upcoming clinic, other health-care providers that can administer immunizations include:

- Charles County Department of Health, 301-609-6900, Ext. 6018;
- Baden Clinic, 301-888-3323; and
- Urgent Care Centers such as Patient First, CVS Minute Clinic, MedStar Prompt Care or Righttime Medical Care.

Flu clinics will open at the aforementioned sites on the above dates from 2 to 6 p.m. To schedule an appointment for a flu shot, go to marylandvax.org and type Charles County Health Department in the "Search by School Name or Location" bar. Click the blue "Sign Up for Flu Vaccinations" button to schedule an appointment for a flu immunization appointment.

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

Building Service Worker — Matthew Henson Middle School, 12-month position. A high school diploma or GED is required, as well as the ability to read and write effectively. Candidates must be physically capable of performing manual labor. Apply by Oct. 7.

Reading Intervention Instructional Assistant — Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 10-month position. Apply by Oct. 7.

Benefits Assistant — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Candidates must have an associate's degree in human resources, business administration or a related field from an accredited college or university. Three years progressively responsible experience in benefits administration preferred. Apply by Oct. 7.

Building Service Worker — Henry E. Lackey High School, 12-month position. A high school diploma or GED is required, along with the ability to read and write effectively. Applicants must be physically capable of performing manual labor. Apply by Oct. 8.

Literacy Instructional Assistant — Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required, and the ability to work in an instructional support role with high school/middle school-aged children. Apply by Oct. 12.

Food Service Assistant Manager — All schools, 10-month position. A high school diploma or equivalent required. A minimum of three years of experience in food service preferred. Apply by Nov. 1.

Technology Education Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree is required and applicants must meet certification requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Educa-

tion. Apply by Dec. 31.

Title I Tutor — Location to be determined, temporary position. A bachelor's degree is required with a professional certificate in elementary education preferred. Position open until filled.

Temporary Computer Analyst — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, temporary position. A high school diploma is required. A year of current work experience in information networks and user support desired. Position open until filled.

Title I Parent Liaison — Location to be determined, 28.5 hours per week. Position open until filled.

Security Alarm Technician — CCPS Maintenance Shop, 12-month position. Graduation from a two-year college or technical school with coursework in electronics and computers, and one year experience combination of training and experience. Position open until filled.