



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Prepare to 'Launch'

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will hold an Early Learning Launch 10 a.m.-1 p.m. March 21 at La Plata High School. The event will provide resources for families with children 5 years and younger. Resources include school readiness activities for parents and children. During the event, parents can fill out their child's application for prekindergarten or register their child for kindergarten a week earlier than advertised. Admission to pre-kindergarten is based on guidelines set by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Visit the CCPS website at [ccboe.com](https://www.ccboe.com) for information on prekindergarten category eligibility guidelines. Parents must complete the application process for prekindergarten and register for kindergarten online through ParentVue, an online student information system used by CCPS. The system is available at <https://www.ccboe.com/index.php/online-registration>.

Career Fair March 21

The office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) is holding the second annual career fair 10 a.m.-1 p.m. March 21 at North Point High School. The fair is free and open to all, but is designed to help students find work after graduation. There will be on-site interviewing opportunities. Participants should bring copies of their resume. North Point is at 2500 Davis Road in Waldorf.

All a'buzz for the Bee

The Charles County Spelling Bee is set for 6 p.m. March 24 at Mattawoman Middle School. Due to contractual obligations, the Bee will not be livestreamed this year. The competition will air on CCPSTV in the days following the Bee. Mattawoman is at 10145 Berry Road in Waldorf.



A closer look at the HITS Expo

Ashton Gordon, left, a senior in La Plata High School's Project Lead the Way biomedical sciences program, focuses a microscope for brothers, Nathan, center, a fifth grader at Willam A. Diggs Elementary School, and Aidan Benites, at the Dissection Connection station at the History, Industry, Technology and Science (HITS) Expo March 7 at St. Charles High School. More about the HITS Expo can be found at www.ccboe.com.

North Point's Ball named CCPS Teacher of the Year

North Point High School art teacher James Ball is well known among the school community. As a veteran Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teacher of 26 years, Ball is passionate about art and art education. He is also dedicated to athletics and coaches several sports at North Point.

Art of teaching

For 26 years, Ball has taught students how to love art and to connect their talents to personal experiences. He strives to connect with all students, not just those in his classroom or on the playing fields. For those connections and Ball's commitment to building relationships with all students, he was recently named the 2020 Charles County Teacher

of the Year.

Ball said he was overwhelmed to learn he was North Point's Teacher of the Year nominee, and shocked when his selection for the county award was announced. "When my name was announced as winner, I was overwhelmed with emotion and then shocked I could receive such an honor amongst all of the outstanding teachers. I am still in a state of shock," Ball said.

Ball's passion for baseball growing up fueled his desire to pursue a sports career after high school. That is until he took a job teaching at a Parks and Recreation summer art camp. "After my first day teaching the kids, I knew this is what I wanted to do as a career," Ball said.

Ball is a Charles County native and grad-

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Notebook

On the cover

The Board of Education of Charles County honored outstanding educators at its March 10 Board meeting. From left are Corrin Deavers, reading resource teacher, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School; Gunner Sgt. Samyra Rogers, Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (MCJROTC) program instructor, St. Charles High School; and Lauren Goldsmith, second-grade teacher, J.C. Parks Elementary School.

Special education survey

The Maryland Special Education Parent Involvement Survey is open to parents of children ages 3 to 21 who are receiving special education or related services through CCPS. The survey takes about five minutes to complete and must be completed by May 18. Go to www.ccboe.com and look under What's New for a link to the survey.

ESFCU educator award

The Support Education Foundation of Educational Systems Federal Credit Union (ESFCU) awards funding to administrators, support staff and teachers to support professional development. The Maurice Erly Professional Development Award is a one-time \$1,000 award that can be used toward continuing education fees, workshop registrations, certification fees and tuition. Applicants must be ESFCU members. The application is available online at <https://supportededucation.org/helping-educators/>. The application is due April 1. Winners will be announced June 15.

Honoring CCPS volunteers

Volunteers make a difference in the lives of CCPS students and staff. The Be the Difference Outstanding Volunteer Award program honors school volunteers. There are five categories in the program including parent volunteer from the elementary, middle and high school levels, Charles County businesses and community organization volunteers. To learn more and to nominate a volunteer, go to www.ccboe.com. Click Quick Links, then click the "Be the Difference" Outstanding Volunteer Award." The nomination deadline is April 1.



Lauryn Wallace, a student in the pharmacy technician Career and Technical Education program at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, prepares to demonstrate the proper way to perform CPR during a health fair at the Starkey building.

Stethem CTE students breathe life into health fair

High school juniors in the pharmacy technician and physical rehabilitation Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center held a health fair today at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building.

This is the second year Stethem students held the event. The first year was staged at the center, but student feedback prompted organizers to switch up locations to allow students the chance to interact with more people outside of peers and staff members they see every day.

Stations included blood pressure checks, height and weight checks, a lung peak flow challenge and office exercises. (Tip from junior De'Mari Freeman, a physical rehabilitation student — "Don't use a chair with wheels" if you try chair push ups or chair lunges.)

There was information on HIPPA rights, coronavirus, hydration, heart attack symptoms in men and women, and signs of a concussion. The health fair not only gave students the opportunity to share their knowledge about what they are learning in their classes, they get to work on communication skills.

"...Talking to people, we are learning from them, too," Jordan McCoy, a junior pharmacy technician student, said.

The physical rehabilitation and phar-



Lauren Hoyle, left, a certification assistant in CCPS human resources, gets her pulse checked by Karleigh Randolph, a student in the pharmacy technician Career and Technical Education program at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center.

macy technician are two-year opt-in programs that students can apply to. They start the programs in their junior year of high school, splitting the school day between Stethem and their home schools.

Many of the students in the pharmacy tech and physical rehab programs want to explore careers in the health and medical field. "I like organization and I like helping people," junior Alexandria Camp, a pharmacy technician student, said.

D'Shaun Tyler, a junior in the physical rehabilitation program, is interested in neurology. "I want to solve medical mysteries and help people," he said.

BALL

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uated from La Plata High School.

He said it was there that he met a teacher who fueled his passion for art. “Mr. [Joseph] Troy was my high school art teacher who made me fall in love with art,” Ball said. Troy retired in 2016, but not before Ball was able to work alongside him as a colleague. “It was amazing to be able to work with him as a fellow teacher,” Ball said.

Ball started his career with CCPS as an art teacher at Westlake High School in 1994. He was hired by former Westlake Principal Dr. John Cox. Ball said Cox helped him transition to teaching. “Dr. Cox gave me a chance. He took me under his wing,” Ball added. Ball later transferred to North Point in 2005 when the school first opened.

During his career as an art teacher, Ball has taught several art courses, ranging from Art I and Art II to Advanced Placement (AP) studio design. His expectations are high — students know his class is one to take seriously. His course load provides Ball with opportunities to reach a wide variety of North Point students. Ball expects student achievement and pushes his students to exceed their own expectations to master course content. He requires students to maintain a weekly art journal that he reviews, as well as a digital portfolio of their class assignments. Ball said he encourages students with exceptional talent to pursue advanced courses. “If I see a kid with amazing talent, I recruit them for my advanced courses,” he said.

Theresa Alo has taught alongside Ball for 15 years. She said he is an example of a dedicated teacher who goes above and beyond to motivate students. “He establishes a classroom environment that allows students the ability to focus on artwork. His enthusiasm and dedication to producing hard-working and respectable young men and women is commendable,” Alo wrote in a letter of recommendation.

Coach Ball

Aside from his love of art, Ball has a passion for athletics. He is well known as “Coach Ball” because he has coached for nearly 29 years. His coaching resume features championship titles in both boys’ basketball and cross-country track. Ball has served as the head coach for boys’ basketball and cross



James Ball, an art teacher at North Point High School, looks over students’ work. Ball, a 26 year-veteran of CCPS, was named the school system’s Teacher of the Year.

“Without taking a non-basketball player under his wing in 2015, I cannot sit here today and tell you I’d be where I am without this man.”

Quinton Mayo, a 2015 North Point High School graduate and host of Wizards Outsiders on NBC Sports.

country since North Point first opened.

He added girls’ lacrosse head coach to his list of titles in 2018. He is the only coach at the school who oversees a fall, winter and spring sport. He enjoys mentoring students, both in the classroom and on the fields of play.

Quinton Mayo graduated from North Point in 2015. He was not a student in Ball’s classes nor did he play any sport that Ball coached. However, when Mayo approached Ball about helping him increase student support at basketball games, he helped Mayo explore his ideas. Mayo eventually ended up providing commentary alongside his peers during basketball games from the stands. He said Ball shared with him that he could see Mayo doing this for a living.

After he graduated, Mayo completed two years of computer science courses in college and then remembered a conversation he had with Ball. “Mr. Ball taught me an extremely valuable lesson in high school: no matter what, chase your dreams,” Mayo said. Soon after, Mayo changed his major to communication studies and journalism. He now hosts the Wizards Outsiders show on NBC Sports Washington. Mayo credits Ball with helping him realize his dreams. “Without taking a non-basketball player under his wing in 2015, I cannot sit here today and tell you I’d be where I am without this man,” Mayo wrote in a letter to support Ball’s nomination.

As a coach, Ball strives to instill in students a strong aptitude for school spirit, loyalty and pride. “He is a coach who teaches life lessons by empowering athletes through volunteer and leadership opportunities in the school and community. His actions as a coach lead to one objective — the building up of young men and women,” Andy Shattuck, North Point athletic director, wrote in a nomination statement.

As the Charles County Teacher of the Year, Ball plans to share the importance of fine arts programs in student development.

“The visual arts program in our county is so important to the overall development of students. Students who are enrolled in art have higher SAT scores, fewer dropouts and are academically inclined,” Ball said.

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Job Shadow Day at Malcolm

Malcolm Elementary School fifth grader Dylan Gainer, left, learns the ins and outs of being a school secretary from Patrice Peoples during Job Shadow Day at the school. Fourth and fifth graders were able to see what it takes to keep things running smoothly. They shadowed teachers, secretaries and the principal.

*Submitted by Malcolm's PR liaison
Rebecca Hoover.*



Morning high fives at Billingsley ES

Charles County Sheriff Troy Berry, back left, Sgt. Cooney and Lt. Grove recently greeted Billingsley Elementary School students in the morning. Berry often visits schools and meets with students.

*Submitted by Billingsley's PR liaisons
Monique Burton and Andrea Landis.*

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

Guidance Secretary — Milton M. Somers Middle School, 11-month position. Applicants must have good computer literacy skills and exhibit the ability to compile data accurately and concisely. Apply by March 17.

Human Resources Assistant — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A high school diploma or general education degree is required; an associate's degree in human resources, business or related area preferred. Previous human resources experience or internship preferred. Apply by March 18.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — North Point High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Ap-

plicants must have a demonstrated interest in and aptitude for working with school-aged children. Apply by March 18.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — Matthew Henson Middle School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Applicants must have a demonstrated interest in and aptitude for working with school-aged children. Apply by March 18.

Operations Equipment Repair Technician — Annex 1, 12-month position. A high school diploma is required. A working knowledge of battery/electric floor care machines and small engine repair normally acquired through three years of related experience or an equivalent combination of relevant education and/or experience preferred. Apply by March 18.

Language Arts Teacher — All middle schools, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Mathematics Teacher — Location to be de-

termined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Physical Education Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Science Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Social Studies Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Technology Education Teacher — North Point High School, 10-month position. Apply by March 30.

School Counselor — All high schools, 12-month position. A master's degree in school counseling and eligibility for certification in school counseling as determined by the Maryland State Department of Education are required. Apply by April 30.