

School News

Notebook

Board policies suspended

During its April 21 meeting, the Board of Education of Charles County suspended some its policies to give Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff the flexibility to make decisions while Maryland schools are closed and students and teachers are engaged in distance learning.

Some of the policies that have been suspended include fall eligibility for extracurricular athletics and activities, and graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2020. Student Member of the Board – and a member of Thomas Stone High School’s graduating class – DeJuan Woods Jr. was asked by Superintendent Kimberly Hill to reach out to a group of seniors from around the county to get the student opinion on graduation.

To read more, go to www.ccboe.com and search the press release site for “Board of Educaiton suspends some policies due to school closure.”

AP exam update

The College Board recently scheduled dates for online Advanced Placement (AP) exams for students.

Each exam includes a primary test date in May and a make-up date for students.

All primary exam dates fall between May 11 and 22 with make-up dates from June 1 to 5. Exams will test students on skills and concepts learned in the first 75 percent of the course. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) AP teachers are providing students with lessons in Microsoft Teams to help prepare them for the exam.

The College Board is offering online resources, including review courses facilitated by AP teachers, to students for free. Review course content is available through livestream or on demand.

To learn more about the AP exams and the schedule, go to www.collegeboard.org.



Dressing up for meals

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) food and nutrition service workers liven up meal distribution with a costume change. From left are Deanna Beane, food service manager at Dr. James Craik Elementary School, Shannel Proctor, food and nutrition service worker at J.C. Parks Elementary School and Victoria Langley, food service manager at Parks. Meals sites are at 11 locations around the county and are open Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

CCPS school nurses continue a career of care

When Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) closed March 16 in an effort to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), school nurses left behind their offices, but not their medical knowledge and drive to help people stay healthy.

Nearly 50 school nurses work in CCPS – a mix of employees of the Charles County Department of Health and agency nurses. Since schools closed in mid-March, school nurses have been staffing the COVID-19 call center for the health department from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Following Gov. Hogan’s mandate on physical distancing, the nurses are now working from home answering calls and providing information, support and reassurance,



Andrea Taylor, the school nurse at Milton M. Somers Middle School, takes a call while working from home. CCPS school nurses are staffing the COVID-19 call center.

Board approves 4th-quarter grading policy

The Board of Education at its April 21 meeting approved a change to the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) grading policy for students.

The policy addresses changes necessary due to the statewide school closure and how teachers can provide fourth-quarter grades.

CCPS school buildings are currently closed through May 15; however, teachers continue to provide instruction through distance learning.

The approved grading policy gives credit to students participating in distance learning, including work completed on paper packets and through Apex Learning. CCPS distance learning materials include lessons in critical core content areas, such as English, math, science and social studies, and provides supports for special education and English as a Second Language (ESOL) students.

CCPS instructional staff developed three different policy adjustments for the Board to consider.

The Board approved option one provided by staff. A detailed breakdown of the approved policy is posted on Board Docs.

The approved policy provides students with an opportunity to receive either a

pass, incomplete or fail status for the fourth quarter, with different criteria in place per grade level.

High school students can also increase their final grade in a course by 5 percentage points if they have a grade higher than a 59 percent at the end of the third quarter and complete fourth quarter distance learning activities. This can increase a high school student's GPA.

How students receive pass, incomplete or fail for the fourth quarter

Students will receive a pass grade if there is evidence of distance learning work completed either online or in the CCPS provided lesson packets.

Students will receive an incomplete grade if teachers or CCPS staff have not been able to communicate with a student or parent.

A student may also receive an incomplete grade if the family has indicated extraordinary circumstances prevented their child from completing distance learning work. Students will receive a failing grade for the school year if they earned a failing grade (59 percent or less) for all three quarters this year and earn an incomplete for the fourth quarter.

To read the policy as it applies to grade levels, go to www.ccboe.com.



Notebook

Updated cancellations

An updated list of cancellations is available on ccboe.com. The events canceled in the coming weeks include Westlake High School's spring production on April 24 and 25, and the SAT on May 2 at Westlake.

Feeding the future

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) continues to serve thousands of meals a week to children 18 and younger as the statewide school closure stretches to April 24.

The first week of the meal distribution at eight initial sites saw 11,000 meals given out over five days. By the second week of the original closure, three more meal sites were opened.

The distribution numbers continue to climb, Crystal Richardson, supervisor of food and nutrition services, said. "Last week we did over 32,000 meals, the week before was over 25,000 meals," she said. As of last week, 129,500 meals have been served. To read more about how the FNS staff, go to the [ccboe](http://ccboe.com) website and search the press release site for "meal distribution numbers climb."

Enrichment activities

While distance learning assignments for grades have been distributed, enrichment activities are available online at www.ccboe.com.

Need Teams assistance?

Teachers who need assistance accessing Microsoft Teams or working in the platform, can email webhelpdesk@ccboe.com. Technology staff members are monitoring the email account.

Mental health resources

CCPS school staff members are available for parents/guardians who have concerns about their children's social, emotional and behavioral development. The names and contact information of a child's school counselor, school psychologist and Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW) are available on each school website under the Announcements section.



CCPS for the win

The athletic boosters and athletic directors of the seven Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) high schools -- Henry E. Lackey, La Plata, Maurice J. McDonough, North Point St. Charles, Thomas Stone and Westlake -- recently cleaned out the concession stands now that Maryland schools are closed through May 15. The snacks and drinks usually enjoyed by sports fans have been donated to area food banks. Left, Rich Pauole, La Plata's athletic director, is pictured with a portion of the donation.



Cheryl Smith, left, the acting assistant nursing supervisor for Charles County Public Schools, answers the questions from callers to the COVID-19 hotline. Right, Sheila Brockmann, the school nurse at La Plata High School, is working the COVID-19 hotline during the school closure. Due to Gov. Larry Hogan's mandate on physical distancing, nurses are working from home.

School nurses

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Sheila Brockmann, school nurse at La Plata High School, said.

"I have been in school health for 18 years and this is the first time school nursing staff has been utilized to work in a different capacity," Peggy Bird, interim school health program manager, said. Bird oversees the school health program with Cheryl Smith, the acting assistant nursing supervisor for CCPS.

Brockmann said when news of COVID-19 was first reported, she kept an eye on it. "When we first started hearing about COVID-19, I became obsessed with reading about it, and watching news reports about it," she said, adding that the globe has grappled with other public health concerns in the recent past such as the avian flu, SARS, H1N1 and Ebola. "They were scary, but we were able to get them under control."

Piccowaxen Middle School's nurse Melissa Golden admits to not being overly concerned about COVID-19 — at first. "My first thoughts on coronavirus virus was that it was not as prevalent as the regular flu, but I was wrong," she said.

"With COVID-19, it became clear very quickly that this was something different," Brockmann said "It was coming and coming fast. It was moving and changing and it was difficult for the medical experts to get a handle on it," Brockmann said. "They will though, I am confident that we will get through this and be stronger and smarter for it."

The school health program is a collaborative effort between CCPS and the Charles County Department of Health which allows for nurses in each school.

Nurses make sure students are taking their maintenance medications for ADHD, allergies and other health issues. Schools are communities, ones that have people with asthma, diabetes, seizure disorders and those who have anaphylaxis, a serious allergic reaction that is life-threatening.

Then there are the everyday situations that call for a nurse's attention — the occasional headache, injuries, stomachaches, pink eye and colds. "Because school nursing is such an autonomous position, someone who can think quickly, act responsibly and know when to

ask for help — that makes a great school nurse," Bird said.

Brockmann said she loves her job. "I love seeing my students every day and being their support at school," she said. "I appreciate how difficult it must be for parents to send a child to school with a medical condition. I take that part of the job very seriously."

Both Golden and Brockmann are nursing veterans. Brockmann started her nursing career in her native Philadelphia working on an in-patient psychiatric ward before briefly working with patients with dementia. She has worked in home health and started as a substitute school nurse before sharing the job at Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School and Mattawoman Middle School. She now works fulltime at La Plata High School.

Golden's specialty is in step-down pulmonary/cardiology, and has worked as a nursing instructor at Prince George's Community College, an investigative nurse for a health insurance company, as a home health nurse, in urgent care, and spent years working in hospitals and long-term treatment facilities. "I have a service heart and have always wanted to help people," Golden said. "It was either nursing or social work. Nursing won out."

School nurses, like other medical professionals, recommend physical distancing and maintaining good basic health through nutrition, hygiene and rest during the COVID-19 crisis.

"We will make it through this and when we return to schools, the school nursing staff will be ready to care for CCPS students," Bird said. "Many of my nurses have voiced that they greatly miss their school community, both students and staff."

Brockmann, who works with high school students, understands how COVID-19 has upended lives. "I miss them so much," she said of the students. "I think about them every day and wish we were at school going through our routine, and yes, even complaining about it a little. I look forward to when this passes, and when we will back at school and back to our normal routine. This too shall pass and [we] will have stories to tell our future generations about what it was like during this crazy time."

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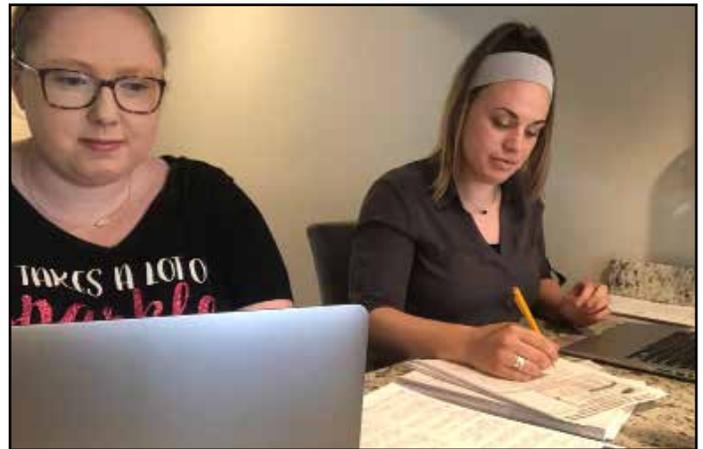


Strumming for students

James Thompson, Eva Turner Elementary School's learning resource teacher (LRT) and his daughter, create musical connections for students who are distance learning. Teachers around the county have been connecting with their students using Teams, a video conference platform.

Lesson planning

Arthur Middleton Elementary School teachers and housemates, Brianne White, back right, a fourth-grade teacher, and Morghan Hungerford, who teaches third grade, work from home on lesson plans during office hours. CCPS teachers each have office hours — varying on what grade level they teach — to answer questions from parents and students, and work on lessons.



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

Administration Intern — Location to be determined, 11-month position. A bachelor's degree and Standard Professional Certificate issued by the Maryland State Department of Education are required, along with at least three years of successful teaching experience. Apply by April 30.

Building Service Worker — Location to be determined 12-month position. Applicants must have the ability to read and write, as well as being physically capable of performing manual labor. Applicants should have a willingness to work overtime in cases of emergency. Apply by May 29.

IEP Facilitator — All schools, 11-month position. A bachelor's degree required, with a master's degree preferred. Applicants should

hold or be eligible for a Maryland Standard Professional Certificate with special education endorsement. Three years of satisfactory special education classroom teaching required. Apply by June 30.

Pre-K Special Education Instructional Assistant — All elementary schools, 10-month position. Applicants must have the ability to work in an instructional support role with pre-kindergarten children and work with children who have special needs. Apply by July 12.

Computer Teacher — Location to be determined 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Early Childhood Teacher — 10-month position, all elementary schools. Apply by Dec. 31.

Elementary Teacher — Location to be determined 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

English Teacher — All high schools, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

ESOL Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Family and Consumer Science Teacher —

Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Family and Consumer Science Teacher — St. Charles High School, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

French Teacher — Location to be determined 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

HVAC Mechanic II — CCPS Maintenance Shop, 12-month position. High school diploma and any combination equivalent to four years journey-level experience in HVAC trade and a valid Maryland Board of HVACR Contractor's Journeyman license are required. Position open until filled.

Reading Recovery Teacher — All elementary schools, 10-month position. Apply by July 1.

Art Teacher — All schools, 10 month position, Position open until filled.

Business Education Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Position open until filled.