



School News

Notebook

Schools, sites closed

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will be closed Monday, May 25, 2020, in observance of Memorial Day. The 11 meal distribution sites will be closed and there will be no instruction through Teams on May 25.

Learning packets

The next set of elementary learning packets will be available May 28 at the 11 distribution sites. The sites at Henry E. Lackey, Maurice J. McDonough, St. Charles and Westlake high schools will be closed on the day of those schools graduation ceremonies. Lackey and McDonough sites are closed June 1, Westlake's site is closed on June 2 and the site at St. Charles will be closed June 3. On those days, the county's other distribution sites will be open.

Graduations set

Graduation looks a bit different this year due to the school closure and the need to social distance to slow the spread of COVID-19. High school graduations will take place at each school. Henry E. Lackey and Maurice J. McDonough high schools will graduate June 1. On June 2, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools will hold events. St. Charles and La Plata high schools will hold graduations on June 3, and North Point's graduation is set for June 4. Students and their families were given the option to participate in an in-person event or virtual ceremony. Each high school is coordinating a time slot for students to walk across an outdoor stage at their respective school. The events are not open to the general public. Virtual graduations for each school will be available to view to the public on June 12.



Mental Health Matters!

Ca'mye Thompson, a student of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, participated in Children's Mental Health Matters!, a statewide campaign that is celebrated each May in Maryland. Ca'mye created artwork titled "Old Town Road," which featured him riding a horse and (we'd like to believe) singing along to the hit by Lil Nas X. He is one of 246 students who took part in the Celebrating Through Art: The First Lady's Mental Health Awareness Youth Art Display. Students around Maryland created artwork based on the theme of what makes them feel happy, healthy and/or hopeful. To see more art produced by Maryland students, go to <https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/get-involved/annual-youth-art-display/>.

Dr. Mudd's Whatley named CCPS Principal of the Year

Orlena Whatley has been serving meals and handing out instructional packets to families for the past two months, and that's what the Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School principal was doing last week when she learned she is the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) 2020 Principal of the Year.

Whatley is known as a leader who takes care of her community, but she was surprised by the recognition. "I had no idea I had been selected and thought these types of things had been postponed due to the closures. I was handing out meals when [Superintendent of Schools] Dr. Hill called me to tell me the news. It was very unexpected for me. You do what you do and expect nothing in return. It's very humbling," Whatley said.

Whatley's recognition comes at a time when school buildings are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic; distance learning replaces in-class instruction and schools serve meals curbside rather than in a cafeteria. When the state ordered schools to close, school principals jumped in to do what was necessary for their school communities. One of the first things Whatley did was to ask CCPS leaders if she could open her school as a food distribution site so she could ensure her community was taken care of during the closure.

Whatley's commitment to children, her staff and the Dr. Mudd community is evident in

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Catch up on TV

A number of CCPS TV-produced videos are live at the On Air section of CCPS TV. Learn how building service teams are working to keep CCPS buildings clean and safe, how food and nutrition services staff is ensuring children are being fed during the school closure, who is making face shields for the county's first responders and how high school staff members went the extra mile to celebrate members of the Class of 2020.

Meal account refunds

The CCPS Food and Nutrition Department will refund meal account balances for high school seniors. This includes monies on both a student's meal and general food accounts. CCPS staff will provide check refunds to the parent or guardian on file in the student information system. Checks will be processed and mailed to the home address on file with CCPS by the end of June. This also includes any balances on My Payments Plus, the online meal prepayment system used by CCPS. Parents with additional students enrolled in CCPS can request the balance to be transferred to another student in their family. For more information, go to the What's New section of www.ccboe.com.

Updating residency

Each school year in February, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) requires parents of students in fifth- and eighth-grades to submit two updated proofs of domicile to their child's school. Prior to the school closure, parents received a letter about updating proofs with an April deadline. The deadline has been eliminated, but students in Grades 5 and 8 must have updated proofs on file before the 2020-21 school year begins. Students transitioning to sixth grade and high school as a freshman will not have their course schedule confirmed until their updated proofs are on file. To learn more, go to www.ccboe.com.

Registration dates

Registration for prekindergarten and kindergarten is taking place now. Go to <https://www.ccboe.com/index.php/online-registration> to start the process.

In Memoriam

Sylvia Bannister



Sylvia Bannister

Sylvia Bannister, a long-time employee of Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), passed away May 6, 2020. Bannister worked for more than 40 years as a substitute and Instructional Assistant (IA) at Henry E. Lackey and Maurice J. McDonough high schools. She was well known and loved by all her students and co-workers. "Sylvia Bannister was an integral part of McDonough high school," McDonough Principal Steven Roberts said. "She always approached with a smile and a cheerful greeting, able to connect with students and staff members as a willing listener. Her positivity and sensitive approach will be missed at our school by staff, students and parents."

Bannister graduated from Bel Alton High School and was a member of Zion

Baptist Church in Hilltop for more than 50 years.

"Mrs. Bannister was a very caring person who would go out of her way to help our students. I've known her for the past four years and she has been a big help to me and the SOAR program at McDonough," Jonathan Briscoe, a special education teacher at McDonough, said "She loved to bring in decorations for all holidays and plan festive parties for our students."

Services were held May 17.

"The thing I will miss the most is how much she helped me transition to my new position. Her being a veteran in the field of special education, she always made sure I was on top of the little things when it came to the students," Briscoe said. "She will be truly missed."

In Memoriam

Frank "Frankie" Clarke



Frank Clarke

Frank "Frankie" Clarke, an multimedia and English teacher at Thomas Stone High School, passed away May 8, 2020. A musician, Clarke worked with many Washington, D.C.,-based bands and fronted "Frankie and the Actions."

"Mr. Clarke served as an English and multimedia teacher at Thomas Stone and he was a true rock star who will be greatly missed," Thomas Stone Principal Shanif Pearl said. Clarke was also a poet and artist, and earned the Poet Laureate Award in 1993 from his alma mater, University of Maryland, College Park.

"Mr. Frank Clarke was always calm, and always cool," said Brittany Yhap, a vice principal at Theodore

G. Davis Middle School, who worked at Stone with Clarke when she was an administrative intern. "He was hip without even trying, and held a special place in the hearts of students, parents and Stone staff. Frank was fun — always seeking to make light of challenging or difficult situations. Frank was a genuine man who welcomed everyone, including the 'misfits,' with open arms and an eager heart. I am thankful I got to know and work with him," Yhap said.

Before teaching at Thomas Stone, Clarke taught at Crossland High School and Potomac High School and was a professor of English literature at Bowie State University.

Whatley

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all that she does. Her dedication to student success and community support led to her selection as the CCPS 2020 Principal of the Year and finalist in the Washington Post's Principal of the Year program.

Dr. Mudd is one of 11 CCPS meal sites that operates daily during the week. Staff at the site serve up to 300 meals a day and see steady traffic of families and children. Whatley has been helping serve meals and hand out instructional packets each day since Dr. Mudd opened March 24 as a meal site.

Whatley has been principal at Dr. Mudd since 2017 and joined CCPS as an administrator in 2014 when she relocated to Maryland from Texas. Whatley's perspective on leadership is being committed to relationship building, making connections and showing compassion. She is a hands-on leader and sets clear expectations for students and staff. Whatley leads the school community with the vision that everyone can be successful. She takes the time to listen to parents, staff, and most importantly, students. Whatley captures the attention of students by taking time to understand them and their needs. Students know they matter and, in turn, put forth their best effort in the classroom and model positive behavior.

"Mrs. Whatley is the best principal ever. She is always in the hallway solving a problem or helping out. She walks around the school to check in on everyone and makes sure that we all have everything we need. We can count on her to make sure the school is doing well," Dr. Mudd fifth grader Cheyanne Curry wrote in a nomination letter.

Anthony Galdamez, a fifth grader, also wrote a letter in support of Whatley's nomination. In his letter, he outlines three reasons why his principal is deserving of the Principal of the Year title. "She keeps us safe. Mrs. Whatley tries to keep us safe and healthy. Mrs. Whatley prepares us for college, military or trade school. Mrs. Whatley hopes we can have our dreams come true. Thanks to her, we have fun at Dr. Mudd," Galdamez wrote.

For someone so passionate about education, Whatley did not initially plan to go into teaching. While attending the University of Houston as a political science major, she volunteered at the local YMCA to tutor kids. The YMCA was located in a low socio-economic area and having grown up in a similar area, Whatley wanted to give back. She spent about three years tutoring children through a program called Why Kids are Smart. At one point, a local school principal came to see Whatley at the YMCA. "I had a principal come to see me and she said 'the kids talk about you at school, so I needed to come meet you,'" Whatley said. It was at this point that Whatley looked into an alternative education certification program. "Before I graduated college I was already accepted into the alternative certification program. They accepted me without me having a conferred degree," she added.

Whatley graduated in May 1994 with her bachelor's degree and accepted a job as a kindergarten teacher with Dallas Independent School District by June. "That's how it all started," she said.

From there, Whatley's passion for working with children grew and so did the importance of her belief in establishing positive relationships with students. Whatley makes everyone feel important, from parents and staff to students and community partners. She makes all feel like they are at the top of her priority list. The Dr. Mudd community members are comfortable bringing concerns to Whatley because of the



Orlena Whatley, center, is the 2020 Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) 2020 Principal of the Year. Since the school closure, Whatley and other Dr. Mudd staff members have been working at the meal site at the school. She is pictured with second grader JazLynn Swales, left, and Kamrin Briscoe, a Dr. Mudd fifth grader.

relationships she fosters. The community knows that she cares.

Dr. Mudd is a Title I school and many students need supports outside of school. Whatley has introduced programs such as reading buddies and forged partnerships with local churches to ensure students and their families have meals on the weekends. Whatley also works with several local agencies to help her students get what they need during the school closure.

It is important to Whatley that her students know she understands them and is there to support them. "It's about the connection you make with kids... the relationships. Kids want you to understand them. I was a low socio-economic student. We moved a lot and my Mom worked two jobs. I've walked in these shoes and have had struggles as a family. It is an understanding that you never lose," she said.

As a leader, teachers and staff see Whatley as a motivator, colleague, friend and fierce supporter of education. She pushes teachers and staff to achieve greatness and supports an environment of collaboration and teamwork. Dr. Mudd recently underwent a renovation and students and staff relocated to a transition school for two years. In leading her team, Whatley guided the transition from the old school building to the transition school and back to the renovated campus.

"Although so much pressure was placed in Mrs. Whatley's hands, running a school and rebuilding the original school, she exceeded all expectations. The proof is in our test scores and the beautifully renovated building that we officially moved into this school year. I know in the hearts of all she has touched, she is already Principal of the Year," Dr. Mudd third-grade teacher Kelly Brickey wrote in a nomination letter.

As Principal of the Year, Whatley will be honored by the Board of Education later this year. Whatley was also the finalist from Charles County in the Post's Principal of the Year awards program.

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CCPS students honored as Carson Scholars

Two Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students achieved Carson Scholar status earlier this month.

They are Jayden Hill, a fourth-grade student at Billingsley Elementary School, and Kiley Grollman, a fifth grader at Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School.

The Carson Scholars program recognizes students for high academic achievement, humanitarian qualities and community service.

As Carson Scholars, both Grollman and Hill receive a \$1,000 college scholarship.

Carson Scholars are eligible for annual renewal of the scholarship as long as they maintain high academic standards and a commitment to their communities.

Students are nominated by members of their respective school communities for recognition as a Carson Scholar. The application process is competitive and about 500 new Carson Scholars are chosen nationwide annually.

Ten other CCPS students received a scholarship renewal in 2020. They include:

- Eileen Browning, sophomore, Maurice J. McDonough High School;
- Owen Butler, senior, La Plata High School;
- Noah Cusack, eighth grade, Piccowaxen Middle

School;

Brady Freundel, eighth grade, General Smallwood Middle School;

Alyssa Gerhart, junior, North Point High School;

Jolie Lombardi, eighth grade, Piccowaxen;

Madelyn Mudd, senior, La Plata;

Aaron Sellow, freshman, North Point;

Nya Whitney, sixth grade, Milton M. Somers Middle School; and

Benjamin Williamson, freshman, North Point.

Each year, the Carson Scholars Fund awards \$1,000 college scholarships to a select group of high achieving students in grades four through 12. These students demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and humanitarian qualities.

Carson Scholars must also have a minimum GPA of 3.75.

The Carson Scholars Fund was founded in 1994 by world-renowned pediatric neurosurgeon Benjamin S. Carson and his wife to motivate and reward academic excellence in young people.

The Carson Scholars Fund has awarded more than 7,000 scholarships and has scholars in all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

Visit the Carson Scholars website at www.carsonscholars.org for more information.

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

Reading Interventionist — Matthew Henson Middle School, 10-month position. Apply by May 25.

Content Specialist for Physical Education — Master's degree in related field or equivalent is required. Apply by June 2.

Reading Interventionist — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by July 31.

Infant and Toddler Teacher — F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 11-month position. Apply by June 30.

Automotive Technician Teacher — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. Apply by July 31.

English Teacher — North Point High School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 31.

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

IEP Facilitator (pool for future openings) — All schools, 11-month position. Apply by Aug. 1.

Mathematics Teacher — St. Charles High School, 10-month position. Apply by Sept. 15.

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

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

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

Elementary Childhood Teacher — All elementary schools, 10-month position. 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.

Language Arts Teacher — All middle schools, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

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

Family and Consumer Science Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

HVAC Mechanic II — CCPS Maintenance Shop, 12-month position. Applicants should have a high school diploma and any combination equivalent to four years journey-level experience in HVAC trade. Position open until filled.

Food Service Worker (six-hour position) — Location to be determined, 10-month position. High school diploma or equivalent required. Position open until filled.

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