Dear community members,

Welcome back! We’ve had a wonderfully smooth opening to the year, and the season of back-to-school nights is upon us. We hope you’ll join us at your school to meet your teachers and get a glimpse of school life. Check the schedule on the back of this publication, or visit our new web site at charlottesvilleschools.org.

This document includes a checklist of ways to facilitate smooth interactions between your family and our school division. These items range from free online balance checks of your students’ lunch accounts to log-ins to get a glimpse of your students’ assignments, progress, grades and more through Canvas, our online learning system.

Our roll-out of Chromebook laptops for students in grades 3-12 has also been smooth. This is the second phase of our 1:1 (one device per student) program. These devices offer the creative powers of a laptop and the ease-of-use of a tablet.

Finally, phase three of our science lab renovations is now complete. If you haven’t had the chance to tour the new science and engineering facilities at Buford (completed in 2013), the new Sigma Lab at CHS (2014), or the renovated science rooms at CHS (2015), I invite you to be our guest.

From laptops to renovated science spaces to extraordinary fine arts programs, we appreciate the way that our community supports our schools and the students who attend them. Let’s get ready for a great year!

–Dr. Rosa S. Atkins

CCS Updates

Charlottesville City Schools offers a number of ways for families to stay connected:

- Students Photos and Schoolwork: To limit how CCS uses students’ images or artwork, please complete the Permission Checklist. Otherwise, you will give permission for your child to appear in photos and videos, for CCS to share images with partners such as City Schoolyard Garden, and for CCS to show your student’s schoolwork.
- Electronic Report Cards: By completing the Permissions Checklist, parents can stop receiving paper report cards. All families have access to grades through PowerSchool. At year’s end, all families will receive a printed report card.
- Meal Account Balances and Electronic Payments: CCS partners with My School Bucks so families may set up low-balance alerts (free) and make optional online payments (with a convenience fee).
- PowerSchool and Canvas: Follow your students’ progress in PowerSchool (grades, attendance) and Canvas (assignments, grades, due dates, and more).
- Google Calendar: See charlottesvilleschools.org/calendar to sync your e-calendar with the division and your school.
- Social Media: Follow us @CvilleSchools on Facebook & Twitter!
- Livestreamed Board Meetings: The community is invited to attend or speak at CCS Board meetings (held the first Thursday each month, 5pm, CHS Media Center). We also livestream at ustream.com.

Congratulations to our teachers! Buford ESOL teacher Gail Heard spent three weeks in the Philippines as part of a year-long program with the State Department’s Teachers for Global Classrooms. Johnson teacher Christine Esposito won awards from the National Council on Geographic Education, one for her outstanding teaching and another for the book she co-wrote. And CCS teachers won more than $11,000 in grants from the Shannon Foundation to support projects in science, gardening, photography and more. Grant-winners are Kena Brandt, Melissa Combs, Kathleen Gragg, Karl Helmstetter, Carmella Johnson, Samantha Pagni, Stephanie Tatel, and Mary-Elizabeth Via.
For students at Clark, Johnson, and Venable, it’s their year to get a visit from the Richmond Ballet, who will perform the comic ballet *Coppélia* this month.

Burnley-Moran welcomed students back with its annual community field day, featuring fresh air and new friends. They’ve also been leaving a “Positive Footprint,” following a national project for encouraging kindness.

Clark (Walker, and other schools) wrapped up another successful Books On Bikes season, with teachers and librarians visiting students’ neighborhoods to make summertime bike deliveries of free books and popsicles.

Clark students also attended a Charlottesville City Council meeting to present the memory quilt that students created with the assistance of the Crescent Hill Quilters. The collaboration would not have been possible without Clark Art teacher Evelyn Reid, Piedmont Council for the Arts and the Bridge Progressive Arts Initiative.

Greenbrier hosted a huge crowd at its back-to-school picnic on September 11, a great opportunity to get to know Interim Principal Kenneth Leatherwood and assistant principal Cam Ellis.

Jackson-Via welcomed 93 grandparents and other guests to a Grandparents’ Day luncheon on September 11.

The first “Golden Shelf” winner of the year has been named at Johnson Elementary, just one example of how the library and school emphasize positive discipline to teach students to ROAR (be Respectful, Open-minded, Actively engaged, and Responsible).

Venable teachers donned superhero costumes and took to their neighborhood on the last day of summer to greet students and families. The school also hosted a back-to-school potluck and clothing swap. Venable was also featured in a Charlottesville Tomorrow article about the importance of play in kindergarten.

Sixth-graders will attend a special music program by the Charlottesville Chamber Music Festival on September 16 called *Where Does Music Come From*?

The always-active Peace Squad at Walker kicked off the year with a Kindness Rally. The group also held a photo challenge, with pix of teachers and students in their “Be Cool, Be Kind” t-shirts during summer travels.

With help from the United Way’s Day of Caring volunteers, Walker is organizing Mix-it-up-at-Lunch. Students will play mixers in assigned seats to encourage new friendships. PE classes are also doing team-building activities.

This summer, Walker students completed a vibrant mural along the outdoor stairs leading from building A to B. The student-designed mural features figures inspired by the work of artist Keith Haring interspersed with hands that spell “art” in American Sign Language.

Students from Buford and Walker participated in the summer Reflections Governor’s School, a program for those gifted in the visual arts. Click here for a slide show.

Buford civics & economics classes conducted a neighborhood trash pick-up to study (and practice) community service. And history classes skyped with author Kenneth C. Davis!

Students enrolled in ESOL (English for Speakers of other languages) worked with Ms. Pagni from Walker School to create chalk self-portraits as a springboard to writing.

For Buford elections, candidates must complete an application and gather 75 signatures, and students must register to vote! For more authenticity, the City’s elections staff visits the school (with voting booths) to assist on election day.

Engineering teacher Brendan Martin and students Amara Green and Jasmine McCray (now a 9th-grader at CHS) presented at the Fab 11 conference at MIT this August.
After its successful Veg-Off taste-test last week, Buford is preparing for its Fall Harvest Festival on September 18. Organized with City Schoolyard Garden, the event is part back-to-school night and part garden party with food and live music.

Before school even began, 34 CHS students gathered to learn about leadership and community-building at the CHS Student Council’s 2nd annual conference. The students participated in a roundtable with student leaders from U.Va., heard from CCS Board members and administrators, and planned school spirit events for the year.

Sophomore Taylor Shefski was selected to participate in this summer’s “James River Expedition,” a floating classroom along the river. Free for students, the trip is organized by the James River Association and funded by Dominion Resources.

Congratulations to Anna Hennigan ’15 who won (again) the C’ville Weekly’s youth fiction competition.

CHS students bucked a national trend by sending their SAT scores in 2014-15 higher. The school continues to outperform Virginia, which outperforms the nation.

CHS will host a regional college fair with reps from 70 colleges. The event will be Sunday, September 20, and advanced online registration will provide a scannable card to save students the trouble of completing forms for each school.

Charlottesville’s coed golf team is having another record-setting season. Jefferson district champs, the team set a record at the Conference 23 regular season championship, with a team score of 300. In that tough conference, they earned 3rd for the regular season, with A.J. Stouffer named conference regular-season player of the year. Good luck as the rest of the season unfolds, boys and girl!

In other athletic news, ScrimmagePlay was on hand to capture in video CHS football’s big win over Harrisonburg, including Rashad Brock’s 99-yard TD run.

Kudos to the CHS students who participated in the highly competitive governor’s school programs this summer: Helen Atkins in Latin and Stefani Mitrovic in Spanish (Foreign Languages); Megan Bird and Chris Hays (Humanities); and Micah Hunter-Chang for violin and Dora Baker in theater (Visual and Performing Arts). Finally, a special shout-out to Sam Rimm-Kaufman, one of just six Virginia students selected for the program’s partnership with NASA.

School Board Meeting: September 3

In their summer and September meetings, the School Board named the band room at Buford in honor of retired director Joseph V. Tornello, approved foreign-language textbook adoptions, and OKed the selection of Chromebooks for student computers in grades 3-12. They also voted to keep the Virginia Retirement System’s delegate as the sole manager for investment contributions for the voluntary portion of the hybrid plan for employees. For more details or other reports, visit our electronic schoolboard, accessible via our web site. Register here to receive notices of future Board meetings. We livestream at uestream.com (search for Charlottesville City Schools).

Upcoming Meetings & Events

**September**

15: Back-to-School Nights  
  - Burnley-Moran, 5:30 (PTO at 5)  
  - Clark, 5:30  
  - Greenbrier, 6:30  
  - J-Via, 5:30 (dinner); PTO, 5pm  
  - Johnson, 6pm

16: United Way Day of Caring Projects  
CATEC Back-to-School Night

17: Back-to-School Nights  
  - Buford, 6pm  
  - Lugo-McGinness, 6pm  
  - Venable, 5:30pm

18: Buford Harvest Festival, 6pm

20: CHS College Fair, 4-6pm, CHS

22: CHS Back-to-School Night, 5:30-7pm

24: Special Education Advisory Comm., 8:45am, Division Annex

27: CHS Orchestra Plays at Foxfield Family Day, 11am

28: No School for Students (Professional Learning Day)

**October**

1: School Board Meeting, 5pm. CHS Media Center

2: Jackson-Via Fun Night

5: Quest Advisory Comm., 7:30pm, Div. Annex

7: Walk-to-School Day  
  - Johnson Fall Festival, 5pm

10: Buzz-by-Belmont 5K, 7:30am, Clark.