



VOL. 2 ISSUE 4 • DEC. 2025

# PURPLELICIOUS NEWS

It's not a color. It's a newsletter.



## Message From the Principal

### Stay Connected

INSTAGRAM:  
[@CITYSPRINGSSCHOOL](#)  
FACEBOOK:  
[CITY SPRINGS  
ELEMENTARY/MIDDLESCHOOL](#)

[WWW.CITYSPRINGS.SCHOOL](#)

CLASSDOJO FOR DAILY NEWS

### School Leadership

Dr. Rhonda L. Richetta, Principal

Ms. Jenae Toulson, Asst. Principal  
for PK-3, 443-902-1353  
[JAJones@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:JAJones@bcps.k12.md.us)

Mr. Rob Summers, Asst. Principal  
for Grades 4-8, 410-207-4625  
[RDSummers@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:RDSummers@bcps.k12.md.us)

OFFICE: (410) 396-9168



As we enter December, I want to remind our families just how important every single school day is for our students. With only 15 instructional days this month before the long winter break, each day of learning truly counts. Consistent attendance plays a major role in academic success—

students who attend school regularly stay on track with their learning and develop habits of responsibility that last a lifetime. Missing even a few days can create learning gaps that are difficult to make up, especially in reading and math where daily instruction builds step by step at all grade levels, PK through 8th grade. We ask all families to make every effort to ensure your child is present every day in December unless they are truly ill, so we can finish the first half of the year strong together.

As we look ahead to the holiday season, I want to extend warm wishes to all our students, parents, and family members. May this time be filled with meaningful moments with loved ones. Thank you for your continued partnership and support — our school community is stronger because of you, and I am grateful for each and every one of you! Wishing you a happy, healthy, and joyful holiday season!

With gratitude,  
Dr. Rhonda L. Richetta, Principal



## High School Choice for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

8th Grade families, now's the time to make decisions about the next steps post-City Springs! We proudly send Eagles to top-tier Baltimore City high schools, including Baltimore City College, Western High School, Baltimore Polytechnic, and Paul Laurence Dunbar.

Last month, several high schools visited City Springs, and Ms. Watkins is working with each family on the school-choice process.

### Resources and Helpful Dates:

BCPS High School Choice Fair, Sat., Dec. 13, doors open at 10 AM, Free, Baltimore Convention Center. Details: [baltimorecityschools.org/choice](http://baltimorecityschools.org/choice)

Dec. 1: Composite scores and choice applications available for families in the new Student Enrollment Management System (SEMS): [www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/SEMS](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/SEMS)

Jan. 23: Choice applications are due in SEMS: [www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/SEMS](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/SEMS)

Feb. 2: Charter applications are due. Charter schools have their own application process. Please reach out directly to schools of interest or visit our charter webpage for more information.

Questions? Contact Ms. Watkins at [SLWatkins01@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:SLWatkins01@bcps.k12.md.us)

## MSDE Star Ratings for City Springs

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Star ratings are out. City Springs continues to make strong gains. Our school improved from 36.9% in 2022 to 44.2% in 2025, just 0.8 points shy of the 3-star threshold.

This consistent upward trend reflects our focus on rigorous instruction, student engagement, and a positive school climate. With targeted supports and high expectations, City Springs remains on a clear path toward achieving 3 or more stars in the near future. Keep up the great work, Scholars and families!

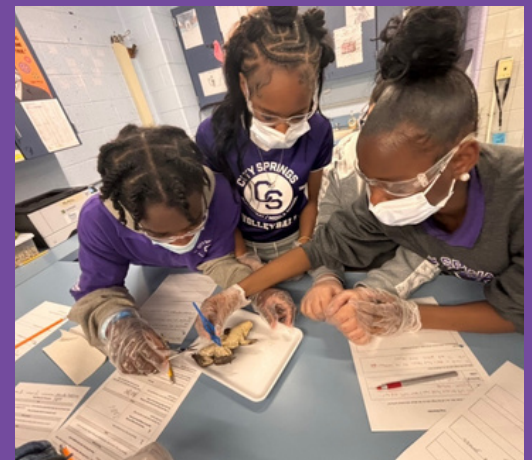


## STEM Exploration During American Education Week

During American Education Week, Nov. 17–21, we focused on Science, Technology, Math, and Engineering (STEM) education. Scholars across the grades enjoyed hands-on science labs and lessons.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade dissected frogs to observe its anatomy and other adaptive traits. From Terrance O.: "My favorite part was taking out the organs like the heart and stomach. We saw a crawfish the frog was digesting."

7<sup>th</sup> Grade dissected owl pellets to examine what they eat. From Mason B.: "I discovered a lot of small bones like skulls and limbs. I gained more knowledge about the type of prey owls catch."







## Class Spotlight: 2nd Grade

By Ms. Lakey and Ms. Butler:

We have been learning about insects. The Scholars have learned that in order to be classified as an insect, it has to have 6 legs and 3 body parts (head, thorax, and abdomen). They also learned that most insects have wings but only once they become an adult. The most interesting thing they learned was about the life cycle. Some insects have a complete metamorphosis like the butterfly, which means the insect changes completely from one stage to the other, while others have an incomplete metamorphosis and resemble the adult in some way.

## Friendsgivings: We are Grateful for Community!

Our wonderful November tradition continued with two Friendsgivings. Our Afterschool program (below, left) had a Thanksgiving Feast on Nov. 20, while the Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Scholars had their Friendsgiving during Thanksgiving week (center and right photos). These events were a wonderful way to celebrate community and this season of giving and gratitude at City Springs, and a commemoration of Native American History Month. We are blessed to have such wonderful Scholars and families at City Springs!





## Field Trip Fun

Our Nov. field trips included the 5th Grade field trip to Pierce Park to learn more about homophones (words that sound alike but are spelled differently and/or have a different meaning) through the Park's walking path labeled with homophones. 7th Grade went to University of Maryland at College Park for the Phi Sig Sorority "Phield Day" and a campus tour and field games and competitions with sorority members. Scholars learned more about academic programs, clubs/organizations, Greek life, and more.

On Sat., Dec. 13, students will be attending the City Schools' High School Choice Fair.

Top photo and Pg. 1: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade at Phield Day; Bottom photo: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade at Pierce Park



## Show Your Eagle Spirit!

Every day, we show our school spirit, but Spirit Week gives us a chance to take our Purple Pride to the next level! All students and faculty/staff may participate:

- Monday, Dec. 15: Ugly Sweater Day & Celebration of Learning: ACC
- Tuesday, Dec. 16: Anything But a Cup (to drink out of) & Celebration of Learning: Ivy League
- Wednesday, Dec. 17: Crazy Hat Day & Celebration of Learning: Big Ten
- Thursday, Dec. 18: Grinch Day (wear green) & Celebration of Learning: MEAC/C
- Friday, Dec. 19: Schoolwide Pajama Day

## Attendance Matters

Attendance counts EVERY DAY! With December's short month and the excitement of the holidays, please continue to send your child to school every day, in uniform, and ready to learn. **Our average monthly attendance rate so far this school year is 89.5%** Let's finish December strong! Congratulations to our students who had perfect attendance in Nov. Keep up the great work!

## Leader in Me Class

City Springs' unique class, The Leader in Me, is taught by Coach Edward Pullen. This year, we've expanded the program to Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade.

Coach Pullen teaches age-appropriate leadership skills by using our school's 8 Habits to include all grades, helping Scholars Put First Things First (Habit 3), to Be Proactive (Habit 1), and more.

We interviewed Coach Pullen about the class. He shared why he loves teaching kids to be leaders so that they can succeed in school and in life. Read the interview at [baltimorecp.org/news](http://baltimorecp.org/news).







## House Fun!

We continue to engage our Scholars in spirited House events, designed to deepen our school culture and connections. On Nov. 21, grades 3-6 had a House event focused on House cheers.

Each House created their own cheer, which they shared (very loudly and joyously) on our Purple Field after doing a team-building Hula-Hoop Challenge to move their entire team through the hoop while holding hands. Congratulations to the Empathy and Pride Houses for tying first-place for the Cheer Challenge!

Scholars are enjoying the House System!



## City Springs Parent College

To better support our village of families, we are excited to introduce City Springs Parent College, a parent engagement initiative modeled after Baltimore City Public Schools' Parent University for K-12 parents.

Nearly 30 City Springs parents have joined this free program of great access to resources for student success and family assistance. City Springs Parent College provides consistent, curated educational resources, social programs, and local opportunities through five courses (in-person, hybrid, and virtual). Courses include how to support at-home learning, financial literacy, and more; family support groups; a parent book club; and other parent and guardian seminars.

**Interested? Scan the QR Code.**

Questions? Email Mr. Obi at [aobianwu@elev8baltimore.org](mailto:aobianwu@elev8baltimore.org).

City Springs Parent College  
Demographic Survey & Sign Up  
Form



## New School Building Design

The architects for the new City Springs School unveiled their design and got feedback from our community. Our new school will be a Net Zero Energy building designed to produce as much energy as it consumes annually. We have begun demolition of the Lombard building across the street, which is the site for our new building. The exciting design supports:

- Next-generation learning
- Collaboration between the school and the community
- Principles of Restorative Practices
- Emotional and social growth by creating safe and inclusive spaces
- A safe learning environment

Learn more at the next design presentation on Jan. 28, 5 PM.





# Community School Coordinator Corner

## Thank You, CBRE!

On Nov. 20, CBRE, our community partner, generously gave away 80 Thanksgiving turkeys and bags of sides to our families. CBRE began its wonderful support of City Springs last November. Thank you, CBRE!



## Christmas Dinner Assistance

Once again, our wonderful partner, Saint Vincent de Paul of Baltimore, is providing 50 Christmas dinner packages, which will be distributed the last week of school before winter break (details coming soon). Packages are first-come, first-serve basis; you must sign up with the QR code below. We cannot guarantee that everyone who registers will receive a dinner.



## Weekend Backpacks

Weekend Backpacks Baltimore provides free food every Friday. Families must sign up for the program by scanning the QR code:



## Winter Clothing

CBRE is donating winter clothing this month. If you are in need, please email Mr. Trumino. Include your student's name and size in the email.

## Questions?

**MR. TRUMINO**  
**COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
**COORDINATOR:**  
[atrumino@elev8baltimore.org](mailto:atrumino@elev8baltimore.org)  
Phone: 443-836-6019







# Go, Eagles!

It continues to be a great season for our Eagles! Lots of Purple Pride, teamwork, and perseverance at practice and during games. Well done to all our fall sports teams and good luck to our winter athletes!

## Middle School Girls Volleyball



On Nov. 12, our Middle School Girls' Volleyball team played its first game of the season. They beat opponent Wildwood Elementary / Middle School at Wildwood, winning two out of three games. Dr. Richetta, who was in the stands cheering for the Eagles, said, "I was so proud of their City Springs toughness and teamwork! Congratulations to our Lady Eagles and Coach Henshaw!" Here's to a great volleyball season!

## Girls on the Run

On Nov. 23, our Girls on the Run runners competed at the Perryville Community Park. Congrats to the City Springs team and Coach Uhl on a great meet!





## Upcoming Events

- Early Release Days: Dec. 5, 12, 19
- Progress Reports Distributed: Dec. 10-12
- BCPS High School Choice Fair, Dec. 13, 10 AM-3 PM, Free, Baltimore Convention Center
- Spirit Week: Dec. 15-19 (see page 4 for each day's theme)
- My Name, My Name Raffle: Dec. 19
- PTO Meeting/ FY27 Priority Engagement Session #1: Dec. 18, 5:30-6:30 PM
- Winter Break: Dec. 22-Jan. 4
- School Reopens: Monday, Jan. 5

Visit [citysprings.school/events](https://citysprings.school/events) for a full calendar.

## Baltimore Curriculum Project



In this season of gratitude, BCP is proud to highlight the heart of our work: our incredible academic coaches. Their expertise, dedication, and daily support ensure that every teacher in our network continues to grow, innovate, and thrive.

Read the latest BCP blog post featuring these incredible educators and a new video of a behind-the-scenes look at the robust educator support system in all BCP schools. From collaborative planning to real-time classroom coaching, academic coaches are why we are more than a school community; we are a family that lifts one another up.



**Scan the QR code to read the blog and watch the video.**

Join us in giving thanks for the educators who make BCP stronger every day.



### **City Springs Habit of the Month: Put First Things First Attribute of the Month: Disciplined Exemplar Educator: Muhammad Ali (1942-2016)**

Born Cassius Clay, Muhammed Ali began boxing at age 12. Known as "The Greatest," Ali is regarded as the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time. In 1999, he was named Sportsman of the Century by *Sports Illustrated*. Outside of the ring, he was a global symbol of strength and courage and advocate for civil rights and peace.