

SEPTEMBER 2023

Career Pathways Program

Monthly Newsletter



WELCOME BACK AND UPDATES FROM CAREER PATHWAYS

The 2023-2024 school year has begun! The Career Pathways Team wishes everyone an amazing school year and is here to support your career development. Read on to learn about a few of the ways Career Pathways is supporting employees this year.

Ambassador Program

The Career Pathways Program is underway! The 24 ambassadors this year are a mix of veteran and new ambassadors, and represent employees from across the organization.

This month, the Career Pathways Program would like to highlight two ambassadors: Tamea Stover, administrative secretary at Julius West Middle School and Alpha Bayoh, bus route supervisor at the Randolph Depot. Tamea is a veteran ambassador who joined the team last school year as a part of the very first ambassador cohort. She has hit the ground running this year and is already supporting employees at her location. Alpha is a new ambassador this year, and we are excited to watch him grow professionally and provide amazing support to our supporting services employees.

Career Pathways Ambassadors have the opportunity to attend monthly training sessions to expand their knowledge and skills. This month, ambassadors will gather for the annual kick-off meeting to discuss program upgrades and collaborate. They will also have the opportunity to attend an information session to learn about open enrollment.

The Career Pathways Ambassador Program now has its own website! To see the current ambassadors and learn more about the program visit us on the web.

CAREER PATHWAYS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The Mentoring Program

The Career Pathways Team has expanded and refreshed the mentoring program for supporting services employees. The goal of the Supporting Services Mentoring Program is to provide mentors to both new employees and existing staff to help them excel in their roles, direct them to training and on-the-job work experiences, and prepare them for career development opportunities.

To learn more about the mentoring program, visit us on the web.

MCPS MENTORING PROGRAM FOR SUPPORTING SERVICES EMPLOYEES

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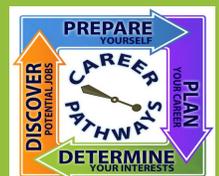
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The Leadership Development Program

Last year the Career Pathways Team collaborated with a consultant to develop a comprehensive leadership development training program, open to supporting services employees in all roles across the organization.

The program aims to help employees hone professional skill sets and design career pathways for ongoing growth. The program consists of two cohorts: Pathway 1 is designed for individual contributors and Pathway 2 is designed for current and aspiring leaders. This month marks the official kick-off of the program and participants will begin by exploring sub topics around self awareness including strengths, mindset, resilience, and more.

CAREER PATHWAYS PRESENTS!

On October 9, 2023, the Career Pathways Program will be hosting several new professional development training sessions open to supporting services employees. For many 10-month supporting services employees, this is a no-pay scheduled day. Eligible employees will be paid the SPT-10 training rate of pay for participating in training on October 9, 2023. All employees are invited to attend regardless of eligibility for the SPT-10 stipend.

The following brand-new training sessions will be presented by Career Pathways on October 9, 2023:

Interviewing for Teaching Positions

In this four-hour in-person session, participants will learn strategies to connect their experience as a paraeducator with interviewing for teaching positions.

The target audience for this training session is current paraeducators who are seeking teaching positions.

PDO Course #91978

Resume Writing

In this four-hour in-person training session, participants will learn best practices for writing resumes and cover letters as well as how to effectively use MCPS Careers. The target audience for this training session is current supporting services employees.

PDO Course #91979

Deaf Culture and Communication Strategies

In this two-hour in-person training session, participants will learn about Deaf culture and effective communication strategies for working with Deaf staff and students. The target audience for this training session is current supporting services employees.

PDO Course #91981

Introduction to Spanish for Front Office Staff

In this two-hour in-person training session, participants will learn some basic school-related phrases in Spanish and communication strategies to promote positive interactions with MCPS families. The goal of this training is not language acquisition. It will focus on effective communication with speakers of other languages, specifically Spanish. The target audience for this training session is current supporting services employees who are the first point of contact for MCPS families (ex. school secretary, administrative secretary, office assistant).

PDO Course #91980

Note: *If you require accommodations to participate in any of the above training sessions, please reach out to the instructors at least one week prior to the training date.*



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PARAEDUCATOR NEWS

Read on to learn about special opportunities for paraeducators this school year.

New Paraeducator Orientation

New Paraeducator Orientation will be held in-person this year on **Saturday, October 14, 2023** from **8:00 AM to 3:45 PM** at Richard Montgomery High School. Sign-in starts at 7:15 AM.

Sign up for New Paraeducator Orientation on PDO, **Course #91890**

Paras who have been hired in the past two years that have NOT attended the virtual New Para Orientations are encouraged to register and attend. Participants will be paid Tier II, \$20/per hour for the orientation. Payment for attending this training will be paid within approximately six weeks of the event and is not part of the SPT10 training stipends. Participants are still eligible to attend and be paid for up to sixteen (16) additional hours of SPT10 training taken on unpaid time for this school year.

For complete details, view flyer [here](#).

Paraeducator Pay Promotion

All new paraeducators are hired at a grade 12 and have the opportunity to promote to a grade 13 after taking a required number of training hours from training listed on Professional Development Online (PDO) and successfully completing their six-month probationary period.

To learn more click [here](#).

Saturday Mornings with the National Resource Center for Paraeducators (NRCP)

The NRCP offers a series of virtual training on Saturday mornings, on a variety of topics including IDEA and data collection, effective behavior management, and more. *The NRCP is an external organization and there is a cost associated with attending the webinars.*

For complete details, view flyer [here](#).

National Resource Center for Paraeducators 36th National Virtual Conference

The National Resource Center for Paraeducators is offering a 4-day virtual conference in January 2024. The target audience for this conference is current paraeducators, related service providers, and interveners. Topics will include resources, paraeducator roles, inclusion, and more. *The NRCP is an external organization and there is a cost associated with attending the conference.*

For more information and to register, visit the event page [here](#).





TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Did you know? All permanent MCPS employees are eligible to receive tuition reimbursement for up to nine credits per fiscal year.

The tuition reimbursement website provides comprehensive instructions on how to apply for tuition reimbursement, how much money you can expect to be reimbursed, and a timeline for processing reimbursements.

Check out the tuition reimbursement website [here](#).

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

MCPS, in partnership with its university and college partners, regularly hosts information sessions to inform employees about the unique higher education opportunities available to permanent MCPS employees. See below for current information sessions.

Towson University Master of Art in Teaching (MAT) in Special Education

MCPS, in partnership with Towson University, is pleased to offer a Master's of Art in Teaching (MAT) in Special Education at the Universities at Shady Grove. This program is designed for employees in permanent positions who are seeking initial teacher certification in special education.

Towson University will host an information session on Wednesday, September 21, 2023 via Zoom from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM. RSVP on PDO using Course **#90585** to receive the meeting link.

Montgomery College Culturally Responsive Educators Aspiring for Teaching Excellence (CREATE)

MCPS, in partnership with Montgomery College, offers the CREATE Program. CREATE is a cohort program open to students pursuing any associate of arts in teaching (AAT) degree at Montgomery College.

The CREATE Program will host an information session on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 via Zoom from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM. RSVP on PDO using **Course #89298** to receive the meeting link.



University Partner Spotlight: Bowie State University

Founded in 1865, Bowie State University is the oldest historically black college or university (HBCU) in the state of Maryland. Today, Bowie State University ranks among the nation's top comprehensive universities and offers 29 undergraduate majors, 20 master's degree programs, and two doctoral programs, as well as a number of certificate programs. Montgomery County Public Schools partners with Bowie State University to offer a Master of Education in Reading program as well as the Summer Institute and Weekend College for conditionally licensed teachers.

To learn more about Bowie State University, visit their website [here](#).

To learn more about the programs offered to MCPS employees in partnership with Bowie State University, visit the Higher Education Partnerships webpage [here](#).



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FALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction to Google Forms

September 20, In Person at 15 W. Gude Dr.: Sassafraas Room

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

The objective of this course is to illustrate to MCPS support professionals the basics of using Google Forms and how to use the tool for various purposes appropriate for a school/office environment. The class will include a hands-on practice segment, and take-home materials/handouts. By the end of the class, participants will know how to navigate their way around the application and independently create forms.

PDO Course #91456

5 Steps to Getting Started in Google

September 21, Zoom Webinar

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

This interactive course provides participants with very basic understanding of the primary functions of five Google applications: Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Forms, and Google Sheets. During the training, participants have the opportunity to learn how to organize their Drive, collaborate with colleagues using Google Docs, Slides, Forms, and Sheets.

PDO Course #87353

Outlook for Secretaries

September 26, Zoom Webinar

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Outlook for Secretaries builds on basic skills in Outlook and teaches students to work with some of the more advanced features of Microsoft Outlook. By the end of the class, students will be able to manage email more efficiently, share calendars and delegate access, set up meetings and appointments, create and manage tasks, adjust account settings, and create distribution groups. We will introduce a variety of features and tips that students can use for a deeper dive going forward.

PDO Course #86516

Autism, ADHD, & More: Understanding Neurodiversity for Supporting Services Staff

October 3, Zoom Webinar

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

This course will provide a brief introduction to neurodiversity and some of the common disorders. You will receive an overview of the disorders and consider strategies for supporting neurodiverse students in our various roles in the school system. We will consider ways to respond and build relationships with students who have developmental, behavioral, and emotional disabilities. In addition, this session will support the development of four of the Supporting Services Core Competencies: Commitment to Students, Knowledge of Job, Interpersonal, and Communication.

PDO Course #91478

What is SPT-10?

SPT-10 is a special opportunity for eligible 10-month employees to receive a stipend of \$20 per hour to attend training outside of their duty day.

In prior years, employees could receive up to 8 hours of SPT-10 pay for attending training outside of their duty day throughout the school year. This year, the number of hours has increased to 16!

SPT-10 eligible training sessions can be identified by having "SPT-10" in the PDO Course title and/or description.

All supporting services employees are welcome to attend SPT-10 training, however if they do not meet the eligibility requirements, they may not receive pay.

For complete details, please refer to the SPT-10 Fact Sheet which can be found [here](#).





PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

MCPS currently offers over **20** partnership programs with **11** higher education institutions.

MCPS hosts approximately **400** college and university interns annually - both internal and external.

HOW TO BECOME A TEACHER IN MCPS

Are you a current MCPS supporting services professional who wants to become a teacher?

Attend a virtual information session to learn about the different pathways to teacher certification, and how MCPS can support you on your journey. The next information session will be held on **Monday, October 16, 2023** from **4:30 PM to 5:30 PM** on Zoom.

For more information, see PDO course description below, or click [here](#) to view a flyer.

How to Become a Teacher in MCPS

Participants will examine the commitment MCPS has for support professionals who want to become teachers, understand the Maryland State Department of Education certification process, explore the various degree pathways for teacher certification, and learn about the specific MCPS offices and departments that collaborate with employees pursuing a career in teaching.

PDO Course # 87524



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THE MCPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The MCPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers no-cost and confidential services to all MCPS employees and their adult household members. Services include short-term counseling with a licensed mental health provider, wellness information and workshops, supervisory consultations, mediation through the dispute resolution program, referrals to community resources, caregiver support group, support during critical incidents, and more.

Visit the [EAP website](#) and contact the office at 240-740-6500 (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. year-round) to learn more. Check out the upcoming EAP workshops for Supporting Services Professionals, coming soon on PDO:

- September 20th from 4-5:30 p.m. “Mindfulness: How to Be More Present”: This course will cover the benefits of mindfulness and how to start a mindfulness practice. Participants will practice a variety of mindfulness exercises to explore strategies that work for them.
- October 18 from 4-5:30 p.m. “Building Your Resiliency Practice”: This activity-based course will empower you with skills to manage adversity, change, and stress. This training covers topics such as coping strategies and self-care practices. You will leave with concrete tools to begin implementing a personalized proactive and responsive resiliency plan right away.
- November 8 from 4-5:30 p.m. “Recognizing & Responding to Stress in the Body”: Stress is a natural part of life and too much stress can easily overwhelm our brain and body. Participants will learn how to identify their unique stress response and practice proactive & responsive strategies to alleviate stress.
- October 12 from 5-6: p.m. “Budgeting 101”: This course presented by the Educational Systems Federal Credit Union (ESFCU) will cover the basics of savings. Participants will learn how to set and attain financial goals.

EAP Fall Virtual Bulletin Board now available. Click [here](#) to view the virtual bulletin board.



HELPFUL INFORMATION



Employee Resources

- [FY24 Work Schedules](#)
- [FY24 Pay Schedule](#)
- [MCPS - SEIU Agreement 2023-2026](#)

Dates to Remember

- **Friday, September 22, 2023** - Early Release Day for Students
- **Monday, September 25, 2023** - Non-Instructional Day, No School for Students and Teachers, Offices are Open
- **Monday, October 9, 2023** - Professional Day for Staff, No School for Students

CONTACT US

Questions? We would love to hear from you! Please see contact information below.

Want to schedule a 1:1 consultation? Please complete the Career Pathways Intake Form found [here](#) or scan the QR code below:



Career Pathways Program Contact Information

Heather L Harman - Career Pathways Program Specialist

Email: Heather_L_Harman@mcpsmd.org

Department of Human Capital Management - Office of Human Resources and Development
45 W. Gude Dr. Rockville, MD 20850

Visit us on the web:
bit.ly/46AhNo0



Credits

Images used in this month's edition of the Career Pathways Newsletter, were selected via Canva.

The Bowie State University Logo is from <https://bowiestate.edu/about/>