The Board of Education at its April 9 meeting honored five Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff members for their commitment to students and the school system. Honored, from left, were Jennifer Diaz, registration secretary at William B. Wade Elementary School; Shellia Soderstrom, reading resource teacher at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School; Alexandra Anderson, a fourth-grade teacher at Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School; Ayesha Claytor-Stanislas, a social studies teacher at Matthew Henson Middle School; and Brinson Lundegard, a science teacher at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center.

La Plata, MD - The Board of Education at its April 9 meeting honored five Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) employees for exemplary accomplishments, and their commitment to teaching and learning.

Honored were Alexandra Anderson, Jennifer Diaz, Brinson Lundegard, Shellia Soderstrom and Ayesha Claytor-Stanislas.

Anderson is a fourth-grade teacher at Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School. She was nominated for recognition by Jenifer Principal Nancy Seifert. Anderson strives to provide her students with a safe and caring learning environment. She takes great pride in her instruction and incorporates best practices in her lesson plans to ensure all students are successful. Anderson sponsors an impressive Black History Month project annually. Her students present a wax museum to explore and celebrate diversity. In her four years teaching at Jenifer, Anderson has taught the special education inclusion class, gifted reading class and accelerated math class. Last year, her fourth graders received the highest scores on systemwide county math assessments. She also serves as the math team coach and works hard to prepare her students for the challenge. Seifert said Anderson is a role model teacher. “Mrs. Anderson finds joy in working with all students. She is very positive and looks for ways to praise students for their efforts and successes no matter how small. Her passion and dedication to our students is demonstrated daily,” Seifert wrote in a nomination statement.

Diaz is the registration secretary at William B. Wade Elementary School. Wade staff members nominated her for recognition by the Board. Diaz takes initiative to motivate and encourage students and staff. She creates display charts, hands out popsicles and gives verbal shout-outs during the morning announcements to spread positive cheer. She is meticulous in her work, often reviewing a task or assignment several times, and takes pride in being detailed and accountable. Diaz is known among both students and staff as a kind and caring person who is willing to help anyone in need. She comes to work early each day and stays in the afternoon until her work for the day is complete. Wade Vice Principal Kerri Loyd said Diaz is an employee who will do what is necessary to support students and staff. “Anything that needs to be done at Wade, she will do. Her best quality is her kindness in terms of welcoming staff, students and parents into the office even though she sits in the back of the office. She takes delight in helping people,” Loyd wrote in a nomination statement.

Lundegard is a science teacher at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center. She was nominated for recognition by the administrative team at Stethem. Lundegard has been teaching at Stethem for the past 11 years and demonstrates kindness and passion for her students. She works mainly with students who are placed at Stethem for remedial services and need extra support to transition back to their home school. Lundegard strives to create engaging lessons for students to pique their interests and help them retain class material. Her classroom is built on mutual trust and her students benefit from her passion for teaching. Lundegard is known among her colleagues as a teacher who demonstrates passion in the classroom each day. Stethem Principal Curry Werkheiser said Lundegard’s commitment to her students is admirable. “It takes a very special kind of teacher, a very special kind of person, to work with students who have become disengaged with traditional education. Lundegard is a teacher with one of the biggest hearts I’ve ever seen in education,” Werkheiser wrote in a nomination statement.

Soderstrom is the reading resource teacher at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School. She was nominated for Board recognition by her Dr. Mudd colleagues. She is known at Dr. Mudd as a staff member who is a jack of all trades. From sharing her passion for literacy with students, to supporting the school’s Reading Buddies program, Soderstrom demonstrates commitment to children each day. Her colleagues describe her as a team player, teacher leader, counselor, interventionist and reading buddy. On any given day, Soderstrom can be found working with a small intervention group, helping with student assessments, modeling strategies in classrooms or analyzing student data with grade-level teams. She recently completed her administration I certification program and shadows the leadership team at Dr. Mudd. Her colleagues admire her leadership style, mindset and natural ability to build relationships with students. Soderstrom also works closely with the Dr. Mudd Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) to provide ideas for parents to help their children at home. Dr. Mudd Principal Orilena Whatley said Soderstrom is the type of teacher who brings out the best in everyone. “She is our rock star. She is driven to be the difference in every life she touches. Each day, Shellia comes to work looking for ways to make our school better,” Whatley wrote in a nomination statement.

Claytor-Stanislas is a social studies teacher at Matthew Henson Middle School. She was nominated for Board recognition before the Board by Henson Principal Christina Caballero. Claytor-Stanislas has been teaching with CCPS for the past five years. She is the social studies department chair and history fair chairperson at Henson. Claytor-Stanislas is passionate about teaching and instills in her students a love for learning about history. She coordinates the school history fair and leads the hospitality committee for the CCPS History, Industry, Technology and Science (HITS) Expo. She holds daily lunch bunches for students in need of additional support and works closely with the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) to ensure parents have learning tools at home to help their child succeed. Claytor-Stanislas also serves as a mentor and enjoys building relationships with students and parents. Caballero said Claytor-Stanislas is a valuable asset to the Henson community. “She is a lifelong learner and exemplary teacher. Last year, she received the honor of History Fair Teacher of the Year. She is passionate about her content area, and her passion helps students to become passionate as well,” Caballero wrote in a nomination statement.

The Board at its monthly meeting honors students and staff chosen by their principals for recognition.