



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Calling all Rams

Maurice J. McDonough High School is inviting alumni to march in their 2015 homecoming parade on Friday, Oct. 16 at 5 p.m. Those interested in participating should RSVP on the McDonough website. A meet and greet reception is planned at 4 p.m., prior to the start of the parade.

CAP information night

There will be an information meeting for secretaries interested in becoming Certified Administrative Professionals (CAP) on Monday, Oct. 19 at 5 p.m. in the staff development room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. The meeting will cover the enrollment process, the 15 week online class and the March test. Classes begin on Nov. 2 and end just prior to the test.

North Point STI open house

North Point High School is hosting an open house on Tuesday, Oct. 20, at 6:30 p.m. for parents and current eighth-grade students who live in Charles County and are interested in applying for one of the Science, Technology and Industry (STI) programs for the 2016-17 school year. A second STI open house is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Fall plays

La Plata High School starts off the 2015 fall play season with Lillian Hellman's "The Little Foxes," on Oct. 22-24. The production is set in a small Alabama town in the early 1900s and focuses on power and greed. The main character, Regina Hubbard Giddens, struggles to become rich in a society in which fathers only recognize their sons as financial heirs. Show time is 6:30 p.m. for all three performances. Ticket prices are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. CCPS employees can receive one complimentary ticket with their identification badge. Call 301-934-1100 for more information.



Teachers honored for national certification

Two Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers, Laura Buzzell, right, of Henry E. Lackey High School, and Deborah Simmons, center, of Milton M. Somers Middle School, received certificates from Board of Education Member Barbara Palko, left, during the Oct. 13 Board meeting. Buzzell and Simmons were recognized for achieving national certification through the Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Both completed a yearlong performance-based assessment series last school year to achieve national certification and join 31 other CCPS teachers who hold current national certification status.

Board approves systemwide social media policy

The Board of Education on Oct. 13 passed a social media policy, opening new instructional opportunities as well as another marketing tool for schools. Superintendent Kimberly Hill will now develop rules to provide guidance for employees accessing, creating or contributing to any social media on behalf of Charles County Public Schools (CCPS).

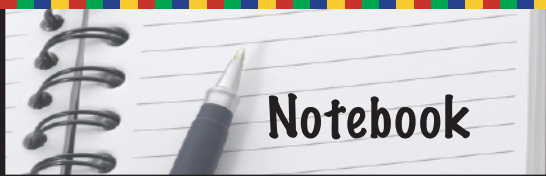
In the policy, the Board states that it recognizes that social media is beneficial for community engagement and teaching and learning. According to the policy, social media use by CCPS employees is allowed as a tool to advance communications for students in the educational process as well

as for parent communication and community engagement.

The Board of Education policy defines social media as any online technologies where people share information, opinions, experiences and perspectives. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and WordPress.

The school system and schools already use Twitter as a communication tool. The school system Twitter account is @ccps. The Superintendent and several Board members also tweet regularly.

The Board of Education recently launched a Facebook page titled Charles County Board of Education.



On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are staff members recognized during the Oct. 13 Board of Education meeting. Pictured, from left, are Michelle Gilliam, school counselor, Maurice J. McDonough High School; Kristen Liston, choir teacher, Milton M. Somers Middle School; and Brian Chase, building service manager, Gale-Bailey Elementary School.

All-County concerts

CCPS All-County Band, Chorus and Orchestra concerts are scheduled for later this month and November. The All-County Chorus concert is Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m. at Westlake High School. The All-County Orchestra concert is 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 17 at St. Charles High School. The All-County Band concert is 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at La Plata High School. All concerts are free and open to the public.

Third paycheck of the month

There are three pay days this month. The only deductions taken from the third paycheck are taxes and retirement. Other deductions, such as health insurance, are not deducted from the third paycheck in months with three pay dates.

Celebrate your principal

Did you know that October is National Principals Month? Principals are our school building leaders and role models for students. For ideas on how to honor your principal for their hard work and dedication to teaching and learning, visit www.principalsmonth.org/.

Prudential Spirit Awards

Prudential Financial Inc., in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, is seeking youth volunteers for the 2016 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. The award honors outstanding community service by students in grades five through 12 at the local, state and national level. Local honorees are eligible for consideration of the state designation, as well as a \$1,000 award. Students must apply by Nov. 3 and submit their application to their school principal. Students can apply online at <http://spirit.prudential.com> or at www.nassp.org/spirit.

National Board Certified Teachers



Julie Verras



Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/Early and Middle Childhood

Position held: Kindergarten teacher at Mary B. Neal Elementary School

Years of teaching experience: 20

Years with Charles County Public Schools: 16

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education, Towson University
Advanced Professional Certificate with Master's Equivalent in Reading; graduate work completed, Towson University

Memorable Moment:

The teaching of reading is so rewarding. One student transferred in as a non-reader when I taught first grade in Prince George's County. We had an intervention program called Project Read that I conducted in the classroom. It was a kinesthetic approach to the teaching of reading. He blossomed. By the end of first grade he was on grade level. At the end of the year celebration his mother gave me a hug and had a tear in her eye. I was so proud to be his teacher and make a difference in his life.

Parks named 2015 Eco-School by NWF

J.C. Parks Elementary School was recently recognized by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) as a 2015 Eco-School, a designation only 10 schools received across the United States this year. Parks is the only Maryland school to receive the 2015 honor, which recognizes schools for their commitment to demonstrate sustainability initiatives, monitor energy efficiency practices, waste disposal and other environmental impact areas, and support a commitment to environmental education in the classroom.

Parks has two outdoor classroom locations at the school that students use during their science classes and as part of additional learning opportunities. The areas feature benches, paved walkways lined with trees, plants native to Maryland and concrete tables for student use. Lesson plans and activities focus on reducing environmental impacts, learning how to act on environmental challenges and modeling environmental practices.

The Eco-Schools program features three levels of recognition: Bronze and

Silver Awards, and the Green Flag Award. The Green Flag Award is the highest honor a school can receive and all 10 schools recognized in the 2015 program, including Parks, received the Green Flag Award. Parks received a Green Flag Award last year and schools must reapply for this designation every two years. Schools are permanent Eco-School designees once they receive a fourth Green Flag.

Parks' science teacher, Deanna Wheeler, coordinates program activities for the school. Several other Charles County public schools have registered with the NWF to take part in the Eco-Schools program, including Berry, Dr. James Craik, Gale-Bailey, Indian Head and Mary B. Neal elementary schools, and John Hanson and General Smallwood middle schools.

The NWF Eco-Schools program was launched in 1994 to help incorporate environmental awareness and action into school communities. For more information on the Eco-Schools program, visit the NWF website at www.nwf.org/EcoSchools/map.aspx.

CCPS students, community get a lesson on Internet safety and cyber bullying

“Use privacy settings... Share photos judiciously... and Prevent victimization of others” are key messages shared this week by Richard Guerry, founder of the non-profit organization the Institute for Responsible Online and Cell-Phone Communication (IROC2), to more than 1,900 Charles County Public Schools seventh-grade students and community members. As part of National Bullying and Prevention Month activities, North Point and St. Charles high schools hosted Guerry Oct. 7-8, who presented his program to seventh graders who attended during the school day on field trips. Students learned about negative and malicious digital behavior and how they can help themselves and others prevent becoming victims.

Guerry stated that an identity is stolen every two seconds. He urged students and parents to ensure that devices have intact security features to help prevent identity theft. Guerry also spoke to students about the dangers of posting to social media and the misunderstanding that content can be deleted forever. “Everything you do or say in the digital world is public and permanent. Fully read privacy policies so that you can understand that anonymous posts and accounts are not really anonymous,” Guerry said.

There are positive and negative ways to use technology and social media. Guerry stated, “Before posting a status update, ask yourself, ‘Do I want this published on the front page of the local newspaper?’ Status updates are public and permanent. Do you really want everyone to know that you will be on vacation away from home for the next week?”

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kimberly Hill attended Guerry’s presentation and hopes that the presentation encourages everyone to think before posting anything online. “Our hope is that the information provided in this program will empower parents and students to safely and appropriately utilize the tools in a positive way. We all need to remember to think before we post and that everything we post becomes public and permanent,” Hill said.

The Oct. 7-8 program was sponsored by the Governor’s Office for Children, the Charles County Children’s Aid Society and the Charles County Advocacy Council for Children, Youth, and Families.

“Our community should be proud of the fact that Richard Guerry’s Internet Safety program for students and community members was a collaborative effort of many county agencies,” Hill said.



Richard Guerry, founder of the Institute for Responsible Online and Cell Phone Communication, presented an Internet safety presentation to more than 1,900 students and community members on Oct. 7-8.

CCPS pilots program for seniors to learn college application process

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is piloting the Maryland College Application Campaign Week next week to assist high school seniors in applying to college, with the goal of each student submitting at least one application to the college, university or technical school. During the week of Oct. 19-23, seniors at several Charles County high schools will participate in the campaign by working with school staff and volunteers to submit a complete college application.

In 2014, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) piloted the campaign in 21 high schools with more than 1,900 students participating statewide. While the campaign targets all high school seniors, activities focus on educating first generation and low-income students in how to successfully research and complete the college application process. According to Alicia Jones, supervising school counselor for CCPS, some students do not complete college applications because they do not know how to complete or even start the process. “Our goal for this campaign is for every graduating senior to complete at least one college application. We will teach them how to step-by-step and walk them through the process,” she said.

To prepare for the campaign, high school English teachers have been working with students to complete essential parts of most college applications, including a written essay, resume and letters of recommendation. This year’s senior class of students worked on a college fit/application worksheet as juniors last school year as part of a required English III graded assignment. As part of the assignment, students researched four possible colleges, universities or trades schools they were interested in learning more about. Part of the worksheet also required students to list their extracurricular activities and test scores in preparation for including this information on an application.

Most colleges and universities charge prospective students a fee to submit an application, but many community colleges such as the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) offer free applications. As part of the campaign, CSM admissions staff will attend each participating school Oct. 19-23 to work with students on completing a free CSM application. Staff from CSM visit high schools annually to talk to students about local offerings, and most students complete a CSM placement test as juniors. Seniors who apply to CSM during Maryland College Application Week will already have test scores on file as part of their application.

Schools participating in the CCPS pilot program are Henry E. Lackey, La Plata, Maurice J. McDonough, Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools. College and career advisors at these schools are coordinating activities to highlight the upcoming campaign and are helping to connect students with resources to learn more about applying to college and planning for their future after graduation.

A copy of the college fit/application worksheet, as well as a list of application fees for Maryland schools, is posted on the CCPS website at www.ccboc.com. High schools will also be hosting financial aid workshops later this school year to walk students and parents through the process of researching aid, completing scholarship applications and the FAFSA. For more information, contact Alicia Jones at aajones@ccboc.com or call the college and career advisor at your child’s school.

Jones will be featured on an upcoming edition of Comcast Newsmakers to discuss the Maryland College Application Campaign Week and the school system’s participation in the program. Check your cable provider to see which channel features the show.

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CCPS Cougars volunteer for annual service day

Rain doesn't slow Thomas Stone High School students down when it comes to volunteering and community service. Stone held their third annual service day on Sept. 30 where students, community members and staff were asked to volunteer and help clean up the outside of their school building.

Student volunteers split up between two teams to tackle the cleanup. Five students worked on picking up debris and trash from a forest trail located behind the school softball field. A second team of five students worked on weeding the perimeter of their orchard fence and the flowerbed surrounding Stone's entrance sign off of Route 5. After completing their jobs, students discussed their accomplishments and how to stay involved with more community service events.

Stone science teacher Christopher Rooney has organized the annual Service Day since it started three years ago and thinks it was a success. "The Service Day went very well. All tasks we set out to do were accomplished. Our Service Day is an opportunity for Thomas Stone students to engage in meaningful community service aimed at improving the school's grounds and gardens," Rooney said.

School organizations, such as the National Honors Society, Key Club, Young Researcher's Community Project and Future Educators of America often require student members to complete community service. The Maryland State Department of Education requires Student Service Learning as a graduation requirement for students in middle and high school.



During the Thomas Stone High School service day on Sept. 30, community volunteer Marty Eldredge, left, helped Stone senior Lauren Smith, right, clean up a flower bed in front of Stone's entrance sign.

Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.ccboc.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job Openings

Building Service Worker – Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Oct. 19.

Truck Driver – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Oct. 19.

Building Service Worker – T.C. Martin Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Oct. 22.

Special Education Instructional Assistant/Emotional Adjustment Program – Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 10-month position.

Instructional Assistant – Mattawoman Middle School, 10-month position.

Supervisor of Employee Services – Bachelor's degree in human resources or related field and five years of supervisory experience

in human resources required. Master's degree and prior experience with self-insured programs preferred.

School Psychologists – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10.5-month positions. School Psychology Certification required and Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential preferred.

Speech and Language Pathologists – Locations to be determined, 10-month positions. Master's degree in speech pathology and a Maryland State license in speech and language pathology required.

Elementary School Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Mathematics Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Physical Education Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Facilitator – Location to be determined, 11-month position.

Carpentry Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Prekindergarten Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Vocal Music Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Instrumental Music Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Science Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Spanish Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Technology Education Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

English Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

French Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Computer Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Business Education Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position.