



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Two-hour early dismissal

The next two-hour early dismissal day is Wednesday, Nov. 2. This day has been converted from a day off for students and is the final of three make-up days.

Board to meet Nov. 8

The next Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 8. The meeting begins at 1 p.m. Staff and student recognition starts at 4:30 p.m. A complete agenda can be found at www.ccboe.com/pr.

Schools/offices closed

Schools and offices are closed on Friday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day.

Scholarship workshop

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is hosting a scholarship workshop for high school students, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 19, at North Point High School. The workshop, featuring Marianne Ragins, is designed to help students successfully complete the college scholarship search and application process. Space is limited to the first 450 participants in attendance and reservations are required. Visit www2.ccboe.com/instruction/scholarshipworkshop/register.cfm to register.

FIRST Robotics Challenge

The College of Southern Maryland's FIRST Tech Challenge and Lego League Robotics qualifying competition is Dec. 3 at the La Plata campus. Elementary, middle and high school students will be competing to advance to the Maryland State FIRST championships. Elementary and middle school students will compete in the FIRST LEGO League challenge entitled, "Bowled Over," while high school students will compete in the FIRST Tech Challenge, "Food Factor." Winners will advance to the state championships. For more information, visit <http://www.csmd.edu/istem/robotics.html>.

Mitchell is 'People's Choice'

Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School entered a scarecrow in the sixth annual Scarecrow Festival in La Plata. The scarecrow, named Mitch, was voted as the People's Choice Award. The Parent Teacher Organization president Jennifer Klueh, pictured, helped with the creation of Mitch. Klueh said the energy and motivation of the staff, students and families made this project fun and rewarding. Klueh was so proud of Mitchell's students and families who took time to vote for their creation. Mitchell received a plaque for their school.



Some employees will receive one-time payment

Some employees will receive an extra check on Nov. 10, which is a one-time payment for those who were not eligible for a grade or step increase in July.

The payment, which could be up to \$1,000, was negotiated with the Education Association of Charles County (EACC) and the American Federal, State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Full-time employees not receiving a grade or step increase will receive \$1,000, and the amount will be prorated for part-time employees based on the employee full-time equivalent, or number of hours worked each week. For example, a half-time employee would receive \$500.

Eligible employees include those who did not receive a pay increase in July and who were employed prior to June 30, 2011, and who are still employed on Nov. 10, 2011. The Superintendent and his executive staff are exempt and will not receive any payment. Employees who were due a level, step or grade increase but did not receive it because of a poor performance evaluation are also exempt and will not receive any payment.

Superintendent James E. Richmond said the one-time payment is being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Education Jobs money, which must be used for employee com-

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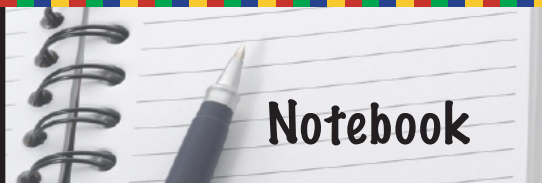
Student suspensions continue to decrease

Charles County Public Schools student suspensions decreased this past school year, according to a recent report sent to the Maryland State Department of Education. Suspensions dropped from 4,824 in the 2009-10 school year to 4,142 in 2010-11.

Superintendent James E. Richmond said the goal is to reduce suspensions by putting programs in place that help students change behaviors that lead to suspension.

Richmond attributes the continued decline in suspensions to programs such as the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program used in 30 schools and Capturing Kids Hearts, a program at some high schools. "Charles County Public Schools results show how a well-implemented, well supported PBIS program can help reduce suspensions and keep students in school where they can learn," Richmond said.

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On the cover

Pictured on the cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at the Oct. 11 meeting. Pictured, from left, are Lauren Hoza, kindergarten teacher, Mary H. Matula Elementary School; Nathan Mouli, social studies teacher, Maurice J. McDonough High School; Joan Matthews, media instructional assistant, Gale-Bailey Elementary School; and Linda Forrest, reading resource teacher, Milton M. Somers Middle School.

Open forums

The Maryland State Board of Education has initiated its search for a new State Superintendent of Schools. Open forums for the community will be held at locations throughout the state to help identify characteristics residents want for the new superintendent. The State Board will discuss the results and suggestions from the forums at their Dec. 6 meeting, and the report will be posted at www.maryland-publicschools.org. The forums will be held at 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the following locations: Laurel High School, Prince George's County, Nov. 2; Seneca Valley High School, Montgomery County, Nov. 3; Huntington High School, Calvert County, Nov. 7; Mountain Ridge High School, Allegany County, Nov. 7; Edgewood High School, Harford County, Nov. 9; and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Baltimore City, Nov. 10.

High schools receive grants

Three schools recently received grants in the amount of \$101,021.47 as a part of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Biomedical Science Grants. Henry E. Lackey High School received a \$57,137 grant to fund the implementation of the first three courses of their biomedical sciences programs. Westlake High School received a \$23,981.21 grant to support the implementation of their first course, "Principles of Biomedical Sciences." La Plata High School received \$19,903.53 to use towards the implementation of a second section of "Principles of Biomedical Sciences."

Fall back

Standard time begins on Sunday, Nov. 6. Remember to turn your clocks back one hour.

Deputy superintendent lauded for supporting counselors

Deputy Superintendent Ronald Cunningham is usually the person handing out awards and recognition. On Oct. 13, Cunningham was the one accepting the honors.

The Maryland School Counselor Association (MSCA) honored Cunningham as the 2011 MSCA Advocate of the Year at its annual fall conference. Nominated by IEP facilitator and former supervising counselor Jeanette Kaufmann, Cunningham was presented with the award for his consistent support for counselors and their work. Cunningham was lauded for not only maintaining staffing levels, but also during tight economic times, working to increase counselor staffing in schools with greater need.

"He makes it a point to pay attention to peripheral details impacting counselors," Kaufmann stated in a nomination letter. For example, Kaufmann said Cunningham supports efforts to provide a stipend to Nationally Certified Counselors, granting them the same compensation paid to nationally certified Charles County Public Schools teachers.

"He invites counselors to present their programs to new administrators and makes a point to stop into counselor meetings to share words of encouragement and appreciation," Kaufmann wrote.

"It's easy to be an advocate for the

people who are so important to the success of the students in our school system and who care so deeply about what they do," Cunningham said.

Kaufmann, who has worked as a counselor supervisor in three counties, said Cunningham is "exemplary in his commitment to the role that counselors can and should play in supporting students."

Cunningham started with Charles County Public Schools in 1994 as a regional administrator. He was promoted to the position of associate superintendent in 1997 and named as deputy superintendent in 2005. Cunningham began his career in education in 1964 as a social studies teacher at Crossland High School. He served in various administrative positions in Prince George's County Public Schools, including 10 years as a high school principal.

"I do appreciate the recognition, but I'm more comfortable passing it out," Cunningham said of receiving the award.



Ronald Cunningham
Deputy Superintendent

Suspension

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Recently, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recognized 30 Charles County Public Schools for their PBIS programs. PBIS focuses on creating safe and more effective schools by developing and implementing research-based, schoolwide classroom discipline systems, reinforcing desirable behaviors and using clear and consistent responses to behavioral violations.

The PBIS program was introduced in 1999 and has grown in Charles County. PBIS is a voluntary state program that helps schools create better school climates, spending less time on discipline and more time on teaching and learning.

Five out of the six Charles County high schools experienced a decline in suspensions from last year. Henry E. Lackey High School had a marked decline, reduc-

ing suspensions from 683 in 2010 to 450 in 2011. Principal James Short attributed the decrease to a strong, consistent effort by school administrators to build positive relationships with students. Short said administrators' doors are always open for students and they encourage students with a problem or issue to talk about it with a staff member. Additionally the school is doing more student mediation, Short said.

Charles County Public Schools posts its suspension data as part of its ongoing efforts to address and monitor suspension rates in schools. Information posted on the Web site includes 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 end-of-year suspension figures by category as well as category definitions. The reports are located at <http://www2.ccboe.com/aboutus/fastfacts.cfm>.

Charles County Public Schools shows support for Breast Cancer Awareness month

With pink caps on their heads and pink gloves on their hands, the Westlake Wolverine cheerleaders shouted out to a marching band wearing pink scarves and football players using pink tape and pink towels.

It was Friday, Oct. 21, and the Westlake High School students and staff wore pink, lots of pink. It was pink for a cause, and there were pink shirts, pink pants and pink socks. But wait, there's more. There were pink shoelaces and pink hair and lots of support and fundraising for Breast Cancer Awareness month.

Pink was the last of a flood of colors that splashed through Westlake last week. On Monday, the Wolverines were awash in purple, turning attention to cancer and its affect on their lives. On Tuesday they wore orange for leukemia and remembered a classmate who died earlier this year from the disease. Wednesday was blue day for colon and prostate cancer awareness, and Thursday they wore white to draw attention to lung cancer.

It was a cancer awareness campaign, Principal Chrystal Benson said, that was well planned and executed by student members of the Westlake Cancer Society. Ashley Govan, a junior, is one of those students and said the club expanded its "Paint Westlake Pink" day from last year to a weeklong campaign to raise money for all types of cancer research and cures.

Aaron Brevard, a freshman, said they were not sure students would participate. "The teachers, the food service workers, just about everyone was wearing pink. I wasn't sure the guys would wear pink, but they did," Brevard said. There was no shortage of support for the cause, with nearly 80 percent of the school participating each day.

The students were pleased with the fundraising efforts that included Quarters for a Cure where students placed quarters in a jug, and the sale of pink shirts designed by teacher Derek Willard. The

group raises money all year for Relay for Life, and the shirt sale proceeds are assisting staff members undergoing treatment for cancer with expenses like gas and food.

Katie Wathen, a social studies teacher and sponsor of the Westlake Cancer Society, said the students researched awareness facts, made posters and developed the awareness activities. "Cancer is a disease that hits home with everyone," Wathen said.

Most have a story to tell about someone they love who has battled the disease. To honor those people, announcements were made each day in memory of those who died and in support of those who have survived, Benson said.



Westlake High School freshmen Jayqae Jenkins, left, and Michael Neal, right, wear pink attire for breast cancer awareness month. A color photo can be found online @ www.ccboe.com.

Schools show support, raise funds for breast cancer awareness and research

October is National Breast Cancer Month, and schools have joined national efforts to promote awareness and education of the disease and early screening.

General Smallwood Middle School students were "Bulldogs for the Cause" last week, wearing pink and raising funds through the sale of bracelets and ribbons. Athletes across the county, like the volleyball players at La Plata High School, wore pink accessories or shirts during games. At a recent La Plata volleyball match, the "Pink Warriors" honored staff and family members who are cancer

survivors.

The American Cancer Society reports that there are about 39,520 deaths from breast cancer each year, and it is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer.

Breast cancer death rates have decreased, according the American Cancer Society, in part because of education that has led to finding the cancer earlier and better treatment.

There are more than 2.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

Extra pay

pensation. Since the money is not guaranteed each year, Richmond said he could not use it for permanent increases.

"This is something the Board of Education and I want to do so that people get some benefit from the funding. We negotiated this with the employee bargaining groups. Some of our employees have not had a salary increase for several years, and because of their positions or time served, they are no longer eligible for step or grade increases," Richmond said.

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Both unions negotiated a step increase for the 2011-2012 school year, an increase eligible employees started receiving with the first paycheck of this school year. The school system still remains one step behind.

Payment will be made by a separate check or direct deposit and is subject to all federal and state withholding taxes. Payment will be made on Nov. 10. Call the Human Resources Division, extension 7255, if you have questions after the payment is made on Nov. 10.

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Board of Education announces November 8 agenda

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 8, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building on Radio Station Road in La Plata. The public portion of the meeting begins at 1 p.m. and recognition begins at 4:30 p.m.

Board meetings are also streamed live on the school system Web site. Visit www.ccboe.com/boe/live to watch the Board meeting.

Executive session – 10 a.m.

Call to order – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Superintendent's update

Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Correspondence/Board member updates
- Education Association of Charles County update
- Student Board Member's update
- Deputy Superintendent's update
- CIP update
- CCPS Environmental Education
- Substitutes
- Testing results

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

Recognition

Public Forum – 6 p.m.

Action items

- Minutes
- Personnel

- Legislative positions 2012

- Ethics policy

Adjournment

All meetings are televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12, and are rebroadcast throughout the week. Channel schedules are available on the school system Web site. Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12 also feature original programming produced by the Charles County Public Schools communications department. Shows include NewsBreak 96, a twice monthly program that features school programs, students and staff, as well as On Air, a monthly show that highlights student and staff accomplishments.

Nov. 28 work session

The Board of Education plans to hold a work session at 6 p.m. on Nov. 28 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. The following is a tentative agenda.

Call to order – 6 p.m.

Public Forum

Work session discussions

- Student transfers committee update
- Goals

Adjournment



Staff notes

Job Openings

Food Service Workers – Paul C. Barnhart Elementary School and Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 10-month, part-time positions. Apply by Nov. 4.

Literacy Teacher – Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position. Apply by Nov. 7.

HVAC Teacher – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position.

New Teacher Mentors – Openings at county middle and high schools, 10-month positions. Master's degree and a minimum of five years teaching experience and two years of experience in related leadership role required.

Food Service Program Support Manager – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position.

Title I Instructional Specialist – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree and five years experience required.

Math Teacher – Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 10-month position.

Inclusion Resource Teacher – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position.

School Counselor – Mary B. Neal Elementary School, 10-month, part-time position. Master's degree in guidance and counseling and five years experience required.

Extra pay positions

Henry E. Lackey High School has the following openings:

- Girls' head and assistant lacrosse coaches
- Indoor track coach
- Bocce coach

Contact David Anderson, athletic director, 301-743-5431, to apply.

Westlake High School has the following opening:

- Assistant lacrosse coach for boys and girls

Contact Dominic Zaccarelli, athletic direc-

tor, 301-645-8857, to apply.

La Plata High School has the following openings:

- Head swimming coach
- Varsity winter cheerleading coach
- Junior varsity winter cheerleading coach

Contact Cliff Nagle, athletic director, 301-753-1754, to apply.

Staff Notes

Mattawoman Middle School was recently named a winner in the sixth annual Celebrate the Arts Contest. The school is being awarded a \$5,000 grant to support and maintain their cultural arts programs during the 2011-2012 school year. The award is sponsored by Bob's Discount Furniture, which is giving awards to nine schools in nine states to support and strengthen dance, music and the arts in schools. Mattawoman, which was nominated by art teacher Lauren Kasberg, is Maryland's winner.