

School News



Parents rate school system communications

Charles County Public Schools recently released results from a communications survey conducted with parents in the spring that shows where parents get their school information, what information sources they use and how parents think communications can be improved.

The Communications and Research and Assessment departments conducted a survey of parent satisfaction with communication efforts and their communication preferences. The school system mailed 789 surveys to parents in mid-March and followed up until 476, or 60.3 percent, were returned.

Overall, 85.3 percent of parents said they believed they were informed about what is going on at their child's school. Parents provided comments about what they read in school newsletters, what information they want on school web sites and how they like to receive information about their child's school. Increasingly, parents indicated they would like more information relayed through technology, both on the Internet and through email correspondence.

Top sources of information for parents include news sent home with their child, the school newsletter and the Internet. Parents also use information from other people, the newspaper and television as top information resources.

Information parents would like to see added to school web sites includes activities, events, specific classroom news and homework assignments.

Despite suggestions to communicate more through technology, 75.5 percent of the respondents said they still want a printed copy of their child's newsletter.

Parents were also asked if they use the school system's television station as a source of information. While only 34.5 percent of respondents said they watch the

station, parents offered suggestions about what they would like featured or would watch. Top information requested by parents includes bulletin board items, such as calendar of events, lunch menus and special emergency announcements. Features highlighting special events around the schools, programs featuring students and student-produced programs were also rated highly. Other areas of interest include a monthly school system news magazine featuring events sponsored by schools and the school system, live broadcasts of Board of Education meetings, choral and band performances, sports games and interviews with coaches and public service announcements.

Overall, 28.6 percent of parents rated communication between their school and parents as excellent; 43.3 percent ranked communications as good; 24.5 percent said communication was fair; and 3.6 percent said communication was poor.

Superintendent James E. Richmond has requested that staff develop a comprehensive communications plan that includes how the school system can improve communications as well as the costs associated with making those improvements.

Additionally, using the results from the survey, staff determined that one highly effective communication tool being used by parents is the Internet. Over the summer, the Communications Department redesigned and restructured the school system web site to make it more comprehensive. An on-line survey conducted about the changes was favorable and staff continues to make alterations to the site based on comments sent in by the public.

A complete copy of the communications report on the survey can be found at <http://www2.ccboe.com/publicinfo.cfm> under the What's New section.



Robert Westfield

Author, former student to visit

The public is invited to a meet and greet former Henry E. Lackey High School student Robert Fields, the author of the recently published book, *Suspension*.

Charles County Public Schools will host Fields, who goes by the pen name of Robert Westfield, for a meet and greet at the Brewhouse Coffee Shop in La Plata, 12-2 p.m., Nov. 19. Westfield will be available to discuss his book as well as his writing process.

The writer will be in Charles County the week of Nov. 13 and will talk to AP students about his process, writing and publishing. He will also participate in several other community events including a literary session at the College of Southern Maryland.

Westfield is a 1990 graduate of Lackey. His book is described as a "dark comedy about a young New Yorker's failed attempts to isolate himself from stalkers in a city filled with impostors, ax murderers and a fanatically religious, overprotective mother."

Register for staff development spring courses

The Department of Staff Development through the Office of Program Support is accepting registrations for Certificated Professional Development (CPD) courses from Nov. 1 – Dec. 22. Participants enrolled in a CCPS course will receive CPD credit(s), formerly called MSDE credit. To register for CCPS courses, complete a registration form at www2.ccboe.com/staffdev/courses/cpd/cpd_register.cfm.

Course: Classroom Organization Management Program
Dates: Jan. 23, 30; Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13
Time/location: 4:45 – 7 p.m.; Mattawoman Middle School

Course: Working Successfully with ESOL and Special Needs Students in the Regular Classroom
Dates: Feb. 8, 15, 22; March 1, 8, 15, 22
Time/location: 4:15 – 6:15 p.m.; Thomas Stone High School

Course: Nuts & Bolts of Teaching from A-Z
Dates: Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27; April 3, 17, 24; May 1, 8, 15

Time/location: 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.; Westlake High School

Course: Reading in the Content Areas – Part I (*Needed for Secondary Certification*)
Dates: Jan. 27; Feb 10, 24; March 10, 17
Time/location: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Maurice J. McDonough High School

Course: Reading in the Content Areas – Part II (*Needed for Secondary Certification*)
Dates: Jan. 17, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28; March 7
Time/location: 4:30-9 p.m.; Stone

Course: Making It Happen Through Creation, Implementation and Facilitation –

Inclusion (*Needed for Certification*)
Dates: Feb. 24; March 3, 10, 24, 31
Time/location: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Hanson

Course: Materials for Teaching Reading (*Needed for Elementary Certification*)
Dates: March 24, 31; April 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12
Time/location: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.; John Hanson Middle School

Course: Assessment for Reading Instruction (*Needed for Elementary Certification*)
Dates: Jan. 17, 22, 24, 29, 31; Feb. 5, 7, 12, 14
Time/location: 4:30 – 8:30 p.m.; Stone

Charles County Public Schools has partnerships with local universities and colleges. To register for graduate courses contact the college or university directly.

College of Notre Dame www.ndm.edu

Course: Probability for Middle School Educator
Dates: Jan. 30; Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27; April 3, 10, 17
Time/location: 5 – 7:45 p.m.; Stone

McDaniel College www.mcdaniel.edu

Course: Reading in the Content Areas – Part II
Dates: Jan. 17, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28; March 7
Time/location: 4:30-9 p.m.; Stone

Course: Materials for Teaching Reading
Dates: March 24, 31; April 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12
Time/location: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Hanson

Course: Assessment for Reading Instruction
Dates: Jan. 17, 22, 24, 29, 31; Feb. 5, 7, 12, 14
Time/location: 4:30 – 8:30 p.m.; Stone

Course: Supervision & Evaluation of School Personnel
Dates: Jan. 16, 23, 30; Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, (March 9)
Time/location: 4:30 – 9 p.m.; Stone

Course: Group Dynamics
Dates: Jan. 17, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28; March 7, 14
Time/location: 4:30 – 8 p.m.; Stone

Course: Introduction to Educational Administration
Dates: March 13, 20, 27; April 10, 17, 24; May 1, 8, (May 10)
Time/location: 4:30 – 9 p.m.; Stone

Course: Curriculum Trends & Issues
Dates: Jan. 17, 24, 31; Feb. 3, 7, 14, 21, 24, 28 (March 3)
Time/location: 5 – 8:30 p.m., 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (Sat.); Stone/Hanson

Course: Assessment of Student Learning
Dates: March 15, 22, 29; April 5, 12, 19, 26; May 3, 10
Time/location: 5 – 9 p.m.; Stone

Course: Brain Based Ways We Think and Learn

Dates: March 24, 31; April 21, 28; May 5 (May 12)
Time/location: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Hanson

Course: Culture & Diversity
Dates: Jan. 20; Feb. 3, 10, 24; March 3
Time/location: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Hanson

Gratz College & Regional Training Center www.regionaltrainingcenter.org

Course: Skills and Strategies for Inclusion and Disability Awareness
Dates: Jan. 5, 6, 7; March 20, 21
Time/location: 6 – 9:15 p.m. (Fri.); 8 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. (Sat./Sun.); Hanson

Course: Styles of Teaching: Personality Type in the Classroom
Dates: Feb. 9, 10, 11; March 3, 4
Time/location: 6 – 9:15 p.m. (Fri.); 8 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. (Sat./Sun.); Hanson

Course: Teaching Writing and Thinking Across the Curriculum
Dates: March 9, 10, 11, 24, 25
Time/location: 6 – 9:15 p.m. (Fri.); 8 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. (Sat./Sun.); Hanson

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Staff development courses *(continued)*

Bowie State University: Register through Bulldog Connection at www.bulldogconnect.bowiestate.edu.

Course: Introduction to Research
Dates: Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22; March 1, 8, 15
Time/location: 4:55 – 9:55 p.m.; Stone

Course: Human Growth & Development
Dates: Jan. 30; Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13
Time/location: 4:55 – 9:55 p.m.; Stone

Course: Career Counseling & Development
Dates: March 28; April 4, 11, 18, 25;
Time/location: 4:55 – 9:55 p.m.; Stone

Students discuss government, presidency in town hall meeting

Nine high school students participated in a town hall meeting to discuss government and the presidency with the 2006 Paul Peck Presidential award winners. The Paul Peck Presidential awards were created in 2002 to promote a greater knowledge and understanding of the American presidency and to honor individuals who have served or portrayed the office of the president.

The first session of the town hall meeting included a discussion of the portrayal of the presidency and domestic and foreign policies with award winner and American historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. Schlesinger has written books on various presidents including Andrew Jackson, Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy. He has won two Pulitzer Prizes and served as special assistant to President Kennedy.

The second session of the town hall meeting included a discussion of service to the presidency and how students can become involved in their government with award winner Leon E. Panetta. Panetta served in the Nixon administration in the Department of Health, Education and

Welfare and later as director of the U.S. Office for Civil Rights. He also served for nine terms in Congress before working for President William J. Clinton. He served as Clinton's chief of staff from 1994 to 1997.

The following students participated in the town hall meeting: Kristyn Bird, La Plata High School; Patrick McClure, Henry E. Lackey High School; Malcolm Whitfield, Lackey; Matthew Smith, North Point High School; Evelyn Brooke, North Point; Mary Fletcher, Westlake High School; Hayley Thurman, Westlake; Ashley Balentine, Maurice J. McDonough High School; and Kamal Baig, McDonough.

The National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, and the Junior Statesmen Foundation co-sponsor the event. The National Portrait Gallery is an organization devoted to telling the stories of America through the individuals who have built national culture. The Junior Statesmen Foundation is an educational organization for high school student leaders that prepares students for responsible leadership in a democratic society.

Schools plan activities to celebrate American Education Week

“Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility” is the theme this year for American Education Week, which will be celebrated throughout Charles County Public Schools Nov. 12-18.

Schools are planning various activities, such as family reading nights, school spirit days, salutes to educators, quarterly recog-

nitions, bulletin board displays, parent and grandparent visitation days and teacher and volunteer recognition, to observe the American Education Week.

The week highlights the importance of bringing together educators, school staff, parents, students and communities in a unified effort to build great public schools.



Seven advance in Board race

Three incumbents are among the seven top candidates who received the most votes Tuesday, Nov. 7 in the General Election. Results are unofficial and could change following the addition of absentee, provisional and overseas ballots. The Board of Elections counts absentee ballots on Nov. 9, provisional ballots on Nov. 13 and overseas ballots on Nov. 17. Results are not final until after all ballots are counted and verified.

Newcomers Roberta “Bobbie” Wise, Maura Cook, Pamela Pedersen and Charles Carrington joined incumbents Jennifer Abell, Collins Bailey and Donald Wade as the top seven candidates for the Board.

The new board will take office on Dec. 18, 4 p.m., at North Point High School. A farewell reception for outgoing Board members is scheduled at 3 p.m., Dec. 12 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building during the current Board’s final meeting.

Board meeting

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is Tuesday, Nov. 14, 1 p.m., at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. The Board will host its annual legislative breakfast at 7:30 a.m., Nov. 27 at the Starkey Building.

Cover photos

Pictured on the cover are employees from the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. From left are John Felicitas, personnel specialist for teacher services; Howard Chase, building service manager; and Barbara Simmons, human resources receptionist.

Personnel

Apply for the following positions online at www.ccboe.com/hur, or in writing to the personnel office. All positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted.

Job openings

Teacher Vacancies - Charles County Public Schools has teaching positions at all levels. Contracts are available for December graduates and early contracts will be offered to spring graduates interested in teaching in Charles County. Refer potential candidates to www.ccboe.com or 1-800-416-0794.

Power Reading Teacher - General Smallwood Middle School and Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School; 10-month positions. Five years teaching experience; bachelor's degree required.

Reading Resource Teachers - Dr. James Craik Elementary School and La Plata High School.

Reading Recovery Teacher - Dr. Mudd & Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy elementary schools; 10-month position. Masters degree in early childhood education or reading; three years of teaching required. The Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy positions closes Nov. 14. Dr. Mudd's position is open until filled.

Special Education Teacher of the Emotionally Disturbed -- Henry E. Lackey High School; 10-month position.

Gifted Education Resource Teachers - All elementary schools; 10-month positions. Masters degree or advanced professional certificate; minimum five years of teaching experience.

Mathematics Teachers - Thomas Stone and La Plata high schools, Mattawoman and Piccowaxen middle schools and the Stethem Educational Center; 10-month positions.

English Teachers - Thomas Stone High School and the Stethem Educational Center; 10-month positions.

Family & Consumer Science Teacher - John Hanson Middle School; 10-month position.

NJROTC Instructor - Westlake High School; 11-month position.

Kindergarten & PreKindergarten Teachers - Indian Head Elementary School; 10-month positions.

Three-Year-Old Program Teacher - Barnhart Elementary School; 10-month position.

Speech Language Pathologist - All elementary schools; 10-month positions.

Business Teacher - Maurice J. McDonough & La Plata high schools; 10-month position.

Art Teacher - Maurice J. McDonough High School; 10-month position.

Health/PE Teacher - Maurice J. McDonough High School; 10-month position.

Teachers for Self-Contained Therapeutic Day Treatment Program - F.B. Gwynn

Educational Center; 10-month positions.

Occupational Therapist - All elementary, middle and high schools; 10- or 11-month positions.

Title I Instructional Technology Teachers - All elementary schools; 10-month positions. Closes Nov. 20.

Food Service Worker - North Point High School; three-hour, 10-month position.

Program Analyst/Project Manager - Department of Planning and Construction, Starkey Building; 12-month position. Four-year college degree in business, contractual/planning or technical school program in construction technologies, engineering, architecture, business contracting/planning, or related field required.

Title I Secretary - Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, temporary 12-month position. Closes Nov. 14.

Instructional Assistant - John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position. Closes Nov. 14.

Instructional Assistant - Matthew Henson Middle School, 10-month position. Closes Nov. 14.

Secretary - Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Educational Center, temporary-position.

Instructional Assistant - Milton Somers Middle School, 10-month position. Closes Nov. 17.

The Charles County public school system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices. For inquiries, please contact Keith Grier, Title IX Coordinator, or Patricia Vaira, Section 504 Coordinator (students), or Keith Hettel, Section 504 Coordinator (employees/adults), at Charles County Public Schools, Jesse L. Starky Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, Maryland 20646. 301-932-6610/870-3814. For special accommodations call 301-934-7230 or TDD 1-800-735-2258 two weeks prior to the event.

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The mission of Charles County Public Schools is to provide an opportunity for all school-aged children to receive an academically challenging, quality education that builds character, equips for leadership, and prepares for life, in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.