

School News



Where success is measured one student at a time • November 7, 2008 • R-306

Students learn election fundamentals through voting

As voters prepared to vote on Tuesday, Charles County Public Schools students were holding their own elections to combine political events to classroom lessons.

Eva Turner Elementary School held three student elections. The first was for prekindergarten students, in which they voted for a favorite book from two choices, "Bear Wants More," and "Clifford: The Small Red Puppy."

Students in kindergarten through grade 5 voted for their favorite

author. Poems from authors Shel Silverstein and Jack Prelutsky were presented to students in class in mid-October and were posted at the main entrance of the school for students to read. Sally Pruitt, a reading resource



Eva Turner Elementary School reading resource teacher Sally Pruitt, center, collects voter registration cards from Turner fifth graders Kyle Nease, left, and Terrell Stevenson, right, during the school's author election, held Oct. 30.

choose what they think the best poems are," said Turner Principal Kathleen Morgan. Each student received an "I Voted" sticker to represent their participation in the author election. "The kids were super excited about the elec-

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School system updates community on new high school plans

The Board of Education held a question-answer forum Oct. 27 to talk about the next new high school and delays in construction.

Charles Wineland, assistant superintendent for supporting services, gave an overview of the school, which will be built on Piney Church Road in Waldorf. Originally scheduled to open in 2011, the state has not approved the school and the Charles County Commissioners have ordered value engineering on the system's plans. Wineland said the possible opening date has been pushed to 2013, which may be optimistic in today's economy.

County residents at the forum held at Mary B. Neal Elementary School, which is near the proposed high school site, asked about finances, value engineering, the status of the

swimming pool and funding alternatives.

The swimming pool planned for the school was removed from the plans after the county told the Board of Education to reduce the cost of the school. "It was the largest single item that was 100 percent county funded and could be cut to meet the cost reduction target," Wineland said.

The next high school is planned as a traditional school with a 1,600 student capacity. The school also includes plans for a digital classroom, which would be used not only by students attending the high school, but also by all CCPS students and the community.

More information on the next high school is available on the school system Web site at <http://www.cboe.com/digitalclassroom/>.

PE teachers present curriculum

Eleven Charles County Public Schools physical education teachers recently attended the Maryland Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD) convention, held Friday, Oct. 17, in Towson. Connie Harris, a physical education teacher at Westlake High School, presented two sessions, the first on incorporating portfolios in assessments, and the second on a sports education model, which incorporates social contracts, personal and team responsibility, leadership development and conflict resolution into teaching team sports to middle and high school students.

David Bradshaw from Maurice J. McDonough High School, Adam Lowe of Thomas Stone High School and Brent Stum of La Plata High School presented the school system's weight training curriculum that was written to align with state and national standards.

Schools open for staff Nov. 11

Schools are closed for students only on Nov. 11. Elementary school conferences will be held and report cards for elementary students will be issued.

Graduation time changes

2009 graduation ceremony times for Thomas Stone and Westlake high schools have recently been changed. Westlake High School's graduation time was changed from 9:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Tuesday, June 2. Thomas Stone High School's graduation time was changed from 2:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday, June 2. Ceremonies for Stone and Westlake will be held at the Showplace Arena in Upper Marlboro. North Point High School will host its first graduation ceremonies in the school's gymnasium 7 p.m., Tuesday, June 2.



Notebook

Corrections

Kimberly King, an instructional specialist at Milton M. Somers Middle School, was incorrectly identified in the Oct. 24 *School News* On the cover item. Jenifer Cox, a teacher at Mary B. Neal Elementary School and daughter of Dr. John H. Cox, was incorrectly identified in the Cox Dedication feature in the Oct. 24 issue of *School News*.

CCPS extends food drive

Charles County Public Schools has extended its food drive to benefit the Southern Maryland Food Bank for an additional two weeks. Canned and non perishable food donations can be dropped off in the donation box located in the lobby of the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Donations should not be sent through the pony. Call 301-934-7220 for more information.

Joint PTO meeting planned

The Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) from La Plata High School, Milton M. Somers Middle School and Mary H. Matula Elementary School are hosting a joint meeting with the Charles County Sheriff's Office at La Plata, 6:30 p.m., Nov. 13, to discuss cyber bullying, Internet chat sights such as MySpace, and the dangers associated with these sites. The meeting is open to the public.

On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School employees. Pictured, from left, are: Nancy Carbone, special education instructional assistant; Bradley Jones, physical education teacher; Laquitta Washington, prekindergarten teacher; and Joni Rooney, technology teacher.

Elections

Continued from Page 1

tion. You could hear them talking about the election at lunch, at the water fountain and in the hallways," Morgan added. Prelutsky was chosen as the favorite Turner author with 174 votes.

Turner students in fourth and fifth grades also voted in a mock presidential election between Barack Obama and John McCain. They also voted yes or no on three questions about gas prices, health care and educational spending.

Students at Milton M. Somers Middle School also held a mock presidential election on Tuesday, Oct. 28. Election coverage was incorporated into classroom lessons as students researched topics such as political advisors, cabinet members and their duties, what it takes to become president, what duties the president performs, how the Electoral College works and what the campaign process entails. Christina Mulhollan, a Somers social studies teacher, required her students

to combine their research and use Power Point presentations to present the material to classmates. Her students also created a bulletin board that displayed information about the candidates and their stands on important election issues, such as education, energy, health care, retirement and security.

Each student cast their vote by paper ballot during their language arts classes. Somers also arranged for their presidential election to be part of the National Student/Parent Mock Election (NSPME). Results from the election were forwarded to the NSPME and will be counted in nationwide student results. The program aims to teach students the value of democracy

and citizenship, and what the right to make an informed decision means. Somers students elected Obama as their president with 476 votes, with McCain coming in second place, with 323 votes.



Gale-Bailey Elementary School third graders Jeremy Diaz, left, Alexia Funchess, center, and Nathan Kavlick, right, show off their "I voted" stickers, on Monday, Nov. 3. Gale-Bailey students participated in the nationwide Studies Weekly online election to learn about the voting process and what it means to make a personal, informed decision.

Board meeting - November 18

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 18, 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. The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and rebroadcast throughout the week. Program schedules for Channel 96 are available at www.ccboe.com under the public information and media tab.

Executive session – 12 p.m.

Call to order – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance, Thomas Stone High School's JROTC unit

Superintendent's update to the Board

Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Correspondence/Board Member updates
- Education Association of Charles County
- Student Board Member update
- CIP update

- Enrollment analysis
- Recruitment/hiring
- New health curriculum
- Food services update
- Legislative issues packet
- School locator

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

- New business
- Future agenda items

Recognition – 4:30 p.m.

- Students
- Employees

Public Forum – 6 p.m.

Action Items

- Minutes
- Personnel
- FY2008 Audit presentation
- Title I Parent program

Adjournment

School	As of May administration of HSA		Since May, 22 students have met the HSA requirement through the Bridge Plan. Percent met by Bridge
	Percent met HSA requirement (Population: Students who have taken all four tests)	Percent met HSA requirement (Population: All grade 11 students)	
Lackey	86.2	82.7	0
La Plata	95.5	94.0	1.2
McDonough	91.1	87.2	1.9
North Point	96.7	94.3	0.8
Stone	88.5	84.5	1.6
Westlake	89.7	84.8	1.4
County	91.9	88.7	1.2

Class of 2009 advances toward meeting testing requirement for graduation

The Maryland State Board of Education voted Oct. 28 to keep the High School Assessment as a graduation requirement for students in the Class of 2009.

Charles County Public Schools High School Assessment (HSA) results show that 91.9 percent of the students in the class of 2009 who have taken all four HSAs have met the graduation requirement.

Of the entire class of 2009, which includes students who have not yet taken all four tests, 88.7 percent have met the requirement. These figures are as of May 2008 and do not include the additional 1.2 percent of students who reached the goal over the summer through the HSA Bridge program. Students meeting the requirement have either achieved a passing score on each of the four tests, achieved a combined score of 1602 on all four tests or completed it through the Bridge Plan. The school system started the Bridge Plan this summer for those students who are having difficulty with traditional tests.

HSA is a requirement for the Maryland High School Diploma for the class of 2009. HSAs include algebra, English II, government and biology. The algebra and English II scores are also used as part of the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) and to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at the high school level. The state plans to release AYP results on the state report card site, www.mdreportcard.org, later this year.

After the May administration of the HSA, there were 226 students of 1,992 who had not met the HSA requirement for various reasons. Of those students, 70 seniors have not taken all four assessments – 40 students have one test to take, 12 have two tests, eight

How do students meet the requirement?

- 1. Pass all four tests. The passing scores are: Algebra/Data Analysis, 412; Government, 394; Biology, 400; and English 396.**
- 2. Earn a combined score of at least 1602 (the total of the four passing scores). This combined-score options allows students to offset lower performance on one test with higher performance on another.**

Bridge Plan: For students who have difficulty with traditional tests, the State this summer began implementing the Bridge Plan. Students can successfully complete rigorous eight- to 12-hour projects in the four subjects for every 21 points they fall short of the passing score.

have three and 10 have not taken any of the four assessments. There are three additional opportunities for students to take or retake the tests this year. “We anticipate that once these students have completed all four exams, they will meet the HSA graduation requirement,” Superintendent James E. Richmond said.

Since May, 22 additional students met the HSA requirement through the Bridge program, and approximately 40 other students have submitted final projects that could be accepted within the next two to three weeks. “The percentage of students meeting the requirement changes every week and the vast majority of the students who started the process in the summer are making great strides toward meeting the requirement,” said Drew Jepsy, director of instructional assessments. “Most of the 65 students who started the process in the summer have completed their projects or are only a few away from meeting the requirement,” Jepsy said.

Additionally, there are 137 students who are working on Bridge projects this fall.

“These students are moving closer each day to completing their projects, and I believe that by January we will have close to 100 percent of our students meeting the HSA requirement,” Jepsy added.

The Bridge Plan offers some students who have not achieved passing scores on assessments an optional way to meet the HSA requirement. Students failing to pass an HSA can complete a single eight- to 12-hour project for every 21 points they fall short of the passing score.

Students who have not passed the tests are being offered additional classes, support and program adjustments to help move them toward graduation.

“Our biggest concern now,” said Superintendent James E. Richmond, “is the number of students we have transferring into our school system who have not met the HSA requirement or taken all of the tests. We have 156 new students who entered our schools this year as seniors and have not taken all the tests. We continue to work with all students to help them achieve this graduation requirement,” Richmond added.

Personnel

Apply for positions at www.ccboe.com/hur, or in writing to the personnel office. Positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job openings

Coordinator of Autism Services – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Candidates must have three years of experience with autism at the system level and must be pursuing a master's degree.

Instructional Specialist – Location(s) to be determined; 10-month position.

Certified School Psychologists – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10.5-month position. Candidates must be eligible for Maryland State Department of Education certification.

Behavior Specialists, Support – Openings at all levels; 10-month position.

Behavior Specialists, Certificated – Openings at all levels; 10-month position.

Food Service Workers – Openings at county schools. Three- and four-hour, 10-month positions. Apply by Nov. 10.

Food Service Worker – Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School. Five-hour, 10-month position. Apply by Nov. 10.

Adult Education Instructor – Lifelong Learning Center, six-hour position. Bachelor's degree required. Apply by Nov. 11.

Food Service Substitutes – Openings at various county schools. Apply by Nov. 12.

Building Service Worker – William B. Wade Elementary School; 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 14.

Special Education Teacher – General Smallwood Middle School; 10-month position.

Fifth-grade teacher – William A. Diggs Elementary School; 10-month position.

Third-grade teacher – William A. Diggs Elementary School; 10-month position.

Kindergarten Teacher – Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School; 10-month position.

Language Arts Teacher – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; 10-month position.

English Teachers – Future high school level openings; 10-month positions.

Special Education Teacher for Science – La Plata High School; 10-month position.

Special Education Teachers for Inclusion and Resource – Future high school openings; 10-month positions.

Special Education Teacher of the Emotionally Disturbed – High-school level; 10-month position.

Special Education Teacher for Inclusion – High-school level; 10-month position.

Life Skills Teachers for Severe and Profound – William A. Diggs Elementary and Henry E. Lackey High school; 10-month positions.

NJROTC Instructor – Westlake High School; 10-month position.

IEP Facilitators – Openings at middle-school level; 10-month positions.

Extra pay positions

Maurice J. McDonough High School has the following openings:

- Head varsity boys' lacrosse coach
- Head varsity wrestling coach
- Assistant wrestling coach

Call Principal Jervie Petty, 301-753-1755, to apply.

Westlake High School has the following opening:

- Head varsity softball coach

Call Principal Chrystal Benson, 301-753-1758, to apply.

Staff Notes

Payroll announcements

Employees who receive actual paychecks will receive a direct deposit authorization form and flyer with today's check. Payroll is encouraging employees to take advantage of direct deposit.

A pay date also falls during winter break, on Friday, Jan. 2, and checks for that date will be mailed Dec. 31 to home addresses on file with payroll. Direct deposit vouchers will be delivered to schools and centers on Monday, Jan. 5. Verify that your address is correct on your paycheck and your direct deposit voucher.

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