



## Equity training addresses diversity and achievement

Teachers and administrators at all Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) schools and centers completed equity training on March 4 as part of the school system's sensitivity to cultural diversity in the classroom and work place. More than 2,000 employees took the training, which is called "Charles County Public Schools Courageous Conversations Equity Training."

Training was provided systemwide and was required for certificated staff – employees holding teaching certificates. Training for support and technical staff is scheduled for this summer and all new employees will be required to take the course when they are hired. Facilitators were trained by the division of instruction and provided the training at each school and center.

James E. Richmond, superintendent of schools, told employees that he wanted the training to renew their passion for ensuring that all children reach their potential. "I want you to think about how we meet the needs of all children. I want you to think about student placement and the norms we use to determine it. Do those norms identify the true potential of all students?"

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Judy Estep said principals and staff provided positive feedback about the training. "Staff members are asking for additional training and want to know what we are planning as a follow up. Additionally, the training provided some deep and thought-provoking discussion," Estep said.

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## CCPS celebrates reading during Read Across Charles County

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) celebrated Read Across Charles County Day on Friday, Feb. 27. The annual event invites every child in the community to celebrate literacy and reading, and the birthday of the famous children's book author Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss.

Members of the community were invited into county elementary schools to read Dr. Seuss

classics such as "The Cat in the Hat" and "Green Eggs and Ham" to students. A number of elementary schools celebrated the event with a door-decorating contest in which students and staff decorated classroom doors with Dr. Seuss decorations.



**Eva Turner Elementary School teacher Kathy McGowan, left, along with Sally Pruitt, center, reading resource teacher, and Elizabeth Hoza, right, instructional assistant, celebrate Read Across Charles County Day on Feb. 27 dressed as characters from Dr. Seuss books.**

during the morning announcements and students voted for the mystery reader.

CCPS coordinates the event with the National Education Association's Read Across America event. Visit [www.nea.org/readacross/](http://www.nea.org/readacross/) for more information.

Students in the Future Educators Association (FEA) from Maurice J. McDonough High and John Hanson Middle School were invited to read to students at Gale-Bailey and J.P. Ryon elementary schools.

Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School also coordinated a mystery-reader event in which a student read from a Dr. Seuss book

## Summer school changes

Registration, start dates and the location for the 2009 summer school session have been changed. Registration will be held at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m., Thursday and Friday, June 25-26, and 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., Saturday, June 27.

Summer school staff begins on Monday, June 29. Classes begin Tuesday, June 30.

## Top speller from Hanson

Jazmine Smith, an eighth-grade student at John Hanson Middle School, won the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) 31st annual Spelling Bee held Feb. 27 at Milton M. Somers Middle School by spelling the word "kinesiology" correctly.

As the county winner, Smith advances to the National Scripps Spelling Bee scheduled for May 26-28 in Washington D.C. Dang-Quang Tran, a seventh-grade student at Mattawoman Middle School, won second place. The bee is sponsored by CCPS, the College of Southern Maryland, the *Maryland Independent*, the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc., and Chaney Enterprises.

## Imaginations run wild

The Destination Imagination tournament is Saturday, March 14, at North Point High School. The event begins at 8 a.m. and the awards ceremony is at 4 p.m.

## It's that time of year

Charles County Public Schools students in grades three through eight will take the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) in math on March 17-18. The MSA reading test will be administered on March 24-25.



## Notebook

### **Free concert**

The Marshall University Chamber Choir is hosting a concert at La Plata High School, 7 p.m., March 19. The concert is part of an initiative by the Marshall University College of Fine Arts to reach a larger student base beyond the West Virginia border.

### **Grote golf tournament**

The Ken Grote Open golf tournament has been scheduled for Monday, June 22 at Hawthorne Country Club in La Plata. Details and registration information will be announced at a later date.

### **Spring is almost here**

The first day of spring is Friday, March 20.

### **MAC meeting canceled**

The Minority Achievement Committee (MAC) meeting scheduled for 4:30 - 6 p.m., Wednesday, March 18 has been canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for April 1.

### **On the cover**

Pictured on the cover are exemplary employees honored by the Board of Education at its Feb. 10 meeting. Pictured, from left, are: Clyde Abbey, building service manager, Eva Turner Elementary School; Kimberly Stillwell, science teacher, J.P. Ryon Elementary School; Evangeln Turner, school counselor, Berry Elementary School; Robin "Chris" Hoepfl, secretary, Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; and James "Earl" Swann, building service manager, La Plata High School.



Turner staff, Charles County Sheriff Rex Coffey, and representatives from Teen Court and Lifestyles of Maryland held a kick-off ceremony on Tuesday, Feb. 3, for the adoption of Turner's grounds by Teen Court and Lifestyles of Maryland. Pictured, from left, are Clyde Abbey, Turner building service manager; Turner Vice Principal Stephanie Nottingham; Turner building service worker James McGill; Turner building service worker Keya Young; Turner Principal Kathleen Morgan, Sheriff Rex Coffey; Teen Court Coordinator Sarah Vaughan; and Corae Briscoe, support services director for Lifestyles.

## **Eva Turner adopted by Teen Court justice program**

The playground and recreational areas of Eva Turner Elementary School were recently adopted through the Adopt-a-Spot program as part of a partnership between the Charles County Sheriff's Office Teen Court juvenile justice program and Lifestyles of Maryland Foundation, Inc.

Teen Court and Lifestyles of Maryland signed a yearlong contract to adopt Turner, and students who have been ordered to perform community service through the Teen Court program will volunteer time during the weekend hours to maintain the school grounds.

Teen Court Coordinator Sarah Vaughan said a group of about 10 kids will visit the school once a month during the winter season, and twice a month during the warmer

months. She also said that parents of children in the Teen Court program also take the time to get involved.

The Teen Court program works with children between the ages of 12 and 17 who have been convicted of first-time misdemeanor offenses, such as traffic violations and disorderly conduct. The children are judged by a jury of their peers, who decides their sanction, or punishment. One of these sanctions is community service.

Vaughan said Teen Court chose Turner because it is a community-based school in central Waldorf and she hopes additional schools can be adopted through the partnership with Lifestyles of Maryland, Inc. in the future. For more information on the Teen Court program, visit [www.ccsso.us](http://www.ccsso.us).

### **Training**

Many school principals plan to implement suggestions in regards to equity and closing the achievement gap in their School Improvement Plans, Estep said.

Diversity training is not new to CCPS. It is required as part of the 10 requirements for minority achievement, which were adopted by the school system and Board of Education more than a decade ago to help address the achievement gap between students. "Minority Achievement Requirement 2" mandates that the system provide sensitivity training to all employees, certificated and support personnel, to address cultural diver-

### **Continued from Page 1**

sity. A human relations course is required as a condition of hiring. Up until two years ago, CCPS offered a course in diversity and blended cultures. Richmond asked the division of instruction to review the course and its relevance to employees and the school system. As part of that review, an employee survey was taken and the course offered March 4 goes beyond the previous training.

"Today's training is intended to go a step further – to raise our level of thinking and to provoke thought about the way we teach," Richmond told employees.

## Japanese students learn about American education from CCPS staff, students

Japanese teacher candidates said sayonara to host families and Charles County Public Schools on Feb. 26 following a two-week educational visit to learn about American education.

During a sayonara party held at North Point High School, the 33 education students from Bunkyo University provided school officials and host families with cultural performances including traditional Japanese dances, songs and a fashion show. Mitsuharu Yonezu, a visiting professor who traveled with the students, said the experience was helpful for the students to understand American education. "We are interested in the culture and life in America," he said while thanking those who made the visit possible. "This program helps us continue warm relations between the United States and Japan," Yonezu said.

This is the 19th year of the partnership between Bunkyo and Charles County Public Schools. Starting in 1987, the Japanese teacher candidates began visiting Charles County and the students attend seminars, visit classrooms and co-teach lessons. The purpose of the program is to provide the students the opportunity to identify similarities and differences between American and Japanese education; offer mini-lessons on Japanese culture and



Student teachers from Bunkyo University sing *Almost Heaven, West Virginia* for guests at a Sayonara party held Feb. 26 at North Point High School. Pictured, front row from left, are: Hiroki Suganuma, Tomohiro Terasawa and Yohei Noda. The student teachers visited CCPS for two weeks to learn about education in the United States.

language for CCPS students; experience American family life; reflect on the relationship of American culture to practices in education; and practice English. CCPS teachers and students also acquire better knowledge of Japanese language and customs. Students spend one of their two weeks living with volunteer host families from around the county.

Superintendent James E. Richmond told the students that he hopes their visit provided them with information and cultural experiences that they cannot get from a book or classroom.

"As superintendent of schools, I have worked on

this partnership over the years and look forward to many more years of cooperation between our school systems. In an age when technology puts global information at our fingertips, it becomes more important that we maintain these partnerships so our teachers gain first-hand experience and knowledge outside of the classroom. Technology allows us to read about other nations, but nothing replaces person-to-person contact. A couple of years ago, I had the privilege to visit Japan and your school system, and was able to bring home a better understanding of your educational philosophies, your culture and your traditions," Richmond said.

## School system to partner with University of Maryland for degree/certificate program

Beginning this fall, Charles County Public Schools and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, will offer a K-8 mathematics education advanced degree program with a focus on inquiry pedagogy, culturally responsive instruction and leadership in mathematics. The program will offer either a master's degree in education or an 18-credit post-baccalaureate certificate with a concentration in K-8 mathematics instructional leadership. The program will begin in September.

The master's can be completed in four years (summer 2013), and the certificate can be completed within three years (spring 2012). The master's degree program includes 36 total credit hours: 18 core education courses and 18 content area courses.

The core education courses include:

- Culturally Responsive Instruction in Mathematics;
- Research Designs in Education;
- Seminar in the Study of Teaching;
- Teacher Leadership;
- Assessment and Evaluation; and
- Project Seminar – Capstone.

The content area courses include:

- Mathematical Reasoning;
- Number, Number Systems and Operations;
- Geometry and Spatial Reasoning;
- Algebraic Reasoning;
- Statistics, Data Analysis and Probability; and
- Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry.

The certificate program includes a total of 18 credit hours. They are:

- Culturally Responsive Instruction in Mathematics;
- Mathematical Reasoning;
- Number, Number Systems and Operations;
- Geometry and Spatial Reasoning;
- Algebraic Reasoning; and
- Teacher Leadership.

Applications for the program must be submitted by May 1, 2009, to Barbara Palko, career technology education instructional specialist for CCPS. For additional information or a schedule of classes, call 301-392-7501 or e-mail [bpalko@ccboe.com](mailto:bpalko@ccboe.com).

## Personnel

Apply for positions at [www.ccboe.com/hur](http://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

**Secretary, Human Resources** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; 12-month position. Apply by March 17.

**Special Education Instructional Assistant, Hiatus** – General Smallwood Middle School; 10-month position. Apply by March 19.

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

**Special Education Teacher for Math** – Thomas Stone High School; 10-month position.

### Extra pay positions

**Thomas Stone High School** has the following opening:

- Girls' assistant volleyball coach

Call Principal Larry Martin, 301-753-1756, to apply.

**Westlake High School** has the following opening:

- Head varsity boys' basketball coach

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

### Staff Notes

#### Making Work Pay credit tax change

The Internal Revenue Service has released new federal tax withholding tables that incorporate the new Making Work Pay credit, which may result in more take-home pay for employees. The new tax tables apply to individuals claiming single whose federal taxable wages are below \$173,000; and individuals claiming married whose federal taxable wages are below \$216,000.

The withholding changes will be effective with the March 13 paychecks. For more information on how the Making Work Pay credit may affect your biweekly paychecks or your year end tax liability, visit the IRS Web site, [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

#### MetLife 403b account announcements

Employees who transfer funds from former 403b accounts to the new MetLife account before March 31, 2009, will be refunded any surrender charges incurred with the transfer. To receive a refund, employees must fill out the transfer form and give it to the MetLife representative assigned to your school, center or building.

The form is available on the school system Web site at [www2.ccboe.com/staffservices/benefits.cfm](http://www2.ccboe.com/staffservices/benefits.cfm). Once the surrender charges are noted on a statement from the former account provider, employees can give a copy of the statement to their MetLife representative before Oct. 15.

Employees can also update beneficiary information on their accounts through the MetLife Web site, [www.metlife.com](http://www.metlife.com), or by downloading a beneficiary update form, available under the staff services of the CCPS Web site, and mailing it to MetLife.

#### Summer leadership institute

CCPS is looking for educators and current vice principals to attend the 2009 Leadership Institute, scheduled for June 22-26, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Thomas Stone High School. Candidates are educators who want to develop leadership skills to help them successfully transition into an instructional and/or administrative leadership position or vice principals who aspire to be principals and want to further develop their leadership skills in order to transition into a principal position.

The Institute is open to all CCPS educators seeking positions such as department heads, Instructional Leadership Team, high school resource teachers and principals; designed to engage participants with motivational and participatory experiences; and focuses on five critical areas of educational leadership: vision, accountability, instruction, communication and group dynamics. Participants can earn three CPD credits from the Maryland State Department of Education. Register by e-mailing [staffdevelopment@ccboe.com](mailto:staffdevelopment@ccboe.com). Call 301-934-7332.

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