

# School News



Where success is measured one student at a time • July 31, 2009 • R-322

## Mattawoman principal William Wise retires

William Wise, principal of Mattawoman Middle School and a 44-year veteran of Charles County Public Schools, has announced his retirement. Wise, who has been a middle school principal for 31 years, is also a former Charles County Public Schools principal of the year.

"I feel fortunate and honored to have been a part of the Charles County public school system and to have had the opportunity to work with the best," Wise said.

Wise began his career in education in February 1965 as a fifth-grade teacher at the old Waldorf School. He transferred the next year to Lackey High School as a social studies teacher and also served as a social studies teacher at Pomonkey High School and Matthew Henson Middle School. He was assigned as a vice principal in 1974 at Milton M. Somers Middle School, and also served for one year as vice principal at La Plata High School. In 1977, Wise was named as the first principal at Piccowaxen Middle School, opening the new school and serving for eight years before moving to the principal spot at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School. It was during his eight years at Stoddert that the school



William Wise

was named by the state as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

In 1994, Wise accepted the challenge of opening another new school, Mattawoman Middle School, where he has served as the school's only principal. Wise was honored as the *Washington Post's*

Distinguished Educational Leader and the Charles County Public Schools Principal of the Year during the 1997-98 school year.

Wise was also selected as the 2008 Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) Principal of the Year. The students honored Wise for his many years of promoting student leadership at the middle school level. The Principal of the Year award highlights the many contributions made by principals throughout the state who support student activities and student leaders.

"Bill Wise has served Charles County, our children and our community with a quiet professionalism through his 44-year career. He was the type of educator who saw the best in

See Wise, Page 2

## Stone named character school

Thomas Stone High School was named a 2009 Maryland School of Character by the Maryland Center for Character Education (MCCE) and the Character Education Partnership. The awards program recognizes schools that demonstrate outstanding character education programs that yield positive results in student behavior and academic performance.

As a Maryland School of Character, Stone advanced to the national level of competition as a state nominee for the National School of Character awards program. Stone will be recognized and honored by the MCCE for their character education program at a luncheon in September.

## News to Know

Charles County Public Schools quarterly newsletter, titled *News to Know*, will be mailed to all student and staff households the week of Aug. 23. The report, the third to be produced this year, contains back to school information, student and staff accomplishments, and a welcome message from Superintendent James E. Richmond.

Call 301-934-7220 for additional copies of the newsletter or for more information.

## Follow us on Twitter!

Charles County Public Schools recently joined Twitter, a free short-messaging service the public can view and use to receive updates from the school system. Information available through the CCPS Twitter page includes fall sports registration information, as well as the latest press releases. Visit [www.twitter.com/ccps](http://www.twitter.com/ccps) to sign up for the service.

## Maryland School Assessment scores remain steady

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) reading and mathematics scores on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) remain steady, according to results released earlier this month by the Maryland State Department of Education. Most schools met adequate yearly progress (AYP) and overall school goals. Six of 29 elementary and middle schools missed making AYP in one or more subgroup areas. High school data will be released later this summer.

Scores are reported for a total of 12 tests, six reading and six math, taken in March by

students in grades three through eight. Scores are expressed as the percentage of students who scored at or above the proficiency levels set when the exams started in 2003. The school system met annual measurable objective (AMO) in 454 of 463 subgroups. The annual measurable objective is the yearly benchmark established by the state for school systems to meet their goals by 2014.

Composite MSA reading proficiency at the elementary grades has risen more than 23 percentage points since 2003, and composite

See AYP, Page 2



### 2009-10 Calendar

An electronic copy of the 2009-10 Parent Handbook/Calendar will be available on the Charles County Public Schools Web site by Aug. 7. Print copies will be delivered to all schools and centers during the week of Aug. 10. Requests for additional copies will not be honored until September to ensure all students and staff receive one copy.

### NewsBreak 96, On Air

The Charles County Public Schools communications department produces original programming for Comcast Channel 96. *NewsBreak 96* is a bi-weekly show that features highlight of events, programs and successes in the school system.

*On Air* is a monthly show that highlights the programs and activities that make Charles County Public Schools a successful school system. Each month, three to five programs of newsworthy events and activities are featured and provide a visual representation of how CCPS operates.

Visit the Channel 96 Web site, [www.ccoeb.com/publicinfo/channel96](http://www.ccoeb.com/publicinfo/channel96), for an up-to-date programming schedule.

### On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are the nominees for the *Washington Post's* 2009 Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher of the Year award who were recognized at the June Board meeting. Pictured, from left, are: Maria Arevalo, language arts teacher, General Smallwood Middle School; Deborah Taylor, math teacher, Mattawoman Middle School; Laura Kelly, art teacher, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School; Nancy Burch, physical education teacher, Thomas Stone High School; and Charna Brooks, third-grade teacher, William A. Diggs Elementary School.

### AYP

elementary mathematics proficiency has increased by 20 points. Composite middle school reading proficiency has increased 17.5 percentage points since 2003, while composite middle school math proficiency has risen 33.8 points.

At the middle school level, the most significant gains were made in eighth grade, where students increased scores in both reading and math. Seventh-grade students increased math scores by 4.3 points but declined 2.8 points in reading. At the elementary level, scores remained steady with no gain or loss above 2.7 points.

Mattawoman Middle School did not meet its annual measurable objective in the free and reduced price meals (FARMS) reading subgroup, causing it to miss making AYP as a school. However, the school met AMO for all students combined and for 18 of the 19 required subgroups. It is the second consecutive year that the school has not met AYP in a reading content subgroup; therefore it enters the first of two years of school improvement. Mattawoman must meet AYP for the next two years to exit school improvement.

### From page 1

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) charts the progress of the overall student population in the grades tested, as well as for students receiving three categories of special services: FARMS, Special Education and English Language Learners. It also follows the success of students in five racial subgroups: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, African-American, White and Hispanic.

Superintendent James E. Richmond said "the rising targets set forth in federal law make it more challenging each year for schools to meet the goals, but many of our schools are reaching the high 80 and 90 percent proficient levels. Additionally, we continue to work with all children for success, and hard work in the classroom continues to benefit students and improve instruction."

Other schools missing AYP in one or more subgroups this year are: Gale-Bailey Elementary School, Theodore G. Davis Middle School, John Hanson Middle School, Matthew Henson Middle School and General Smallwood Middle School. State, system and local school data are now available on the MSDE report card, [www.mdreportcard.org](http://www.mdreportcard.org).

### Wise

everyone, and always treated students, parents and staff with respect. Dr. Wise worked countless hours over the years to ensure he was providing his students the best possible education. We are thankful for his many contributions over the years and his commitment to excellence. He will be missed, and we wish him well in retirement," said Superintendent James E. Richmond.

### From page 1

Wise has a long history with Charles County Public Schools where he began his career as an elementary student at Indian Head Elementary School and continued on to graduate from Lackey High School.

Richmond said the search for a new principal at Mattawoman has begun, and he hopes to be able to name a successor soon.

## Board agenda - Aug. 11, 2009

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Aug. 11, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building on Radio Station Road in La Plata. The public portion of the meeting begins at 11 a.m. The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96.

**Executive session** – 10 a.m.

**Call to order** – 11 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Reports of officers/boards/committees**

- Superintendent's update
- Correspondence/Board member updates - MABE conference
- Education Association of Charles County
- Student Board member update
- CIP update, State CIP 2011

- Summer Success Academies
- Bridge to Excellence update
- Staffing update
- Legislative update
- Recurring resolutions
- Record retention policy #2470

**Unfinished business**

**New business and future agenda items**

- New business
- Future agenda items

**Public Forum** – 3:30 p.m.

**Action items**

- Minutes
- Personnel

**Adjournment**

## Summer engineering academy ignites student interest in robotics

More than 100 Charles County Public Schools students participated in the second science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) summer program sponsored by the school system and the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head division.

The two-week-long program was held at Theodore G. Davis Middle School from July 6-17 and students were divided into 18 teams of seven. Each team was assigned a mentor, a CCPS science teacher, who also served as the team referee. Additionally, each team was paired with an engineer from NSWC and a student from the College of Southern Maryland.

The program introduces students to a series of science and engineering problems through Material World Modules (MWM), various engineering challenges, robotics challenges and a research project.

The modules are a series of kits students use to investigate real world engineering problems. One module covered why specific sports equipment, such as golf balls, tennis balls, footballs and basketballs, are used for specific sports.

The second of two modules consisted of smart sensors, including light, infrared and magnetic sensors. Students were required to



**Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School science teacher Jack Belle, second from right, monitors the progress of a team of CCPS students during a practice session of the robotics challenge during the summer STEM program offered by the school system and NSWC. Student teams built and programmed robots to maneuver an 8 ft. x 8 ft. challenge board.**

investigate the sensor's trigger and hypothesize what sets the sensor off, such as light, temperature, motion and pressure. Student teams also had to map out where, in the area surrounding the sensor, the sensor could be triggered.

The robotics portion tests the teams in eight different challenges. Student teams were required to create robots from metal logos. Using a programmable controller and a laptop computer, students tested their robots on an 8 ft. x 8 ft. challenge board in eight events. The goal was for students to use their robot on the board to rescue a swimmer, clear mines, recover a ship, create a sea base, deliver humanitarian aid, search for a submarine, transport troops and dock their robot.

Other challenges in the program focused on electronics, ballistics, packaging and rocketry skills, including an egg drop challenge and a rocket launch. Each team also had to work with a water balloon cannon to correlate the launch conditions with a target range.

Additionally, teams presented a research proposal for a possible robotics project on the last day of the program and the top three teams were given "funding" for their proposals.

## In Memoriam



**Tracy McMullen**

### Tracy M. McMullen

Tracy McMullen, a first-grade teacher at Indian Head Elementary School, passed away on Thursday, July 23, 2009. She spent her entire career with Charles County Public Schools as an elementary school teacher at Indian Head, where she was hired to teach in 1990.

Ms. McMullen grew up in the Bowie area and graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park, in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She obtained her master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Western Maryland College in 1999.

She lived in Davidsonville, Md., and has three sisters, Carron Klenkel, Lisa and Tina, and two brothers, Sean and Terry. Additionally, she has 12 nieces and nephews.

Services were held July 26 at Robert E. Evans Funeral Home in Bowie, and July 27 at St. Bernadette's Catholic Church in Severn. Burial followed at Lakemont Memorial Gardens in Davidsonville.

## 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

**Principal** – F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 12-month position. Candidates must have a master's degree and be eligible for an administrative supervisory certificate. Five years of teaching experience, two years in a leadership role required. Apply by Aug. 5.

**Special Education Instructional Asst., Life Skills** – Westlake High School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 5.

**Special Education Instructional Asst.** – Mary H. Matula Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 11.

**Special Education Instructional Asst., Life Skills** – Berry Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 11.

**Kindergarten Instructional Asst.** – William A. Diggs Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 11.

**Food Service Manager** – William A. Diggs Elementary School, 6-hour, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 12.

**Building Service Worker** – Matthew Henson Middle School, 12-month position. Apply by Aug. 12.

**Food Service Substitutes** – Openings at county schools. Apply by Aug. 5.

**CIEP Facilitator** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 11-month position. Bachelor's degree and IEP experience required. Apply by July 31.

**Life Skills Teacher for Severe and Profound** – Openings at the elementary-school level, 10-month positions.

**Language Arts Teachers** – Benjamin Stoddert, Matthew Henson, Mattawoman and Theodore G. Davis middle schools, 10-month positions.

**Mathematics Teacher** – North Point High School, 10-month position.

**Family and Consumer Science/Childcare Teacher** – North Point High School, 10-month position.

**Title I Instructional Technology Teacher** – Eva Turner Elementary School, 10-month position.

**Art Teacher** – John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position.

**Prekindergarten Special Education Inclusion** – Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, 10-month position.

**Adaptive Physical Education Teacher** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position.

**Science Teacher** – Middle school level, 10-month position.

**Reading Recovery Teacher** – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

**French Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

**Physical Education and Health Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

**Library and Media Specialist** – Elementary school level, 10-month position.

**Vocal Music Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

**Special Education Teachers** – Openings at all age levels, 10-month positions.

**Physics Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

**Spanish Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

**Computer Science Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

**English Teacher** – High school level, 10-month position.

### Staff Notes

#### Third paycheck for July

Today's paycheck is the third paycheck in July. The only deductions taken from the today's check are taxes and retirement. Other deductions, such as health insurance, are not deducted from the third paycheck in a month with three pay dates.

#### Summer hours end Aug. 17

All CCPS buildings and locations that were operating on the summer-hours schedule of 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. return to normal hours of operation on Monday, Aug. 17.

**School News** is published by  
Charles County Public Schools  
301-932-6610  
301-934-7220  
Fax: 301-932-6651

**Board of Education Members**  
Donald M. Wade, Chairman  
Roberta S. Wise, Vice Chairman  
Jennifer S. Abell  
Collins A. Bailey  
Charles E. Carrington  
Maura H. Cook  
Pamela A. Pedersen  
Kyle Grusholt, Student Member

**Superintendent of Schools**  
James E. Richmond

**Editor/Writers**  
Katie O'Malley-Simpson  
Shelley Buter

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. Starkey 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.

**Charles County Public Schools**  
Post Office Box 2770  
La Plata, Maryland 20646  
(address service requested)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT No. 66  
La Plata, Md.  
20646

*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.*