

School News



Where success is measured one student at a time • August 14, 2009 • R-323

School system prepares for start of new school year

The new school year began last week as principals attended the annual back-to-school leadership conference and new teachers arrived for orientation. Preparations continue in anticipation of all teachers reporting to work on Aug. 18 and students returning on Aug. 24.

Superintendent James E. Richmond welcomed both administrators and new teachers, saying he wants Charles County Public Schools to be a world-class school system. He told both groups if they set high expectations for all children, accountability would take care of itself. He said reading is a primary goal and eliminating the reading gap must be done in early childhood.

The Superintendent told new teachers that the school system's success depends on them. "It all comes down to one thing – and that is you. When children come through the school doors, they are looking for one person –



Margot Savoy, a new language arts teacher at Mattawoman Middle School, left, works with John Tompkins, an instructional specialist based at Matthew Henson Middle School, right, on an activity during new teacher orientation on Wednesday, Aug. 12 at North Point High School.

you." He told the more than 150 new teachers attending orientation at North Point High School that motivation is the key and that they need to be well prepared. He reminded teachers that accountability is about teaching all children and that all children can learn. New teachers attended three days of orientation this week to learn about Charles County Public Schools, benefits, classroom management and curriculum.

On Monday, the first day of new teacher orientation, there were 152 new teachers. New hires include 29 elementary teachers, 73 secondary teachers and 50 special educators. There were still two elementary, 19 secondary and four special education vacancies early this week.

See Orientation, Page 2

School system names new principal, vice principals

Superintendent James E. Richmond has announced the appointment of Douglass Dolan as principal of Mattawoman Middle School, effective immediately. Dolan replaces William Wise, who retired last month after 44 years of service to Charles County Public Schools.



Douglass Dolan

Dolan moves to Mattawoman from Theodore G. Davis Middle School where he has served as a vice principal for the past two years. Dolan began his career in education

in 1995 as a social studies teacher at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School in Prince George's County. He transferred after one year to Friendly High School where he started as a social studies teacher and later served as an assistant principal during his 11 years at the school.

Dolan's appointment is the first of several administrative changes announced for the upcoming school year.

See Appointments, Page 2

Welcome back

Welcome back to teachers and 10-month employees. Veteran teachers return to the classroom on Tuesday, Aug. 18. Students begin school on Monday, Aug. 24.

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.

Open houses, orientations

Schools have planned open house and orientation events for parents, students and the community. A complete listing of dates and times is available on the school system Web site at www.ccboe.com/pr.

24-hour information line

Charles County Public Schools posts school news, employee and student accomplishments, inclement weather closings and calendar information on our 24-hour information line. Call 301-934-7410 or 301-932-6656. The line is updated at least twice a week and immediately when inclement weather decisions are made.

Bus hotline

The school system has a bus hotline for parents to call with questions about school bus routes. Call 301-932-6655 to access the hotline, which will be available Aug. 24-25, from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Bus routes can be accessed through School Locator, a new feature offered by Charles County Public Schools on the system Web site. School Locator can be accessed at www.ccboe.com/schoollocator/.



Notebook

2009-10 Calendar

Copies of the 2009-10 Parent Handbook/Calendar were delivered to all schools and centers this week. Teachers and other 10-month staff members will receive a copy through their school next week. Requests for additional copies will not be honored until September to ensure all students and staff each receive one copy.

College fair

Charles County Public Schools is sponsoring its 13th annual Mid-Atlantic College Fair on Wednesday, Sept. 23, at the Greater Waldorf Jaycees Community Center. More than 130 colleges and universities are participating. The fair is open 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. for students and 6 - 8 p.m. for the public. Financial aid workshops will be held at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. For more information, call Jeanette Kaufmann, 301-934-7314.

This Week

This Week in Charles County Public Schools is a short news item compiled each Friday and sent via e-mail to all employees. This Week provides informational links to news items, school system accomplishments and facts, as well as upcoming events that employees might like to attend.

On the cover

Pictured on the cover are three of Charles County Public Schools' newest teachers. Pictured, from left, are: Ayesha Smith, fourth-grade teacher, C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School; Justin Meeder, earth science teacher, Westlake High School; and Stephanie Goncalves, third-grade teacher, William A. Diggs Elementary School.

School system prepares for possible swine flu outbreak

Health officials are concerned schools may see a more dramatic outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus in the fall, and plans are underway to minimize its impact.

Phylis Reinard, supervising school nurse, told the Board of Education on Tuesday that children are more susceptible to the H1N1 virus because they have not received flu vaccines on a regular basis like many adults. Throughout Maryland, the health department will be offering the seasonal flu mist to children in the schools. This will be a voluntary program, and a joint letter from the school system and health department will be sent to parents. The flu mist will be given only to healthy children who have parental permission.

The biggest challenge, Reinard said, is to minimize the spread of disease through proper hand washing and respiratory etiquette. She said she is meeting with school nurses this week to ensure they have the latest information about the virus and to plan how to make sure children are washing their hands at school. "We are targeting elementary children because they are in closer contact. They tend to catch everything and they bring it to school or home and share it," Reinard said.

She also cautioned that school nurses will be sending sick children home. "Sick chil-

dren should not be in school," Reinard said. She added if a child's temperature goes above 100 degrees and they have symptoms of a sore throat and cough, the child should remain home until they have been fever free for 24 hours.

The school system will also be monitoring attendance rates and how many students and staff are sent home with flu-like symptoms. There are no plans now to close schools if a student or staff member is diagnosed.

The school system will continue to work closely with the Charles County Department of Health to keep parents and staff updated on the latest information about the flu.

All public schools in Charles County use appropriate measures to limit the spread of infection. Some of the daily cleaning done by building service workers includes disinfecting bathrooms and other areas with hospital-approved cleaners.

The school system is maintaining a Web site to provide the most up-to-date information on the H1N1 virus as well as other health information. Visit the school system Web site at www2.ccboe.com/health/ for important health information, illness and medication policies, vaccination requirements and more.

Orientation

From page 1

Following a morning of fine arts performances by students and introductions from school system staff, new teachers spent their first day with keynote speaker Dr. Harry Wong, author of "The First Days of School." Wong discussed techniques that help teachers with classroom management that leads to

student success.

"When we talk about the state and federal goals of 2014, it is you, the professional teacher, who will help us reach those. We are happy to have you here," Board Chairman Donald M. Wade said to teachers.

Appointments

From page 1

The Board of Education also approved four new vice principals.

They are Shannon Finnigan as vice principal at Berry Elementary School; Jackie Couvillon as vice principal at William A. Diggs Elementary School; Brad Williams as vice principal at Davis; and Diane Laveglia as vice principal at Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School.

Additionally, Richmond announced the following vice principal transfers:

- Pauline Johnson from La Plata High School to Henry E. Lackey High School;

- Veronica Crawford from Lackey to La Plata;
- Patricia Mooring from Gale-Bailey Elementary School to Arthur Middleton Elementary School;
- Tara Moore from Middleton to Gale-Bailey; and

- David Hoogerheide from Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy to Diggs.

There is still one administrative opening, the principal position at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, which Richmond anticipates filling before the start of the school year.

All new assignments begin immediately.

Educational Exchange brings Space and the White House to CCPS

“What is the future of Earth?” was one of the main questions asked of Peter Marquez, the director of space policy for the White House’s National Security Council, at the Charles County Public Schools Educational Exchange held July 28 at North Point High School.

More than 100 guests, including Charles County Public Schools students, teachers and administrators, as well as members from various county agencies, were invited to participate in a question and answer session with Marquez, who was featured as the guest speaker at the event.

Marquez was introduced to guests in attendance by Donald M. Wade, chairman of the Charles County Board of Education, who stressed the importance of Marquez’s visit to the school system. “These educational discussions are important for our students to feed their minds about science and technology, and to educate the Charles County community to the advances the school system is making in providing children with the best education. They are an extension of Superintendent James Richmond’s vision to prepare our students for the 21st century,” Wade said.

Marquez, who advises the administration of President Barack Obama on space policies and the future of the United States space program, spoke of the advances made in space technology over the past 20 years, and two new spacecrafts currently in development. He also stressed the need for future generations to become excited early in their education about math, science and technology. “With so many of our astronauts in their 50’s and 60’s who may retire soon, we just don’t have the interest there that we did years ago with future generations,” Marquez said.

Marquez also commented on the programs Charles County Public Schools offers to students that include science, technology,



Peter Marquez, director of space policy for the White House’s National Security Council, left, and Charles County Board of Education Chairman Donald M. Wade, right, discuss space technology and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education at the Educational Exchange event held July 28 at North Point High School. Marquez was the guest speaker and talked to guests about space policies in development under President Barack Obama and the importance of developing student interest in space.

engineering and mathematics, and said that future generations are in “an incredible spot in history” because so much technology is available for learning. “You really have built an impressive program for students,” he added.

Some of the teachers in attendance, including Chris Rooney, a chemistry teacher at Thomas Stone High School, were interested in Marquez’s thoughts on how to interest children in science and math at an early age. Rooney asked Marquez what his thoughts were on the use of space technology in everyday applications, including solar panel use for energy. Marquez explained to the audience that many forms of space technologies are present in daily life, such as satellite radio and automobiles, and that much of the same materials used to build spacecrafts today will be

used to build homes for future generations.

Marquez said he does not receive many opportunities to speak to children about space education and highlighted the importance of finding ways to ignite curiosity and excitement in elementary, middle and high school students. “Teachers can do simple things, like showing their students a shuttle launch, to excite their minds. Talk to them about space policy in their history classes. There are so many ways to feed that curiosity,” he said.

The exchange, the third hosted by the school system, was held in conjunction with the National Space Foundation and the Space Discovery Institute. The Board of Education and Superintendent Richmond developed the educational exchanges last school year as an effort to educate students, staff, community members, and county and state representatives in the advances the school system is making in education.

The school system is planning to host another educational exchange next spring.

Comcast Channel 96 features original programming, student anchors

Charles County Public Schools has an educational channel, Comcast Channel 96, provided free to the school system through a franchise agreement with the Charles County government. Comcast Channel 96 is managed by the CCPS communications department and features educational programming ranging from adult education series to foreign language programs for students.

Staff also produces local shows featuring students and staff in action, as well as events happening in the school system. The station is also used to broadcast Board of Education meetings live and rebroadcasts each meeting to keep the public informed.

Additionally, student volunteers from county high schools serve as anchors for Newsbreak 96, a monthly show highlighting school system events. For the 2009-10 school year, they are: Jade Hamdan, senior, Maurice J. McDonough High School; Kristin Quinn, senior, La Plata High School; Gabrielle “Gaby” Hayes, senior, Henry E. Lackey High School; and Michele Fisher, senior, La Plata. If you have an idea for the television station, e-mail Steven Sprouse at ssprouse@ccboe.com or Kyle Graves at kgraves@ccboe.com.

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

Food Service Manager – J.C. Parks Elementary School, 6-hour, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 24.

Literacy Instructional Assistant – Henry E. Lackey High School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 25.

Purchasing Assistant I – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Aug. 17.

Family Service Coordinator – Charles County Judy Centers, 12-month position. Apply by Aug. 21.

Secretary in Technology – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Aug. 21.

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

Gifted Education Resource Teachers – Future openings at all levels, 10-month positions.

Speech Language Therapists – Openings at all grade levels, 10-month positions.

Family & Consumer Science Teacher – High school level, 10-month position.

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

Spanish Teacher – La Plata High School, 10-month position.

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

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

Language Arts Teacher – Mattawoman Middle School, 10-month position.

Reading Resource Teachers – Future openings at all levels, 11-month positions.

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

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

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

Library & Media Specialist – Opening at the elementary school level, 10-month position.

Life Skills Teacher for Severe and Profound – Piccowaxen Middle School, 10-month position.

Special Education Teacher for Inclusion and Resource – Eva Turner Elementary School, 10-month position.

Staff Notes

Employee Self-Service Portal

Charles County Public Schools provides employees with a self-service portal to view pay stubs, check annual and sick leave balances, and to view current tax withholdings. The link to the portal is located at the top of the staff services page on the CCPS Web

site, www.ccboe.com/staffservices.cfm. Information is password protected. To access the portal, enter your five-digit employee identification number (located to the right of your name on pay stub), and then enter your four-digit pin (the last four digits of your Social Security number).

Network telephone system

All schools and classrooms are equipped with Cisco IP phones. Employees can check voicemail from their classroom, office or home. Complete instructions for checking voicemail are located on the staff services page of the CCPS Web site.

Key Communicator network

The Charles County Public Schools communications department is launching a Key Communicator network for the 2009-10 school year. Key communicators are employee's within the schools who let the communications department know the great things that are happening with students and staff. Past key communicators have provided pictures of noteworthy events and upcoming school activity information. Principals are asked to select their school's key communicator. If you have an interesting hands-on lesson, a professional accomplishment, or student success story, let your principal or key communicator know. Information received from key communicators is often published on the Web site or sent to local media for publicity.

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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.