

# School News



## CCPS welcomes students for 2009-10 school year

Sheriff deputies joined school officials Monday to welcome high school students back to school with reminders of teen driving laws and safety messages. Officers were passing out safety flyers and checking for seat belts as student drivers arrived for the start of the 2009-2010 school year. The focus on safe driving is an effort by Charles County Public Schools and the Charles County Sheriff's Office to prevent teen driving accidents and fatalities.



**John Hanson Middle School special education teacher Jennifer Connelly, left, welcomes back Hanson seventh grader Andrew Woodard, right, as he arrives at school on Monday. The school system opened for the 2009-2010 school year on Aug. 24 and welcomed more than 26,800 students.**

Charles County Public Schools opened on Aug. 24 with limited enrollment increases, the addition of several new academic programs and plans for combating a possible outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus in the fall.

More than 26,800 students were expected to start the 2009-2010 school year, an enrollment prediction that includes an 80-student increase and follows a three-year trend of limited growth. This is in contrast to the triple-

digit student population increases of the preceding two decades and the smallest increases since the early 1980s.

### New teacher hires

The number of teacher hires decreased this year. Most teaching positions are filled, and Keith Hettel, assistant superintendent of human resources said as of Friday, Aug. 21, the system had hired 169 teachers, including 84 middle and high school, 29 elementary and 56 special education teachers.

### Instructional programs

Several new academic opportunities are available to students this year. Gateway to Technology has been expanded to all middle schools, and a new program, Magic Planet, will be piloted at four elementary schools. A

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## School system receives scores on state, national tests

Charles County Public Schools received scores from a mix of national and state tests this week, including results on Advanced Placement (AP), SAT and the science portion of the Maryland School Assessment (MSA).

Student scores on AP and the science tests improved while SAT scores dropped. The mean grade on all AP tests taken this year is 2.25, up from 2.07 in 2008. There were 3,460 AP class enrollments and 88.3 percent, or 3,054 exams taken. The number of test takers scoring ones and twos on the exams decreased while those scoring three and higher increased.

Charles County's average score on the SAT, a nationally known college entrance test, is 1464, which is down from 1511 the previous year. The number of student test takers was up by more than 200 students, increasing the percent of the class taking the SAT from 32.1 to 39.8.

Students' average score in the mathematics section of the test is 490, the average score in the writing section is 481 and the average score on the critical reading portion is 493. Only scores for graduating seniors are

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### College Fair location

The location of the upcoming Mid-Atlantic College Fair was incorrectly listed in the Aug. 14 edition of *School News*. The 12th annual Mid-Atlantic College Fair will be held at North Point High School on Sept. 23. The fair is open to students from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and to the public from 6 to 8 p.m.

### Schools/offices closed

Schools and offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7, in observance of Labor Day.

### Schools honored for PBIS

The Maryland State Department of Education honored 29 Charles County public schools this summer for their Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program.

Each of the 29 schools honored has implemented PBIS into their school and received either a Gold, Silver or Bronze award from MSDE. For a list of schools honored and to read about the award criteria, read the press release posted on the school system Web site at [www.ccboe.com/pr](http://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.

### AFLAC open house

AFLAC representatives will visit all schools and centers for open enrollment Oct. 12 - Nov. 6. A complete listing with dates and times will be available on the CCPS Web site and published in *School News* next month.

## Notebook

### Your News to Know

Charles County Public Schools parent newsletter, titled "News to Know," is available on the school system Web site at [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com). The newsletter, which is the third of four to be produced this year, contains school system information for parents, inclement weather closing contacts, parent visitation and observation procedures, and student and faculty accomplishments.

The publication is produced by the Charles County Public Schools communications department. Call 301-934-7220 for copies of the newsletter or additional information.

### Tweet Tweet

Did you know that Charles County Public Schools maintains a Twitter page? Follow us at [www.twitter.com/CCPS](http://www.twitter.com/CCPS) for system updates, news, facts and more. The site can be accessed from the internal network by selecting view for work purposes only under the options area of the Websense notification page.

### On the cover

Pictured on the cover are four of Charles County Public Schools' newest teachers. Pictured, from left, are: Jennifer Minopoli, science teacher, Theodore G. Davis Middle School; Neil Saguid, special education teacher, General Smallwood Middle School; Lennie Houston, electronics teacher, North Point High School; and Ashley Bendert, science teacher, Mattawoman Middle School.



### Middleton receives donation from community store

Arthur Middleton Elementary School Principal Greg Miller, pictured above, far left, accepts a \$2,500 donation from Big Lots Inc. from Paul Bergen, district manager of the Waldorf store, pictured above, far right. Also accepting the reward on behalf of the school were Jacquelyn White, reading resource teacher at Middleton, pictured second from left, and Middleton Vice Principal Patricia Mooring, pictured second from right.

Middleton received the donation Aug. 14 from Big Lots, Inc., a local wholesale store that recently opened in the St. Charles community. Bergen said Big Lots, Inc. chose Middleton as the donation recipient because the company wanted to support its closest neighborhood school. Miller said he plans to use the donation funds to support the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program at the school.

### Testing

included in the 2009 report. Students in the Class of 2009 were offered more than \$44.8 million in scholarships.

SAT tests are designed to demonstrate a student's mastery of certain subjects to colleges. Many colleges use the test as a part of the admissions process.

La Plata High School was the highest performing school with a score of 1591. Maurice J. McDonough High School students posted an average score of 1507 and Westlake High School students posted a 1498 average. North Point High School students averaged 1441, Thomas Stone High School students' average score is 1427 and Henry E. Lackey High School students averaged 1348. North Point had the highest number of students taking the SAT, with 59.3 percent of the class taking the test.

Statistics show that SAT scores improve the longer a student attends high school in Charles County. Students attending CCPS for one year averaged 1332, two-year students

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averaged 1350, three-year students averaged 1410 and students attending four years averaged 1486.

Students in grades five and eight showed marked improvement on the science portion of the Maryland School Assessment. Fifth grade scores increased to 61.4 percent of students scoring at proficient or advanced, up from 57.2 percent in 2008. Eighth-grade scores also improved from 53.3 to 60.3 percent, up seven points.

This is the second year that science has been part of the MSA, but the scores are not used to help determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The science portion of MSA shows how well students have learned science skills as specified in the state curriculum. The test includes both multiple choice and brief constructed response items.

More complete information on test scores can be found on the school system Web site at [www2.ccboe.com/aboutus/fastfacts.cfm](http://www2.ccboe.com/aboutus/fastfacts.cfm).

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program called Algebraic Thinking is being implemented at all middle schools, and three schools have been selected to participate in an in-school academic support program called Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

Gateway to Technology is a middle school pre-engineering course and part of the nationally recognized Project Lead The Way high school engineering curriculum. Gateway to Technology is activity-oriented and designed to help students in grades six through eight explore math, science and technology. Units of study include Design and Modeling, Automation and Robotics, The Magic of Electronics, The Science of Technology, and Flight and Space. The course focus is on showing, not telling, students how to use engineering skills to solve everyday problems and to help students build stronger math, science and technology inquiry skills.

The Magic Planet is a digital video globe and projection device that allows students to view and explore dynamic digital media of the earth. The Magic Planet, along with teacher lessons, helps to improve the way students understand and apply concepts to global systems. Magic Planet explores climate, geologic history, the biosphere and many more earth related concepts. It is being piloted at four elementary schools this school year. They are William B. Wade, Walter J. Mitchell, Malcolm and Berry elementary schools.

Middle schools are adding Algebraic Thinking, which presents math concepts using manipulatives, pictorial representations and algorithms to help students develop a better understanding of concepts and math. Earlier this month, classroom teachers received five days of training to familiarize them with the course and teaching techniques.



**Maurice J. McDonough High School social studies teacher Jimmie Swain, pictured above, prepares paperwork in his classroom on Tuesday, Aug. 18, the first day back for teachers of the 2009-10 school year. CCPS opened for the new school year on Monday, Aug. 24.**

Three schools, General Smallwood Middle School, and Westlake and Henry E. Lackey high schools, are adding AVID to help prepare students for college eligibility and success. AVID places academically average students in advanced classes and is part of the school system's continuing efforts to eliminate achievement gaps for minority, rural, low income and other students without a college-going tradition in their families. Team members at each school received one week of training this summer to implement the program and to incorporate AVID methods throughout the school.

**H1N1 preparations**

Letters were sent home this week with all students to update parents on preparations for the H1N1 virus, as well as announcing the availability of flu mist for seasonal flu. In October, the Charles County Department of Health will offer flu mist in all elementary schools for students

with parental permission.

School-aged children are most susceptible to the H1N1 virus because they have not been exposed to seasonal flu vaccines as often as adults. Last school year, an outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus caused several Maryland schools to close for a short time; however, no Charles County schools were closed. Health officials have said schools and counties should prepare for a potentially severe outbreak this school year. No plans are being made to close schools, but plans are being made to isolate sick children and to limit exposure and the spread of germs through education of proper hand washing and respiratory etiquette.

**Board agenda - September 8**

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Sept. 8 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. The public portion of the meeting begins at 1 p.m. The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and rebroadcast throughout the week. All Board meetings are also streamed live on the school system Web site at [www2.ccboe.com/boe/live/](http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/live/).

**Executive session** – 12 p.m.

**Call to order** – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Superintendent's update to the Board**

**Reports of officers/boards/committees**

- Correspondence/Board member updates

- Education Association of Charles County update

- Student Board member update:

- Opening of school

- Fall sports update

- CIP update

- FY2009 Comprehensive Maintenance Plan

- Update on high school security cameras

- Integration of history and science fair content

- Staffing update

- Record retention policy

**Unfinished Business**

**New business and future agenda items**

- New business

- FY2009 intercategory budget transfer

- Future agenda items

**Recognition**- 4:30 p.m.

- Resolution: Health Careers Month

- Taste of America North Point High School students, staff

**Public Forum** – 6 p.m.

**Action items**

- Minutes

- Personnel

- State 2010 CIP

- Recurring Resolutions

**Adjournment**

## 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

**Instructional Assistant** – F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 28.

**Technology Facilitator** – Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 28.

**Student Data Accounting Clerk** – Location to be determined, 11-month position. Apply by Sept. 1.

**Special Education Instructional Assistant, Inclusion** – Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position. Apply by Sept. 2.

**Food Service Worker** – Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, 5-hour, 10-month position. Apply by Sept. 3.

**Inclusion Support Resource Teacher** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position. Apply by Aug. 28.

**Special Education Instructional Specialist** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 11-month position.

**Instructional Specialists** – Future openings at all levels, 11-month positions.

**Gifted Education Resource Teacher** – Middle school level, 10-month position.

**Speech Language Therapist** – Openings at all age levels, 10-month position.

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

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

**Mathematics Teacher** – Mattawoman Middle School, 10-month position.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Special Education Resource Teacher Elementary** – Elementary school level, 10-month, two-year position to support students with disabilities.

**Special Education Resource Teacher Middle** – Middle school level, 10-month, two-year position to support students with disabilities.

**Special Education Teacher for Reading/Language Arts** – Benjamin Stoddert Middle 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 at [www.ccboe.com/staffservices.cfm](http://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).

#### 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.

#### Press release subscriber list

Subscribe to the CCPS press releases subscriber list to receive the latest student and staff accomplishments, and school system information, including inclement weather alerts, directly to your e-mail account. All posts are delivered within minutes. Visit [www.ccboe.com/pr](http://www.ccboe.com/pr) to sign up.

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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.*