

School News



Where success is measured one student at a time • November 6, 2009 • R-329

Students see STEM in action at technology summit

More than 470 Charles County public middle- and high-school students boarded a school bus this past Saturday to learn a little more about careers in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields at the second annual Southern Maryland Youth Technology Summit, hosted by the College of Southern Maryland.

Presenters spoke to students about STEM careers and discussed internship and scholarship opportunities. The event also featured hands-on activities for students, such as flight simulation and remote control robots, and afternoon workshops for participants to learn about rocketry, robotics, and the college application process.

Monique Varlas, instructional specialist for



Bryan Otis, an engineer with the U.S. Naval Air Command, left, shows Henry E. Lackey High School freshman Khalil Hutchison, center, and Piccowaxen Middle School sixth grader Michael Balazek, right, a model airplane at the second annual Youth Technology Summit held Oct. 31 at the College of Southern Maryland.

STEM programs, said Charles County Public Schools became involved in the event to highlight the system's commitment to exposing students to all career possibilities. "There is a large base of private and public sectors that need our students to be informed and excited about STEM careers," Varlas said.

CCPS held an attendance competition among middle and high school stu-

dents and will offer additional funds for school materials to the school with the highest number of attendees. Presenters featured included the Energetics Technology Center, the Naval Surface Warfare Center, the National Security Agency, and Lockheed Martin.

North Point Road Show

Charles County Public Schools is hosting its last Road Show information session for parents and community members. Westlake High School's Road Show is 5:30 – 8 p.m., Nov. 12 at the school. Other participating schools include C. Paul Barnhart, Berry and Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer elementary schools and Mattawoman Middle School.

Possible topics covered include understanding assessment tests, early childhood education readiness, preparing students for rigorous classes, online resources for students, developmental changes at the middle-school level, communication access and school safety.

Door prizes will be handed out and light refreshments will be served. Babysitting services for children ages 3 and older will be provided free-of-charge. For more information, call 301-934-7245 or your child's school.

Schools/offices closed Nov. 11

Schools and offices are closed on Wednesday, Nov. 11, for Veterans Day.

Schools celebrate freedom

Charles County Public Schools is celebrating American Freedom Week Nov. 9-13. Schools will be hosting different events throughout the week to honor the United States, patriotism, freedom and members of the armed forces.

Stone celebrates the big "40"

Thomas Stone High School is celebrating its 40th anniversary at 11 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 14. Contact Stone Vice Principal Michael Meiser, mlmeiser@ccboe.com, for more information or to RSVP.

Wade students trick-or-treat at White House with the Obamas



The White House selected William B. Wade Elementary School last week for a special Halloween treat. Wade was given 200 tickets to participate in President Obama's first Halloween celebration. Principal Amy DiSabatino said the White House selected Wade because they wanted a school in a Washington suburb and for its academic record.

Student and family member names were randomly drawn by DiSabatino for the tickets. The White House assigned different visit times and a few students, including Wade fourth-grader Jasmine Brake, pictured left, received their treats from the President.

Notebook

In the mood for the theatre?

Three Charles County public high schools are presenting their fall plays during the first few weeks of November. Maurice J. McDonough High School is presenting "Dracula," this Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6-7, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Nov. 8 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for students and \$7 for student thespians. The show is not intended for young children.

Students will also be hosting "Dracula's Lair," a haunted cemetery in the back of the auditorium, to raise money for Trick or Treat So Kids Can Eat. Dracula's Lair opens 30 minutes before and after each production show time. Entrance fee is \$1 or four cans of non-perishable food items.

La Plata High School will present the comedy "Reckless." Performance dates are Nov. 12-14. Performance time for all three dates is 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and \$4 for thespians.

North Point High School is presenting its fall production, "The Man Who Came to Dinner" on Nov. 12-14. Performance time for all three dates is 7 p.m. Tickets are \$8 for adults, and \$5 for students and senior citizens.

On the cover

Pictured on the cover are employees from General Smallwood Middle School. Pictured, from left, are: Ronnie Swailes, building service manager; Wendie Newcamp, gifted education resource teacher; Yvette Motley, instructional specialist; and Justin Presley, music teacher, and band and strings director.



Mary H. Matula Elementary School fourth grader Marco Frederico, pictured above, selected the book "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" for his project and modeled his pumpkin after the Potter, the main character.

Matula students get creative with books and pumpkins

Fourth graders at Mary H. Matula Elementary School got a chance to celebrate reading and literacy with glue, paint, glitter and a pumpkin the week of Oct. 26 as part of the school's fifth annual Character Trait Pumpkin Project. The project requires students to pick and read a book of their choice, and then select a main character to model a pumpkin after.

Student pumpkins were on display in the library and cafeteria, and were featured as part of the school's "Fall Festival" held

Oct. 30 for parents, students and the Matula community. Popular choices this year included the characters Bella and Edward from the "Twilight" series, the "Cat in the Hat" from the Dr. Seuss series, and Ramona from the "Beverly Cleary" series.

Barbara Simmons, a fourth-grade teacher at Matula, said the idea behind the project is for students to have a fun and creative way to practice reading skills. Parent volunteers were also on hand to help students complete their pumpkins.

Board agenda - November 10

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 10 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 Public Forum is at 6 p.m. The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and rebroadcast throughout the week. All televised Board meetings are also streamed live on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/live/>.

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
- Enrollment

- CIP update
- Civics Mosaic program/Russian visit
- Communications update

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

- New business
 - 2010 Legislative Issues Packet
 - Contract award approval for Dr. Brown Elementary School full-day kindergarten addition
- Future agenda items

Recognition – 4:30 p.m.

- Students
- Staff
- Recognition from American Cancer Society - Relay for Life

Public Forum – 6 p.m.

Action items

- Minutes
- Personnel

Adjournment

Winter weather can affect school schedule

Who reports to work and at what time when schools close?

If weather conditions pose a potential hazard, school officials may dismiss early, delay opening schools or close schools for the day. If no announcement is made, schools open at regularly scheduled hours and all employees are expected to arrive at work on time.

The chart below explains the code system for employees. Please note that teachers and instructional assistants follow the student schedule and do not follow inclement weather codes.

Delayed openings and early dismissals

A delayed opening applies only to schools. All administrative office personnel report at their normal starting time unless a code accompanies the delay notification (see chart). All non-teaching personnel are expected to work for the full business day unless an announcement is made. If an employee is unable to arrive on time or needs to leave early, he or she must contact his or her immediate supervisor and submit a leave slip.

How to stay updated

Employees should call the 24-hour information line, 301-934-7410 or 301-932-6656, to determine whether they must report to work. Employees may also check their voicemail. An announcement is placed on every employee's voicemail extension. Employee information is also provided to radio and television stations listed on page 10 of the Parent Handbook/Calendar; however, the stations do not always run the employee codes.

E-mail notification available

Employees and parents of Charles County Public Schools students can be notified by e-mail when inclement weather or other events cause unscheduled delays, early dismissals or closings. Those interested can log on to www.schools-out.com and register to receive automatic e-mails whenever a change to the regular

school schedule occurs. Parents and students can also log on the site at any time to check the latest status for all schools. Parents and staff can also sign up for the Charles County Public Schools press release subscriber list to receive an additional e-mail notification.

Visit www.ccboe.com/pr to subscribe to the service.

Weather alerts are posted under the press releases section within minutes of a decision being made.

How decisions are made

The school system's transportation department monitors road conditions and weather reports; school employees regularly contact the state and county roads department, Charles County Sheriff's Office, Maryland State Police and the National Weather Service for assessments of roads and weather.

Every effort is made to make the decision to close or delay the opening of schools by 5 a.m. and, when possible, earlier. Once that decision is made, school officials place the information on the 24-hour information line, and the CCPS Web site, as well as notify the Washington metropolitan area radio and television stations. If it is necessary to close schools during the day, local radio and television stations are notified and asked to make the announcements, usually by 10:30 a.m., and the announcement is also placed on the Web site, Channel 96 and the 24-hour information line.

No announcements are made when schools are open.



What happens when the weather is bad?

Codes	Who reports to work	When	Exceptions
Code 1	All personnel report	1 hour late	Emergency personnel on time*
Code 2	All personnel report	2 hours late	Emergency personnel on time*
Code Red	Only Emergency personnel*	On time	
No code/ Schools closed	10.5-, 11- and 12-month personnel	On time	

**** Please note that teachers and instructional assistants follow the student schedule and do NOT follow weather codes, except for on days when schools are closed for students and teachers are scheduled to report to work.**

*If emergency personnel are unable to report to work on time, they must submit a leave slip. Emergency personnel include operations supervisory staff, building service managers, assistant building service managers, building service workers, maintenance supervisory staff, all maintenance staff, security personnel and transportation supervisory staff.

*10.5 and 11-month employees are expected to fulfill their contract days at the discretion of their supervisor. If they do not report to work and take liberal leave, they must submit a leave slip.

Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.ccboe.com/hur. Positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job openings

Building Service Worker – Maurice J. McDonough High School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 17

Building Service Assistant Manager – Thomas Stone High School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 17.

Human Resources Receptionist – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 10.

Special Education Teacher of the Emotionally Disturbed – F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 10-month position.

Title I Instructional Specialist for Technology – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 11-month position. A minimum of five years teaching at the elementary level is required, with three years of teaching with technology preferred.

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

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

Special Education Resource Room Teacher – Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, 10-month position.

High School Instructional Resource Teacher – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position.

English Teacher – Westlake High School, 10-month position.

Library and Media Specialists – Openings at Theodore G. Davis Middle School and at the elementary level; 10-month positions.

Life Skills Teacher – Piccowaxen Middle School, 10-month position.

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

Special Education Teacher for Science – Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 10-month position.

Special Education Teacher for Social Studies – Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 10-month position.

Special Education Teacher – Westlake High School, 10-month position.

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

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

Extra Pay Position

Thomas Stone High School has the following opening:

- Assistant Wrestling Coach

Contact Principal Larry Martin, 301-753-1756, for details.

Staff notes

Stoddert teacher receives science grant

Jennifer L. Davis, a science teacher at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, was recently selected as a 2009 Science Tools Grant award recipient by the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA).

Davis will receive \$250 to use toward lab supplies for the Stoddert science department and for students to use in a guided, in-class group science project. She will receive the grant next month at a ceremony hosted by the Southern Maryland AFCEA chapter.

The Science Tools Grant program is a joint effort between individual AFCEA Chapters and the Educational Foundation to promote effective science teaching and to enhance the abilities of capable STEM teachers in K-12 schools worldwide.

Airing this weekend on NewsBreak 96

Airing this Friday is a new episode of NewsBreak 96, a monthly show produced by the communications department that highlights school system events. This episode features the Adult Education graduation, the recent Youth Technology Summit and noteworthy calendar events. The show airs on Comcast Channel 96, and is available as a video on demand on the CCPS Web site at www2.ccboe.com/publicinfo/channel96/vod/.

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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.