

# School News



## Important Dates Coming Soon

### Spring forward

Daylight saving time is Sunday, March 13. Remember to turn your clocks forward one hour. The first day of spring is Sunday, March 20.

### MSA testing is coming

Students in grades three through eight will take the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) in mathematics on Tuesday, March 8, and Wednesday, March 9. The MSA reading test will be administered to students on Tuesday, March 15, and Wednesday, March 16.

### Science projects abound

Check out the county's youngest scientists at the annual Charles County Public Schools Science Fair, March 4-5, at La Plata High School. Students drop off their projects on March 4, and judging and an awards ceremony will be held March 5.

### In the mood for a show?

Thomas Stone High School is presenting their annual spring play "Annie," at 7:30 p.m., March 31, and April 1-2. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for students. Employees can receive two free tickets by showing their school system identification badge.

### Youth Art Month

Charles County Public Schools celebrates Youth Art Month in March. Student artists will be honored during a March 10 reception at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. The reception starts at 5 p.m.

### Reaching the 3rd quarter

Charles County Public Schools third-quarter assessments will be administered to students March 14-25. The third marking period ends on Thursday, March 31.

## Richmond earns prestigious national space award

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Superintendent James E. Richmond is the 2011 winner of the National Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award.

Named for Mercury Astronaut Alan Shepard, the award recognizes outstanding contributions to technology education by kindergarten through grade 12 educators or administrators. The Astronauts Memorial Foundation (AMF) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) selected Richmond as the 2011 winner. Richmond receives the award, which will be presented by AMF, NASA and the National Space Foundation, during the opening ceremony of the 27th National Space Symposium on April 11 in Colorado Springs.

"A long-time advocate for STEM education, James Richmond has made a lasting impact on tens of thousands of students," said Dr. Stephen Feldman, president and CEO of the Astronauts Memorial Foundation, which administers the award. "And, through the programs he has created, he is helping to develop a future workforce of scientists and engineers."

Board of Education Chairman Roberta Wise nominated Richmond for the award and described the superintendent as "an educational pioneer who began a journey into space education while developing plans for the county's seventh high school. ... As head of a school system in a community that houses a Naval Surface Warfare Center but has a graying population of scientists and engineers, he responded to concerns about the future of the engineering workforce by creating partnerships with the engineering community and by enhancing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs to encourage today's children to fill tomorrow's void in the workplace."

During the past decade, Richmond has

launched multiple programs to help students excel in STEM. During Richmond's tenure as superintendent, the school system has been able to take advantage of its proximity to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Andrews Air Force Base and the Patuxent River Naval Base to develop compelling and real-life-based technology programs for students. Additionally, CCPS has worked closely with the Space Foundation to bring space-related STEM programs to teachers and students.



**Superintendent  
James E. Richmond**

Programs initiated under Richmond include:

- Project Lead the Way, an aerospace engineering-themed course, in CCPS high schools;
- Gateway to Technology, which includes a new flight and space curriculum, in CCPS middle schools;
- STEM curriculum written by the NASA Dryden Flight Research Center;
- Space Foundation Space Across the Curriculum professional development courses for CCPS teachers of all grade levels;
- Telepresence distance learning technology for live exchanges among students and aerospace scientists and engineers around the world;
- "Magic Planet," a device that allows teachers to use real-time NASA data to create three-dimensional videos that depict scientific phenomenon; and
- The Team America Rocket Challenge, an international program to involve students in aerospace engineering.

Richmond's significant accomplishments include:

- Securing federal grants to add digital technology to classrooms;
- Involving all of the district's 35 schools in the MESA (Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement) program since 2007;
- Developing productive partnerships

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**On the cover**

Pictured on the cover are employees who were honored by the Board of Education Feb. 8. Pictured, from left, are: Ronald Fry, ROTC instructor, La Plata High School; Susan Adriani, home and hospital services teacher, Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; and Matthew Werner, special education teacher, F.B. Gwynn Educational Center.

**SECAC to meet March 16**

The Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) will meet on Wednesday, March 16, starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Board room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Contact the parent center, 301-934-7456, for more information.

**Educational Showcase**

Charles County Public Schools is hosting its first Educational Showcase on Saturday, April 2, at North Point High School. The event begins at 10 a.m. and will feature educational presentations on a variety of topics ranging from information on the early childhood education program and bullying prevention to an Edline system and advanced placement curriculum overview. Entertainment will also be provided by student performers, such as school bands, choirs and Destination Imagination teams, and children in attendance can participate in story time with guest readers or have their face painted by honor society students.

Guests in attendance will receive a gift bag with special items and will have the opportunity to choose from more than 40 presentations that feature interesting and popular topics for elementary, middle and high school students, as well as general sessions targeted for students of all ages. Additionally, each school will maintain a booth to provide attendees with specific school-related information from parental involvement opportunities to extra-curricular activities available for students.

The event will showcase all of the opportunities that Charles County Public Schools offers students, parents, staff and the Charles County community. There will be something of interest for all ages! Visit [http://www2.ccoeb.com/educational\\_showcase.cfm](http://www2.ccoeb.com/educational_showcase.cfm) for more information.

**Lackey teacher leads the way for engineering**

Henry E. Lackey High School's John Crawford went from rubbing elbows with astronauts at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Langley Research Center to guiding students through engineering projects in the classroom. As a mechanical engineer turned teacher, Crawford transitioned from the field of engineering to teaching in order to show children how exciting learning about mathematics, science and engineering is, and to have a more rewarding career.

Since he began his career with Charles County Public Schools in 2005 as a mathematics teacher, Crawford has been instrumental in developing the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum at Lackey. Crawford, along with Jonathan Liston, who also teaches at Lackey, focused on expanding the growth of the program to entice more students to learn about engineering. Over the past five years, the PLTW program at Lackey has evolved from 20 students in 2005 to more than 120 students enrolled in courses last year. Crawford said the courses have been successful in teaching students about opportunities after high school.

"More than 95 percent of the students that complete the PLTW engineering program at Lackey go on to college, with the majority of them attending college for some field of engineering," Crawford said.

Crawford has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and a master's in aerospace/mechanical engineering. He is also a PLTW Core Training Institute master teacher. For the past three years, Crawford

has worked with other teachers to instruct them in how to implement the PLTW principles of engineering curriculum into their classrooms. He first taught in 2009 at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), which is the affiliate program in charge of certification for Maryland PLTW schools. He also taught a special session for teachers in Montgomery County Public Schools and most recently in 2010 at Duke University.



**John Crawford**

Crawford is one of 22 Charles County Public Schools teachers who are certified to teach PLTW courses. Five Charles County public high schools offer the program, with La Plata, Westlake and Thomas Stone high schools launching it this school year. Lackey, as well as Maurice J. McDonough High School, is a certified PLTW school. The certification process includes a self-assessment; a site visit and a final certification report. Lackey was the first high school in Charles County to fully implement the program.

"At Lackey, I am very proud that we are the first school in Charles County to have established the complete PLTW program. Students really respond to the curriculum because it is challenging, but also a fun way to learn. It is also really fun to teach for the same reasons," Crawford said.

Space Foundation CEO Elliot Pulham. "He is also a good friend of the Space Foundation and an extraordinary educator."

Because CCPS has an educational partnership with the Space Foundation, Pulham said the Space Foundation excused itself from voting when Richmond's nomination advanced to mitigate any perception of a conflict of interest. The other members of the selection committee elected Richmond unanimously. The Astronauts Memorial Foundation sponsors Richmond's trip to Colorado Springs to accept the award.

**Shepard award**

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with a wide range of space industry, military, government and educational institutions and individual scientists to support and supplement CCPS school programs; and

- Including a digital classroom/planetarium with aerospace programming and "Science on a Sphere" for use by students throughout the district in the new St. Charles High School, which is scheduled to open in 2013.

"Jim Richmond is a vocal champion for STEM and for using space themes to engage students in technology subjects," said



**Read Across Charles County**

Teachers and students visited storyville on Tuesday, March 1 to celebrate Read Across Charles County. Guest readers, green eggs and ham and plenty of costumes and special events highlighted the annual celebration. Pictured, clockwise starting with the upper left photograph, are: Alexandria Jenkins, Theresa Benton and Grace Bowie, fourth graders at Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School; Jenifer's first-grade team, pictured from left, Kristi Vliet, Sapna Vachhani, Kathleen Stafford and Lauren Washington; Henry E. Lackey High School junior Paris Walton and Gale-Bailey Elementary School first grader Tristan Hunt; Iyssis Johnson and Austin Velez, first graders from Gale-Bailey; Diane Padgett, kindergarten assistant, and John T. Fowler Plaza, kindergartner at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School; the T.C. Martin Elementary School kindergarten team, from left, Sarah Cavegn, Sue Childers, Catherine Stoner, Carol Briscoe, Elizabeth Schmitt, Amy Campbell, Stacey Olson and Kristina Lacey, dressed as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs; T.C. Martin Vice Principal Caroline Timmons as the "Grouchy Ladybug" and Linda Dade, special education instructional assistant, dressed as "Tigger"/the T.C. Martin tiger; and Martin first grader Juliana Harris dressed as Dora the Explorer from the book "When I Grow Up."



## Board of Education announces March 8 board agenda



The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, March 8, 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 student and staff recognition starts at 4:30 p.m. The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12 and is rebroadcast throughout the week. The meeting is also streamed live on the Charles County Public Schools Web site. Visit <http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/live/> to watch the meeting.

- Maryland Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning Survey (TELL) and athletic eligibility
- CIP update
- Mathematics programs and Charles County Public Schools Educational Showcase

- School calendar 2012-2013
- Legislative update

### Unfinished business

### New business and future agenda items

- New business
- Future agenda items
- Recognition** – 4:30 p.m.
- Students
- Employees
- Daniel Meltsner, Charles County's Outstanding Educator for Use of Technology
- Resolutions: *Month of the Young Child and National Student Leadership Week*

### Public Forum – 6 p.m.

### Action items

- Minutes
- Personnel

### Adjournment

### Executive session – 12 p.m.

### Call to order – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance, North Point High School's JROTC unit

### Superintendent's update

### Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Legislative audit report, pupil transportation follow up
- Correspondence/Board Member updates
  - Maryland Commission on Education Effectiveness
- Education Association of Charles County update
- Student Board Member update

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### Board of Education Members

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## Personnel

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

**Special Education Teacher for Inclusion and Resource** – Arthur Middleton Elementary School, 10-month position.

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

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

**HVAC Teacher** – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position.

**Instructional Resource Teacher, Middle School Level** – Location to be determined, 11-month position.

**Family and Consumer Science Teacher** – Westlake High School, 10-month position.

**Speech Language Therapist** – Elementary

school level, 10-month position.

**Coordinator of Middle School Instruction** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree, a minimum of five years successful teaching experience, and experience in leadership roles are required.

**Principals** – Seeking applicants at all age levels, 12-month positions. Five years of experience with a minimum of three years in the classroom required. Administrative experience is also preferred. Apply by March 4.

### Staff Notes

#### System participates in national survey

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is participating in a new study that will help school districts improve communication with parents and their school communities. Approximately 100 school districts in the United States and Canada have signed on to participate in the study, which is being

conducted at no cost to CCPS. The research is part of a communication accountability program of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), a non-profit organization dedicated to improving communication in school communities.

The survey firm K12 Insight Inc., is conducting the survey. The survey will be sent by e-mail beginning on Monday, March 7. CCPS provided a confidential list of 3,000 randomly selected e-mail addresses for the purpose of the survey.

All responses are confidential and school system staff will receive the results from the survey in late spring. The results will be used to refine current communication efforts and improve their effectiveness. The complete results from the 100 school districts will be announced in July by NSPRA and no identification will be given to individual school systems.