



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

New teacher reception

The new teacher reception is 4 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 21, at Middleton Hall in Waldorf. The annual event is sponsored by Charles County Public Schools, the Charles County branch of the NAACP and Nu Zeta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc.

System hosts College Fair

Charles County Public Schools is hosting the 14th annual Charles County College Fair on Wednesday, Sept. 21, at North Point High School. Hours are 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. The public is invited to attend the evening session of the fair and parents are encouraged to bring their children.

Two financial aid workshops will be held, one at 6:15 p.m. and one at 7:15 p.m., for parents and students to learn about the financial aid application process. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call your child's school or 301-934-7314.

Feels like Fall

The first day of autumn is Friday, Sept. 23.

Interim Reports

Interim reports will be issued to students on Monday, Sept. 26.

Airing this week ...

Airing this week on Comcast 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12 is a new episode of Newsbreak 96, produced by the school system's communications department. This episode salutes 9/11 survivors and families of those who lost loved ones that day, and highlights the upcoming Mock Trial season and a technology-based scavenger hunt. Visit the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/publicinfo/channel96/> for programming schedules and show times.



Benjamin Stoddert Middle School mathematics teacher Sean Anderson, seated center, volunteers for a demonstration on Monday, Sept. 12, during a science, technology, engineering and mathematics program called "FMA Live!" Program performers JJ Jones, Christy Nicholle and Eric Olson plunged Anderson face first into a pie while demonstrating gravity, inertia and motion. See page 3 for a complete story on the program.

Make-up time includes one contract day

Student make-up days for school missed the first two weeks of school have been determined, but Superintendent James E. Richmond must still decide how teachers and other employees who follow the teacher schedule will make up for missed time.

The Board of Education approved a change in the student calendar that provides for make-up days on Sept. 16, Oct. 21 and Nov. 2. The change provides one make-up day for teachers, who were scheduled to be off on Oct. 21 for the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) conference. The other two days, Sept. 16 and Nov. 2 were already included in the 189 contract days for teachers, and therefore do not provide relief from time missed.

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Keith Hettel said the Superintendent would work with his executive staff and the Education Association of Charles County (EACC) to determine when the two other workdays can be added. Employees who follow the code system – mostly 12-month employees – were required to report to work all three days and do not have days to make

up to fulfill their contracts.

Schools were closed Aug. 29, Sept. 8 and Sept. 9 due to flooding, impassable roads and other damages caused by heavy storms in Charles County. The days off had depleted three of four days built into the calendar for emergency use. State law requires that a school district hold school for 180 days a year.

Calendar Changes

- Schools will be open Friday, Sept. 16 for a full day.
- The first day of school for prekindergarten students has been changed to Monday, Sept. 19.
- Schools will be open for a full day on Oct. 21.
- Schools will operate on a two-hour early dismissal schedule on Nov. 2.

Ford selected for national school advocacy group

Dr. Sonya Ford, school counselor at North Point High School, was recently selected by the College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) Advisory Team. She is one of 25 nationwide school counselors selected to serve on the team, which promotes the value of school counselors as leaders in school reform, student achievement and college readiness.



Sonia Ford

Ford was recommended for selection to the team for her school counseling experience and for assisting in statewide presentations and workshops. She has also held several leadership roles on the Executive Board of the Maryland School Counselor Association (MSCA) and is currently the Online Communications Chair. In 2004, the NOSCA created the Advisory Team to help advance academics for students and support school counselors nationwide.

As a member of the Advisory Team, Ford will serve a three-year term and will work with practicing school counselors and district counseling directors in strategic planning focused on professional develop-

ment for school counselors and targeting areas for research. Ford said she was elated by her selection to a national group focused on advocating for school counseling.

"I am honored to represent school counselors and the important work we do to make a difference in the lives of the students we serve," she said. Ford began her career with Charles County Public Schools in 2008 at North Point and was a 2011 nominee for the American School Counselor Association's School Counselor of the Year award. Prior to working at North Point, Ford held school counseling positions in both Howard and Prince George's counties.

In addition to serving on the NOSCA advisory team and her role as a school counselor at North Point, Ford is a faculty member of the School of Education at the American Public University and the College of Social and Behavioral Science at Walden University. She is also one of 17 Charles County Public Schools counselors who are nationally certified by the National Board for Certified Counselors.

Advanced Placement, SAT participation increases

Charles County students increased participation in Advanced Placement (AP) and SAT assessment participation, according to data released this week by the College Board, which administers AP, SAT and other national programs.

Charles County Public Schools average score on AP exams rose slightly to 2.14 from 2.13 in 2010. Nearly 89 percent of all students taking the rigorous AP classes took at least one test in 2011. "Taking Advanced Placement classes in high school better prepares our students for future study and success," Superintendent James E. Richmond said.

While the number of students taking the SAT increased, average scores decreased. Scores for the class of 2011 were 1455, down from 1486 in 2010. National and state averages also declined. Average participation countywide is 39 percent, up from 35.7 percent in 2010.

Students' average score on the critical

reading section is 494; math scores are 488 and writing scores are 473. 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. Only scores for graduating seniors are included in the 2011 report. Students in the Class of 2011 were offered nearly \$40 million in scholarships.

La Plata High School students averaged 1672, with 26.4 percent of graduates taking the SAT in 2011. Westlake High School students posted a 1492 average, with 18.5 percent participation. Both North Point High School and Henry E. Lackey High School students averaged 1445. North Point had 62.9 percent of its graduates taking the SAT and Lackey had 30 percent. Maurice J. McDonough High School's average is 1415 with 34.8 percent participation and Thomas Stone High School students averaged 1377 with 47 percent participation.



On the cover

Pictured on the cover are four Charles County Public Schools bus drivers. Pictured, from left, are: Nolan Woodland, Carolyn Foote, Jessica Clark and William Fraser.

EACC Crab Feast

The Education Association of Charles County's (EACC) annual crab feast is 3:30 to 8 p.m., Friday, Oct. 7, at the Charles County Fairgrounds. Tickets for teachers and retirees are \$25; tickets for new teachers are \$5. Attendees must have their Charles County Public Schools identification badge with them upon entering the gates. Attendees can also bring one guest, but must purchase a guest ticket for \$25. Tickets can only be purchased on the EACC Web site at www.teameacc.org. They will not be sold at the gate. The deadline to purchase tickets is Oct. 1. Call 301-392-0150 with questions or for more information.

Adult Education open house

The Adult Education Program at the Life-long Learning Center is holding an open house from 6 to 8 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 5. The event is open to the public and attendees can learn about available programs and services including the GED program, English as a Second Language, citizenship courses and the National External Diploma Program. Call 301-753-1774 for more information.

Board work session

The Board of Education of Charles County is holding a work session at 6 p.m., Monday, Sept. 26, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. The meeting will be aired live on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12, and streamed live on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/live/>. The agenda is as follows:

Call to order – 6 p.m.

- Pledge of Allegiance

Public Forum

Work session

- Goals

Adjournment

Board meetings are also available as videos on demand on the CCPS Web site. Visit <http://www2.ccboe.com/publicinfo/channel96/>.

Stoddert students learn about motion through hip-hop education program

On Monday, Sept. 12, students at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School learned how to look at scientific concepts such as motion, gravity and force by participating in a hip-hop dance based education program. The program, called “FMA Live!,” features actors, music and demonstrations that teaches Sir Isaac Newton’s laws of motion and the process of scientific inquiry.



Kevin Wassie, a language arts teacher at Stoddert, prepares to Sumo wrestle math teacher Zachary Ortolano during a STEM program .

Two sessions featuring the program were held in order to allow all students to attend the performance. Included in the program were three hands-on demonstrations in which a group of 10 students – five for the first performance and five for the second performance – were randomly selected to help demonstrate. A group of teachers also agreed to participate to make the event more exciting for students.

The first exercise demonstrated inertia, motion and gravity. During the second session, Stoddert eighth-graders Quinton Hutchinson and Roman Morgan

were dressed in jumpsuits covered in Velcro and competed against one another in jumping onto a foam pad to see who could jump the highest and stick to the pad. Students cheered for their classmates while the FMA performers – Eric Olson, Christy Nicholle and John “JJ” Jones – discussed how the exercise related to the concept of inertia.

The second exercise during the second performance featured eighth grader Elizabeth Hughley, who was tasked with kicking a soccer ball into a goal to demonstrate force and its relationship to mass and acceleration. Also included in the exercise were Stoddert teachers Kevin Wassie and Zachary Ortolano, who dressed up as Sumo wrestlers and held a one-on-one wrestling match to show how the

force of one object affects another object. Students cheered as the teachers battled it out on stage and knocked each other over in the Sumo suits.

To demonstrate Newton’s concept that every action causes an equal or opposite reaction, eighth-graders Dymond Hamlin and Casey Hoey got to race against each other in steam-powered cars attached to a bungee cord. As they progressed across the stage, the student drivers were pulled back by one of the FMA performers who used the cords attached to the cars to cause their cars to move backwards. Victoria Farrell, a science teacher at Stoddert, said although the scientific concepts featured in the program are usually taught to eighth graders, all students walked away with an easier way to remember them.

Before the program ended, a fourth and final demonstration focusing on all three concepts was demonstrated with the assistance of Stoddert math teacher Sean Anderson. Anderson was seated in a hydraulic chair that was powered across the stage by inertia, force and gravity, and was pushed into a large whipped-cream pie. Afterwards, the FMA performers quizzed Anderson and the students about what they learned during the program.

The program is part of Honeywell’s education initiatives focused on inspiring young people to study STEM-related subjects and career paths. Farrell coordinated the event for the school, which was one of 21 nationwide middle schools selected to feature the program this year. The program was created by Honeywell and NASA in 2004 and has been featured in more than 690 middle schools nationwide.



Stoddert math teacher Zachary Ortolano prepares to Sumo wrestle teacher Kevin Wassie as part of a demonstration during a STEM program at the school.



CCPS television station features original programming, student anchors

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has two educational television channels, Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12. The channels feature educational programming ranging from foreign language and financial literacy programs, to mathematics and science lessons for students. The channels are managed by the school system’s communications department and feature original programming that highlights students and staff in action, as well as events happening in the school system. The stations are also used to broadcast live Board of Education meetings and rebroadcasts these meetings to keep the public informed on the school system.

Original programming for both stations includes NewsBreak 96, a bi-weekly show that highlights school system events, programs, students, staff and successes. All episodes are anchored by student representatives from county high schools. Anchors for the 2011-12 school year are: Brittany Drawdy, senior, Maurice J. McDonough High School; Austin Gore, junior, La Plata High School; Ina Reyes,

junior, La Plata; Annabel Russell, senior, Westlake High School; Murugi Thande, senior, North Point High School; and Ciara Wade, senior, Thomas Stone High School.

The station also broadcasts On Air, a monthly show that highlights 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 the system operates.

The channels are provided free to the school system through a franchise agreement with the Charles County government. If you have an idea for the television station, contact Katie O’Malley-Simpson, director of communications, at komalley@ccboe.com, or Kyle Graves, video production specialist, at kgraves@ccboe.com. Programming schedules are available on the school system Web site at www.ccboe.com.

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Nominate a teacher for Post's Agnes Meyer award

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is accepting nominations for the *Washington Post's* 2012 Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award. The annual award honors exemplary teachers who demonstrate excellence in teaching and outstanding leadership, encourage creative and quality instruction, and contribute in a substantive way to the improvement of education.

Nominees must be full-time teachers in grades prekindergarten through 12 and have a minimum of five years teaching experience. Three of those years must have been with Charles County Public Schools. Teachers, students, former students, administrators or community members may submit nominations. Teachers may not nominate themselves. Nominees must also maintain their teaching position throughout the 2012-13 school year.

Nomination materials must include a minimum of four statements of support, one of which must be from a professional educator; a career summary; a description of contributions in each of the nomination criteria categories, and two color photographs submitted both on a disc and printed out, and must include a headshot of the nominee and a photo of the nominee in the classroom.

Nominees must be teachers who:

- instill a desire in students to learn and achieve;
- understand the individual needs of students,

encourage their talents and foster their self-esteem;

- demonstrate a thorough knowledge of subject matter and the ability to share it effectively with students;

- foster cooperative relationships with their colleagues and the community;

- demonstrate outstanding leadership; and

- maintain their teaching position throughout the 2012-13 school year.

Charles County's Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award recipient will be one of 21 recognized by the *Post* from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

Nominations packets are due Friday, Jan. 13. Materials should be sent to Jeanette Sudik, Division of Human Resources, Charles County Public Schools, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, Md., 20646. Nominations must include the cover page, which is linked to the school system's Web site at http://www2.ccboc.com/employment/emp_rec.cfm.

Award recipients will be recognized and awarded \$3,000 at a ceremony in May.

The *Post* established the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Awards in honor of Agnes Meyer, a supporter of public education who was the wife of Eugene Meyer, who purchased the *Post* in 1933.

Staff notes

Job Openings

Inclusion Resource Teacher – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position. Apply by Sept. 16.

Building Service Manager – Berry Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Sept. 20.

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

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

New Teacher Mentors – Openings at county middle and high schools, 10-month positions.

Teacher for the Emotionally Impaired – F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 10-month position.

Supervising School Counselor – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree in school counseling and a minimum of five years of experience required.

Title I Instructional Specialist – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree and a minimum of five years experience required.

Instructional Resource Teachers – Openings at county elementary schools, 11-month positions. Master's degree and a minimum of five years experience required.

School Counselor – Mary B. Neal Elementary School, 10-month, part-time position. Master's degree in guidance and counseling and a minimum of five years experience required.

Staff Notes

Retirement session

The Charles County Retired School Personnel Association and division of human resources are hosting a retirement planning session on Thursday, Oct. 13, from 5 to 8:30 p.m. in the Board room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. The session will include guest speakers and retirement plan-

ning handouts. Light refreshments will also be available. An RSVP is required as space is limited. RSVP to Janice Spatz, 301-934-2146 or jspatz@comcast.net.

North Point childcare openings

The North Point High School Early Childhood Training Center has openings for children ages 2-5 for the 2011-12 school year. The openings are full-time only, and the center is open from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Contact 301-753-1759, ext. 159113, or 301-302-8306 for more information or with questions.

Turner hosting ribbon ceremony

Eva Turner Elementary School is hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony at 1:15 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 29, to celebrate the opening of the school's new wing. Light refreshments will be available. If you plan to attend, RSVP to Amy Willett at 301-645-4828 or ajwillett@ccboc.com by Sept. 22.