



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Calendar changes

Schools are open on Oct. 21 to make up for instructional time lost earlier this school year due to inclement weather. This was previously scheduled as a day off for both teachers and students. The next two-hour early dismissal days for students are Wednesday Oct. 26 and Tuesday, Nov. 2.

American Freedom Week

The Board of Education declared Nov. 7-11 as American Freedom Week in Charles County Public Schools. Schools will recognize special days that commemorate American freedoms as well as those who have lost their lives and those who serve to preserve our liberty. Special activities will be held to honor veterans and celebrate patriotism.

First marking period ends

The first marking period ends Wednesday, Nov. 2, and the second marking period begins on Thursday, Nov. 3. This is a change from what is listed in the Parent Handbook-Calendar, and reflects the addition of Nov. 2 as a school day for students. Report cards will be issued to elementary students and mailed to middle and high school students on Wednesday, Nov. 9.

New administrators

The Board of Education on Oct. 11 approved three administrative appointments. Michael Heim, vice principal at North Point High School, has been assigned as the assistant in transportation. He fills the position left vacant when Richard Wesolowski was appointed this summer as director of transportation.

Alicia Jones, counselor at William A. Diggs Elementary School, has been appointed as the supervising counselor for the school system. Brian McCarthy, an English teacher at La Plata High School, has been appointed as a vice principal at North Point.



J.C. Parks Elementary School Principal Thadine Wright, right, sits with two new second-grade teachers, Stacy Miller, left, and Kristen Brown, middle, at the new teacher reception held at Middleton Hall in September.

New teachers adjust to jobs, schools, community

Shanita Smalls is starting her tenth year of teaching, but she says it feels like her first one all over again. Smalls, a special education teacher in the emotional adjustment program at Mary H. Matula Elementary School, is starting over this year as one of 151 new teachers hired by Charles County Public Schools (CCPS).

Smalls is one of 23 new special education teachers who join 27 elementary, 61 secondary, 32 related arts, two school counselors and six instructional resources staff hired to fill vacancies created by resignations and retirements. "Thus far the transition has gone smoothly. There is a lot to learn and I am fortunate to be working with a staff of people who are willing to help and answer questions," said Smalls, who previously worked with high school students in New York City.

New hires were down from 170 last school year, but the Human Resources Division continues to recruit heavily for highly qualified teachers. Staff members spoke with 2,326 candidates and conducted 695 screening interviews at 41 university and regional teacher job fairs in 11 states, said Sean McDonald, human resources specialist, during a presentation to the Board of Education.

Jamie Gateau, a fifth-grade teacher at Mary B. Neal Elementary School, is one of 80 first-year teachers hired. Slightly more

New teacher hires	
Elementary Teachers	27
Secondary Teachers	61
Related Arts Teachers	32
Special Education Teachers (and related service providers)	23
School Counselors	2
Instructional Resource Staff	6
Total New Hires	151

than half of all new hires are first-year teachers, a statistic, according to McDonald, that mirrors the state and nation. There were 36 new teachers with one-to-five years experience; 16 have six-to-ten years and 19 have 11 or more years of experience. Gateau, a Charles County resident and Thomas Stone High School graduate, is one of 21 new teachers who graduated from a CCPS high school. "I chose this county because this is where I am from," Gateau said.

The highest number of new hires, 73 teachers, are Maryland residents, but McDonald said the school system continues

New teachers, page 3



On the cover

Pictured on the cover are staff members who work in the new primary wing at Eva Turner Elementary School. Pictured from left, are Darleane Lowe, kindergarten teacher; Kathryn McGowan, kindergarten teacher; Meghan Monroe, kindergarten instructional assistant; and Linda Rios, parent liaison.

Direct billing with Notre Dame

Beginning with the 2012 spring semester, Charles County Public Schools will offer certificated staff direct billing with Notre Dame of Maryland University. Teachers enrolled in a master's degree program will be able to request Charles County Public Schools to prepay tuition for course work up to \$2,225 per fiscal year (July 1-June 30) if they are in a Human Resources-approved master's degree program.

It's Academic team advances

North Point High School's *It's Academic* team placed second at a regional competition held Sept. 17 against Gonzaga College High School of Washington and South County Secondary School of Lorton. The event aired on WRC TV (NBC 4) Saturday, Oct. 8. The three-member team consists of Alexander Corbin, Alphonso 'Gaston' Lopez and Keith Nottingham.

Former student wins top award

The National Teacher of the Year Program recognized Jon Rolle, a 2000 graduate of Westlake High School, as the 2011 Washington, D.C. Teacher of the Year. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education chose Rolle based on nominations from students and staff members. Rolle is a third-grade teacher at Friendship Public Charter School's Southeast Academy.

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 highlights stories on what it is like to live in space, how to avoid the flu bug and where to shop for colleges without leaving Charles County. Visit the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccoeb.com/publicinfo/channel96/> for programming schedules and show times.



Thomas Stone High School's JROTC presented colors on Sept. 29 at Eva Turner Elementary School's ribbon-cutting event. Fifth-grade students Nakhyla Ligonde, left, and Michael Bess, right, recite the Pledge of Allegiance with principal Stephanie Nottingham.

Turner celebrates new wing with a ribbon cutting

Eva Turner Elementary inaugurated the opening of its primary wing addition Sept. 29 with an official ribbon cutting.

In a ceremony celebrating the roomy new area that houses prekindergarten and kindergarten, Principal Stephanie Nottingham said the addition replaces space lost when the school system changed from half-day to full-day kindergarten classes. The addition contains approximately 8,387 square feet. Calling it an "imagination center," Nottingham said this is where Turner's youngest students "begin their journey into lifelong learning."

Full-day kindergarten is a state requirement, mandated by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002. The Act required school systems to implement full-day programs by the 2007-08 school year. Eva Turner was one of the first Charles County schools to implement full-day kindergarten, starting in the 2001-02 school year. The school system phased in full-day kindergarten, converting several schools each year.

The construction of additions and renovations began several years ago, with state and county funding commitments to the expansions. At Eva Turner, construction began in the summer of 2010 and was completed in March 2011. Students and teach-

ers moved into the new space at the beginning of this school year.

Already, six other schools have opened new wings, including C. Paul Barnhart, Gale-Bailey, T.C. Martin, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, Dr. Gustavus Brown, and Indian Head elementary schools. Construction is ongoing at Arthur Middleton Elementary School, and additions to William B. Wade and Mary H. Matula elementary schools are in the design phase. Construction funding for Wade and Matula has been deferred to 2015 due a CIP change that diverts Charles County Public Schools construction resources to the new high school.



Kindergarten student Kayla Hill, right, cuts the ribbon with superintendent James E. Richmond, left.

Kathy McGowan, kindergarten teacher, used her classroom birthday box to compare the feeling of waiting for construction to be completed, peeking at the progress throughout the year and finally arriving at the big day when she moved her students into their new classroom. "We waited a long time for this," said McGowan.

"If you truly learn all you ever need to know in kindergarten, then what a great place Eva Turner Elementary School now has for all that learning," said guest speaker and Board of Education Chairman Roberta Wise.

La Plata High School seniors research, create video to highlight forgotten history

The War of 1812 lies buried in public memory between the American Revolution and the American Civil War. While the Revolution gave birth to our nation, in many ways, the War of 1812 created our national identity by providing patriotic images like the Star Spangled Banner proudly waiving above a smoke-shrouded Fort McHenry. Much of the history of this forgotten war took place in Maryland and, six La Plata High School seniors and a daring social studies teacher are bringing part of that history back into our lives.

Michael Mazzeo, a U.S. History teacher at La Plata High School, was approached in the spring of 2010 by Mary Pat Berry of The United States Daughters (USD) of 1812 to coordinate a DVD project with local high school students. Mazzeo, excited by the opportunity for his students, volunteered his time for the project. For an entire year, Mazzeo and the La Plata High School students researched and recreated scenes from Charles County's past. The students took ownership of the project and filming.

Student Geoffrey Hammersley took on the role of producer, editor and co-director. He and Mazzeo committed the team of six to the project in the fall of 2010. By winter, Hammersley said the script was complete. "I have always liked history and thought that it would be really neat to be in a documentary that showcased the history of Charles County," Hammersley said.

The documentary was shot in the spring and summer of 2011. Christopher Cheney and Jonathan Teeney operated the cameras, and the other three students, Matthew Bellerose, Casey Gaskins, and Jennifer Munoz, completed the team's efforts as actors. The students donated their time to work on the project. Weather permitting, the team taped after school and on weekends at local places such as Maxwell Hall, Port Tobacco, Bryantown, Chapel Point and Indian Head. After hours of editing, the project was completed in August, 2011. "My favorite part of the project was working with the students. Seeing their commitment and professionalism and watching the actual filming was always a 'wow' to me. I was continually impressed with their motivation, acting, and dynamic team work," said Mazzeo.



La Plata students and staff recently presented their history project to the Charles County Commissioners. Pictured, back row, from left are U.S. history teacher Michael Mazzeo, Christopher Cheney, Jonathan Teeney, Geoffrey Hammersley and Matthew Bellerose. Pictured, front row, from left are Principal Evelyn Arnold, Jennifer Munoz and Casey Gaskins.

The USD of 1812 is a volunteer women's service organization founded to promote patriotism and to preserve the history of the time period between the end of the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium promotes history in our area and awards grants for historical projects. These historical associations developed the idea to create a DVD to showcase the roll Charles County played in the War of 1812.

After a year of hard work, the students and Mazzeo gave the USD and Charles County Commissioners a sneak peak of their film at a Sept. 27 meeting. The students were rewarded with the chance to meet with some of the USD members and were congratulated on their work. The Historical Society of Charles County and the Ella Virginia Houck Holloway Chapter, Daughters of 1812 are planning a joint dinner meeting on Saturday, Oct. 22, to premier the DVD project in its entirety.



New teachers

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to hire a high number of highly qualified teachers from New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan. Smalls is one of 21 teachers who moved here from New York, and Austin Krieg, a science teacher at North Point High School, is one of 10 from Michigan. "Charles County was a high priority for me mostly because of the security of the district. It is a growing area and the administrative team has a track record of doing an excellent job with their resources, which has resulted in few layoffs and the hiring of a number of other teachers. The diversity of the county also was something that attracted me here," Krieg said.

Krieg is also among the 15 science teachers hired this year. Science, English, math, special education and foreign languages remain the critical areas needing to be filled each year. Krieg is also among the 30 male teachers hired, which represents only 20 percent of all new hires. Most new hires, 80 percent, are female, which follows a national trend, McDonald said. The majority of new teachers, 62.9 percent, are white females. New hires also include 15.2 percent white males, 14.6 percent African-American females, 3.3 percent

African-American males, 1.3 percent Asian females, 1.3 percent Native American males, and .7 percent of both Hispanic and Native American females.

Board Chairman Roberta Wise said the high number of females hired has not changed since she was hired years ago. Board members also expressed concern about the low number of African-American males hired. McDonald said this also is a national trend because few African-American males are choosing teaching as a profession. This makes it difficult to find and hire qualified candidates, he said.

So far, the new teachers say their teaching experience has been positive. "As an educator I am a lifelong learner and I look forward to all the possibilities that lie ahead as I learn the ropes here at Matula in Charles County," Smalls said.

On the support staff side, Jeremy Campbell, human resource specialist, said 42 people were hired this summer. Close to half of the new hires, 19, are new instructional assistants.

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National Merit Scholarship Corporation honors students

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) recently honored 11 Charles County Public Schools students for their academic success through the 2012 National Merit Scholarship Program and National Achievement Program. Westlake High School senior Felicia Dillard was named as a semifinalist in the National Achievement Program.

Dillard is one of 1,600 nationwide high school students eligible to compete for 800 achievement scholarship awards, worth more than \$2.4 million. Students are considered for the program when they take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) as high school juniors.

Semifinalists are designated within geographic regions and are the highest-scoring program entrants in the states that make up specific regions. A total of 1,300 semifinalists will advance to the finalist level. Finalists are selected for high academic performance and SAT scores, principal recommendation, and student and community leadership activities. Finalists will be announced later this year. The NMSC also commends and refers students to colleges for their SAT/PSAT performance and potential for academic success.

National Merit Scholarship Program

Commended students in the National Merit Scholarship Program are

- Cayley Dymond, North Point High School;
- Ian England, North Point;
- Natalie Griffin, North Point; and
- Connor Roberts, North Point.

National Achievement Program

National Achievement Program Outstanding participants referred to colleges are

- Dylan Higgins, La Plata High School;
- Alexis Adams, North Point;
- Kevin Ramseur, North Point;
- Driana Watson, North Point;
- Raymond Johnson, Thomas Stone High School; and
- Misha Stone; Westlake.

More than 1.5 million students nationwide entered the Merit Scholarship program. Additionally, 160,000 students nationwide entered the National Achievement Program.

The NMSC is a non-profit organization that was established in 1955 to conduct the annual National Merit Program. Scholarships awarded through the program are underwritten by NMSC's funds and more than 500 business organizations and other educational institutions with the goal of honoring the nation's scholastic students and the pursuit of academic excellence.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation provides the names of commended and referred students to each school.

Staff notes

Job Openings

Operations Foreman – Charles County Public Schools Maintenance Shop, 12-month position. Apply by Oct. 14.

Building Service Workers – Theodore G. Davis Middle and Berry Elementary schools, 12-month positions. Apply by Oct. 14.

Building Service Assistant Managers – Benjamin Stoddert Middle and Berry Elementary schools, 12-month positions. Apply by Oct. 14.

Spanish Teacher – Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 10-month, part-time position. Apply by Oct. 14.

Special Education Instructional Assistant – J.C. Parks Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Oct. 14.

School Counselor – William A. Diggs Elementary School, 10-month position. Master's degree in guidance and counseling and a minimum of 500-hour practicum or experience in

counseling required. Apply by Oct. 17.

Instructional Assistant Job Coach for the Adult Independence Program – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. Apply by Oct. 24.

English Teacher – La Plata High School, 10-month position. Apply by Oct. 25.

Building Service Worker – William B. Wade Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Oct. 25.

Personnel Specialist, Human Resources – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree required.

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

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

Food Service Program Support Manager – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position.

Inclusion Resource Teacher – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position.

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

Extra pay positions

Thomas Stone High School has the following opening:

- Assistant baseball coach
- Contact Steven Lee, athletic director, 301-645-2601, to apply.

Maurice J. McDonough High School has the following opening:

- Head girls varsity basketball coach
- Contact Jason Bursick, athletic director, 301-753-1755, to apply.