



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Thanksgiving Break

Schools and offices are closed Nov. 23 - 25 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Two-hour early dismissal

The next two-hour early dismissal day for students is Wednesday, Dec. 7.

CCPS local conference

Student chapters of the Future Educators Association (FEA) will participate in the fourth annual Charles County Public Schools local FEA conference on Friday, Dec. 9, at the College of Southern Maryland's La Plata campus.

It's Academic Competition

The annual Charles County *It's Academic* competition is 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 7, at Maurice J. McDonough High School.

Music all around

Student musicians in the all-county band and orchestra groups are presenting their concerts after Thanksgiving. The orchestra concert is 7 p.m., Nov. 29, at Henry E. Lackey High School, and the band concert is 7 p.m., Nov. 30, at La Plata High School. Admission is free.

Students attend conference

The Robert D. Stethem Educational Center recently sent seven students to the SkillsUSA Maryland Annual Fall Leadership Conference, Nov. 3-4, in Ocean City. At the conference, students interacted with other SkillsUSA Maryland members and attended leadership training sessions. Four students met the requirements to receive a certificate of achievement.

SkillsUSA Statesman Award went to Kelly Dingess, Maurice J. McDonough High School, junior; James Graves, McDonough, junior; Alyson Hughes, Westlake High School, junior; and Theodore Rankin, Westlake, junior.



J.P. Ryon Elementary School was one of many schools in the county to celebrate American Education Week. Prekindergarten student Khaniia Johnson, above, shows the school flag she created in Mrs. Matchock's class. Each prekindergarten student created a flag that signified their favorite thing about school.

Charles County celebrates American Education Week

Brooklyn Walker says the best thing about school is Jillian Genua, her physical education teacher at J.P. Ryon. Walker and her classmates in Devon Matchock's prekindergarten class celebrated American Education Week last week by talking about why school is so special.

"Mrs. Genua is my favorite. She teaches how to climb on a wall," Walker said. Students at J.P. Ryon expressed their appreciation for school through a variety of educational activities. Younger students created school flags describing their favorite moments in school, while students in kindergarten, first, fourth and fifth grades wrote thank you notes to school staff. Ryon's second and third graders wrote about what they would do if they were principal.

The National Education Association (NEA) encourages communities across the nation to celebrate November 14-19 as American Education Week. The week honors the hard work of students and educators and recognizes the dedicated members of the community who add to the success in public education. This year's theme was "Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and

Our Responsibility." Each day spotlighted a different aspect of school life. Monday was Open House Day, Tuesday was Parents Day, Wednesday was Education Support Professionals Day, Thursday was Educator for a Day and Friday was Substitute Educators Day.

Charles County Public Schools engaged in a wide variety of activities.

C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School held an Evening of Learning event for parents with dinner and hands-on activities to help parents learn about the school's reading and math programs. Piccowaxen Middle School spotlighted the roles of employees, parents and students in creating a quality education program. Each day, the school honored a different group, including guidance, the instructional leadership team (ILT), teachers, parents, support staff and instructional assistants (IA), bus drivers and students. Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School teachers wore their college clothing and marked a colorful map with the locations of their alma mater.

American Education Week has been celebrated nationally for 90 years.



On the cover

Pictured on the cover are employees from J.P. Ryon Elementary School. Pictured, from left, are Benjamin Harrington, special education teacher; Lyndsay Kelly, fifth-grade teacher; Tisha Harrison, fifth-grade teacher; and Lena Van Sickle, fifth-grade teacher.

Stone leads in drill competition

Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) students from Thomas Stone High School competed in the eighth annual General Colin Powell Drill Competition on Saturday, Nov. 10, at Theodore Roosevelt High School. Stone was the overall champion, placing first out of 15 schools. The cadets participated in eight out of 10 events. Teams were judged in different events, or skill areas. Skill areas that teams were judged in include inspection, regulation color guard, armed knockout and unarmed knockout.

La Plata receives award

The La Plata High School's varsity volleyball team received the Lesley A. Cooke Volleyball Tournament Sportsmanship Award for the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) at the Maryland State Finals on Nov. 19. The school which displays the best overall sportsmanship while participating in the tournament is presented with the award by the State Volleyball Committee. Appointed judges observe each school's coaches, players, spectators, cheerleaders, and pep bands, rating them on a scale of 1-10. The award is presented to the school achieving the highest average score.

North Point honors Honeycutt

North Point High School's Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) is hosting the first annual Lance Corporal Terry E. Honeycutt, Jr. Drill Classic at 8 a.m. on Dec. 3. The competition will be held in honor of Terry Honeycutt, a four-year North Point JROTC cadet and member of North Point's first graduating class, who while serving in the United States Marine Corps died on October 27, 2010 from injuries sustained in the Helmund Province of Afghanistan. The program will conclude with a performance by the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard demonstration drill team.

**In Memoriam
Susan Keith**

Susan Lynne Keith, an instructional specialist at Milton M. Somers Middle School, passed away Tuesday, Nov. 15.

Mrs. Keith's career with Charles County Public Schools started in 1985 when she was hired as a language arts teacher at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School. In 1995, she transferred to Mattawoman Middle School, and in 1999 she moved back to Stoddert as a reading resource teacher. In 2005, she accepted an instructional spe-



Susan Keith

cialist position at Stoddert, and in 2010 she transferred to Somers.

Mrs. Keith received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Family and friends wore Carolina Blue to services, which were held Nov. 21 at Hughesville Baptist Church.

Mrs. Keith was a resident of La Plata, where she lived with her husband and two children.

System plans for redistricting of three schools

Elementary and middle school boundaries for three Waldorf schools will change next year as Charles County Public Schools prepares to balance enrollments. Superintendent James E. Richmond informed the Board of Education on Nov. 8 that a review of enrollments shows that Theodore G. Davis Middle School, William A. Diggs Elementary School and Mary B. Neal Elementary School are at or above capacity and redistricting is needed.

A redistricting committee is being formed to develop proposals to create new attendance zones for the three schools that will reduce the student enrollment, make room for growth and alleviate the need to immediately place portable classrooms at Neal. "These three schools are full and enrollments continue to climb due to the growth in surrounding areas. We have available seats at nearby schools, so we feel it is necessary to redistrict at this time," Richmond said.

Students affected by the redistricting will change schools in August 2012.

The school system is developing a redistricting committee, which includes six parents, three community members at large, three principals representing the three levels of schooling, a representative from the county's Department of Planning, a consulting specialist in redistricting and key central office staff to serve on the committee. Parents' names are selected at

random from submissions made by school principals. Parents from schools impacted are excluded to avoid the appearance of self-interest or conflict of interest.

The committee will develop two rezoning alternatives to submit to the Superintendent by January, and the Superintendent will present the alternatives to the Board of Education in February. A public hearing will follow, and in March, the Superintendent will present his recommendation to the Board. A second public hearing on the Superintendent's recommendation will be scheduled. The Board will make a decision at its April 10 meeting and may make modifications to the Superintendent's recommendation based on public input.

Information about the redistricting will be available throughout the process. All information will be posted on the school system's Web site, www.ccoeb.com, and information flyers will be sent home with elementary students and mailed to middle school parents.

Community input is essential to a successful redistricting. The Superintendent welcomes comments from the public. Comments and suggestions may be shared at public hearings, through e-mail or by letter. E-mails should be sent to redistrict@ccoeb.com. Mail letters to Charles County Public Schools, Redistricting, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, MD 20646.

Flexible spending, long-term care, universal life insurance now available

It is open enrollment time for AFLAC unreimbursed medical and dependant day care flexible spending accounts (FSA), and the school system has also added long-term care and Universal Life Insurance. Open enrollment for AFLAC Unreimbursed Medical and Dependent Day Care FSAs is available through Dec. 2. Open enrollment for long-term care and Universal Life runs through Dec. 9.

What is a Flexible Spending Account (FSA)?

FSAs allow you to pay for eligible out-of-pocket health care and/or dependent care expenses on a pre-tax basis, before federal, state and Social Security taxes are deducted. Using an FSA to cover out-of-pocket expenses you would have paid for anyway reduces taxable income by that amount, which in turn lowers your taxes.

How does it work?

An employee who earns \$40,000 a year is in the 25 percent federal tax bracket. If the employee contributes \$1,000 to the unreimbursed medical FSA and \$3,000 to the dependent care, their taxable income would be \$36,000. Their contribution to the plan could result in a \$1,000 reduction in federal taxes, depending on marital status, withholding elections and other factors. A free calculator at www.dinkytown.net/java/Payroll125.html can help employees evaluate their individual situation.

An unreimbursed medical FSA lets employees pay for IRS-allowed medical expenses not covered by medical, dental or vision insurance, including deductibles, copayments, orthodontia, glasses, contact lenses, prescriptions, chiropractic, and more. Check IRS Publication 502 at www.irs.gov for a list of allowable expenses.

FSA contributions are deducted from paychecks throughout the year. As you incur eligible expenses, you can submit receipts to the plan administrator for reimbursement, or use an AFLAC Flex Now Card. The Flex card allows employees to draw on their accounts at the point of service to pay for qualified medical expenses, thereby eliminating the need to pay cash up front.

A dependent care FSA lets you use pre-tax dollars to pay for expenses related to care for children, a disabled spouse, parent, or other dependents incapable of self-care, including:

- Licensed day care or adult care facility fees,
- Services provided in or outside your home (including babysitter, nursery school or summer day camp) so that you and your spouse can work, look for work, or attend school full-time,
- Before-and after-school programs for dependents under age 13.
- Babysitting by relatives older than 19 and not your dependent.

What are the restrictions?

- There is a maximum contribution of \$2,400 a year for unreimbursed medical and \$5,000 for dependent care FSAs.
- Health care and dependent care account contributions are not interchangeable.

It is important to estimate expenses carefully, because you must use all the funds in your FSA account during the plan year or forfeit the remaining amount. However, even though you must incur an expense within the plan year, the deadline to submit claims for an incurred expense during the 2012 calendar year is March 15, 2013.

ALFAC Group Disability

Elimination Period

- Accident elimination period: 0 days
- Sickness elimination period: seven days

Benefits Duration

- Maximum benefit period: six months
- Guaranteed Issue Amount:* \$2,500
- Benefits are paid directly to employee.
 - The plan provides a partial disability benefit.
 - There is portable coverage.

ALFAC Group Accident Insurance

- Contains 24-hour nonoccupational coverage,
- Includes wellness, ambulance and physical therapy benefits,
- Contains an accidental death and dismemberment benefit.

Long-term Care and Universal Life

This year, employees can enroll in universal life insurance and long-term care through Charles County Public Schools. Enrollment runs through Dec. 9.

Why should you consider Universal Life Insurance?

Your loved ones may face a major loss of household income and financial stability if you die prematurely. Life insurance can help provide for your family's needs after your death.

Universal Life Insurance is a flexible product that provides insurance protection into your retirement years, as well as a cash value component that credits interest on a tax-deferred basis.

Program highlights

- Spouse and child coverage is available without employee purchasing coverage.
- Cash value accumulates on a tax-deferred interest basis based on current federal income tax laws.
- Hassle-free premium payments are made through payroll deduction so there are no checks to write.
- Benefits are portable, so you can keep coverage even through job changes and into retirement, as long as you pay your premium.
- Insurance is available in a range of levels to meet your needs and budget.
- Small minimums, down to \$5,000 or \$10,000, are available.
- Employees can insure up to \$500,000, and up to \$200,000 on the spouse with simplified underwriting.
- A child rider is also available with either employee or spouse coverage up to \$10,000 with no underwriting questions.

Long-term care

Long-term care provides protection where medical insurance may not cover. Long-term care is assistance with everyday activities such as eating, dressing, or moving in and out of bed, or supervision for someone with a cognitive impairment. Unlike health insurance or disability policy coverage long-term care helps to reimburse for charges incurred for custodial care received in your home, in the community, or in a facility.

Program highlights include:

- Pays for assisted living facility.
- Pays for nursing facility.
- Pays for home health aides.
- Pays for adult daycare.

Ask questions of a benefit counselor during information meetings scheduled for your location. Meetings are scheduled in the morning and afternoon. The brochures and rates can be found on the V:\HumanResources\BenefitsandRetirement\ALFAC.

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Board of Education announces December 13 agenda

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 13, 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 12 and is 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, Westlake High School JROTC unit

Superintendent's update to the Board

Reports of officers/board/committees

- Correspondence/Board member updates
- Education Association of Charles County update

- Student Board member update

- Deputy Superintendent update

- CIP update

- Student transfers report

- F.B. Gwynn Center renovations

- Autism program

- Human Resources update

- Legislative update

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

- New business

- Future agenda items

Recognition- 4:30 p.m.

- Students

- Staff

- War of 1812 DVD project

- Maurice J. McDonough High School, 1A/2A state golf champions

Public Forum - 6 p.m.

Action items

- Minutes

- Personnel

Adjournment



Nov. 28 work session

The Board of Education plans to hold a work session at 6 p.m. on Nov. 28 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Meetings are televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12, and on the school system Web site, www.ccboe.com.

Call to order - 6 p.m.

Public Forum

Work session discussions

- Student transfers committee update

- Goals

Adjournment

Staff notes

Job Openings

Building Service Manager – Malcolm Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 22.

Building Service Assistant Manager – Dr. James Craik Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 22.

Building Service Worker – Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 22.

Autism Teacher – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Nov. 30.

State Claims Manager – Location to be determined, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 1.

Media Specialist – J.P. Ryon Elementary School, 10-month position. Master's degree in library science required.

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

New Teacher Mentors – Openings at county middle and high schools, 10-month positions. Master's degree and a minimum of five years teaching experience and two years of experience in related leadership role required.

Literacy Teacher – Thomas Stone High School, 10-month position.

Pharmacy Technician Instructor – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position, part-time position.

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

Math Teacher – Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 10-month position.

Extra pay position

Thomas Stone High School has the following openings:

- Head varsity volleyball coach
- Junior varsity volleyball coach

- Assistant tennis coach

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

Maurice J. McDonough High School has the following openings:

- Head tennis coach

Contact Jason Bursick, athletic director, 301-753-1755 to apply.

Staff Notes

Retirement Plan Seminar

A seminar for active participants of the Board of Education of Charles County Pension Plan will be held 3-4:30 p.m., Dec. 7, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. The seminar will provide an overview of the plan and recent changes. Active plan participants include staff from food services, maintenance, building services and certain technical staff.