



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Presidents Day

Schools and offices are closed on Monday, Feb. 20, in observance of Presidents Day.

Employees to be honored

The Board of Education will honor more than 30 employees for their years of service to the school system in a ceremony on Feb. 23, 5 p.m., in the Board room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. A complete listing of those to be honored will be featured in the March 3 edition of *School News*. For information about the ceremony, call 301-934-7356.

Interims issued

Interims will be issued to students on Monday, Feb. 27.

Ready for spring sports?

Spring sports begin on Thursday, March 1. Visit the school system Web site at www2.ccboe.com/sports/schedule.cfm to view sports schedules for Charles County's six high schools.

Read Across Charles County

Charles County Public Schools celebrates Read Across Charles County on Friday, March 2. The annual event is a reading motivation and awareness program that invites children in the community to celebrate literacy and reading, and the birthday of the famous children's book author Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss. Each year, the school system coordinates the event in conjunction with the National Education Association's Read Across America Day.

High school computer bowl

The high school computer bowl is 9 a.m., Saturday, March 3, at North Point High School. Student teams in the tri-county area compete in the event and participate in two rounds of competition.

System recognized for energy savings efforts

Charles County Public Schools recently received more than \$25,000 in incentives for participating in the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative's (SMECO) Business Solutions program. The program provides incentives to businesses that make efficiency improvements to their facilities.

Representatives from SMECO and ICF International, an energy consulting company selected by SMECO to help implement its energy efficiency programs, presented two checks to the school system – one for \$20,365 and another for \$5,135 – during the Feb. 14 Board of Education meeting. The incentives were provided for the replacement of old lighting with energy-efficient fixtures and equipment at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center and Maurice J. McDonough High School.

Gwynn underwent renovations last year in order to provide additional program space, and a Career Technology Education (CTE) classroom at Maurice J. McDonough High School was also renovated. Both renovations included the replacement of fluorescent lighting fixtures with energy-efficient equipment. Incentives are funded through the Maryland Public Service Commission's approved energy efficiency charges that are part of the EmPower Maryland initiative.

The school system also received a \$145,000 incentive through participation in the 2011 Demand Response Program, which is coordinated through SMECO's contract with Comverge. Comverge is an independent company that provides clean energy solutions through demand response programs. The program focuses on reducing electricity use during peak demand hours. Last school year, the electric usage of 12 schools and buildings was reduced during peak demand hours. In the future, all schools, centers and buildings will participate in the program from June through September.

Under EmPower Maryland, Maryland's five major utility companies developed and implemented energy efficiency and demand response programs that include electric bill rebates for energy efficiency investments, audits and services. The goal of EmPower Maryland is to reduce power consumption 15 percent by 2015.

All non-residential customers with SMECO service are eligible to participate in the Business Solutions program, but interested customers must apply for participation. Additional information is located on the Business Solutions program page of the SMECO Web site, www.smeco.coop.

Superintendent receives Salute to Excellence award

Charles County Public Schools Superintendent James E. Richmond was recently honored by the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. with a 2012 Salute to Excellence award. The awards program is part of the sorority's Educational Advancement Foundation (EAF) and honors community members that serve their communities and work to enrich the lives of others.

Richmond was nominated for the award by Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc.'s Charles County chapter, Nu Zeta Omega, for his support of the organization's educational initiatives and for providing Charles County Pub-

lic Schools students with opportunities to achieve academic and personal success.

"This award honors people in the community that foster the growth of our youth. Mr. Richmond has supported us in our educational endeavors since he became superintendent in Charles County. We chose to honor him for his efforts in the advancements of minority achievement and



**Superintendent
James Richmond**

See Alpha Kappa Alpha, page 2



On the cover

Pictured on the cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at the January and February Board meetings. Pictured, from left, are: Stephen Williams, administrative assistant, La Plata High School; Inmaculada Dove, special education instructional assistant, F.B. Gwynn Educational Center; and Lauren Washington, first-grade teacher, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School.

County science fair arrives

The annual Charles County Public Schools Science Fair is March 2-3 at Theodore G. Davis Middle School. Student participants can drop off their projects on March 2, and judging begins at 9 a.m. on March 3. An awards ceremony will be held March 3 at 5 p.m.

Aflac flexible spending audits

Aflac, a supplemental insurance company that school system employees can use to purchase optional medical plans, conducts audits to ensure flexible spending plans comply with IRS regulations in accordance with IRS Publication 502. Employees who have flexible spending accounts through Aflac may be audited: when a transaction does not match the co-pays associated with the Board sponsored Blue Cross/Blue Shield health insurance programs; and when the card is used for services at a vision or dental provider.

Employees will receive an audit letter from Aflac if additional information is required to verify a claim. Aflac requires the following information for an audit:

Legible receipt(s) or an Explanation of Benefits showing:

- The patient's name;
- The service provider's name;
- A description of the service or a list of items purchased;
- The charge(s) for each service or item; and
- The date(s) of service.

Employees with flexible spending accounts should keep all receipts and documentation related to Aflac Now Card transactions.

For questions about flexible spending accounts, contact Christeda Warner at 301-934-7459 or cwarner@ccboe.com. Employees can also contact Aflac directly at 1-800-323-5391.

Westlake's Brunone honored for use of technology

Courtney Brunone, a French teacher at Westlake High School, was recently named Charles County's 2012 Outstanding Educator Using Technology by the Maryland Society for Educational Technology (MSET).

The award recognizes outstanding pre-kindergarten through grade 12 teachers who make exemplary contributions to instructional computing practices by infusing technology into classroom lessons. Brunone was nominated by Westlake staff for modeling innovative uses of technology in the classroom to help her students succeed and for serving as a resource of information for her fellow peers.

In a letter submitted on behalf of Brunone's nomination, her colleagues said her commitment to using technology in the classroom is a model for other teachers. "From her use of digital recording devices to the SMART Board and notebook, Ms. Brunone is on the cutting edge of the digital interactive classroom. She is an example of what teachers using technology in the classroom should strive to be."

Brunone uses the SMART Board and notebook technology to enrich student success by creating lessons that engage both visual and kinetic learners. Through the use of this technology in her lessons, students in Brunone's classes have improved their comprehension of French. She also uses technology to explore contemporary and popular culture events that relate to

students and their academic needs in studying French.

Brunone incorporated the use of digital recording devices into her lessons to help students better pronounce and verbalize the French language accurately. She also serves as a main source of information for staff on the best uses of the SMART Board technology.

She said she is honored to receive an award that highlights staff that use resources to provide students with fun ways to learn. "I am thrilled to have this award, especially since the world languages are often in the background. This honor gives me the opportunity to show that our department is creative with technology and works hard to give our students an education relevant to today's world. C'est un vrai honneur (It is a real honor)!" Brunone said.

Brunone has been teaching French at Westlake for the past three years, and has held several basic and advanced SMART Board training sessions. She has also presented her lessons using technology to foreign language teachers at other schools.

Visit <https://www.msetonline.org/> for more information on MSET.



Courtney Brunone

Alpha Kappa Alpha

continued from page 1

for his support of children," said Miriam-Matthews Clark, Nu Zeta Omega Chapter president.

Richmond accepted the award at a luncheon held Feb. 11 in Annapolis. He credits Charles County Public Schools teachers and staff with the award for their hard work and dedication to children. "I accept this award on behalf of the school system and the efforts made to promote success in the classroom and the values of lifelong learning. I commend Alpha Kappa Alpha's commitment to education and the assistance they provide to students in order for them to achieve success and attain educational and career goals," Richmond said.

Clark said each chapter nominates community members for the EAF excellence awards. Richmond was one of 10 award recipients honored by Alpha Kappa Alpha at the luncheon. This is the second year for the EAF excellence awards program.

The Nu Zeta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. was chartered in 1980 and participates in several annual community events, including the Charles County Public Schools new staff reception.

For more information about Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and the EAF program, visit <http://www.akaeaf.org/default.htm#>.

At Gale-Bailey Elementary School, 100 Hershey kisses are just enough

One hundred paper hands, 100 signatures and a number line from one to 100 lined Gale-Bailey Elementary School's hallway. It was Tuesday, Feb. 7, and Gale-Bailey's students were celebrating the 100th day of school with the slogan, "100 days smarter."

First-year kindergarten teacher Jessica Farrell had the students marching around the classroom to the tune of "Ten Little Indian Boys," wearing 100-day hats and counting to 100. She then sent her students on a scavenger hunt around her classroom to find 100 Hershey kisses. Each kiss had a number from one to 100 on the bottom, and students were told to find five kisses, bring them to the number chart placed at the front of the room and cross off the matching number. Colleen Snow, a kindergartner, said if she could have 100 of something, "I would like to have 100 Hershey kisses, that's how many we found today. I would like that or 100 star balloons from the Dollar Tree." Snow also shared the 100 items that she brought from home, which were chocolates from Halloween that were "too old to eat."

First-grade teacher Katrena Gregory planned an English lesson around items students brought to share for the celebration. Gale-Bailey Principal Carrie Richardson shared her 100th-day items, which were Cheerios, with Gregory's class. The students smiled widely as they eagerly showed Richardson their writing skills. Gregory helped the class write sentences on items that everyone, including Richardson, brought to the classroom. Richardson said, "I really do look forward to the 100th day of school because it is so exciting for the kids. They have been keeping count since the first day of school." First-graders also had the chance to work up a sweat with physical education teacher John Kraft, who worked with each first-grade classroom

to do 100 exercises. The students did 10 sets of 10 different exercises including crunches, arm circles and squats.

Gale-Bailey was not the only elementary school to celebrate the 100th day of school. Students at J.C. Parks and Mary B. Neal elementary schools were also counting to 100 for most of the day. Parks kindergarten teacher Mary Fenton showed her 100-day spirit by wearing a sweater with 100 bows and devoting a whole day to the number 100. Students counted and colored 100 shapes and made 100-day hats. They also ate 100-bite snacks including M&Ms, animal crackers and goldfish. During recess the kindergartners exercised by completing 100 jumping jacks. "We look forward to the 100th day all year. We count every day on the calendar, mark the tens/ones, count by 10's, make a big deal out of bundling the ones into tens, and get very excited when we hit the nineties," Fenton said. Neal kindergarten teacher Marisa McDaniel had her class draw a picture of how they would look if they were 100-years-old. They also wrote a short book on what the students would do with



Kindergarten teacher Jessica Farrell encouraged student Hope Treadway, pictured above, to find the number on the number chart that matched with her Hershey kiss and cross it off as part of the class' Hershey kiss scavenger hunt.

\$100, how they would be if they were 100-years-old and what 100 things they could eat. Kindergartner Shamir Taylor wrote, "If I was 100-years-old I would get married." Aaron Johnson saw reaching 100 in a different way. "If I was 100-years-old I would cry," he said.

Maryland law requires students to attend 180 days each school year. Students celebrate the 100th day of school as a midway milestone. The number 100 is very important for elementary school students. It is used as a number, measurement of time, a score or percentage and helps to teach children the importance of place values. Celebrating the 100th-day of school is used as a teaching tool as well as being a lot of fun, Richardson said.

Receive inclement weather, emergency closing information by text message

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is using a new notification system that allows staff to sign up to receive e-mails and/or text messages when schools are closed, delayed or closing early due to inclement weather.

The Charles County Citizen Notification System (CNS) is a free service that allows citizens to receive timely notifications about events and activities throughout the county. Notifications can be sent in either e-mail and/or text form to a computer or cell phone. Text messages from CCPS will only be sent when the school schedule changes due to inclement weather or other crisis situations.

This service is in addition to the standard school system notifications for closings or delays. CCPS will continue to provide closing and delay information on its 24-hour information line, at www.ccboe.com, Twitter, and television and radio stations listed on page 10 of the 2011-12 Parent Handbook/Calendar.

Charles County is dedicated to keeping its citizens informed and wants to ensure good communication. Participation is voluntary, and parents must subscribe to receive notifications. CNS is being offered

through a partnership with Charles County Government.

To become a CNS subscriber:

- Click on the Citizen Notification (CNS logo) link on the left-hand side of the school system's Web page at www.ccboe.com.
- This takes you to a registration page. You must supply an e-mail, create a password and put in your zip code. There are spaces for your name and address, but supplying that information is optional.
- You can choose to receive e-mail and/or text notifications. If you choose to receive text messages, you will be asked to supply your cell phone number (enter without dashes) and select your phone carrier. There is no charge to receive text messages; however, standard text message fees by your carrier apply.
- A new screen will pop up. Click the plus sign for Charles County Public Schools and check School closings/Delays. Other agencies also offer information parents may wish to sign up for such as emergency weather alerts and road closings. A complete menu of options can be found by clicking the plus sign next to each agency name.

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301-932-6610
301-934-7220
Fax: 301-932-6651

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Editor/Writers

Katie O'Malley-Simpson
Shelley Mackey
Kara Gross
Laura Hupp

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Board of Education announces March 13 agenda

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, March 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 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.

Executive session – 12 p.m.

Call to order – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance, Thomas Stone High School's JROTC unit

Superintendent's update

Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Correspondence/Board Member updates
- Education Association of Charles County update
- Student Board Member update
- CIP update
- Superintendent's redistricting recommendation
- Proposed FY 2013 operating budget
- Update on 2013-14 school calendar
- Legislative items
- Non-discrimination policy

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

- New business
- Future agenda items

Recognition – 4:30 p.m.

- Students
- Employees
- Courtney Brunone, 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
- Policy #3430 Accounts: opening and closing accounts
- Superintendent's rule #5126: student transfers

Adjournment

Future Meetings

Redistricting public hearings are scheduled at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 28, at Thomas Stone High School and 7 p.m., Monday, March 26, at North Point High School.



Personnel

Job Openings

Technology Facilitator – Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Feb. 17.

Principals – Possible future openings, 12-month positions. Master's Degree, eligibility for an administrative certificate, five years of teaching experience and two years in a leadership role required. Apply by Feb. 21

Vice Principals – Possible future openings, 12-month positions. Master's Degree, an Advanced Professional Certificate and three years of teaching experience required. Apply by Feb. 21.

Building Service Workers – Openings at Dr. James Craik, J.P. Ryon and William A. Diggs elementary schools, 12-month positions. Apply for Ryon and Diggs by Feb. 21; Craik by Feb. 23.

Technical Assistant in Testing – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Bachelor's degree in a related field

is required. Apply by Feb. 23.

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

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

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

New Teacher Mentors in Math, Science and English – Openings at county 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.

Science Teacher – North Point High School, 10-month position.

Autism Teacher – Early childhood area/location to be determined, 10-month position.

Instructional Resource Teacher – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 11-month position. Master's degree and five year's experience required.

School Psychologist – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, temporary, one-month position in March. A specialist-level degree program, including a year-long internship, is required.

School Psychology Internship – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, one-year position. Internship is for the 2012-2013 school year and pays a stipend.

Staff Notes

Retirement session

The Charles County Retired School Personnel Association and the division of human resources are hosting a retirement planning session 5 - 8 p.m., Thursday, March 15, in the Board room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building.

The session will include guest speakers and retirement planning handouts. Light refreshments will also be available. An RSVP is required as space is limited. RSVP to Janice Spotz, 301-934-2146 or jspotz@comcast.net.