



# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### *Send out your holiday cheer*

Charles County Public Schools students and staff give back to their school communities year-round. Stories about giving during the holidays are especially heart warming. Share your school's story with us on Twitter and Facebook. Use #CCPSwarmhearts.

### *Kudos to Stone teacher*

Congratulations to Dan Weiss, a math teacher at Thomas Stone High School. He recently received a \$1,000 check from Educational Systems Federal Credit Union for submitting a time management practice to their Tips and Tools for Back to School contest. Weiss donated the prize back to the Stone community. Visit [www.ccboe.com/pr](http://www.ccboe.com/pr) to read the complete story.

### *Winter break schedule*

Schools will be closed for winter break Dec. 23 through Jan. 1. Students and teachers head back to the classroom on Monday, Jan. 4. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) posts all calendar information on the school system website, [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com).

### *School News break*

This is the last edition of *School News* for 2015. The next printed copy will be available on Friday, Jan. 8. The Communications Department is considering eliminating a paper version of *School News*, with the exception of copies mailed to retirees and requests from schools. Copies of *School News* are posted on the school system website at <http://www.ccboe.com/newsletter.php>.

### *Payroll update*

The pay date of Thursday, Dec. 24 is a CCPS staff holiday. Pay checks for employees who are not signed up for direct deposit will be mailed to their home addresses on Dec. 23. Direct deposit vouchers will be ponied to schools, centers and available central office departments on Dec. 22.



## La Plata It's Academic team takes top spot

La Plata High School's *It's Academic* team placed first at the Charles County Public Schools competition held Dec. 2 at the College of Southern Maryland. Pictured from left are senior Matthew Fan, senior and team captain T.C. Martin and junior Justin Cortez. They earned first place with a score of 300 points in the final round against North Point and Westlake high schools. This is the third consecutive year the La Plata *It's Academic* team has won first place in the local event. They will compete in a regional match against Dominion and Gonzaga high schools that will air April 2 on NBC4. Team coach is La Plata science teacher Michelle Schoenbauer.

## State releases baseline PARCC data for schools

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) released local school system and school-level data earlier this week for PARCC, Maryland's new middle and elementary school assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics.

More than 30 percent of Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) elementary students in grades 3-5 of the PARCC English Language Arts/Literacy assessment last spring scored at a level of 4 and 5 combined. Levels 4 and 5 are the highest levels on the PARCC five-point scale. Additionally, more than 30 percent of Charles County's middle students reached Level 4 and 5 combined in English Language Arts/Literacy.

More than 30 percent of middle school students taking the mathematics or Algebra

I PARCC assessment, and 28.9 percent of students in grades 3-5 scored at Level 4 and 5 combined.

According to MSDE, for students in grades 3 through 8, achieving Level 4 or 5 indicates their readiness for coursework in English and math at the next grade, with the goal of preparing students to enter college or career upon graduation. The scores required to meet these thresholds were determined over the summer by Maryland educators and their peers around the country.

The assessment uses a five-point score scale set by Maryland educators and others:

- Level 5 – Exceeded Expectations
- Level 4 – Met Expectations
- Level 3 – Approached Expectations

See PARCC, page 2

## Notebook

### On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are employees honored by the Board of Education last month. Pictured from left are Kelly Elliton, third-grade teacher at Dr. James Craik Elementary School; Katherine Schubbe, business education teacher at St. Charles High School; and Tynika Lytle, pupil personnel worker at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School.

### Summer enrichment sessions

CCPS will offer enrichment camps next summer, starting in June for students in grades kindergarten through eighth and is looking for teachers interested in leading a session. Teachers can choose their session and week of participation and earn extra pay. Interested teachers must complete a proposal form, which is posted as a Featured Link on Inside CCPS. Forms are due by Dec. 18 to Ann Taylor or Joyce Campbell. Contact Taylor at ataylor@ccboe.com or Campbell at jcampbell@ccboe.com with questions.

### Play season ends with Lackey

Check out student actors at Henry E. Lackey High School this weekend as they present, "Voices from Washington High," on Dec. 11-12 at 6:30 p.m. and at 2 p.m. on Dec. 13. The play depicts how violence and tragedy can evolve among students in American high schools. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$7 for students, senior citizens and military members and \$6 for thespians. CCPS employees receive two free tickets by showing their school system identification badge.

### Winterfest is coming

The James E. Richmond Science Center is hosting a Winterfest event on Saturday, Dec. 12 starting at 9 a.m. Tickets are available for purchase at <http://www.ccboe.com/sciencecenter/winterfest/>. Feature showings include "Let it Snow" and the "Season of Light." Attendees can also visit a hot chocolate bar, participate in hands-on activities, take a picture in their photo booth and see the winners of the Snow Globes on a Sphere contest on the Science on a Sphere technology.

## National Board Certified Teachers



Deborah Simmons



### Early Adolescence Mathematics

**Position held:** Mathematics teacher at Milton M. Somers Middle School

**Years of teaching experience:** 22

**Years with Charles County Public Schools:** 13

#### Education:

Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education 1-6/Middle School, West Liberty University  
Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Polytechnic University

#### Memorable Moment:

I enjoy seeing my former students succeed when they move on to high school and college. I like when they see me in the community and thank me for making them work so hard. One of my favorite teachers was Mr. Porter who taught English and typing at the junior high level. He taught my Dad, my two brothers and myself. Each year he would compile a book of students' best writing and call it "Results not Excuses." I had great respect for him, and I would like to think I model my style of teaching after him.

## PARCC

continued from page 1

- Level 2 – Partially Met Expectations
- Level 1 – Did Not Yet Meet Expectations

#### County scores, middle school

**Algebra 1/mathematics:** Overall, 32.9 percent of middle school students scored a combined score of 4 and 5 on the mathematics and Algebra I assessments. Students taking the Algebra I test for math scored a 72.3 percent at level 4 and 5. Students in eighth grade taking the mathematics assessment scored 8.3 percent at levels 4 and 5; students in seventh grade scored 22.9 percent at levels 4 and 5; and students in sixth grade scored 27.9 percent at levels 4 and 5.

**English/Language Arts:** Overall, 30.1 percent of middle school students scored at level 4 and 5 combined. Countywide, students in eighth grade scored 32.4 percent at levels 4 and 5; students in seventh grade scored 27.6 percent at levels 4 and 5; and students in sixth grade scored 30.4 percent at levels 4 and 5.

#### County scores, elementary school

**Mathematics:** Overall, students in grades 3-5 scored 28.9 percent at levels 4 and 5. Fifth-grade students scored 25 percent at levels 4 and 5; fourth-grade

students scored 26.3 percent at levels 4 and 5; and third-grade students scored 35.5 percent at levels 4 and 5.

**English/Language Arts:** Overall, students in grades 3-5 scored 33.9 percent at levels 4 and 5. Fifth-grade students scored 35 percent at levels 4 and 5; fourth-grade students scored 33.9 percent at levels 4 and 5; and third-grade students scored 32.7 percent at levels 4 and 5.

According to MSDE, PARCC results cannot be compared with the MSA, which the state used for a decade, both because this is a new test and a different test. PARCC is the first assessment aligned to Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards, which set a higher bar for student learning. The tests go beyond the old "fill in the blank" model of standardized tests by emphasizing the need for students to demonstrate critical thinking, problem solving and clear writing.

Individual elementary and middle school student reports will be sent home to parents within the next few weeks.

For complete CCPS results, visit <http://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/>.

## School Administration's Christine Mais awarded Richmond Leadership honor

Since the 1990s, Christine Mais has been a staple in the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) office of school administration. She is a go-to resource for several school system staff and administrators because she is well known for giving more than 100 percent to any task. If she isn't at her desk, she is at a school volunteering with students or in the community, helping with one of the many organizations she supports. Her commitment to the school system, children and the Charles County community are evident in all that she does. For this commitment, Mais was recently named the 2015 recipient of the James E. Richmond Leadership Excellence Award.

The award was established two years ago to honor school system leaders who exhibit standards of leadership and excellence demonstrated by Richmond during his career. Richmond spent his entire 47-year career with Charles County Public Schools, and served four terms as superintendent. Mais was formally presented with the award at the Board of Education's Dec. 8 meeting and said she is honored to be selected for an award that values inspiration.

"Mr. Richmond was the epitome of leadership as he inspired and motivated everyone to reach their potential – no matter their role in the school system. It has been my honor and privilege to work among many leaders over the past 31 years and I am deeply honored to receive this award," Mais said.

In her current role as executive assistant to the assistant superintendent of school administration, Mais serves as a liaison between the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building and the county's 36 schools and four centers. She works to support principals and vice principals, as well as any other staff member, teacher, student, parent or community member in need of assistance. Her professionalism is apparent in all that she does and her ability to stay calm and handle whatever crosses her desk is admirable to her peers. She is often the first line of response for the office of school administration for parent concerns, emergency reports and incidents at schools.

Dr. Sylvia Lawson, assistant superintendent of school administration, has worked closely with Mais during the past 2.5 school years. Prior to working with Dr. Lawson, Mais worked alongside Ronald Cunningham, the former deputy superintendent of schools until his passing in 2011. At the Board meeting, Lawson talked about Mais' dedication to the school system and said not only is she her go-to resource, but is someone who is "virtually irreplaceable."

"Over the past 31 years, Chris has been a true asset to our school system. She has shared her wealth of knowledge with so many and is a thriving force of humanitarianism and volunteerism in our community. She has been a great executive assistant and a great friend. Chris, you will be missed but never forgotten," Lawson said when presenting



Christine Mais, pictured left, executive assistant to the assistant superintendent of school administration, was honored by the Board of Education at their Dec. 8 meeting with the 2015 James E. Richmond Leadership Excellence Award. At the meeting Board of Education Chairman Virginia McGraw, pictured right, presented the award plaque to Mais.

Mais to the Board. Earlier this year, Mais announced her plans to retire in March.

Over the years, Mais has worked closely with school principals. Several Charles County Public Schools principals commented on Mais' ability to support them and guide them during their career. Kathleen Morgan, principal at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, said Mais has always been there to guide her. "Over the past 15 years as a principal Chris Mais has always been a guardian angel to principals," Morgan added.

Benjamin Stoddert Principal Kenneth Schroeck said Mais stands out as a person who strives to exemplify excellence. "Chris stands out as someone who exemplifies excellence for Charles County Public Schools. She has been there to guide me. She has inspired me and always went out of her way to make sure I was simply having a good day," Schroeck said.

Mais first joined CCPS in 1985 as a secretary in the University of Maryland/

Charles County Teacher Education Center. A major accomplishment of her career during her time with the Education Center was her involvement with the formation of the school system's partnership with Bunkyo University in Japan. In the late 1980s, a group of CCPS teachers applied for a Mid-Atlantic Region Japan in the Schools (MARJiS) grant through the University of Maryland. Through this grant, CCPS staff traveled to Japan and later hosted Bunkyo students as part of a student exchange. In 1989, Mais was selected to be a part of the MARJiS team and traveled to Bunkyo University. For the following 10 years, Mais helped to coordinate and plan the annual Bunkyo student exchange visit.

In addition to her commitment to Charles County Public Schools, Mais also serves the community in which she works. She has been a part of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life efforts for nearly 20 years and has served as captain and co-captain of the team at the Starkey Building. Additionally, Mais is the Charles County Public Schools campaign coordinator for United Way and the secretary of the Kiwanis Club of Charles County.

Mais said she is honored to work for Charles County Public Schools. "Thirty one years ago when I came to work for Charles County Public Schools, it was the best decision I ever made. I am deeply grateful for those who saw something in me. Going the extra mile... it was and is a way for me to show my appreciation for all of the blessings in my life," Mais said.

The idea behind the award came from former longtime Board of Education Col. Donald Wade, who served on the Board of Education for several years and passed away in 2014. Wade introduced the award as a way to honor outstanding school system leaders and to honor Richmond for his service to Charles County Public Schools.

School News is published by Charles County Public Schools  
301-932-6610  
301-934-7220  
Fax: 301-932-6651

**Board of Education Members**

Virginia R. McGraw, *Chairman*  
Michael Lukas, *Vice Chairman*  
Jennifer S. Abell  
Mark Crawford  
Victoria T. Kelly  
Margaret T. Marshall  
Barbara S. Palko  
Pearson Benson, *Student Member*

**Superintendent of Schools**

Kimberly A. Hill, Ed.D.

**Editor/Writers**

Katie O'Malley-Simpson  
Shelley Mackey

The Charles County public school system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices. For inquiries, please contact Dr. Patricia Vaira, Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator (students) or Pamela K. Murphy, Title IX/ADA/Section 504 coordinator (employees/adults), at Charles County Public Schools, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, MD 20646; 301-932-6610/301-870-3814. For special accommodations call 301-934-7230 or TDD 1-800-735-2258 two weeks prior to the event.

## Nominate your principal for Post recognition

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is accepting nominations for its 2016 Principal of the Year Award. The annual award honors exemplary principals and recognizes those who go beyond the day-to-day demands of their position to create an exceptional educational environment. The selected principal will also serve as the CCPS finalist in *The Washington Post* Principal of the Year program.

*The Post's* Principal of the Year program is formerly known as the Distinguished Educational Leadership Award program. Starting this school year, one finalist in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area will be named *The Washington Post* Principal of the Year.

Teachers, students, former students, parents, administrators, or community members may submit nominations. Nominees must have a minimum of five year's experience as a principal and three of those years must have been with CCPS. Principals cannot nominate themselves.

Nomination materials must include a minimum of four statements of support, one of which must be submitted by a professional educator; a career summary (list of positions held, date and location of each, and degrees and certificates earned); a 200-word biography written to highlight the specific award for which the awardee was nominated; and a

description of contributions in each of the nomination criteria categories.

The nomination criteria categories are:

- manage effectively;
- demonstrate and encourage creativity and innovation;
- foster cooperation between the school and the community;
- maintain a continuing dialogue with students and parents as well as faculty and staff;
- keep abreast of developments in the field of education;
- encourage team spirit;
- demonstrate leadership and exemplify commitment;
- continue to play an active role in the classroom; and;
- maintain their position as principal throughout the 2016-17 school year.

Nomination materials must be included in a presentation binder and are due by Monday, Jan. 4. Binders should be sent to Monica Monroy, Office of Human Resources, Charles County Public Schools, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, Md., 20646.

Visit <http://www.ccboe.com/jobs/emprec.php> to view other nomination requirements.

## Personnel

Apply for positions online at [www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php](http://www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php). All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

**Job Openings**

**Instructional Assistant, Automotive Technology** – North Point High School, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 14.

**Switchboard Operator** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 15.

**Secretary to the Executive Director of Human Resources** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 15.

**Secretary to the Principal** – General Smallwood Middle School, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 15.

**Prekindergarten Instructional Assistant** – Berry Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 15.

**Job Placement Technical Specialist, Adult**

**Independence Program** – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. Bachelor's degree, knowledge of Southern Maryland job market and experience working with individuals with disabilities preferred. Five years' experience working with youth required. Apply by Dec. 17.

**Building Service Worker** – La Plata High School, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 21.

**Special Education Instructional Assistant** – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

**Instructional Assistant** – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

**Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Tutors** – temporary positions, hourly pay rate of \$11.85. Interested candidates must have a high school diploma or GED. Applicants can also be Charles County Public Schools students in the Work Based Learning program, but must have a recom-

mendation from their principal and advisor. Experience with implementing student goals, meeting deadlines and managing multiple tasks preferred.

**Home and Hospital Instructors** – temporary positions, locations to be determined. Instructors paid at an hourly rate of \$25.25. Bachelor's degree and experience working with students, planning and implementing lessons required.

**Drafting Teacher** – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

**Extra pay positions**

**Westlake High School** has the following openings:

- Head boys' varsity soccer coach
- Head varsity football coach
- Head varsity girls' lacrosse coach

Contact Dominic Zaccarelli, athletic director, at 301-645-8857 to apply.