



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Board Town Hall Sept. 28

The Board of Education of Charles County invites the public to attend its first Town Hall meeting on Monday, Sept. 28. The purpose of the Town Hall is to provide parents, students, staff and community members an opportunity to ask questions and discuss items about education and schools. Board members and Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff will be available to accept comments and answer questions from the audience.

The Town Hall is set for 6:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 28, at St. Charles High School in the cafeteria. The CCPS communications department will provide live streaming of the Town Hall on www.ccboe.com. The meeting can also be viewed live online at <https://livestream.com/ccpstv/townhall>.

Questions can be sent in advance by email to boardmail@ccboe.com. A Town Hall page will be set up on the CCPS website, www.ccboe.com. All questions and answers will be posted following the meeting.

Retirement planning session

The Charles County Retired School Personnel Association, the State of Maryland Pension System, along with the Office of Human Resources, is hosting a closed retirement planning session for Charles County Public Schools employees who are enrolled in the State of Maryland Pension System.

The session will be from 5 – 8:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 18, in the Staff Development Room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Guest speakers and retirement planning handouts, as well as light refreshments, will be provided. Contact Janice Spatz, 301-934-2146 or jspatz@comcast.net, to RSVP by Nov. 6. Questions about CCPS retirement benefits can be directed to cwarner@ccboe.com or 301-934-7459.

CCPS hires more than 200 new teachers this year

The Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Office of Human Resources is continuing its efforts to hire staff for the 2015-16 school year and focus on teacher recruitment and retention. As of Tuesday, a total of 217 teacher vacancies had been filled with openings in areas such as special education and mathematics. Teacher vacancies are covered by long-term substitutes until permanent teachers are hired. Pamela Murphy, executive director of human resources, presented a staffing update to the Board of Education last week during their monthly meeting. From May 1 to Aug. 26, a total of 1,113 teacher applications were reviewed by human resources staff with an average of five applications submitted per vacancy. More than 67 percent of new teachers are from states outside of Maryland.

Planned recruitment efforts include a focus on increasing the number of student teachers, and providing them with a screen-

ing interview for future positions. Additionally, all first-year teachers are paired with a mentor to support them during their first year with CCPS. To further support teachers and

focus on retention, members of school-based instructional leadership teams serve as mentors to second- and third-year teachers in need of continued support.

For the 2015-16 school year, human resources has filled more than 117 permanent support staff vacancies and screened over 3,000 applications. According to Murphy, the average number

of applications received for a permanent instructional assistant position is 150 per vacancy.

On Sept. 16, human resources helped to host a new teacher reception at Middleton Hall. More than 50 newly hired teachers attended the reception, which is sponsored annually by the Nu Zeta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.



Board of Education Chairman Virginia McGraw, center, talks with Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School Principal Kristin Shields, right, and her new art teacher, Sarah Miller, left, at the New Teacher Reception held Sept. 16 at Middleton Hall.

Student AP scores increase; SAT scores dip

Charles County's students' scores increased on Advanced Placement (AP) exams; decreased on the SAT; and remained flat on the ACT, according to data recently released by the College Board and ACT, Inc.

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) average score on AP exams rose 8.5 percent, up from 2.23 in 2014 to 2.42 in 2015. It is the first significant increase in the past five years. "Taking Advanced Placement classes in high school is one of the best ways to

prepare our students for future study and success. AP classes are the most rigorous, and we encourage students to take the courses as a way to challenge themselves," Superintendent Kimberly Hill said. County AP results are available at <http://www.ccboe.com/aboutus/2015CountyAP.pdf>.

While the number of students taking the SAT increased, average scores decreased. The average score for the class of 2015 was 1,445, down from 1,462 in 2014. State averages

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Notebook

On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are new CCPS principals. Pictured, from left, are Susan McCormick, John Hanson Middle School; Kim McClarin, Theodore G. Davis Middle School; and Deborah Brown, Mary B. Neal Elementary School.

Celebrating a healthy breakfast

CCPS recently highlighted the importance of starting the school day in a healthy way by offering free breakfast to all students from Sept. 7 to Sept. 17. The free breakfast initiative highlighted the success of the CCPS breakfast program, which has grown from serving 3,000 students per day in 2010 to 9,000 per day in 2014. Last week, CCPS provided more than 12,000 breakfasts to students, with an expected similar participation rate this week.

Follow us on Twitter

Did you now that Charles County Public Schools maintains a Twitter page? Follow us on www.twitter.com/CCPS for system updates, news, facts and more. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kimberly Hill also maintains a Twitter page. Follow her @ccpsupt.

24-hour information line

Charles County Public Schools posts school news, employee and student accomplishments, inclement weather closures and delays, and calendar information on a 24-hour information line. Call 301-932-6656 or 301-934-7410. The line is updated twice a week and immediately when inclement weather decisions are made.

Now airing...

Airing now on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12 is a new episode of News-Break, a feature show that highlights Charles County Public Schools students and staff. The episode features a national program Maurice J. McDonough High School students participated in called Breaking Down The Walls, the annual Charles County College Fair and highlights the September Board of Education meeting. Visit www.cbboe.com/ccboetv/ for a programming schedule. CCPS has several student anchors that help film NewsBreak. See page 3 for a story on the anchors serving for the 2015-16 school year.

National Board Certified Teachers



Beth Sorsby



Generalist/Early Childhood

Position held: Reading Resource Teacher at Berry Elementary School

Years of teaching experience: 14

Years with Charles County Public Schools: 14

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Education/Early Childhood Education, Ohio University

Master of Education in Reading, Towson University

Memorable Moment:

When I was teaching kindergarten, we did a reading in the community event. We went to one of the neighborhoods that is zoned for Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School with books and snacks for the students. We spent time in the community reading with the students and then they got to pick two books to keep. One of the students I had taught the year before was reading one of the books to me, when our principal walked by us. She asked the boy, "Who taught you how to read so well?" He replied "Miss Winkler" (my maiden name) with a big smile on his face. It melted my heart. I love helping students discover the joy of reading!



College Board

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also declined. Participation countywide increased from 613 in 2014 to 742 in 2015, a 4.8 percent gain. Students' average score on the critical reading section is 490; the average math score is 487; and the average writing score is 468.

The SAT is used by many colleges as part of an admissions process and designed to demonstrate a student's mastery of certain subjects. Only scores for graduating seniors are included in the 2015 report. Students in the Class of 2015 were offered more than \$62 million in scholarships. SAT results for 2015 college-bound seniors are posted on the CCPS website at <http://www.cbboe.com/PDF/testscores/sat2015.pdf>.

A growing number of colleges are also using college readiness scores from

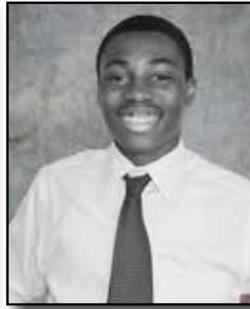
the ACT, the nation's other major college readiness exam, for admission. Statewide, the ACT has been making dramatic gains in participation, and CCPS is following the trend, Hill said. CCPS students have increased participation on the ACT during the past several years, and for the past three years, more students took the ACT than the SAT. In 2015, 923 students took the ACT, compared to 915 in 2014 and 782 in 2013. Many students take both the SAT and ACT. CCPS scores on the ACT remained flat. Students' 2015 ACT composite score was 19.6, down from 19.7 in 2014 and up from 19.3 in 2013. The ACT tests in four areas: English, reading, science and mathematics. ACT results are available at <http://www.cbboe.com/aboutus/ACT2015data.pdf>.



Morgan Abresch



Aaryn Baker



Jaren Jamison



Jasmine Mitchell



Paul Morrissey



Hunter Stempin



Maria Valdisera

High school students give the News to Know as anchors for CCPS Television

Seven Charles County Public high school students were selected to serve as broadcast anchors for original programming featured on the school system's educational television stations – Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12. These students will rotate anchoring episodes of NewsBreak, a show that highlights Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) programs, students and staff, as well as conduct interviews and research for other original programming.

The anchors for the 2015-16 school year are:

- Morgan Abresch, junior, La Plata High School;
- Aaryn Baker, senior, Thomas Stone High School;
- Jaren Jamison, senior, Westlake High School;
- Jasmine Mitchell, senior, North Point High School;
- Paul Morrissey, senior, North Point;
- Hunter Stempin, senior, Maurice J. McDonough High School; and
- Maria Valdisera, senior, La Plata.

This is Abresch's first year serving as a student anchor. She is active in theatre at La Plata and is historian of the thespian troupe. She enjoys doing stage make up and plans to attend either a college or beauty school after she graduates.

Baker is a first-year anchor and is enrolled in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at Stone. She is a member of mock trial and the school choir as well as the National Society of High School Scholars. Baker's favorite subjects are French and English. She plans to study communications or journalism after she graduates.

Jamison is also a first-year anchor and is involved in Westlake's theatre program. He has held several roles in theatre and musical productions at Westlake since he was a freshman. His favorite subject is history and he plans to attend Howard University after he graduates to study broadcast journalism.

Mitchell is an honor roll student and serving as an anchor for the first time this school year. She is enrolled in the engineering program

at North Point and enjoys English and theatre. She is a member of four national honor societies and the student government association. She plans to attend college after she graduates.

Morrissey is a returning anchor from last year and is an honor roll student. He is president of North Point's Future Business Leaders of America chapter and is the Class of 2016 treasurer. He is also a student athlete and participates in swimming and lacrosse, and manages the varsity volleyball team. He plans to study marketing and international business after he graduates.

Stempin is an honor roll student and is serving as an anchor for the first time this school year. At McDonough, he is president of the drama club and National Honor Society. He enjoys theatre and social studies, and participates in the school band and *It's Academic*. Outside of school, Stempin coaches and plays competitive ice hockey with the Southern Maryland Sabres Ice Hockey Club. He plans to study political science and communications after he graduates.

Valdisera is a first year student anchor and is involved in the theatre program at La Plata. She is a member of La Plata's a cappella group, Unplugged, and enjoys English, government and history. She plans to attend the University of North Carolina at Wilmington to study English and musical theatre after she graduates.

During the spring of each school year, CCPS communications staff visits each high school to talk to students and principals about the anchor audition process and to solicit student interest. Students audition for the positions, of which up to eight students are selected to serve each year, and those interested in future careers in journalism, broadcasting or communications are encouraged to apply.

For more information on the audition process, Comcast Channel 96 or Verizon FiOS Channel 12, contact the CCPS communications department at ccpstv96@ccboe.com.

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301-934-7220
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Editor/Writers

Katie O'Malley-Simpson
Shelley Mackey
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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.

Communications department receives national recognition

The Charles County Public Schools communications department recently received four top awards in the 2015 National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) National School Communications Awards program.

Department staff received a Golden Achievement Award, which recognizes exemplary work in all aspects of school public relations, communication, marketing and engagement. The award highlights the communications plan used for graduation 2015, which included efforts to communicate the change of graduation ceremony locations for six public high schools back to a venue in Charles County. The award is among more than 90 Golden Achievement Awards distributed to school systems nationwide.

Two videos produced by communications staff also received awards in the Publications and Electronic Media portion of the awards program. This area of the contest recognizes outstanding work in all types and forms of education communication, including print, electronic, video, audio, websites and social media.

A feature athlete video highlighting a La Plata High School wrestler received an Award of Merit, which is the second highest electronic media award given by NSPRA. A video featuring North Point

High School's Science, Technology and Industry (STI) programs received an Honorable Mention award.

Staff also received an additional Honorable Mention award for a branding package for the James E. Richmond Science Center. Materials submitted included a customized Science Center color folder and brochure, flyers created to advertise feature events scheduled at the Science Center and staff business cards.

Communications department staff includes Katie O'Malley-Simpson, director of communications; Kyle Graves, video production specialist; Kara Gross, communications multimedia assistant; Shelley Mackey, communications specialist; and Gary Nagel, web developer.

This is the third consecutive year that the department has received awards through the NSPRA Communications Contest. Each year, NSPRA sponsors a national communications contest to recognize school districts for their efforts in school public relations. NSPRA was chartered in 1935 and provides school communication training and services to school system leaders throughout the United States, Canada, and the U.S. Dept. of Defense Dependents Schools worldwide. For more information on NSPRA, visit www.nspr.org.

Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.ccboc.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job Openings

Special Education Inclusion Resource Teacher – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position. Master's degree and a minimum of five years teaching experience required. Advanced professional certificate with endorsement in special education or dual certification preferred. Apply by Sept. 19.
Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent of Supporting Services – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Sept. 28.
Content Specialist for Career and Technology Education (CTE) – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree preferred. Apply by Sept. 28.
Kindergarten Instructional Assistant – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

Apply by Dec. 31.
Special Education Instructional Assistant – Emotional Adjustment (EA) program – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.
Life Skills Instructional Assistant – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.
Special Education Instructional Assistant – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.
Multiple Intensity Teaching (MIT) program/Transition Academic and Adaptive Skills Class (TAASC) Instructional Assistant – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.
Literacy Instructional Assistant – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.
School Psychologists – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10.5-month positions. School Psychology Certification required

and Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential preferred.
Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Facilitator – Location to be determined, 11-month position.
Instructional Resource Teacher – Location to be determined, 11-month position.
Bilingual Family and Community Outreach Facilitator – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month, part-time position.
Project Managers – Annex 1, 12-month positions. Bachelor's degree and a minimum of three years experience in the construction industry required; or eight years of relevant experience in construction and trades in place of a bachelor's degree.
Test Coordinators – Openings at Maurice J. McDonough and North Point high schools, 10-month positions. Candidates must hold or be eligible for a professional teaching certification and have a minimum of five years teaching experience.