



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Schools, offices closed

Schools and offices are closed Monday, Jan. 20 in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Schools are closed for students on Jan. 21 for semester break.

Board meeting

The Board of Education of Charles County will meet 1 p.m. Jan. 14 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. Recognition starts at 4:30 p.m. with public forum at 6 p.m.

Robotics volunteers sought

Volunteers are needed for Feb. 1 and 15 VEX Robotics events set to take place at Theodore G. Davis Middle School. Interested volunteers can sign up by completing an online application. There is one application per each event, as volunteer shifts and need differ by event. Volunteers must be 16 or older and will receive lunch, training and a volunteer certificate. Volunteer duties do not include the direct supervision of children. Interested volunteers do not need to complete the CCPS volunteer screening process. For more information and to find links to sign up online, go to <https://tinyurl.com/tnwnv7t>.

4th-grade essay contest

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) fourth graders can participate in an essay contest for the March 21 Maryland Day Celebration in St. Mary's City. Students can represent CCPS and the county with their entry in the essay contest explaining "Why is Charles County a great place to live?" Essays should be at least 150 words but no more than 350 — handwritten or typed. The deadline for submissions is Feb. 3 and students can submit entries to their classroom teacher. Contact ghopkins@cc-boe.com for more information.



JROTC cadets celebrate at Military Ball

Maurice J. McDonough High School JROTC instructor Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Wagenbrenner, right, presents McDonough seniors with certificates at the annual Col. Donald M. Wade Joint Services Military Ball. The event explores military traditions while thanking seniors for their participation in JROTC. Seniors from left are Timothy Breen, Amber Minor, Candace Neeb, Kalah Sauers, Lucas Taylor and Darrell White.

PE teachers honored by state organization

Three Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) physical education (PE) teachers were recently honored by SHAPE Maryland, an organization that promotes and supports health and wellness.

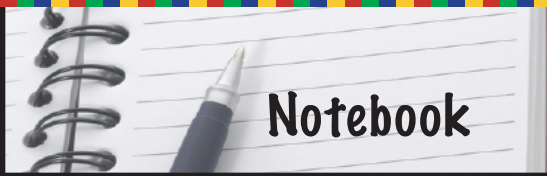
The state chapter of the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) named Michelle Ignaszewski of the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center as Maryland's Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year. Brittany Aley of Benjamin Stoddert Middle School and Diana Gyuras of Billingsley Elementary School each received the Simon McNeely Award given to those for outstanding teaching and service in health, physical education, recreation or dance.

SHAPE Maryland recently held a con-



Michelle Ignaszewski, physical education teacher at the F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, was named Maryland's Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year.

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On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at its December meeting. Linda Breiting, math resource teacher, Theodore G. Davis Middle School, left; and Catherine Graff, prekindergarten teacher, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School.

Something to sing about

The real life "Pitch Perfect" takes the stage 7 p.m. Feb. 22 at St. Charles High School. A cappella groups from metro-area high schools will compete in the Mid-Atlantic quarterfinals including groups from Maurice J. McDonough, North Point, St. Charles and Thomas Stone high schools. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/wvf-bu3s> for tickets and <https://tinyurl.com/uqvrte> for more information. The top two finishers of the Feb. 22 competition will advance to the Varsity Vocals International Championship of High School A Cappella (ICHSA) Mid-Atlantic semifinals.

Scholarship fund open

The Charles County Scholarship Fund offers more than 50 scholarships to Charles County high school seniors. The application window is now open and closes March 1. The application is posted at <https://www.ccoeb.com/ss/charles-county-scholarship-fund-inc/>. Requirements include a resume, a personal statement that details a student's academic and career goals, two letters of recommendation, a high school transcript and copy of the first semester senior year report card.

Weather codes

Learn more about the weather codes used to inform employees of working conditions at <https://www.ccoeb.com/myccps/index.php/inclement-weather-codes-procedures>. Notification is made to radio and television stations at the same time school closings are announced (radio and television stations are also listed on Page 10 in the Parent Handbook and School Calendar). Radio and television stations do not always run CCPS information. When schools are closed for students and there is no code announcement, offices are open. Only 12-month employees follow the code system.

In Memoriam John H. Bloom Jr.

Former Superintendent of Charles County Public Schools

April 18, 1932-Dec. 21, 2019

John H. Bloom, Jr., 87, of Indian Head died Dec. 21, 2019, after a brief illness. He was an educator in Charles County for 35 years, culminating his career as Superintendent of Schools.

He worked tirelessly in support of the Town of Indian Head, Charles County and the state of Maryland.

He was president of the Indian Head Defense Alliance, the Public School Superintendent's Association of Maryland and the Charles County Library Board of Trustees. He also served on the Board of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative for 16 years, was a member of the Maryland Commission for Public Television for 24 years, and a member of the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association. He also served as chairman of the Southern Maryland Committee, Tri-County Council and vice chairman of the Charles County Economic Development Commission.

Born April 18, 1932, in Mount Vernon, NY, he was the son of the late Laura (Wilson) and the late John H. Bloom.

He moved to Indian Head as a child and graduated from Lackey High School.

He received a bachelor of science



John H. Bloom Jr.

and masters of science from the University of Maryland.

He married his wife, Judy, on Aug. 20, 1955. After serving in the U.S. Army, he worked in the Charles County public school system until his retirement in 1993.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Judith Jenkins Bloom.

He is survived by his five children, John H.

Bloom III and his wife, Julie, of Annapolis; Marilyn B. Bloom and her husband, Lewis "Skip" Long, of Williston, Fla.; Frank J. Bloom and his wife, Mary, of Ellicott City; Anne W. Bloom of San Francisco; and William G. Bloom and his wife, Betsy, of Alexandria, Va.; three sisters, Janet Ehler of Atlanta; Claudine Eastburn and her husband, George, of Gainesville, Ga.; and Sharon Lew and her husband, Melvin, of Ashburn, Va.; 10 grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.

A Mass of Christian Burial was Jan. 4, 2020, at St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Indian Head. Interment followed at St. Charles Cemetery, Indian Head.

In lieu of flowers contributions can be made to Charles County Scholarship Fund in memory of John H. Bloom.

The Breakfast Club

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is offering free breakfast for students from Jan. 2 to 10. Students can get a jump-start on the new year with an opportunity to start the day with a healthy breakfast. Breakfast items include milk, cereal, juice and fruit. CCPS menu options are posted on the school system website at [ccoeb.com](https://www.ccoeb.com).

SHAPE

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vention in Ocean City that allows PE educators an opportunity to network and share ideas.

Teaching lifelong lessons

Ignaszewski went into teaching because she wanted to help other people. Choosing physical education ensures she is giving students skills that they will carry throughout their lives. "I found the field of physical education and health to be the most valuable," she said. "Everything that you are taught in those two areas you can use for the rest of your life. It doesn't matter what I do in life, I'm going to have to be healthy and active to live a long life."

Adapted PE is instruction that has been modified to allow for a person with a disability to participate in a physical activity that is as suitable for them as it is for their peers who don't have a disability.

Some of the modifications include different equipment, a shorter distance or lower targets. "Every student I work with is different, each one presents their own challenges. I love the idea of being able to come up with things that work for them," Ignaszewski said. "It's not the same thing for every child, but it's meeting what their needs are." Ignaszewski teaches students at Gwynn on Wednesdays and travels around to half the schools in CCPS during the week — her colleague, Seth Rak, goes to the other half. They work with students in prekindergarten through 12th grade.

"PE is a great area for students who may learn differently. Students come in and just think they're having fun and don't realize they're learning at the same time," Ignaszewski said. "I'm a big advocate for having kids be active as much as possible and learning through movement."

Setting the foundation for a healthy life

Gyuras was studying to be a PE teacher, then her father saw her class schedule that read more like a list of games and sports. He was footing the bill for school, so Gyuras switched to elementary education, spending 16 years as a first-grade teacher.

It was a blessing in disguise, really. "He gave me a great gift," Gyuras said, who is now dually certified to teach in a classroom and a gym. She has been a PE teacher for nine years spending eight at J.C. Parks Elementary School before moving to Billingsley Elementary School which opened its doors to students on Sept. 3.

"It's an exceptional place to be," Gyuras said of becoming a Bobcat. "It has reignited my love for being a teacher."

Gyuras stays up to date on subject matter, networking with other teachers and going online to see what students are learning and liking. Gyuras brought back Speed Stacks from the SHAPE conference to use with students. Speed Stacks are used for sport stacking — quickly stacking cups in various patterns. The exercise could look like kids goofing off, but it is developing eye-hand coordination and dexterity, skills that translate to other sports and activities. Gyuras would like to start a sport stacking club at Billingsley, eventually competing against teams from other schools. She points to research that shows a connection between brain development and physical activity. "The more active a student is, the better they will do in class," Gyuras said. "Exercise boosts their mood and their ability to focus."



Brittany Aley, above center, goes through a warm up exercise with sixth graders JayLyn Locke, left, and Dylan Parker. Right, fourth grader Elysia Richardson, left, learns about Sport Stacking from Diana Gyuras.



Guiding students to healthy choices

As a student at the University of Maryland, Aley was set on becoming a physical therapist. She always had an interest in anatomy and exercise psychology. One of her professors, Dr. Elizabeth Brown, helped Aley find her niche which led to her becoming a teacher.

After earning a bachelor's degree in kinesiological sciences and a master's in curriculum and instruction from Maryland, Aley became an elementary school PE teacher for Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

She started at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School two years ago. The shift from elementary to middle school was a big one. Having learned athletic fundamentals and skills in elementary school, students in middle school start thinking more about strategy and tactics used in different sports while better developing their abilities.

There is also the health component in PE. Aley talks with students about the importance of fitness and making good choices. She talks to them about exercise and how it can benefit them in other areas of their lives — physically and emotionally. In middle school, subjects broached could vary from alcohol and substance abuse, to the dangers of smoking and vaping, to puberty and reproduction.

"I love middle school," Aley said. "Being able to connect with students and having them buy into what I'm saying to them."

Four other PE teachers with CCPS were awarded scholarships to attend the SHAPE MD conference including Alison Cheney and Rebekah Colatruglio, both of North Point High School, Matt Golonka of Theodore G. Davis Middle School and Kelsey Mills of St. Charles High School.

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301-932-6610
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Shelley Mackey
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Parents, students flock to Scholarship Fair to prepare for future

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) Scholarship Fair was a success with 35 local Charles County scholarship organizations registered in advance to present information to more than 450 junior and senior high school students, and their parents.

Del. Debra Davis, Del. Edith Patterson and Sen. Arthur Ellis attended to provide information on legislative scholarships. Representatives from the U.S. Army and U.S. Marines Corps were at the fair, as well.

Parents and students had the opportunity to attend workshops on the NCAA Clearinghouse and supporting their child through the college application process.

Parents and students met Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and 529 Saving Program representatives to ask questions about state financial aid and how to save for college. CSM's financial aid team provided parents with computers to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form.

"The evening was a huge success and a great opportunity for CCPS students to meet face-to-face with local Charles County organizations and to get valuable information on how to apply for their scholarships," said Alicia Jones, CCPS supervising school counselor, who organized the fair with Christian Zimmermann, director of financial aid at CSM.

Personnel

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

Secretary — Maurice J. McDonough High School, 11-month position. Good computer literacy skills including MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint are required. Applicants should have the ability to compile data accurately and concisely, and work well with students, parents and staff. Apply by Jan. 6.
Special Education Teacher EA Program — St. Charles High School, 10-month position. Apply by Feb. 28.
Language Arts Teacher — All middle school, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.
Mathematics Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.
Physical Education Teacher — Location to be determined. 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Science Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

Social Studies Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by March 27.

English Teacher — All high schools, 10-month position. Apply by March 31.

Prekindergarten Title I Instructional Assistant — All Title I elementary schools, 10-month position. The ability to work in an instructional support role with pre-kindergarten children is required. Position open until filled.

Building Service Assistant Manager — All high schools, 12-month position. Applicants must be able to read and write effectively, and be physically capable of performing manual labor. This position calls for overtime in cases of emergency. Position open until filled.

Food Service Assistant Manager — All schools, 10-month position. A high school

diploma or the equivalent is required. A minimum of three years of experience in food service preferred. Must be ServeSafe certified within 12 months of taking the job. Position open until filled.

ESOL Teachers — All schools, 10-month position. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and meet certification requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Education for certification in English for Speakers of Other Languages. Position open until filled.

Art Teacher — All elementary schools, 10-month position. Position open until filled.

Extra Pay Positions

Head Softball Coach — Henry E. Lackey High School. Apply by March 20. Call 301-743-5431.

Head JV Girls Soccer Coach — La Plata High School. Apply by Jan. 30. Call 301-934-1100.