



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

It's show time

Henry E. Lackey High School will stage "Shakespeare in Hollywood" 6:30 p.m. Nov. 8 and 9. The show follows Shakespeare characters who are transported to 1930s Hollywood who land parts in a movie based on "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for students and CCPS badges are honored. "Cheaper by the Dozen" will be performed at North Point High School at 7 p.m. Nov. 8 and 9. Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$5 for students and senior citizens. The next weekend has "Band Geeks!" taking the stage at Maurice J. McDonough High School when a high school band has to march to the beat of its own drummer. Shows are 7 p.m. Nov. 14 to 16 with tickets \$12 for adults, \$10 for students, senior citizens and members of the military, and \$9 for thespians and children younger than 6. CCPS badges are honored with one ticket per badge. For tickets, go to www.mcdonoughdrama.com. For a list and description of more shows set to take the stage this fall, go to www.ccboe.com.

Veteran's Day in-service

An in-service day for all teachers and some instructional assistants is from 8 a.m. to noon Nov. 11. The schedule can be found on MyCCPS at www.ccboe.com. Click on the Staff Development button and then click on the bar reading Countywide In-Service Schedules. For more information about this or upcoming staff development trainings, call 301-934-7253.

Board to meet Nov. 12

The Board of Education will meet 1 p.m. Nov. 12 in the boardroom of the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata. Public forum is at 6 p.m. To view the agenda, go to In the News at www.ccboe.com and search Agenda.



Going (coco)nuts for Book Character Day

Dr. James Craik Elementary School held its annual Book Character Parade Oct. 31. Staff and students dress up as their favorite characters from literature for a parade with parents and family members stopping by to cheer them on. Members of the prekindergarten team dressed as coconut trees from "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom," a children's book that teaches the alphabet and counting skills. From left are Pamela Jenkins, an instructional assistant (IA), Ashleigh Fields-Guntow, a special education IA, Shannon Durst, a prekindergarten teacher and Katie Schneider, a prekindergarten special education teacher.

Governor selects D'Ambrosio for standards board

Louis D'Ambrosio, a longtime Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) educator and principal at Berry Elementary School, was recently selected by Gov. Larry Hogan to serve on the Maryland Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board. He is the first CCPS educator to be chosen to serve a three-year term on the Board.

D'Ambrosio said he applied to serve on the Board to advocate for teachers. "I want to stay involved with the people who are involved in making decisions for education and teaching standards in Maryland," he said.

D'Ambrosio's appointment was made official last month at the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Charles County, who administered the oath of office.

The Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board promotes quality education by establishing standards designed to ensure educational professional development includes high levels of knowledge and skills required to prepare all students for success. The governor appoints members to the Board and members serve three-year terms.

The Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation to create the Board in 1991 as an authority to develop rules and regulations for teacher certification and professional development requirements.

See D'AMBROSIO, Page 3

Notebook

On the cover

Pictured on the front cover from left are Christopher Wogamon, physical rehabilitative teacher, Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; Diane Sumler, second-grade teacher, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School; and Julie Andrews, chemistry teacher, La Plata High School.

CTE Roadshow

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) department staff is taking the show on the road with the CTE Roadshow. Department representatives will stop by middle schools this month to talk to parents and students about CTE programs available in the county. CTE programs are available at all seven Charles County high schools, as well as the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center. Representatives visited John Hanson Middle School earlier this week. They will visit Milton M. Somers at 6 p.m. Nov. 12; General Smallwood at 6 p.m. Nov. 12; Matthew Henson at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 13; Piccowaxen at 6 p.m. Nov. 14; Benjamin Stoddert at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 14; Theodore G. Davis 6:30 p.m. Nov. 14; and Mattawoman at 6 p.m. Nov. 19. A CTE open house for eighth graders will be 6 p.m. Nov. 20 at North Point High School for the school's CTE programs.

Open enrollment

Annual open enrollment for employee health benefits is available until Friday, Nov. 22. Employees can either join a health care plan or make changes to their coverage. Those who do not make any changes, the current elections will continue for the 2020 calendar year. Flexible spending account (FSA) enrollment is not automatic, employees must enroll every year. For more information, go to MyCCPS on www.ccboe.com and click the Open Enrollment image at the top of the page.

Schools/offices closed

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) schools and offices will be closed Nov. 27 to 29 for the Thanksgiving holiday.



Sheila Hettel, left, an instructional resource teacher at Milton M. Somers Middle School, checks in with eighth grader India Riddick who is enrolled in the school's online, interactive math class.

Students at Somers pilot online math program

At the start of this school year, Milton M. Somers Middle School was without a math teacher for some of its eighth graders. Somers had a math vacancy for about 90 students enrolled in grade-level math. Vacancies in certain academic areas such as math and science are common; solutions often include long-term substitutes or pulling other staff to fill vacancies. In this case for Somers, the administrative leadership team worked with Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff to launch a pilot online program through Proximity Learning.

Through Proximity Learning, students participate in an online interactive classroom managed by a certificated teacher. Proximity Learning teachers are highly qualified certificated teachers who provide instruction, lesson plans, assessments and assignments. Each class features a different Proximity Learning teacher.

Class is set up in a computer lab with audio equipment provided by Proximity Learning. During their class period, students are monitored and assisted in person by a long-term substitute. Though in this type of class, the long-term substitute has a much larger role. Lakisha Dent-Ackwith oversees the three classes of eighth-grade general math students. After spending years working in the legal field, Dent-Ackwith began to substitute at the high-school level before taking this unique position at

Somers. She has a background in public administration and received her bachelor's degree from Bowie State University.

In addition to classroom management, Dent-Ackwith helps students with assignments, tests, class content and more. She lesson plans with the Proximity Learning teachers in order to keep the class on track and is part of grade-level team meetings at Somers. Dent-Ackwith has daily contact with each of the three virtual teachers.

Coupled with the online class are opportunities for students to meet with Dent-Ackwith for extra help. Dent-Ackwith hosts lunch and learn sessions weekly on Fridays for students who need to review class material. During the week, Dent-Ackwith helps the online teachers review course content, student grades and assignments, and helps to problem solve areas of concerns shared with her by students.

"I have daily contact with each teacher. We review lessons and try to come up with fun ways to make the content engaging. I also host lunch and learns, which are growing in size each week. I also recruit students who are doing well in the class to attend the lunch sessions. Peer-to-peer help is great for the kids," Dent-Ackwith said.

To read more about Proximity Learning at Somers, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y5ouf92x>.

D'AMBROSIO

continued from Page 1

D'Ambrosio will serve as one of 25 appointed members to the Board over the next three years. Throughout his term, D'Ambrosio plans to influence the teacher certification process. "I want to be able to help influence the way the certification process is working. We are experiencing a teacher shortage, as are other states, but the qualifications for teachers should remain rigorous as they are tasked with helping children achieve success. I hope through my position that I can help to bring highly qualified teacher candidates to Maryland," D'Ambrosio said.

This is not the first state-level educational experience for D'Ambrosio. He recently finished a term serving on the Maryland State Board of Education's Task Force on Student Discipline Regulations. D'Ambrosio was part of a task force subcommittee charged with reviewing state and county discipline guidelines and data, school climate survey data, identifying problematic practices and drafting recommendations for change.

The task force met several times this spring. D'Ambrosio was part of the subcommittee who presented a final report and recommendations to the Maryland Board of Education in June.

D'Ambrosio found out about the Professional Standards Board through his role with the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP).

He joined MAESP and became the Charles County representative in 2007. He served as MAESP president last school year and helped to lead more than 900 members from each of the 24 school systems in Maryland. D'Ambrosio is the first principal from CCPS to serve as MAESP president.

A strong supporter of public education, D'Ambrosio has also been invited to speak at several conferences and workshops. Next month he will attend the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education National School Leadership Summit. The summit will focus on equity-based and culturally responsive teaching and learning environments, cultivating a community of care and support for students, and engag-



Berry Elementary School Principal Louis D'Ambrosio stops by a kindergarten classroom to work with students, including Victor Brower.

ing families as partners in achieving school goals.

In 2018, D'Ambrosio was part of a panel of school leaders that testified during an event on Capitol Hill about Title II funding under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The funding supports school leaders with professional development opportunities to support student needs. The event was co-sponsored by AFSA, the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. D'Ambrosio said he enjoys serving in roles in which he can advocate for educators. "I will take advantage of any opportunity to support teachers and educators, and enhance what we do in order to support student success," D'Ambrosio said.

CCPS expands student identification badge program to more schools

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is expanding the student identification (ID) badge program to all high schools, Matthew Henson and General Smallwood middle schools and Billingsley Elementary School. These schools will begin to implement the program next week. The use of ID badges provides school employees immediate recognition of who belongs in the school. Badges are also part of the CCPS safety and security strategy.

School administrators will issue each student an ID badge featuring their name, school of attendance, class grade and school year. The IDs feature a barcode at the bottom for use with procedures such as tracking student late arrivals and early dismissals. Each school

has an iPad for use with the barcode that connects to the school system's student information system, Synergy.

Students will also be able to use their badge barcode to purchase meals in the school cafeteria and check out books in the school library. Principals can implement additional uses for ID badges at their discretion. Students are responsible for wearing their ID badges daily. A main goal of the program is for all students to have a form of identification with them during the school day.

CCPS plans to complete a systemwide expansion of the program to include all students with an ID badge by the start of next school year. CCPS began its student ID requirement last school year in a pilot program that includ-

ed La Plata High School, John Hanson Middle School and J.P. Ryon Elementary School.

Badges feature student photos taken by Lifetouch, which also provides CCPS with the initial set of badges at each school. Students who lose or misplace their badge will have to wear a temporary one until CCPS staff can issue a replacement. Principals also can identify consequences by school for the loss of a badge or if the student forgets to wear it during the school day.

New students will have their picture taken at school and be provided a badge shortly thereafter. CCPS is using funding from the Maryland Safe Schools and Security Grant issued by the Maryland Center for School Safety to support the badge program.

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Personnel

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

Special Education Instructional Assistant for ACHIEVE program —Matthew Henson Middle School, 10-month position. High school diploma required and experience working with people who have special needs is preferred. Apply by Nov. 18.

ESOL Teacher — All schools, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 31.

Title I Tutor —Position open until filled.

Share good news about your school, classroom with PR liaisons

Each school has a public relations liaison who works with communications staff to highlight achievements, events and everyday victories taking place in Charles County Public Schools. Each liaison has an iPad — or uses their phone — to snap photos and record video for the school's social media outlets, and for use on CCPS's social media and publications.

Liaisons also help parent-teacher organizations record meetings and upload them to YouTube for those who can't attend the meeting in person. The following is a list of liaisons by school, along with their email and job title.

Elementary schools

C. Paul Barnhart — Alycia Smith, asmith@ccboe.com, technology facilitator;

Berry — Kerry Brinkhurst, kbrinkhurst@ccboe.com, second-grade teacher;

Billingsley — Monique Burton/Andrea Landis, mburton@ccboe.com, alandis@ccboe.com, secretary to the principal and special education teacher, respectively;

Dr. Gustavus Brown — Donna Fowler/Yvette Rosas, dfowler@ccboe.com, yrosas@ccboe.com, technology facilitator and administrative instructional assistant, respectively;

Dr. James Craik — Katie Cooper, kcooper@ccboe.com, fifth-grade teacher;

Williams A. Diggs — Lisa Wehausen, lwehausen@ccboe.com, instructional specialist;

Gale-Bailey — Kelly Kavlick/Wadiya Davenport, kmkavlick@ccboe.com, wdavenport@ccboe.com, reading resource teacher and administrative instructional assistant, respectively;

Dr. Thomas L. Higdon — Stephanie Campbell, sdcampbell@ccboe.com, learning resource teacher;

Indian Head — Joni Rooney, jrooney@ccboe.com, learning resource teacher;

Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer — Deidra Fuller/Tanisha Goulbourne, dfuller@ccboe.com, tgoulbourne@ccboe.com, secretary to the principal and instructional resource teacher, respectively;

Malcolm — Rebecca Hoover, rhoover@ccboe.com, technology facilitator;

T.C. Martin — Laura Liverman, lliverman@ccboe.com, technology facilitator;

Mary H. Matula — Trish Koch, pkoch@ccboe.com, library media specialist;

Arthur Middleton — Kelly Foye, kfoye@ccboe.com, special education instructional assistant;

Walter J. Mitchell — Jocelyn James-Smith/Nicholas Gardiner, jjames-smith@ccboe.com, ngardiner@ccboe.com, secretary to the principal and fifth-grade teacher, respectively;

Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy — Rachel Proctor, rproctor@ccboe.com, art teacher;

tor@ccboe.com, art teacher;

Dr. Samuel A. Mudd — Nathaniel Yake, nyake@ccboe.com, technology facilitator;

Mary B. Neal — Katrina Garvey, kgarvey@ccboe.com, secretary to the principal;

J.C. Parks — Ashley Lyles, alyles@ccboe.com, technology facilitator;

J.P. Ryon — Laura Metz, lmetz@ccboe.com, instructional resource teacher;

Eva Turner — Nicole Shannon, nshannon@ccboe.com, parent liaison;

William B. Wade — Heidi Furman/Bonnie Stern, hfurman@ccboe.com, bthomasstern@ccboe.com, library media specialist and special education instructional assistant, respectively;

Middle schools

Theodore G. Davis — Michelle Malloy, mmalloy@ccboe.com, data specialist;

John Hanson — Andrew Youngkin/Letia Cooper, cyoungkin@ccboe.com, lpcooper@ccboe.com, library media specialist and social studies teacher;

Matthew Henson — Heather White, hwhite@ccboe.com, learning resource teacher;

Mattawoman — Joseph Evans, jevans@ccboe.com, science teacher;

Piccowaxen — LisaSue Smirolodo, lsmirolodo@ccboe.com, library media specialist;

General Smallwood — Richard Weis, rweis@ccboe.com, special education teacher;

Milton M. Somers — Nicole Smith, nmsmith@ccboe.com, school secretary;

Benjamin Stoddert — Stephanie Vinson, svinson@ccboe.com, computer teacher;

High schools

Henry E. Lackey — Heather Alvarez, halvarez@ccboe.com, high school resource teacher;

La Plata — Kevin Barry, kbarry@ccboe.com, social studies teacher;

Maurice J. McDonough — Gwen Todd, gtodd@ccboe.com, high school resource teacher;

North Point — Jonica Gaskill, jgaskill@ccboe.com, English teacher;

St. Charles — Matt Helming, mhelming@ccboe.com, technology teacher;

Thomas Stone — Autem Clay, anclay@ccboe.com, administrative intern;

Westlake — Tavon Myers, tmyers@ccboe.com, high school resource teacher;

Centers

Robert D. Stethem — Jermisha Farmer, jpfarmer@ccboe.com, special education instructional assistant; and

F.B. Gwynn — Julia Reppucci, jreppucci@ccboe.com, special education teacher.