



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Virtual Academy open house

Virtual Academy will hold a meet and greet 6 p.m. May 22 for parents and prospective students. The academy is an educational program offered at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center and is an extension of the regular high school program. It provides a hybrid of face-to-face instruction and online high school courses. The academy accepts students who are rising sophomores, juniors and seniors. Stethem is at 7775 Marshall Corner Road in Pomfret.

Project Grad donations sought

Monetary donations and donations of items that a graduating high school senior can use are being accepted for Project Graduation. Restaurants can sign up to donate food for the three-night event held May 30 to June 1. Monetary donations may be made by check to Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) with Project Graduation in the memo. Send checks to CCPS, Attn: Patti Feldman, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, MD 20646. Restaurants that want to donate food can contact Tracy Newbold at 301-392-5575 or tnewbold@ccboe.com. Donations of raffle prizes are being accepted. To donate items for raffle prizes, contact Jenn Conte at jconte@ccboe.com.

Go B19 or go home

Graduation ceremonies for high school seniors in the Class of 2019 are planned for May 30, May 31 and June 1 at the CCPS Convocation Center located at North Point High School in Waldorf. The ceremony for North Point is Thursday, May 30. Ceremonies for St. Charles, La Plata and Thomas Stone high schools are Friday, May 31. Seniors from Westlake, Henry E. Lackey and Maurice J. McDonough high schools graduate on Saturday, June 1. The ceremonies will be streamed live on ccboe.com. The Graduation 2019 page is at www.ccboe.com/index.php/graduation-2019.



No cracking under pressure

Dr. James Craik Elementary School students created contraptions in hopes of keeping an egg from cracking when Principal Michelle Beckwith, top left, PE teacher John Paust and Vice Principal Jason Deihl recently dropped them off the roof. Right, second grader Darren Larsen watches as his team's egg is launched from the roof. The activity was a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) reward.



Shnipes named county finalist for WaPo Teacher award

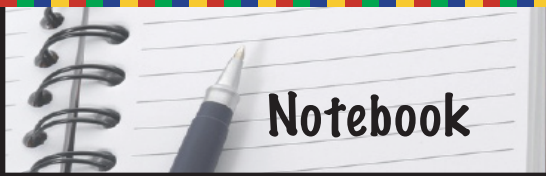
When La Plata High School English teacher Brooke Shnipes graduated from college, her plan was to attend law school. After realizing her true passion was English, she visited New York City to explore a career in publishing. "I had hoped to move to New York City and spend my days reading manuscripts and socializing with up-and-coming authors," she said. However, after her visit Shnipes realized she preferred to live in a smaller town and wanted a career in a field she could pursue both her passion and desire to pass on her love of English to others.

Shnipes is now in her ninth year of teaching at La Plata, a career choice she loves. "Teaching students to write on the college level and interpret literature confidently is

pretty much all I think about," she said. Her students both recognize and feel her enthusiasm toward teaching. Building their confidence to succeed is her number one priority. For her passion toward teaching and putting students first, Shnipes was recently named Charles County's finalist for the *Washington Post* Teacher of the Year award.

La Plata Principal Douglass Dolan said Shnipes was a standout choice to nominate for Teacher of the Year. "Ms. Shnipes has emerged as a true leader in the building; she works well with all students, staff, and parents; has an unparalleled work ethic; and epitomizes the belief that educators are the difference," Dolan wrote in a nomination letter.

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On the cover

Pictured on the cover are nominees for the 2019 Charles County Public Schools Teacher of the Year and the *Washington Post's* Teacher of the Year awards. Christine Turner, left, is a language arts teacher at Theodore G. Davis Middle School; Stephen Warner is a social studies teacher at Westlake High School; and Nancy Ahern is a kindergarten teacher at Indian Head Elementary School.

What's the plan?

A Prudential Pathways seminar is set for 5 to 6 p.m. June 3 on the importance of estate planning. The seminar will be held at Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School. To register, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y2abt7ly>. Email RetirementPathways@Prudential.com.

Enrichment camps

CCPS is sponsoring summer enrichment camps for students in kindergarten through Grade 9. Camps begin the week of June 24 and run through the week ending on Aug. 2. To register, go to <https://www.ccboe.com/index.php/summer-camps-2019>. Cost is \$90 per camp session.

Sports camps offered

CCPS is partnering with the Charles County Sheriff's Office to provide summer camps for students. There is a football camp for students in Grades 3 to 5. Badges for Baseball is for kids 9 to 14 years old and Ladies Leadership Soccer Camp is for girls 7 to 10 years old. To sign up for these or other summer camps, go to <https://www.ccboe.com/index.php/summer-camps-2019>.

Lunch on Us

Charles County Public Schools, in partnership with Charles County Advocacy Council for Children, Youth & Families, LifeStyles, Inc., Department of Social Services, No Kid Hungry, Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism, Charles County Public Library, Children's Aid Society, Tri-County Youth Services Bureau, Health Partners, The Arnold House, and other county agencies are offering a free summer lunch program for Charles County children 18 and younger. For a listing of times and locations, go to <https://www.ccboe.com/ss/summer-meals/>.

In Memoriam Steven Hawkins



Steven Hawkins

Steven Hawkins, a building service worker at Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School, passed away May 2, 2019.

"He was the kindest, sweetest man," Jenifer Principal Nancy Seifert said. "He was gentle and good with the kids."

Bernard Montgomery Jr., a building service worker at Jenifer, worked with Hawkins for 10 years.

He remembers Hawkins as a "jokester" who loved sports and music.

They would try to stump each other with games of "Name This Song."

"He was a good man," Montgomery said.

Tanya Dorsey, the building service manager at Jenifer, said she couldn't have asked for a better employee.

"He was a great guy. Anything he had, you had," she said.

Dorsey is on leave recovering from surgery and Hawkins would call to check in on her to see if she needed anything.

They had known each other for years and worked together for the past eight.

"I enjoyed every bit of it," she said.

Hawkins began working for Charles County Public Schools in 1992.

He worked at La Plata High School, as well Jenifer.

Hawkins is survived by his wife, Pam, and family and friends.

Visitation will be 10 to 11 a.m. May 14 at New Life Church in La Plata. A service will be 12:45 p.m. May 14 at New Life.

CCPS, Sheriff's Office fortify partnership

Superintendent Kimberly Hill and Sheriff Troy Berry renewed their commitment to the long-standing partnership between Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) and the Charles County Sheriff's Office (CCSO).

The superintendent and sheriff signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on April 17 that outlines expectations for special law enforcement services and programs to schools. Berry reiterated his commitment to the School Resource Officer (SRO) program that supplies one full-time SRO for each of the county's seven high schools and eight middle schools.

The goals of the SRO program are not only to provide safety for students and staff, but also to build relationships with students and school system staff to help reduce criminal offenses and incidents of school violence. In addition to their daily work inside the school, SROs also teach

Truth and Consequences classes at middle and high schools and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, starting in elementary school.

"This MOU outlines our investment in our schools. We are committed to the safety and well-being of each and every student, staff member and employee of Charles County Public Schools. We are always evaluating the SRO program and thinking about ways to enhance the service these officers provide day in and day out," Berry said.

Five years ago, officials from the U.S. Department of Justice visited Charles County to research how Charles County's successful SRO program works. DOJ officials called the Charles County a role model for success and said the CCPS program is how the program should work nationwide. To read more, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y4ec69kg>.

Shnipes

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Shnipes' focus is consistently on what is best for students. As the English department chair, she leads by example and ensures her team is well supported. Her colleagues refer to her as dependable, trustworthy, driven and competent, and believe she embodies qualities of a role model teacher. Shnipes strives to deliver engaging lessons and curriculum to her students with humor, enthusiasm and a genuine concern for their academic and personal growth.

Shnipes enjoys working with students at all grade and ability levels, from those in honors English and Advanced Placement (AP) classes to students in need of additional support. She also teaches English at the Charles County Evening High School Program and works with students enrolled in summer school. Dolan said Shnipes is willing to take on any challenge and enjoys working with a variety of students.

"Ms. Shnipes welcomes the opportunity to work with students across all readiness levels. Not only does this increase the validity of her leadership, but it also allows the most in-need students access to the most innovative and instructionally sound teaching. She is an example of an educator making a difference. Education needs more teachers like Ms. Shnipes," Dolan said.

Amelia Crispell graduated from La Plata in 2018. Shnipes was her English teacher during both her freshman and junior years. Crispell said it was Shnipes who helped build her confidence and adjust to high school.

"In my freshman year, I was new to high school: quiet, shy, and unsure of myself. I was terrified of most things and most people, but I had one class everyday where I was unafraid. In English class, I could count on being both challenged as a student and valued as a voice of opinion. I can say with confidence that if not for the attentive and enthusiastic teaching of Ms. Shnipes, I would not have the ability to express myself in the way I do today," Crispell wrote in a letter of support for Shnipes' nomination.

Shnipes strives to not only support her students, but works hard to support the entire La Plata community. Last year, she founded the first Charles County National English Honor Society chapter at La Plata. Through the chapter, students work in a writing center to offer tutoring services. Student members also participated in a Letters from Santa program in which they answered letters from children in the community to develop creative writing skills. Shnipes makes time to serve as



Brooke Shnipes was named the Charles County finalist for *The Washington Post's* Teacher of the Year Award. Pictured are seniors Rashawn Young, front left, and Suniyah Peters. Standing are Josh Bayer, left, Shnipes, Ma'Isah Sesay-Dixon and Jazmine Dent.

a cheerleading coach, class sponsor, school newspaper sponsor and oversees the Write Group creative writing club. Her dedication to La Plata students is endless.

In retrospect, Shnipes is glad she decided to pursue a career in education. She is currently working on her administration certification and is a go-to resource for teachers in need of advice. Her commitment to be a lifelong learner is something she demonstrates to her students each day.

"I never get tired of planning new and engaging activities to liven up a discussion or to draw in a reluctant participant. Now, I can look back to teachers that inspired me, and I think I was always meant to take this path," Shnipes said.

As Charles County's finalist for the Post Teacher of the Year award, Shnipes will be recognized by the Board of Education at its June 11 meeting.

Board of Education sets May 14 public hearing on Fresh Start Academy

The Board of Education will hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 14 to accept comments on the proposed Fresh Start Academy. The hearing follows the Board's regular monthly business meeting and will be held in the boardroom at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building at 5980 Radio Station Road, La Plata.

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) staff will provide a short presentation on Fresh Start.

Following the presentation, the Board will accept comments and questions about the program. Although the forum is designed to be interactive, speakers must sign up by 6:30 p.m. and the Board will limit comments to three minutes.

Fresh Start Academy is a highly structured, safe program for chil-

dren in kindergarten through Grade 2 who persistently demonstrate behavior that impedes their ability to learn and creates a barrier to learning for all students. Children recommended for the program will be those who repeatedly display extreme disruptive behaviors, including destruction of classrooms, running away from the classroom and causing physical harm to others.

Students may be placed at the Academy only after a school has exhausted other available and appropriate interventions. Placement in the program is for about 45 days. The experience will allow students to continue with his/her regular studies while staff introduces a therapeutic and positive approach to behavioral support through early intervention.

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Looking sharp at Hanson

John Hanson Middle School Principal Ben Kohlhorst, left, and eighth grader Emanuel Davis, strike a pose for the school's Students of Distinction event in February for Black History Month. Boys were challenged by IA Yolanda Carter to "dress for success" one day a week in February. Those who met the challenge get a pizza and wings party May 24.

*Submitted by Hanson's PR Liaison
Patricia Hodson.*

Teachers have talent at Indian Head ES

Indian Head Elementary School held a Teacher Talent Show as part of its third quarter PBIS celebration for students in Grades 3 through 5. Third-grade teacher Melissa Wilson, right, hosted the show, while the Three's Program teacher Rachael Ashby was the DJ. Student judges were selected from a raffle. Acts included School Bus Karaoke, below. Principal Shane Blandford showcased the Blandford Bounce and earned top scores.



Submitted by Indian Head's PR Liaison Joni Rooney.



Personnel

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

Administrative Intern — Location to be determined, 11-month position. A bachelor's degree and a Standard Professional Certificate issued by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) are required. Applicants must have three years of teaching experience and evidence of exemplary human relations skills. Apply by May 15.

Financial Secretary — Henry E. Lackey High School, 12-month position. Applicants must be computer literate in Word, Excel, Quicken and QuickBooks. AS400 experience is preferred. Experience with standard book keeping practices and procedures are required. Experience with budgets, payroll and cash handling preferred. Apply by May 15.

Food Service Manager — Arthur Middleton

Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma or equivalent is required, with at least three years of experience in food service management. Knowledge of meal production, planning, scheduling, safety and sanitation preferred. The applicant must be ServSafe certified within 12 months of assuming the position. Apply by May 15.

Special Education Instructional Assistant — Maurice J. McDonough High School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by May 20.

Summer School Teacher — St. Charles High School, hourly position. Bachelor's degree and certification requirements as established by the MSDE are required. There are openings in high school Algebra I, Algebra II, Algebra II with trigonometry and statistics, chemistry with Earth systems, English I and II, Foundations of Technology, geometry, Spanish I and II, middle school language arts,

middle school math and special education instructional assistants. Apply by June 1.

French Teacher — Location to be determined, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree and certification requirements as established by MSDE required. Apply by Sept. 27

Library Media Specialist — Location to be determined, 10-month position. Bachelor's degree and certification requirements as established by MSDE are required. Apply by Sept. 27.

Extra Pay Positions

Head Varsity Field Hockey Coach — St. Charles High School. Call 301-753-2090. Apply by May 31.

JV Boys Lacrosse Assistant Coach — La Plata High School. Call 301-934-1100. Apply by June 8.

Assistant Boys Lacrosse Coach — Henry E. Lackey High School. Call 301-743-5431. Apply by June 14.