



# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### *Town hall set*

The Board of Education is holding a town hall for certificated staff 4:30-6 p.m., Monday, Jan. 22, in the staff development room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Sign up for participants for the certificated Town Hall meeting is now closed; however the meeting is open to the public.

### *Seven Up Art Show*

The Seven Up Art Show will be Jan. 26 to Feb. 11 at Mattawoman Creek Art Center in Smallwood State Park. The show features select artwork of high school students from the county's seven high schools.

It is a judged show and gives student-artists a chance to see their work in a professional gallery setting. A reception is 1-4 p.m. Jan. 28. The art center is open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday-Sunday. For more information, go to [www.mattawomanart.org](http://www.mattawomanart.org).

### *Knight moves*

The kings and queens of Charles County will participate in the Winter Chess Tournament Feb. 24. Held at Henry E. Lackey High School, the tournament is open to students in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Sign in opens at 8 a.m., with games starting at 9 a.m. Players must register by Feb. 21 with no walk-in registrations accepted. To register, go to <http://bit.ly/2Dh1X4z>.

### *College essentials*

The Charles County Scholarship Fund, Inc. website is up and running for seniors who are heading to college. Go to <http://www.ccboe.com/ss/charles-county-scholarship-fund-inc/>. All scholarship applications must be completed and submitted by March 1.



## It's 'snow' problem getting weather updates

Winter is here. Malcolm Elementary School first graders Kendrick White, left, and Avrian Hernandez, stay toasty on chilly days. Their parents and teachers can stay up to speed on school closures and delays by signing up for alert texts. Get the latest news about delays and closures at [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com) or go to <http://www.ccboe.com/index.php/inclement-weather-procedures>.

## Palko, Abell elected to Board leadership positions

The Board of Education of Charles County unanimously elected Barbara Palko as its chairman and Jennifer Abell as its vice chairman at the start of the Jan. 9 meeting.

This is the first term as chairman for Palko, who served as vice chairman for the past year. Abell, who is serving her third term with the Board, was first appointed to the Board in 2004.

This is Abell's second time serving in a leadership position on the Board. She served as vice chairman in 2005.

Palko thanked the Board for its support of her nomination as chairman and said she looks forward to leading the group.

"Over the last three years I have learned the importance of timely communication and transparency. Inclusiveness with stakeholders, staff, students and the community is im-

portant. I believe this Board and the school system have made strides in our communication. I am honored to receive every single invitation that is sent. I mention this because I believe it is important for Board members to be visible. I am honored to serve as chairman and continue with our mission," Palko said.

Abell also thanked her fellow Board members for the opportunity to help lead the group and said she looked forward to continuing her work with the Board.

"I have been with the Board for 14 years. I would be honored to serve this Board in that capacity once again. I do think we are all equal and I am looking forward to continuing that process," Abell said.

Mrs. Palko is serving in her first term on the Board and has served one year as its vice chairman. She is a retired Career and

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## Board

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### On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are teachers from Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School. From left are Genna Gorman, a first-grade teacher; John Makell, the school's physical education teacher; and Stacy Miller, a third-grade teacher.

### Town hall for support staff

The Board of Education will hold a town hall meeting for support staff 4:30-6 p.m., Monday, Feb. 26, in the boardroom at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Registration will open Jan. 23.

### Weather the weather

One of the joys of living in Maryland is the vacillating weather — it's 70 degrees one day, a winter storm sweeps through the next. Sign up to receive text messages from the school system to keep up with delays, closures and other information. The texts are available to parents and staff who opt-in by texting YES or Y to 67587. To stop the texts, text STOP to 67587. To receive free email and text message notifications from the Citizen Notification System (CNS), go to <http://www.charlescountymd.gov/CNS> and select Charles County Public Schools notifications.

### Recognizing the helpers

Superintendent Kimberly Hill would like to highlight community service groups and the efforts they make to help and enrich the lives of our students and their education. Contact sktaylor@ccboe.com, smackey@ccboe.com or komalley@ccboe.com with the names of groups that are active in your school.

### AFSCME meeting set

American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 2981, the union for non-certificated support staff, meets 4:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month at the F.B. Gwynn Center, 5998 Radio Station Road, La Plata. The meetings are open to all dues paying members. Non-members can join at the meeting and attend.

### Workshops open

Afterschool workshops in varying subjects are being held through March. To find out more, go to <http://registration.ccboe.com>.

Technology Education coordinator who also served as a teacher and specialist during her 35-year career with Charles County Public Schools (CCPS). She worked with the Teacher Academy of Maryland Program Advisory Council and CCPS career and technology education programs.



**Barbara Palko**

She is a member of the Charles County Retired School Personnel Association, the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association, Future Educators Association and International Technology and Engineering Educators' Association.

She earned her master's degree in human development-early childhood/special education and her bachelor's degree in elementary education with a science major. She lives in Charlotte Hall.

Ms. Abell was first appointed to the Board in 2004 and served as its vice chairman in 2005 for one year.

She was re-elected to her third term in November 2014.

She is the Senior Development Manager for the March of Dimes Greater Washington, D.C., Market and a longtime resident of Charles County.



**Jennifer Abell**

She is a member of New Life Wesleyan Church, Charles County Chamber of Commerce, Partnerships For A Healthier Charles County and the Fetal Infant Mortality Review Board.

She has volunteered and held leadership positions with many local organizations, including Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the United States of America, Kiwanis International, Parent Teacher Association, Indian Head Swim Team and the Center for Abused Persons.

Ms. Abell received her undergraduate degree at the College of Southern Maryland, lives in La Plata and has four children, all whom graduated from CCPS.



## Feedback needed on school system's strategic plan

The Board of Education of Charles County and Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) are seeking feedback about public education from community members, including parents, staff, students and Charles County residents.

The Board is developing a strategic plan for the school system, including targeted goals and action steps, to determine how to best prepare CCPS students for college and career readiness.

The Board developed a community survey to gather information for use in the planning process. The survey is available online at <http://bit.ly/2F0SXRk>. All survey responses are anonymous. Staff input to the strategic planning process is important to the Board. The survey will be available until Jan. 31.

The Board will share survey results at a regular monthly meeting later this school year.



## The lunch bunch — Matula teachers brings students together to help The Arnold House

Mary H. Matula Elementary School students displayed the character trait of generosity last month by teaming up to put together bagged lunches for The Arnold House, a nonprofit dedicated to raising awareness of homelessness and hunger in Southern Maryland.

Maria Farnham's kindergarten class, Meredith Metcalfe's second graders and fifth graders in Kim Deavers class gathered in Matula's cafeteria, assigned to one of six stations — greeting cards, chips, desserts, sandwiches, water and quality control. Into the brown paper bags went a bottle of water, a bag of chips, a package of cookies and a sandwich. After quality control went through the bags to make sure all items were inside and not "smushed" (a requirement of Matula Principal Carrie Richardson), a hand-drawn greeting card was stapled to the bag.

The service project brought to life the lessons of generosity learned during December, Richardson said. The project shows children how generosity looks in the community and how they can pitch in to help their neighbors.

"I think everybody can help in some way," Sydney Hall, a fifth grader, said. "Even the little kids ... they are being very creative and making really cute cards." Each grade level was assigned a lunch item to bring in and they delivered. The school collected enough to put together 100 lunches, Farnham said. Helping The Arnold House is a natural fit for Matula. The Arnold House assists a handful of Matula families with its backpack program that sends students home with food over weekends.

Nathan Carter, a fifth grader at the sandwich station, was handing off sandwiches to classmate Kaleyah McPherson at the water station to add to the lunches. Trouble was, the sandwich makers were on a roll and McPherson was hustling. "You're killing me, Nate," she said. "Keep up," he laughed.

Once the madness died down, McPherson reflected on the project. "You need to help people," she said. "If they don't have food, give them food. You have to be kind."



Say cheese! Je'Syre Beckwith, left, and Ladislao Valencia, second graders at Mary H. Matula Elementary School, make sandwiches for lunches given to The Arnold House, a nonprofit that raises awareness about homelessness and hunger.



Mary H. Matula Elementary School fifth graders Eliana Barrett, left, and Lamarion Johnson write cards to be included in lunches students made for The Arnold House.

## Nominations due by March 1 for vice principal, support staff awards

Charles County Public Schools is looking for outstanding vice principals and support staff for an upcoming awards program.

The school system is accepting nominations for its 2018 Outstanding Vice Principal Award to be presented to a vice principal who exemplifies excellence. Teachers, parents, students and administrators may submit nominations, and employees cannot nominate themselves. The winner will be announced at a ceremony during the Board of Education's June 12 meeting. Nominees must be full-time employees, employed by Charles County Public Schools as a vice principal for at least three years, and have not received this award in the past five years.

Award candidates must meet criteria in educational leadership, resolving complex problems, developing self and others and community service.

For support staff awards, the categories include building service, food service, instructional support, secretary, maintenance, information technology and central office support staff. This includes staff who work at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, or the Annex I or Annex 2 buildings.

Nominees must meet the following criteria: works full-time, has been employed with the school system for a minimum of three school years in the area for which they were nominated, and not have received this award within the past five years. Support staff nominees must be resourceful in seeking and completing job duties, seek new knowledge and skills, know and understand all aspects of the assigned job, use technology where appropriate, foster cooperative relationships with students, colleagues, and the community and demonstrate outstanding leadership.

For more information and nomination requirements, go to <http://www.ccboe.com/index.php/outstanding-support-staff-award> for support staff and <http://www.ccboe.com/index.php/outstanding-vice-principal-award> for the vice principal award.

All nominee binders should be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources no later than March 1. Award winners will be announced and recognized at the June 12 Board meeting. Nomination materials are also posted on the school system website at <http://www.ccboe.com/index.php/boe-employee-recognition>.

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

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## Stone's Hopper honored

Renee Hopper, a financial literacy teacher at Thomas Stone High School, right, was honored by Community Bank of the Chesapeake for her commitment to personal financial literacy education. Hopper's lessons include speaking to students about credit and good financial decision making. Hopper is pictured with Teresa Roach, a representative of Community Bank.

*Submitted by Darnell Lewis-Russell,  
PR liaison for Thomas Stone High School*



## High school sneak peek at Westlake

Westlake High School hosted its second annual 8th-grade Family Showcase last month. Eighth graders checked out classes and programs like Project Lead the Way Engineering and Bio Med programs, computer science, business, choir, multi media, theater, fine arts, foods, AVID and band. Art teacher Trish Fulcher, left, guides Mattawoman Middle School eighth grader Schumy Pascal through a ceramics project.

*Submitted by Holly Dolan, PR liaison for Westlake High School*

## 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

**Special Education Instructional Assistant** — John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position. Applicants must have a demonstrated interest in and aptitude for working with school-aged children and have excellent human relations skills. Good oral and written communication skills and the ability to communicate effectively with staff, students and parents are required. Applicants must have a high school diploma and experience working with children. Apply by Jan. 23.

**Food Service Worker** — Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 10-month position. Applicants must have basic skills in reading, record keeping and arithmetic. Apply by Jan. 24.

**Vice Principal Pool** — Elementary and mid-

dle schools, 11-month position. Applicants must have a master's degree from an accredited college or university and hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate with Administrator I endorsement. Three years of satisfactory teaching experience is required. Applicants must have exemplary human relations skills, the ability to speak and write effectively and have a demonstrated ability to plan, organize and supervise the work of others. Apply by Feb. 2.

**Secondary Vice Principal Pool** — 12-month position. Applicants must have a master's degree from an accredited college or university and hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate with Administrator I endorsement. Three years of satisfactory teaching experience is required. Applicants must have exemplary human relations skills, the ability to speak and write effectively and have a demonstrated ability to plan, orga-

nize and supervise the work of others. Apply by Feb. 2.

**Principal Pool** — All school levels, 12-month position. Applicants must have a master's degree from an accredited college or university and hold or be eligible for a Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate with Administrator I endorsement. Three years of satisfactory teaching experience is required, along with three years of satisfactory experience as a vice principal. Applicants must have exemplary human relations skills, the ability to speak and write effectively and have a demonstrated ability to plan, organize and supervise the work of others. Apply by Feb. 2.

**Building Service Worker Floater** — A high school diploma or GED is required. Applicants must have the ability to read and write and be physically capable of performing manual labor. Position open until filled.