



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

AFSCME anything

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 at 5998 Radio Station Road in La Plata. The meetings are open to all dues paying members. Non-members can join at the meeting and attend.

Holiday concert set

The Chesapeake Choral Arts Society will present "A Renaissance Christmas" concert in December at Peace Lutheran Church in Waldorf. Performances on Dec. 8 and 9 will include dinner with tickets \$40 for adults, \$35 for seniors, students and military members with identification. Tickets for the dinner concerts must be purchased in advance. A Dec. 10 concert will include dessert and start at 3:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors, students and military members with identification. Peace Lutheran is at 11610 Rubina Place in Waldorf. Purchase tickets at chesapeakechoral.com or call 301-642-0594.

Adopt-a-Family

Adopt-a-Family for the holidays through LifeStyles of Maryland. The organization is seeking volunteers to provide needy families in the county with food for holiday baskets. It costs about \$30 to put together a holiday food basket that includes a turkey, stuffing, vegetables and a starch. For more information or to donate, go to www.lifestylesofmd.org or contact Jakia Ball at 301-609-9900, Ext. 205, or jball@lifestylesofmd.org.



Coffee break

Courtney Beall, left, a third-grade teacher at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, places her order with Margaret Allen, a fourth-grade Life Skills student, at Cafe Skillz, a student-run coffee shop at the school. Read more on Page 2.

J.C. Parks named NOAA Ocean Guardian School

Students at J.C. Parks Elementary School care about the environment. From recognizing December as "No Straw December," to raising flower beds to grow vegetables for donation to local food banks, students on the school's Green Team are doing their part, one project at a time.

One of their main projects of significance is the work going on at the school to help improve watershed areas.

These projects range from the planting of nearly 4,000 native plants on school grounds that help clean rain water, to the use of an outdoor foundation built from a recycled tire and powered by the sun.

For their efforts in these projects, and several more that are planned for this school year, Parks was honored Friday by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-

tion (NOAA) through its Ocean Guardian School program.

This is the second year the school has earned the designation from NOAA.

To receive recognition through this program, schools must apply and submit with their application a community-based project.

The program provides Ocean Guardian schools with grant funds to support conservation projects.

This is Parks' third year of participation in the program, but the second year in a row it received the NOAA recognition.

Deanna Wheeler, science teacher at Parks, oversees the school's participation and the student-run Green Team.

The Green Team includes nearly 50 students and meets regularly to help plan projects to help the environment. In addition to

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On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are staff members honored by the Board of Education at its Nov. 14 meeting. From left are Brian Colaizzi, science teacher at Piccowaxen Middle School; Jane Murphy, food service manager at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School; and Oksana Mouchyn-Dobbs, special education teacher at La Plata High School.

Winter auction planned

Starkey Strong, the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building's Relay for Life team, will hold a winter auction fundraiser Dec. 18 to 20 at the Starkey building.

Nominations due by Dec. 21

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is accepting nominations for its 2018 Principal of the Year award. The annual award honors exemplary principals and recognizes those who go beyond the day-to-day demands of their position to create an exceptional educational environment. The selected principal also serves as Charles County's finalist in *The Washington Post* Principal of the Year awards program.

The school system is also collecting nominations for *The Washington Post's* 2018 Teacher of the Year Award. It honors exemplary teachers who demonstrate excellence in teaching and outstanding leadership, encourage creative and quality instruction, and contribute in a substantive way to the improvement of education.

Nominations for Principal of Year are due by Thursday, Dec. 21. The cover page, as well as additional nomination materials, is posted at <http://bit.ly/2k7kr1P>. Nominations for teachers are due by Thursday, Dec. 21. The cover page, as well as other supporting materials, is posted at <http://bit.ly/2iZVEco>.

Contact Tonia Miles-Carvana in human resources at 301-934-7255 with questions about the awards process.

Workshops open

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

Higdon students brew up excitement with coffee shop

Every other Friday at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, excitement brews. It's when Café Skillz opens its doors for teachers and staff who need a late morning caffeine buzz or sugar rush.

Kimberly McCloskey's Life Skills class runs a coffee shop, providing Keurig-brewed coffee and tea, along with scones, cookies and brownies.

Everything sells for 50 cents, but the students are getting a wealth of experience.

"Money skills, communication and social skills, color recognition," McCloskey lists off the lessons her students learn through running the shop. "They're learning to follow steps to complete a task. It's a fun way to incorporate those skills with something they enjoy doing."

Money raised through the shop goes toward purchasing materials for the classroom and defraying costs of any community trips the class may take, McCloskey said.

The students rotate through positions — cashier, greeter, barista — and everyone has a job. Lily Cusack uses a GoTalk device to communicate "Good Morning" and "Goodbye" to customers. Margaret Allen takes orders and makes change for customers. Tykiem Chase pops capsules into the Keurig and presses the start button. An adult handles taking the to-go cup from the



Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School teacher Kimberly McCloskey, right, helps Lily Cusack greet customers using a GoTalk device.

machine and secures the lid before Chase delivers it (using both hands) to the waiting customer.

Teachers and staff line up to get their caffeine fix and chat with the students who light up the longer the line gets.

"We can really use the coffee today," said Lisa Barrett, a kindergarten teacher in the midst of working on report cards.

It's more than the French vanilla and hazelnut flavors that keep customers coming back. "It's the attitude of the kids," said kindergarten teacher Anna Muscolino.

"We come here whenever it's open," said Courtney Beale, a third-grade teacher. "They take care of us teachers."



Wade's Girls on the Run hit their mark at 5K

Girls in third, fourth and fifth grades at William B. Wade Elementary School are off to a running start this year by participating in Girls on the Run. The 10-week community program includes workouts and team building activities while promoting a positive self-image. The group celebrated the end of the season with a 5K run/walk at Regency Furniture Stadium Nov. 18.

Submitted by Heidi Furman, William B. Wade Elementary School PR Liaison

Benson, Young-Waddy oversee CCPS student engagement office

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has expanded its office of student engagement and conduct to better accommodate the needs of students, families and school administrators.

Overseeing the needs of high schools students is Chrystal Benson, a former longtime CCPS principal. As the student engagement and conduct officer at the high-school level, she works with students who need additional support outside of the classroom. Benson also works with families and school administrators to help students overcome difficult situations affecting their education and attendance.

Charmaine Young-Waddy transitioned to a new role at the start of this school year as the student engagement and conduct officer at the elementary- and middle-school levels. She has been with CCPS for more than 15 years, most recently serving in the role of student services specialist since 2013. As the student services specialist, Young-Waddy oversaw dropout prevention programs, served as the attendance hearing officer and court liaison, and monitored school change requests.

Benson and Young-Waddy work in the office of school administration and assist families with career and academic development, job placement and suspension hearings, and provide strategies to help keep students in school. Both work closely with department of student services staff such as counselors and pupil personnel workers to ensure students and families have access to resources to help their child succeed in and outside of school.

Benson said she enjoys working with

the oldest group of CCPS students to help them prepare for the future.

“As the student engagement and conduct officer for high school students, I have the opportunity to assist students, their families and school administrators with navigating successfully through different types of difficult situations, ultimately helping students to achieve their goal of graduating from high school and pursuing their post-secondary plans,” she said.

Young-Waddy said by working collaboratively with school leaders to provide academic support or interventions, her goal is to help students develop a love for learning in an environment that facilitates growth in all areas.

“As the elementary and middle school student engagement and conduct officer, I feel that this age group and their families need direct, immediate and/or comprehensive support for their children. It is my desire to provide those resources to ensure that each student has a lasting educational experience and a greater appreciation for learning. With this mindset, a stronger academic foundation will in turn lead to an increase in student success academically, socially and educationally. Ultimately, leading to a high school graduate in years to come,” she said.



Chrystal Benson



Charmaine Young-Waddy

Prior to transitioning to this new role, Benson was principal at Thomas Stone High School for one year and principal at Westlake High School for 11 years. She also served as a vice principal at Maurice J. McDonough High School for six years. Benson began her career in education with Talbot County Public Schools as a mathematics teacher at Easton High School and also served as an assistant principal there for four years. She has a master’s degree in school administration and supervision from Bowie State University, and a bachelor’s in secondary education mathematics from Southern University. Young-Waddy began her career with CCPS in 2002 as a special education teacher at Stone after spending four years as a teacher in Virginia. She served as the administrative assistant at Stone from 2004 to 2008 and was promoted to vice principal in August 2008 at McDonough. Young-Waddy transitioned to a vice principal position at Piccowaxen Middle School in 2011 and joined the student services department in July 2013. She has a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction with a focus on school administration from McDaniel College, and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Virginia Union University.

Ocean

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providing native plants and use of a solar fountain, Green Team members have worked on a watershed wheel to help clean rain water, recycled milk cartons, used a hydration system to save more than 26,000 one-time use water bottles and learned about watersheds through field trips to areas such as Malloys Bay and Chapman’s Landing State Park.

According to Wheeler, grant funds earned through NOAA’s Ocean Guardian program help fund field trips to local watersheds, the school’s wetlands day event, buy native plants for the outdoor classroom and even go toward the beautification of the school building itself. Last year with the help of local artist Vicki Marckel, who also is a teacher at Henry E. Lackey High School, students on the Green Team helped to paint a mural on the front of the school.

“This year’s grant funds will help with part two of the mural; stu-

dents will put part two up this year,” Wheeler said.

Samuel Orlando is a member of NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuary and presented Wheeler and the Parks Green Team with the second official Ocean Guardian school banner at the ceremony.

He said he is constantly impressed with conservation efforts led by Parks students.

“You all are a terrific group of kids. I look forward to coming here and I am just blown away by what you all are doing. When I hear the enthusiasm of students, I know the world is changing,” Orlando said. Ocean Guardian grant funding is provided annually to schools once they meet goals outlined in community service projects identified by the school. North Point High School also is recognized by NOAA as an Ocean Guardian school.

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Charles County Board of Education to meet Dec. 12

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 12, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building on Radio Station Road in La Plata.

The public portion of the meeting begins at 1 p.m.

The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12, and is rebroadcast throughout the week.

Board meetings are streamed live on the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) website, www.ccboe.com.

Click on the middle of the main page to start the live streaming.

The following is a meeting agenda and is subject to change.

Executive session – 12 p.m.

Call to order – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance – Thomas Stone High School

Superintendent's update to the Board

Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Correspondence/board member updates
- Education Association of Charles County update
- American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees update
- Student Board member update
- Eligibility/discipline component
- Dreambox math
- Project status update

- CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, CVS Health update

New business and future agenda items

New business

Future agenda items

Recognition – 4:30 p.m.

- James E. Richmond Leadership Excellence Award
- **Students** — Charlie Shin, senior at Maurice J. McDonough High School; Diallo Barnes, eighth grade, Milton M. Somers Middle School; Lucy Flynn, fifth grade, Gale-Bailey Elementary School; Clinton Cupples III, fifth grade, Mary H. Matula Elementary School; and Joya Thompson, fifth grade, Arthur Middleton Elementary School.
- **Employees** — Annemarie Simpson, mathematics teacher, McDonough; Peter Wilt, social studies teacher, Somers; Ann Herbert, prekindergarten teacher, Gale-Bailey; Samantha Clark, special education teacher, Matula; and Karen Ferruzza, library media specialist, Middleton.

Public Forum – 6 p.m.

Action items

- Minutes
- Personnel

Adjournment



Personnel

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

Job openings

Special Education Instructional Assistant

— St. Charles High School, 10-month position. Applicants must have passed the ParaPro assessment or have a minimum of 48 college credits and an interest in and aptitude for working with school-age children. Excellent human relations skills, oral and written communication skills are a must. The ability to communicate effectively with staff, students and parents is required, along with a high school diploma required. Apply by Dec. 11.

Building Service Worker Floater — location to be determined, temporary position. A high school diploma or GED is required. Applicants must be able to read and write effectively and be physically capable of performing

manual labor. A willingness to work overtime is required in cases of emergency. A Building Service Job Fair is 8:30-11:30 a.m. Dec. 12 at Annex II. Candidates will be interviewed on a first-come, first-served basis and can fill out an application before or at the fair.

Navy JROTC Instructor (NCO) — Westlake High School, 11-month position. Applicants must have a bachelor of arts from an accredited college or university and have served a minimum of 20 years of active duty or have retired under the Temporary Early Retirement Authority. JROTC instructors may be called on to manage difficult or emotional customer situations, respond promptly to customer needs, respond to requests for service and assistance, and meet commitments. Apply by Dec. 18.

Staff accountant - Internal Controls/Audit — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. A bachelor's degree

from an accredited college or university with specialization in accounting and audit is required. A master's degree or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) is preferred. Applicants should have a minimum of two years' experience performing audits for a certified public accounting firm or governmental organization, including evaluating and implementing internal controls required. Position open until filled.

Home and Hospital Instructor — location to be determined, hourly employee. A bachelor's degree is required and applicants should have experience working with students. The ability to plan and implement lessons, and work professionally and discretely with extremely confidential information is required. Applicants should have excellent analytical, problem solving and troubleshooting abilities. Position open until filled.