

School News



Important Dates Coming Soon

Music is in the air

Westlake High School will hold a Jazz Festival coffeehouse Friday, Feb. 3 with guests from Maurice J. McDonough, North Point, Thomas Stone and St. Charles high schools and Picowaxen Middle School. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., performances begin at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and students, and families can get in for \$30. For more information, email wlhsbandboosters@yahoo.com.

Unplugged, La Plata High School's a cappella group, will host the International Championship of High School A Cappella Mid Atlantic quarterfinal at 7 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 4 at the school. Competing groups in the event are judged on their vocal and visual performance in areas such as tone quality, balance and blend, visual cohesiveness, energy/stage presence, professionalism and creativity. Tickets are \$15 for students and \$20 for adults. Visit <https://varsityvocals.com/event/ichsa-mid-atlantic-quarterfinal-la-plata-high-school/> to buy tickets. The event is open to the public.

Gallery show

The Seven Up Art Show featuring work by students in the county's seven public high schools will be on display through Monday, Feb. 13 at Mattawoman Creek Art Center in Smallwood State Park in Nanjemoy. The gallery is open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Go to www.mattawomanart.org.

Spelling Bee will be Feb. 16

The 2017 Charles County Spelling Bee will be 6 p.m. Feb. 16 at Theodore G. Davis Middle School at 2495 Davis Road in Waldorf. The Bee will be televised live at www.ccooe.com.

Student spellers will face off to see who will make it to the 90th annual Scripps National Spelling Bee held this spring at the Gaylord Hotel at National Harbor.



EGATE winners announced

Dr. James Craik Elementary School's learning resource teacher, Dana Moyer, center, talks about a story her gifted and talented students — including fifth graders Taylor Kidwell, left, and DeCori Moton — are reading. Craik and William B. Wade Elementary School were recognized with Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education School awards by the Maryland Department of Education. Read the story on Page 3.

Budget proposal presented to the Board of Education

Superintendent Kimberly Hill recently presented to the Board of Education a proposed fiscal year 2018 budget request of \$364.1 million, an increase of 5.8 percent, or \$19.9 million. The budget proposal includes an anticipated \$4 million state increase and a request for an additional \$17.9 million from the county.

The primary cost drivers of next year's budget are employee salaries and benefits, additional support for special population students, teachers for enrollment growth and bus replacements and additional bus routes.

Employee compensation, Hill said, is essential to hire and retain high quality staff — the foundation of success for teaching and learning. The proposed budget shows commitment to investing in top tier staff, and

nearly 81 percent of the budget funds salaries and employee compensation. For every dollar, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) directs 66 cents to classroom instruction, 13 cents toward maintenance, operations and capital outlay, 9 cents to school administration, 8 cents to student transportation, 3 cents to central administration and 1 cent to student and community services. The proposed operating cost per pupil rises to \$13,490, up \$386 from this school year.

The proposal includes \$11.9 million to fund 2018 collective bargaining negotiations with the Education Association of Charles County (EACC) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The \$11.9 million includes nearly \$5.6 million for an across-the-board

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On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at its January meeting. Pictured from left are Melody Philpotts, the media specialist at T.C. Martin Elementary School; Jonathan Liston, an engineering teacher at Henry E. Lackey High School; and Donna Rhoades, a kindergarten instructional assistant at Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School.

Winter chess tourney set

Charles County Public Schools will hold the Winter 2017 Chess Tournament Sat., Feb. 25 at Thomas Stone High School. The event will be 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with games for all grade levels from kindergarten to 12th grade. Register at <https://ccpsregistration.wufoo.com/forms/ccps-2017-winter-chess-tournament/>. Registration will close on Wednesday, Feb. 22. For more information, contact Rebecca LaRoque at 301-934-7369 or rlaroque@ccboe.com or Ann Taylor at 301-934-7378 or ataylor@ccboe.com.

Center sets open house

Southern Maryland Higher Education Center will hold an open house 4 to 7 p.m. April 5 at 44219 Airport Road in California. Learn about doctorates, bachelor's completion and master's degrees. For more information, call 301-737-2500, go to www.smhec.org or email admin@smhec.org.

Spring into center's open house

Towson University in Southern Maryland is offering a master's degree in early childhood education starting in summer or fall. The 33-credit program is completed in three to four years and is designed to increase competence in a current career role or to prepare the degree candidate for a future professional role; it is not an initial teaching certification program. The principles of the program include an interdisciplinary perspective, collaboration, mentoring and advocacy, with the most current knowledge base in early childhood education and best practice for young children and their families. The program is appropriate for early childhood teachers, elementary teachers and teachers who want to learn more about early childhood. Email azumpano@towson.edu.

Budget

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step and level increase in FY18 and \$6.4 million to cover two unfunded step increases from 2011 and 2015.

The school system has not given an across-the-board cost-of-living increase since 2009.

The needs of the school system's growing special student populations also require more resources.

During the past five years, CCPS has enrolled 600 additional special education students with an increase of 200 more students this year than last year.

This year, CCPS had the second fastest growing special education population and the largest increase of English Language Learners (ELL) in Maryland.

Hill's proposal includes more than \$3 million additional funding for special education and ELL services.

Increases would pay for staff and ex-

penditures needed to meet Individual Education Program (IEP) requirements for students, additional special education instructional assistants and support staff and funds to reduce ELL student-to-teacher ratios.

There is also a request for \$417,000 for six new teachers for student enrollment growth. CCPS estimates student enrollment will increase by 143.7 students in FY18.

The Board of Education reviewed the budget earlier this month, during a work session at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building.

Final approval of the budget is expected Feb. 14, followed by submission to the county by Feb. 28. The Charles County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on the county budget, including the Board of Education's request, on May 9.

CCPS 2017-18 Teacher of the Year nominations sought

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is seeking nominations for the school system's Maryland 2017-18 Teacher of the Year candidate.

The nominated teacher must be a classroom, resource or media teacher who spends the majority of his or her time teaching and has a minimum of five years teaching experience. The selected candidate will also be named the 2017 Charles County Teacher of the Year.

There can only be one nominee per school. Nominations are due by Friday, Feb. 24 to Ramona DiBenedetto in the CCPS office of human resources.

Application information is available on the school system website at <http://www.ccboe.com/jobs/teacheroftheyear.php>.

Applications should include the candidate's educational and professional development history; professional biography; examples of community involvement; a statement on the candidate's philosophy/style of teaching; three letters of support from a principal, administrator, colleague, student or former student, parent or community leader; and statements on educa-

tion issues and trends, as well as the teaching profession.

For additional information and requirements, visit <http://www.ccboe.com/jobs/teacheroftheyear.php>.

The 2017 Charles County Teacher of the Year will have opportunities to speak to students and staff during events such as New Teacher Orientation, and will also attend the state Teacher of the Year ceremony and gala.

There is a two-tiered process for the selection of the candidate for the Maryland Teacher of the Year.

The first step is at the county level where applications are received, semifinalists are selected and interviewed by a panel of school system staff, and one candidate is selected to represent Charles County as its Teacher of the Year.

Each Maryland county and Baltimore City forwards one recommendation to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), which selects the Maryland Teacher of the Year.

For additional information, contact DiBenedetto at 301-934-7242 or rdibenedetto@ccboe.com.

Craik, Wade honored as EGATE schools; students, teachers earn awards

At Dr. James Craik Elementary School, when it is time for some students to be pulled out of class and head to see teacher Dana Moyer, things are about to get interesting. Moyer is the school's learning resource teacher and when students are in her class, "It's going to be loud and it's going to be engaging," she said.

"We do a lot of fun things," said Ava Rowledge, a fourth grader who has been in the gifted and talented program since second grade. "I like to read the stories," Christian Pemberton, a fourth grader, added. "I think the stories are amazing."

"Ms. Moyer's work is fun," fifth-grade student Taylor Kidwell said. "And you get to talk for more than half of the time."

Students work on projects like brochures or posters to enhance lessons and they get into debates and discussions about the stories they read.

"They develop better communication skills and they're not afraid of wrong answers. They are open to the right ones," Moyer said.

Moyer was a classroom teacher at Craik for 13 years before teaching gifted and talented students at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon, Malcolm, Dr. Gustavas Brown, Mary B. Neal, Mary H. Matula and Indian Head elementary schools.

Working with gifted and talented students — Moyer sees about 10 to 12 students per grade once a week — is rewarding.

"They're so capable," Moyer said. "They can go beyond — way above grade level into these rich texts they read which leads to discussions."

Joseph Perriello has 37 years of experience as a teacher. He taught math at Benjamin Stoddert and Mattawoman Middle Schools.

In 2002, looking for a change, he started as a gifted instructor, teaching at Berry and Brown elementary schools before landing at William B. Wade Elementary School.

He said a typical gifted student is one who "needs a little more."

"They're kids who would be bored [otherwise]," he said. "They like the challenge, they like moving on and having discussions, using higher level thinking."

One of his students, fifth grader Zoe Wheeler, is working on seventh-grade math.

"It's a challenge compared to my regular schoolwork. I get to think more," she said.

While math is her favorite subject — "There's usually one right answer," she said — she is also a strong writer and enjoys reading.

Students are placed in gifted and talented programs based on test scores and parent and teacher recommendations. Gifted teachers also work with students who are advanced in certain subjects.

The gifted and talented programs at Craik and Wade each earned a 2016 Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) School award from the Maryland State Department of Education.

EGATE awards are given to schools whose programs are in line with the state's criteria for gifted and talented education. It honors elementary, middle and high schools that focus on excellence and improving student achievement.

Schools submit detailed information outlining their programs and are eligible to receive the award every five years.

Craik and Wade are past winners, having been named EGATE schools in 2011.

T.C. Martin Elementary School received the honor in 2012.



Zoe Wheeler, left, a William B. Wade Elementary School fifth grader works on seventh-grade level math with learning resource teacher Joseph Perriello. Wade was recognized with an Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education School award by the Maryland Department of Education.

An awards ceremony will be Feb. 16 at North County High School in Glen Burnie, where 10 Maryland schools will receive an EGATE award.

Outstanding Charles County teachers and students also will take home awards.

The following Charles County teachers and administrators will be recognized at the awards ceremony:

- Debra Calvert, principal, William A. Diggs Elementary School;
- Dana Moyer, learning resource teacher, Craik;
- Joseph Perriello, learning resource teacher, Wade; and
- Lynn Hopkins, reading, English and language arts teacher, Milton M. Somers Middle School.

The following Charles County students will be recognized at the awards ceremony:

- Brady Freundel, fifth grade, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School;
- Christian Gomez, eighth grade, Somers;
- Grace Klaas, fifth grade, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy;
- Alexandra Merchant, fifth grade, Higdon;
- Jashae Proctor, fifth grade, Craik;
- Zahra Ramakdawala, fifth grade, Diggs;
- Faith Rothell, fifth grade, Gale-Bailey Elementary School;
- Ava Rowledge, fourth grade, Craik;
- Zoe Wheeler, fifth grade, Wade; and
- MacKenna Zopelis, fifth grade, Martin.

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From quilts to Middle Ages, students revel in English, history



Maurice J. McDonough High School sophomores Kennedy Bradshaw, left, and Cody Sexton took part in the quilt project.

When students become engaged in learning, the result is often creativity. Sophomores in Courtney Abell's English class at Maurice J. McDonough High School recently experienced the power of collective creativity firsthand. Students were studying a unit on culture and discussed the poem "My Mother Pieced Quilts" in class.

Sophomore L.J. Mortimer came up with an idea for the students to work on a classroom quilt. Other students shared ideas on making a quilt in class. At the conclusion of the project, students discussed themes of culture, family and traditions that make each family unique.

"I learned that family looks different for each person. I myself shared a picture of friends I've had since we were all 3 or 4 years old; they're like brothers to me," Mortimer said.

For the past 15 years, Advanced Placement (AP) World History classes of Henry E. Lackey High School have delved into research and role playing projects. The hard work culminates in a trip to Tony Cheng's Mongolian Restaurant in Chinatown in Washington, D.C.

The students get a taste of authentic Mongolian food while acting out characters from around the African and Asian worlds of the Middle Ages.

After researching locations, native foods, environments and the history of the region they are from, students roleplay traveling to the court of Kublai Khan, founder of the Yuan dynasty.

All of this takes place under the watchful eye of parents, former students, restaurant staff and AP history teacher Don Browder. The two-hour event is held on the first Sunday in December, and is a great way to mix learning, food and fun.



Dream Washington, left, Shelby Oliver, Kavaun Smith and Imala Moore are students in Don Browder's Advanced Placement world history class at Henry E. Lackey High School.

Personnel

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

Job openings

Special Education Instructional Assistant — Henry E. Lackey High School, 10-month position. Applicants must have the ability to work and interact with a wide range of mental and physical disabilities and knowledge of special skills required to work with students having special needs. Excellent organizational and communication skills, and good oral and written communication skills are a must. Apply by Feb. 3.

Administrative Intern — 11-month position. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and a Standard Professional Certificate issued by the Maryland State Department of Education. Three years of successful teaching experience, evidence of exemplary human relations skills and the ability to speak and

write effectively is required. A demonstrated ability to plan, organize and supervise the work of others and knowledge of appropriate instructional and curricular methodologies is a must. Applicants must be enrolled in school administration program of study at master's level. Administrative interns have a 1-year term, with the possibility of reappointment for up to two additional years. Apply by Feb. 10.

Food Service Substitutes — all schools, 10-month positions. High school diploma desirable or sufficient education to have basic skills in reading, record keeping and math. Cooking, food handling and cashier experience is preferred, and an ability to work well with school personnel and students. Apply by Feb. 28.

Benefits Assistant — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Applicants must have a degree in human resources, business administration or a related

field from an accredited college or university, as well as three years progressively responsible experience in benefits administration. Proficiency in Microsoft Office, an ability to work professionally and discretely with extremely confidential information and a strong focus on accuracy and attention to detail is a must. Position will be open until filled.

Electronics Technician III — Annex I, 12-month position. High school diploma required with a degree from an accredited technical school or college preferred. Candidates should have two years minimum industry installation and repair technician experience, a valid driver's license, an insurable driving record and the availability to work weekends and evenings when required. Position will be open until filled.

Extra pay position

Assistant Girls Lacrosse Coach — North Point High School. Call 301-753-1759.