



# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### *Calling all superb spellers*

The annual Charles County Spelling Bee is Friday, Feb. 20, at John Hanson Middle School in Waldorf. The event begins at 6 p.m. and will be broadcast live. Watch the live stream by clicking on the spelling bee slide at [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com).

Students from all Charles County public middle schools and county private schools participate in the event. The spelling bee is sponsored by CCPS, the College of Southern Maryland, the Maryland Independent, Chaney Enterprises and Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SMECO).

### *Presidents Day*

Schools and offices are closed Monday, Feb. 16, in observance of Presidents Day.

### *Commemorate black history*

The James E. Richmond Science Center is hosting a black history event on Saturday, Feb. 21, to commemorate the advancements and achievements in science impacting the African-American community. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. and tickets are \$8 per person. For more information, visit <http://www.ccboe.com/sciencecenter/black-history/>.

### *Two-hour early dismissal*

The next two-hour early dismissal is Thursday, Feb. 26. Afternoon prek attends.

### *Schools celebrate reading*

CCPS celebrates Read Across Charles County this year on Friday, Feb. 27. The annual event is a reading motivation and awareness program that invites children in the community to celebrate literacy and reading, and the birthday of the famous children's book author Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss. Each year, the school system coordinates the event in conjunction with the National Education Association's (NEA) Read Across America Day activities.



### **Artwork brings Franchot to Charles County Public Schools**

Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot visited Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) on Feb. 5 to honor three students as part of the Maryland Masters Award program. The annual program highlights excellence in the arts, and artwork from selected students will hang in Franchot's Annapolis office as part of an exhibit. Franchot, pictured right, listens to William B. Wade Elementary School kindergarten student Eryn Gillam, center, describe her artwork, which was unveiled at the ceremony. Her art teacher John Haldeman, left, also attended the ceremony. Artwork from two other CCPS students - Marian Marteja, eighth grade, Milton M. Somers Middle School, and David Boarman, senior, Henry E. Lackey High School - was unveiled during the ceremony and chosen for the exhibit.

## Eligible staff to receive extra pay Feb. 20

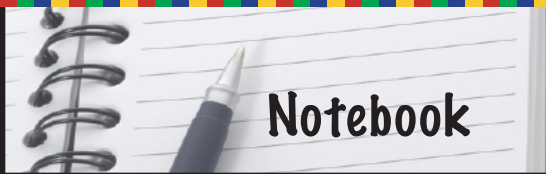
The Board of Education on Feb. 10 approved a one-time payment of \$1,000 to all full-time, permanent Charles County Public Schools employees. Eligible employees will receive the payment Friday, an action supported by the two employee representative groups - the Education Association of Charles County (EACC) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

"In fiscal year 2015, the school system was not able to provide employees with a step or scale increase or a cost of living

adjustment (COLA). The Board agreed with the EACC and AFSCME last year to keep 2015 negotiations open and revisit the budget in January to determine if any employee compensation was possible. The \$1,000 payment closes negotiations for the 2014-15 school year," Superintendent Kimberly Hill said.

Employees who are not full time but work a specific number of contracted hours will receive a prorated portion of the \$1,000 payment. Cost of providing the payment is \$3.4 million for 3,400 employees. Funding

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### On the cover

Pictured on the cover are staff members from the James E. Richmond Science Center. Pictured from left, are Jack Belle, instructional resource teacher; Jennifer Lennon, secretary to the Science Center director; and Patrick Rowley, technology facilitator.

### Nominate a great teacher

Nominations for the Charles County Public Schools candidate for the Maryland Teacher of the Year award are due to the office of human resources by Friday, Feb. 27. The selected teacher will represent the school system as the 2015 Charles County Teacher of the Year. Nomination information is available on the school system website at [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com). Contact Pam Mucciolo at [pmucciolo@ccboe.com](mailto:pmucciolo@ccboe.com) or 301-934-7242 for more information.

### Free training

The Charles County Literacy Council, Inc. is hosting a one-day tutor training for interested volunteers on Saturday, April 11 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the United Way Building in La Plata. Training is free and participants must be 18 or older to register. Volunteers must have an additional four hours of online training prior to April 11. Registration is available online at [www.charlescountyliteracy.org](http://www.charlescountyliteracy.org). Deadline to register is April 4. Call 301-934-6488 for more information.

### Maryland TELL survey coming

The statewide Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) survey will be available Feb. 23 through March 23. All school-based licensed educators and designated educational support staff are encouraged to complete the survey, which measures views on items such as community support and involvement, managing student conduct, teacher leadership, school leadership and professional development.

The survey is Internet-based and all responses are confidential. The survey is supported by several agencies including the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland State Education Association. Principals have access codes for all eligible staff members who would like to complete the survey. Visit [www.tellmaryland.com](http://www.tellmaryland.com) for more details.

## National Board Certified Teachers

**Karen Moore**



**National Board Certification Area**  
**Early Childhood through Young Adulthood**

**Position held:** Pupil Personnel Worker at Theodore G. Davis Middle School

**Years of teaching experience:** 21

**Years with Charles County Public Schools:** 2

**Education:**

Bachelor of Arts in English, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Master of Arts in School Counseling, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

**Memorable Moment:**

After 20 years of being in education, I have many memorable moments. Those moments happen when I have "ah-ha revelations" when working with students. Yes, I have knowledge and skills to teach them but they have real-life experiences to share with me. Those student experiences keep me grounded and focused on being the best educator I can be.

## Zaccarelli selected for Football Coach Hall of Fame

Dominic Zaccarelli, longtime athletic director at Westlake High School, is known not only for his passion for sports and athletics programs, but for his ability to connect with children and push them toward academic success after high school. He works tirelessly to help his student athletes pursue their academic and athletic goals by ensuring opportunities to meet with collegiate scouts, and has helped his student's access scholarships.

During his 31-year coaching career with Charles County Public Schools, Zaccarelli has received recognition for his contributions to athletics, and more importantly, to the high school football program. For his efforts in athletics and supporting the football program, Zaccarelli was selected as an inductee for the Maryland High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. He is one of only two honorees selected for the Hall of Fame this year. The Maryland High School Football Coaches Association coordinates the awards program annually.

Zaccarelli said he is honored to be chosen for the recognition. "It is very

humbling to join a group of only 85 coaches which include inductees Dr. John Cox and Coach Larry Johnson. Being the third Charles County coach to be inducted is a tremendous honor," Zaccarelli said. Joe Russo is the president

of the Maryland High School Football Coaches Association and said Zaccarelli was chosen for his coaching career history.

He will be honored Feb. 22 and a plaque featuring his name will hang in Byrd Stadium at the University of Maryland College Park. He was the head football coach at Westlake from 1993 to 2011, where he helped secure a state championship title in 2008. In 2001, he was named the Athletic Director of the Year for District IV, which includes Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's counties, and earned the title of Southern Maryland Athletic Conference (SMAC) Coach of the Year seven times.



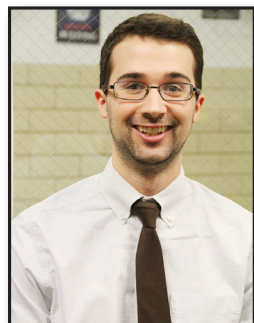
**Dominic Zaccarelli**



# Sokoloski, Taylor recently honored for efforts in gifted education

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education recently honored two Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers – Jeffrey Sokoloski, a language arts teacher at General Smallwood Middle School, and Ann Taylor, a learning resource teacher at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, for their efforts in gifted education.

Both teachers earned the 2015 Teacher as Leader in Gifted and Talented Education awards. The Maryland State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education annually honors educators, students and community organizations for their contributions in developing the talents of Maryland students from all populations in gifted education.



Jeffrey Sokoloski

Sokoloski has been teaching at Smallwood since 2011 and was nominated for the award by Irene Brewster, the learning resource teacher at Smallwood. He was nominated for demonstrating leadership in gifted education and for encouraging his students to achieve academic and personal success. Sokoloski primarily works with sixth- and eighth-grade students and teaches the gifted reading and language arts curriculum. He is also

the eighth-grade team leader and is in the process of completing his master's degree in English literature.

In her nomination letter, Brewster said Sokoloski is a valuable gifted education resource for students and his peers. "He has presented several core strategies to staff members during professional development meetings and 'drop ins' to other language arts classes to enhance and support instructional rigor. As the eighth-grade team leader, Mr. Sokoloski provides policy and procedure information specific to Smallwood to all new eighth grade staff members as well as help and guidance with student behavior and classroom management," Brewster wrote in her letter.

For the past two school years, Sokoloski has helped with curriculum writing for enrichment classes and the gifted reading and language arts courses of study. He also attends professional development opportunities and presents at countywide trainings. To further expand his knowledge of gifted education and language arts practices, Sokoloski

recently attended the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) conference.

Taylor is in her first year as a learning resource teacher at Stoddert, and previously worked as a gifted education resource teacher at the middle-school level for nine years. She was nominated for the award by Maryann Bourassa, content specialist for gifted education for CCPS. As a learning resource teacher, Taylor coordinates all aspects of gifted education at Stoddert and all of the county and state testing for students. She also collaborates with classroom teachers of gifted students to ensure their needs are met. Bourassa said Taylor is actively involved in the success of her students and is a leader at her school, and among her peers across the county and state.



Ann Taylor

"Beyond the school day, Ms. Taylor volunteers her time to support her students in enrichment activities like chess, It's Academic and various academic competitions. She is a leader among her colleagues. Her expertise, professional manner, and willingness to share her experiences and understanding make her a valuable member of our staff," Bourassa wrote in her nomination letter.

Taylor is a member of the instructional leadership team at Stoddert and provides several professional development meetings and presentations to staff on instructional models that support gifted learners. She has also helped write gifted education reading and language arts curriculum for middle-school students and worked to infuse Common Core State Standards into state social studies curriculum. Additionally, she is active with countywide Destination Imagination and History Fair activities.

Both Sokoloski and Taylor will be honored Feb. 25 at the Celebrating Gifted and Talented Education in Maryland reception and awards ceremony. Additionally, three Charles County Public Schools students selected for gifted and talented achievement awards will be honored during the ceremony. For more information, visit the MSDE website at <http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/giftedtalented/index.html>.

## One-time payment

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sources include lapsed salary savings from retirements, unfilled positions and hiring lags.

Additionally, the Board agreed to provide CCPS bus contractors with funds to pay each full-time, permanent bus driver and attendant with a \$500 payment. The cost of the payment is \$175,000 and will be funded by savings generated over several months due to lower fuel prices. CCPS currently works with 27 independent contractors to provide school bus services for students. Full-time, permanent bus drivers and attendants are generally those who are assigned to a specific

bus contract. The Board has also asked each contractor to provide a matching one-time payment amount to their eligible employees, if possible. Funding for the payment will be provided to bus contractors in March, who will distribute the payment to their drivers and attendants.

"The Board understands the impact the economy has taken on our employees over the past several years. We hope this one-time payment shows our commitment to supporting our employees. The Board continues to seek competitive compensation in its fiscal year 2016 budget request," Board Chairman Virginia McGraw said.

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## Graduation rates increase at all county high schools

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) graduation rate hit 91.4 percent in 2014, its highest rate since 2010, according to data recently released by the Maryland State Department of Education. As student graduation rates increase, the CCPS dropout rate continues to decline.

The CCPS four-year cohort graduation rate jumped from 89.8 percent in 2013 and has improved more than five points since 2010. Additionally, CCPS students also improved across all subgroups. The CCPS average exceeds the state graduation rate of 86.39 by five points.

"I can't tell you how proud we are of the accomplishments of our students," Superintendent Kimberly Hill told high school principals. She credited principals, teachers and staff for helping students stay in school and graduate with their class. "None of this would have been possible without your hard work and your commitment to being the difference," Hill said.

Four of six high schools posted graduation rates greater than 90 percent. Henry E. Lackey High School's rate jumped from 87.25 in 2013 to 90.57 in 2014. La Plata High School posted a 2014 rate of 92.82, down from 94.64, and North Point High School's graduation rate remained the highest in the county at 95.94 percent, despite a slight decrease. Westlake High School improved its graduation rate

to 91, up from 88.3 percent in 2013. Maurice J. McDonough High School increased its graduation rate from 88.75 to 89.07 in 2014, and Thomas Stone High School increased by nearly 7-points, raising its rate from 80.65 in 2013 to 87.36 in 2014.

Graduation rates for students of all races/ethnicity were above 90 percent. Four-year cohort graduation rates by race/ethnicity are:

- Asian: greater than 95 percent;
- African American: 90.06 percent;
- Hispanic/Latino: greater than 95 percent;
- White: 91.94 percent; and
- Two or more races: greater than 95 percent.

While gaps in graduation rates between some student groups remain, the numbers improved across the board in 2014:

The graduation rate for students receiving free or reduced-price meals (FARMS) increased more than three percentage points, from 79.06 percent to 82.2 percent.

The graduation rate for special education students improved more than 10 percentage points, rising to 75.16 in 2014 from 64 percent in 2013.

The CCPS four-year cohort dropout rate has declined from 6.13 percent in 2013 to 4.97 percent in 2014.

## 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

**Instructional Assistant** – Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Feb. 17.

**Food Service Manager** – Dr. James Craik Elementary School, 10-month position. A minimum of three years experience required. Apply by Feb. 20.

**Computer Analyst** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Feb. 24.

**Computer Analyst II** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Feb. 24.

**Food Service Workers** – Openings at C. Paul Barnhart, Dr. James Craik and Berry elementary schools, 10-month positions. Apply by Feb. 24.

**Building Service Worker** – La Plata High School, 12-month position.

**School Psychologist** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10.5-month position. A School Psychology Certification in Maryland is required.

**Testing Coordinators** – Openings at the high school level, 10-month teacher positions. A minimum of five years teaching experience is required.

**Special Education Teachers** – Openings at Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer and Eva Turner elementary schools, and Thomas Stone High School, 10-month positions.

**French Teacher** – St. Charles High School, 10-month position.

**English Teacher** – Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 10-month position.

**Prekindergarten Teacher** – Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, 10-month position.

**Science Teacher** – North Point High School, 10-month position.

**Instructional Resource Teacher for Life Skills** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position. Master's degree, advanced professional certificate and a minimum of three years teaching experience with the Life Skills students required.

### Extra pay positions

**North Point High School** has the following opening:

- Assistant football coach

Contact Andy Shattuck, athletic director, at 301-753-1759 to apply.

**St. Charles High School** has the following opening:

- Assistant football coach

Contact Jennifer Smith, athletic director, at 301-753-2090 to apply.

**Thomas Stone High School** has the following opening:

- Assistant girls' lacrosse coach

Contact Steve Lee, athletic director, at 301-645-2601 to apply.