



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Interims issued

Interim reports are issued to middle and high school students on Monday, September 30.

Assessment time

High School Assessment (HSA) testing begins on Monday, Sept. 30, and runs through Friday, Oct. 11.

Two-hour early dismissal

The next two-hour early dismissal is on Wednesday, Oct. 9. Morning prekindergarten attends.

Now showing

Airing now on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12 is a new episode of NewsBreak96, a feature show that highlights Charles County Public Schools students and staff.

This episode features the Charles County Public Schools College Fair. Also in this episode is information on a Star party held at Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School. Learn about the Board of Education's change to the school system's testing policy. Visit www.ccboe.com/ccboetv/ for a programming schedule.

Sign up for system releases

Staff members can sign up to receive Charles County Public Schools press releases electronically to their e-mail accounts. To register, visit www.ccboe.com. Click on the About section in the top menu, then choose Press Releases located under the Public Info/Media section.

The subscribe feature is located on the right-hand side of the home page. Subscribers who signed up to receive press releases from the old website will have to follow these steps to register on the new website.



Delegate Peter Murphy, left, mingles with William B. Wade Elementary School music teacher Lois Washington, center, and Wade fifth-grade teacher Melissa Carpenter, right, at a new teacher reception held at Middleton Hall on Sept. 18.

Students to shadow astronauts in outer space

Twenty Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students will take a field trip to outer space Nov. 26 in a rare opportunity to talk live with two astronauts on the International Space Station.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) selected Charles County Public Schools to participate in Expedition 37/38, a program that connects students and astronauts through a live downlink from the space station. Students will talk to the astronauts, Mike Hopkins and Rick Mastracchio, for about 20 minutes using Telepresence, conferencing technology available in all CCPS high schools.

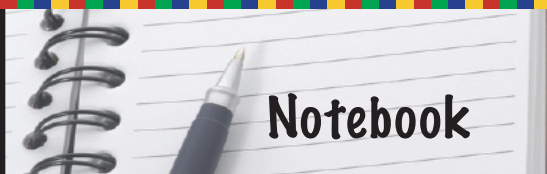
The downlink is a chance for students to interact with astronauts in live time in their work environment, which is outer space. "This is the closest a student can get to job shadowing with an astronaut," said Monique Wilson, director of the Science Center at St. Charles High School.

The 20 students will be selected through a process that will require students to submit

possible questions for the astronauts, according to Wilson. Science teachers will submit the best questions to a committee composed of Space Foundation teacher liaisons, including Marissa Cross of Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, Lara North of Henry E. Lackey High School, Charles Newcomb of Westlake High School and Aparna Joshi of Milton M. Somers Middle School. The committee will make the final selection of participating students from all grade levels.

The downlink is part of NASA's Teaching from Space Program and a continuation of the CCPS focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) offerings for students. "Charles County is always in pursuit of real world STEM applications of content that students are learning in the classroom. This is a dry run for what we are hoping to offer at the Science Center at St. Charles High School for both our students and the community," Wilson said. The Science Center will open when St. Charles High School is completed in 2014.

See Astronauts, page 4



On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are staff members from Eva Turner Elementary School. Pictured, from left, are Candice Vallandingham-Adam, first-grade teacher; John Craddock, school counselor; and Chavonte Harris, third-grade teacher.

Watch Board meetings live

Board of Education meetings are streamed live on the school system website. Visit www.ccboe.com and select the CCPS TV section on the bottom of the home page. To access live broadcasts, choose the live broadcast tab.

Need a badge?

Employees who need a new Charles County Public Schools-issued identification badge are asked to schedule an appointment with the Human Resources office. Call 301-934-7255 for an appointment.

Spanish translation

Charles County Public Schools new website can be translated into a number of languages through a Google translation application.

The 24-hour information line now includes English and Spanish messages. The 24-hour information line numbers are 301-934-7410 or 301-932-6656, and provide updates on early dismissal days, student successes and school emergencies, closings and delays. Hear a Spanish recording of the message by pressing one.

When the school system records a message to parents through the BlackboardConnect call-out system, we can now send it home in English and Spanish. Staff members are also providing outreach by participating in special fairs held to help families navigate school forms and get answers to questions in their native language.

Honor an outstanding teacher

The Washington Post will again be honoring a Charles County Teacher for its Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award.

Please visit http://www.ccboe.com/departments/hr/emp_rec.php for the nomination and process requirements. All nominations are due in the Office of Human Resources by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 10. Contact Jeanette Sudik in the Office of Human Resources, 301-934-7356, for further information.



Sam's Club provided \$1,000 worth of gift cards to Eva Turner Elementary School at Turner's staff meeting on Tuesday. The gift cards were given to teachers and staff members to help with classroom expenses. Kindergarten teacher Juanita Barnes, left, walks to the front of the meeting after her name was randomly pulled to receive a fifty dollar gift card. Assistant Manager of the Waldorf Sam's Club Kristie Fecchio, center, and Turner Principal Stephanie Nottingham, right, pulled teachers' names from a basket.



Nominate an outstanding principal for recognition

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is accepting nominations for its 2014 Principal of the Year and the Washington Post Distinguished Educational Leadership Award (DELA). 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.

Teachers, students, former students, parents, administrators, or community members may submit nominations. Nominees must have a minimum of five year's experience as a principal and three of those years must have been with Charles County Public Schools. Principals may not nominate themselves.

Nomination materials must include a minimum of four statements of support, one of which must be submitted by a professional educator; a brief career summary; and a description of contributions in each of the nomination criteria categories.

The nomination criteria are

- manage effectively;
- school must have made AYP for the last two years under the principal's leadership;

- demonstrate and encourage creativity and innovation;
- foster cooperation between the school and the community;
- maintain a continuing dialogue with students and parents as well as faculty and staff;
- keep abreast of developments in the field of education;
- encourage team spirit;
- demonstrate leadership and exemplify commitment;
- continue to play an active role in the classroom; and
- maintain their position as principal throughout the 2014-15 school year

Charles County's 2014 Principal of the Year will be one of 21 recognized by the Post from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

Nominations are due Friday, Jan. 10, 2014 by 4:30 p.m. Materials should be sent to: Charles County Public Schools, Attention: Jeanette Sudik/human Resources office, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, Md., 20646.

School systems open enrollment for health insurance begins end of October

Open enrollment for the Board-sponsored health insurance programs begins Oct. 21 and ends on Nov. 8. Open enrollment provides employees the opportunity to modify benefit choices or to elect medical benefits. Changes made during the enrollment period become effective Jan. 1.

Health insurance plans

Employees are not required to re-enroll; health insurance elections automatically continue for calendar year 2014. Changes made during the open enrollment period are effective Jan. 1. The Office of Human Resources-Benefits must receive changes by 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 8.

Flexible Spending

The Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) administered by AFLAC are a benefit offered to employees. Employees must re-enroll in FSA each year – current elections do not carry over from 2013 to 2014.

New this year

- The benefit plan year is now the same as the calendar year, covering the time period between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31.
- There is a new enrollment website: <https://ccboe.hrintouch.com>
- AFLAC policies – Unreimbursed Medical, and Dependent Day Care Flexible Spending enrollment are to be completed online using the new enrollment website.

For more information or to apply for coverage, visit <https://ccboe.hrintouch.com> or by calling your AFLAC representative, Phyllis Heslep, at 804.270.6601, to schedule a one-on-one appointment.

How to access the enrollment website

Employees will need to log on the benefits website to make changes. If you do not wish to make any changes, you are not required to re-enroll.

To enroll for your benefits:

- Go to <https://ccboe.hrintouch.com>
- Click on “Register or Reset your Account.” When registering your account, your username must be between 6 and 50 alphanumeric characters. Your password: Must be between 8 and 15 characters and contain at least one number; must contain at least one upper case and one lower case letter; cannot contain more than two of the same characters consecutively; and cannot be the same as your username or Social Security Number.

Things to know about healthcare reform

In March 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) into federal law. PPACA impacts, among other things, employer-sponsored group health plan design, cost, and eligibility. The first of those changes went into effect on July 1, 2011, for the Employee and Retiree Health Benefit Program. The following is a summary of the changes effective July 1, 2011, through Jan. 1, 2014.

Reporting of premium cost on W-2

Originally slated to begin with the issuance of the 2011 calendar year W-2s, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) delayed the requirement to report the plan value on W-2s until the issuance of the 2012 W-2s. However, HHS indicated that employers could voluntarily provide this information on the 2012 W-2s. Charles County Public Schools payroll department chose to include this information on the W-2s issued for the 2012 calendar year. The reporting of the plan total premium (employer and employee cost) on the W-2

is intended to provide information to employees regarding the cost of their healthcare coverage and does not cause this coverage to become taxable.

The amount reported in Box 12 of the W-2s (with the notation of DD) excludes long-term care premiums and flexible spending account contributions that are not combined with medical plans.

Extension of young adult coverage to age 26

The PPACA extended the eligible age limit of children to age 26. A child is defined as an eligible biological, adopted, or stepchild for the purposes of PPACA. PPACA required health plans to change eligibility criteria for adult children in the following ways:

- child does not have to reside in your home;
- child is not required to be a student;
- child does not have to be a tax dependent;
- child may be eligible for coverage under his/her own employer;
- child may be married or unmarried. PPACA does not require coverage for the child's spouse.

Elimination of cost-sharing for preventive care services for the Blue Choice Open Access and Preferred Provider Network (PPO/PPN) plans

Some types of preventive services do not require copayment under PPACA. For the entire list of required preventive care services with no cost share refer to www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/recommendations.htm. Here are a few examples:

- In-network well child examination (newborn through 36 months - 12 visits; 3 years through 21 years - one per plan year) is covered at 100 percent of the plan's allowed benefit with no copayment
- In-network annual GYN examination is covered at 100 percent of plan's allowed benefit with no copayment.
- In-network nutritional counseling and health education for chronic conditions are allowed.
- Annual screening mammograms – Age 35-39 are allowed one baseline screening; age 40 plus, one per plan year.

(Providers may charge a copay for other services rendered during the wellness visit.)

Summary of benefits and coverage

Originally slated to begin in 2012, the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) delayed the effective date until March 1, 2013. Plans are required to provide a four-page, double-sided, summary of plan provisions to each participant, customized by plan and coverage tier (i.e. “Employee Only” or “Employee plus Family”) reflecting covered services and out-of-pocket cost examples.

To obtain a copy for the plan in which you are enrolled log on to the benefits website at: <https://ccboe.hrintouch.com> and click on the tab marked Summaries of Benefits and Coverage or you may call the Office of Human Resource- Benefits at 301-934-7459.

Employees can access their personal benefit summaries, claim forms, review AFLAC products and update life insurance beneficiaries on this same site.

Remember, you have until Nov. 8 to make 2014 benefit elections. If you have any questions during open enrollment, you can contact Christeda Warner at 301-934-7459 or cwarner@ccboe.com.

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

Board of Education Members

Roberta S. Wise, Chairman
Maura H. Cook, Vice Chairman
Jennifer S. Abell
Patricia Bowie
Michael K. Lukas
Pamela A. Pedersen
Donald M. Wade
Amit Patel, Student Member

Superintendent of Schools

Kimberly A. Hill, Ed.D.

Editor/Writers

Katie O'Malley-Simpson
Shelley Mackey
Kara Gross
Amanda Burgess

The Charles County public school system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices. For inquiries, please contact Patricia Vaira, Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator (students), or Connie W. Armstead, Section 504 Coordinator (employees/adults), at Charles County Public Schools, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, Maryland 20646. 301-932-6610/301-870-3814. For special accommodations call 301-934-7230 or TDD 1-800-735-2258 two weeks prior to the event.

Board of Education announces October 8 agenda

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, October 8, 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. and recognition begins at 4:30 p.m. The meeting is televised live on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12, and is rebroadcast throughout the week.

Executive Session – 12 p.m.

Call to order – 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance – Westlake High School's NJROTC Unit

Superintendent's update

Reports of officers/boards/committees

- Correspondence/Board member updates
- Education Association of Charles County (EACC) update
- Student Board Member update
- School Administration update
- CIP update
- School bus red light camera program
- Instruction update
- FY2013 Independent financial audit
- Budget update
- Human resources update

• 2014 Legislative positions

Unfinished business

New business and future agenda items

- New business
- Future agenda items

Recognition - 4:30 p.m.

- Students
- Employees – Patrice Graff, first-grade teacher, Gale-Bailey Elementary School; Stephanie Sullivan, fifth-grade teacher, Mary H. Matula Elementary School; Sandra Peed, kindergarten teacher, Arthur Middleton Elementary School; Ernestine Swann, guidance secretary, Milton M. Somers Middle School; Vonda Hicks, mathematics teacher, Maurice J. McDonough High School
- Resolutions – *American Education Week*; and *American Freedom Week*

Public Forum – 6 p.m.

Action items

- Minutes
- Personnel
- FY 2014 Comprehensive Maintenance Plan

Adjournment



Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.ccboe.com/hur. Positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted. All teaching positions require a Bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job Openings

Food Service Manager – J.C. Parks Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Oct. 1.

English Teacher – Maurice J. McDonough High School, 10-month position.

Science Teacher – Mattawoman Middle School, 10-month position.

Technology Education Teacher – La Plata High School, 10-month position.

Computer Teacher – Mattawoman Middle School, 10-month position.

Library Media Specialist – Openings at the elementary school level, 10-month positions.

Life Skills Teacher – J.C. Parks Elementary School, 10-month position.

Staff Notes

Retirement planning session

Charles County Retired School Personnel Association, the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System and the Charles County Public Schools Office of Human Resources are hosting a retirement planning session exclusively for employees of Charles County Public Schools. Agenda items include a state retirement plan briefing, Social Security information, legal topics and discussion about life as a retiree. The session will be from 5-8:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 2, in the Board Room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Guest speakers and retirement planning handouts, as well as light refreshments, will be provided. Contact Janice Spatz, 301-934-2146 or jspatz@comcast.net, to RSVP by Sept. 27.

Do you want to buy, rent or sell something?

Check out the CCPS classified page for employees and by employees, located on the

InsideCCPS page through a link called "Classified Ads." Employees can post an ad for free. Ads will run for 20 days and then drop out of the system. If you want your ad deleted prior to 20 days, you are responsible for deleting it. Directions for posting are listed on the page.

Astronauts continued from page 1

The downlink is a continuation of a project started in CCPS two years ago when students participated in the Student Space Flight Experiment Program. Students participated in a countywide contest in which they developed experiments and a mission patch to fly aboard the last Space Shuttle mission as well as the first commercial flight of SpaceX Dragon to the international Space Station. Henry E. Lackey High School students were selected to send their experiments to outer space both years.