



# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### *CCASC meeting*

The Charles County Association of Student Councils (CCASC) meeting is Friday, Dec. 6, at Thomas Stone High School. The high school portion is at 9 a.m. and the middle school meeting is at 11 a.m.

### *Joint Military Ball*

The Joint Military Ball is 6 p.m., Friday, Dec. 6, at North Point High School. The ball honors each branch of the military and awards seniors with a certificate for their involvement in the program.

### *Safety training*

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is offering online Safe Schools training. Most of this training is mandatory for employees. Deadlines for courses have been extended to April 11, with the exception of hazard communications, which is past due. The online safety training is available on the CCPS website at [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com). Click on InsideCCPS, log in using your email sign in and password and then click Safe Schools Training, located in the bar on the right. The user name for the Safe Schools training site is your employee ID number.

### *Stone Key Club dinners*

The Thomas Stone High School Key Club created dinner baskets for eight Thomas Stone families. This is the fourth year students have participated in the annual activity, which helps families in need within the school. TSHS Key Club is a 40-member student group, comprised to help the needs of their community.

### *New hours for Starkey*

The Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building is now open for business between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The change opens the building a half hour earlier each day.



**Kaylee Wade, Henry E. Lackey High School freshman, was selected as one of 20 students to ask astronauts Mike Hopkins and Rick Mastroacchio questions about living in outer space.**

## Students, astronauts talk in real time during downlink

Exciting, incredible, magnificent.

That's how 20 Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students described talking live to two astronauts on the International Space Station on Nov. 26.

Students began lining up to ask their questions as the words "We are ready. Charles County Public Schools, this is mission control Houston. Please call station for a voice check," flowed from the Telepresence screen at La Plata High School. Two astronauts appeared on a large screen and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) began Expedition 37/38, a live downlink from space as part of NASA's Teaching from Space initiative. CCPS is one of seven school systems selected to participate this year.

Twenty CCPS students had the opportunity to question Mike Hopkins and Rick Mastroacchio as the astronauts tossed the microphone back and forth and demonstrated zero gravity by floating around the space station. Students asked the astronauts about life and work in space.

Candace Jackson a fourth-grade student

of William A. Diggs Elementary School, said her favorite part was, "watching the astronauts float around and act silly when they answered my question." Jackson asked the astronauts, "Why doesn't the sun make outer space bright?" The fourth grader dreams of becoming a veterinarian or astronaut, and participates on the Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) team at Diggs.

Students only had 20 minutes with the astronauts, and 18 were able to ask their questions. Questions included: "Have you ever done an experiment on the International Space Station where the results surprise you? How does it feel to walk on Earth when you come back from no gravity? Could you keep a live organism like a fish in space? Do you have to worry about static electricity while in space? In your opinion, would it be hard to live your whole life there if you had a life supply of food and water?"

Time ran out before Gill-Jan Eleazar, a senior at North Point High School, was able to ask his question, but he took the opportunity to end the downlink by wishing the astronauts safe travels. Eleazar wants to join the

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### On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at the Oct. 8 and Nov. 12 meetings. Pictured, from left, are Meredith Elrod, fourth-grade teacher, Malcolm Elementary School; Ernestine Swann, guidance department secretary, Milton M. Somers Middle School; and Sue Delacruz, pupil personnel worker (PPW), Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School and Piccowaxen Middle School.

### Student earns scholarship

Danielle Leginze of North Point High School has been selected for a corporate-sponsored special scholarship through the National Merit Program. About 1,200 National Merit Program participants, who are outstanding, but not named as finalists, are awarded special scholarships provided by businesses and corporations. To be considered for a Special Scholarship, students must meet the sponsor's criteria and entry requirements of the National Merit Scholarship Program. They also must submit an entry form to the sponsor organization. Students and their school officials submit detailed scholarship applications, and a committee of NMSC professional staff evaluates information about candidates' abilities, skills, and accomplishments and chooses winners of the sponsor's Special Scholarships. Scholarships may either be renewable for four years of undergraduate study or one-time awards.

### Pay period adjustments

Due to the winter break schedule, payroll is adjusting processing dates for pay periods affecting the Jan. 3 and Jan. 17 pay dates. The changes affect all hourly employees, including but not limited to temporary workers, substitutes and food service workers. Hours included in the Jan. 3 paycheck will include those worked between Dec. 9 to Dec. 17 (seven days). Hours included in the Jan. 17 paycheck will include those worked between Dec. 18 to Jan. 3. Normal pay periods will resume with the Jan. 31 payday.

Schools are closed Monday, Dec. 23 through Friday, Jan. 3. Administrative offices are closed Monday, Dec. 23 through Friday, Dec. 27 for winter break. Offices are also closed Wednesday, Jan. 1 for New Year's Day. Indoor pools at Henry E. Lackey and North Point high schools are closed Dec. 24, Dec. 25, Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.



La Plata High School won first place in the *It's Academic* county competition on Dec. 4. La Plata's three-member team was Colin McNulty, left, Matthew Kamin, center, and Sarah Bard, right.

### La Plata earns top spot at county competition

La Plata High School's *It's Academic* team earned the top spot in Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) competition held Dec. 4 at Thomas Stone High School. The La Plata three-member team of Matthew Kamin, Colin McNulty and Sarah Bard won in the championship round against Thomas Stone and Maurice J. McDonough high schools to earn first place.

Thomas Stone earned second place in the championship round, followed by McDonough in third place.

Each year, the first place team goes on to compete in a regional match airing April 5, 2014 on NBC4. The second place winner also earns a chance to compete in a regional match to air in early fall.

The Greater Waldorf Jaycees presented La Plata with a \$500 scholarship for their first-place win. Matthew Kamin is team captain; William Coggins, Thomas "T.C." Martin, Bethany Riege, Matthew Fan, William Bermudez, Alec Hunsaker, Justin Cortez, Carleigh Hoy, Bryan Dang, Chris Kuhn and Alexandra Saunders are also members of the La Plata team. Team Coach is science teacher Amanda Ferneze.

For second place, Thomas Stone received a \$250 scholarship from the Jaycees. Students competing in the event were the three-member team of Captain Mia Chase, Robert Jeffrey and Ishmail Harris. Kaitlyn Crook is the Stone team alternate and Rachel Pritchett and Matthew Trusnovic are also members of the team. Team coach is German teacher Nancy Jeffrey.

All other high schools received a \$250 scholarship from the Jaycees. The other high school three-member teams were: **Henry E. Lackey High School** – Captain

Terryll Montgomery, Nate Dudley and Kevin Chen; **McDonough** – Captain Adrienne Turner, Franklin Olmstead and Nicholas Schouten; **North Point High School** – Captain Joel Rogers, Ashlynn Stanley and Dennis Whitley; **Westlake High School** – Captain Athina Ketchum, Michael Rowley and Susan Duncan.

Completing the Lackey team are Caleb Bickerstaff (team alternate), Christian Warren, Tuba Tanveer, Kaela Proctor, Aaron Lebeau, Jack Wiegand, Alan Fusina, Maxim Bode, Mailin Quinto, Trayson Thomas, Darius Short, Zakaria Lee Abderrahim, Jeremiah Blakeman and Jeremy Carey. The team coach is social studies teacher Don Browder.

Completing the McDonough team are Jesse Zeitler (team alternate), Pateley Bongiorno, Angela Cruz, Jeanne Dela Cruz, Bridget Cunningham, Faith Hawkins, Sydney Hicks, Marissa Jefferson and Christina Paras. The team coach is English teacher Courtney Abell.

Completing the North Point team are Kehle Hatch, Luke Gibson, Skye Corbin, Aric Gaskill, James Adkins and Wesley Jefferies. The team coach is Spanish Teacher Maureen Stewart.

Completing the Westlake team are Christina Hightower, Damien Dugan, Marsha Forson, Ben Nordmann, Jonathan Land, Oluwadamil Daniel-Akanle and Errol Chatman. The team coach is English teacher James Ressler and is assisted by social studies teacher Matthew Howard.

The Dec. 4 competition will be broadcast on the school system's television stations. Check the programming schedule at <http://beta.ccboe.com/ccboetv/>.

# St. Charles High School names science center after former superintendent

Former Superintendent of Schools James E. Richmond says he is overwhelmed that the school system plans to name the science center at St. Charles High School the James E. Richmond Science Center.

Superintendent Kimberly Hill made the naming announcement Nov. 26, calling Richmond the architect of the “wow” factor for students and the visionary behind the center. Hill’s announcement followed an event that allowed Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) students and NASA astronauts to engage during a live 20-minute question/answer session. The event connected 20 students in the Telepresence classroom at La Plata High School to astronauts on the International Space Station.

Hill said the science center has “two amazing, astounding, incredible, monumental features,” including a digital classroom that seats 180 people and Science on a Sphere, a large interactive globe. “Imagine a cross between a planetarium and an IMAX theater,” Hill said as she described the digital classroom, a dome-like structure at the front of the new high school that opens in August 2014. “It’s not just a thing for students, it is something all of our community can benefit from,” Hill said.



**Pictured above is former Superintendent James E. Richmond after hearing the science center at St. Charles High School’s will bear his name.**

“Mr. Richmond always talked about the ‘wow’ factor for students. He is the architect of the ‘wow’ factor for students. The science center at St. Charles High School will be forever known as the James E. Richmond Science Center,” Hill said as she unveiled an architectural rendering with Richmond’s name on the front of the center.

“I am overwhelmed. It is an honor. It is a great center where students, teachers and the community can learn. I think the science center will inspire children and adults for years to come about the wonders of the universe,” Richmond said following the announcement.

Richmond said the idea was to create the “wow” factor for children using state-of-the-art technology that can help “turn on the minds of children and adults as we look to go to other worlds and planets. Technology has implications for all people of the world, and the wonder of space exploration is one way to turn children onto science,” Richmond said.

The science center is located at St. Charles High School and will be open to all students as well as the public. The center is expected to be complete by the summer of 2014.

## Downlink

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Marine Corps after high school and possibly train to go to outer space. “When I found out about this opportunity, I started researching on how to become an astronaut,” Eleazar said.

The downlink gave students the ability to interact with astronauts in live time from outer space. “This is the closest a student can get to job shadowing with an astronaut,” said Monique Wilson, director of the James E. Richmond Science Center at St. Charles High School. In-flight education downlinks, according to NASA information, are opportunities for students to interact with crewmembers through a question and answer session. The downlink allows students to hear and see the crewmembers live from space; however, the crewmembers were unable to see the audience.

“Charles County is now part of an elite group,” Wilson said. 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. NASA selected CCPS for the downlink through a competitive proposal process that demonstrates the school system’s commitment to STEM programs and space education. “NASA downlinks happen about 12-15 times a year. With the government furlough this year they are hoping for seven,” Wilson said.

Students participating in the downlink were Branden Hicks, fifth grade, Berry Elementary School; Morgan Thompson, fifth grade, Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School; Candace Jackson, fourth grade, William A. Diggs Elementary School; Nina Brown, second grade, William B. Wade Elementary School; Victoria Gordon, third grade, Indian

Head Elementary School; Leah Defalco, fifth grade, Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School; Jolie Lombardi, second grade, Higdon; Nina Harris, fifth grade, J.C. Parks Elementary School; Tamara McGhee, fifth grade, Mary H. Matula Elementary School; Alisha Douglas, third grade, Eva Turner Elementary School; Elizabeth Parent, seventh grade, Milton M. Somers Middle School; Annie Landgraf, sixth grade, Somers; Misa Oliver, eighth grade, Mattawoman Middle School; Daryl Raguindin, eighth grade, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School; Andrew Fan, seventh grade, Piccowaxen Middle School; Tanina Bivins, junior, La Plata High School; Kris Lukas, sophomore, La Plata; Kaylee Wade, freshman, Henry E. Lackey High School; Adriana Carioti, junior, Thomas Stone High School; and Gill-Jan Eleazar, senior, North Point High School.

A committee of Space Foundation teacher liaisons selected the 20 students based on questions they submitted for the astronauts. Students had an opportunity to submit questions through science and art classes, and teachers submitted their best questions to the committee. The committee included 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 downlink was broadcast live on NASA TV and streamed live on the NASA website. CCPS taped the program, which can be found at <http://beta.ccboe.com/ccboetv/>.

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# Board of Education announces December 10 agenda

The Board of Education's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 10, 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. All televised Board meetings are also streamed live at <http://beta.ccboe.com/cc-boetv>.

**Executive session – 12 p.m.**

**Call to order – 1 p.m.**

Pledge of Allegiance – La Plata High School's JROTC Unit

**Superintendent's update**

**Reports of officers/boards/committees**

- Correspondence/Board member updates
- Education Association of Charles County (EACC) update
- American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees update
- Student Board member's update
- Update on student transfers
- Report item: changes to superintendent's rule 5126

- CIP update
- Common Core Curriculum update
- Legislative update

**Unfinished business  
New business and future agenda items**

- New business
- Future agenda items

**Recognition - 4:30 p.m.**

- Students
- Employees – Anne Zabel, instructional assistant, C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School; Olivia Willis, second-grade teacher, Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School; Carol Briscoe, kindergarten instructional assistant, T.C. Martin Elementary School; Charlotte Kelton, reading instructional assistant, John Hanson Middle School; Chief Larry Adams, AFJROTC instructor, Henry E. Lackey High School

**Public Forum – 6 p.m.**

**Action items**

- Minutes
- Personnel

**Adjournment**



## Personnel

To apply for positions online, go to [www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php](http://www.ccboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php). Positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification.

**Job Openings**

**Human Resource Secretary** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 6.

**Food Service Assistant Manager** – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 11.

**Food Service Manager** – J.C. Parks Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 16.

**Building Service Assistant Manager** – Eva Turner Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 16.

**Network Engineer** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 16.

**Principal's Secretary** – General Smallwood

Middle School, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 16.

**General Maintenance Worker I** – Annex 1, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 17.

**Financial Secretary** – Lifelong Learning Center, 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 17.

**Early Childhood Instructional Specialist for Special Education** – F.B. Gwynn Education Center, 12-month position.

**Special Education Teacher** – John Hanson Middle School, 10-month position.

**Preschool Special Education Teachers** – Locations to be determined, 10-month positions.

**Speech and Language Pathologist** – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Master's degree in Speech Pathology and Maryland State license in Speech and Language Pathology required.

**English Teachers** – Openings at the high school level, 10-month position.

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

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

**Prekindergarten Teacher** – C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School, 10-month position.

**English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Teacher** – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

**Staff Notes**

**North Point is Top 25**

The University of Maryland Clark School of Engineering has selected North Point High School as one of its Top 25 Engineering Source Schools. As part of the University of Maryland, the Clark School must draw 70 percent of its students from Maryland. Each year, the Clark School recognizes Maryland high schools for providing them with the greatest number of students. North Point High School serves as Charles County Public Schools Science, Technology and Industry (STI) center and offers 17 specialty programs including engineering.