



Charles County Public Schools

# School News

## Important Dates Coming Soon

### Two-hour early dismissal

The next two-hour early dismissal day for students is Friday, Nov. 18.

### American Education Week

The 90th annual American Education Week is Nov. 14-18. Charles County Public Schools will recognize the importance of bringing together educators, school staff, parents, students and communities in a unified effort to build great public schools. Instructionally related activities involve students to make them aware of the importance of education in America and the efforts of employees and community members to support public schools.

### Thanksgiving closures

Schools and administrative offices will be closed Nov. 23 through Nov. 25 for the Thanksgiving holiday break.

### Don't wait for snow

Sign up now to receive instant e-mail or text message notification of inclement weather school closings from Schoolsout.com. Register at [www.schoolsout.com](http://www.schoolsout.com). E-mail service is free, and cell phone text message notification is available for a small fee.

### Rams take state title

The Maurice J. McDonough High School Rams golf team recently earned the 2011 Maryland State Championship Title in the 2A and 1A divisions through the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA). The McDonough team won the title with a score of 648 against Marriotts Ridge High School, which received a score of 651, in the tournament held Oct. 24 - 26 at the University of Maryland Golf Course in College Park. The team consists of George Bowie, senior; Cas Dickerson, senior; Andrew Malherek, sophomore; and Nick Stottemyer, sophomore.



## American Freedom Week

As part of the Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) American Freedom Week celebration, members of the high school JROTC units and the Thomas Stone High School marching band participated in the 2011 Veterans Day Parade in La Plata. The parade was held in the town on Nov. 6. Pictured in the top photo, from left, are members of the Maurice J. McDonough High School Army JROTC, Jesse Mothershead, Robin Heard, Doris Johnson, and Daris Johnson. Pictured in the photo at left are members of the Thomas Stone Marching Band, Alyssa James, clarinet; Kaitlyn Crook, flute; and Sierra Dyson, tenor sax.

## Teachers give working conditions high grades

Charles County teachers are generally satisfied with their working conditions, but would like to play a larger role in the decision-making processes, according to results of the statewide Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Maryland survey.

The survey asked educators to rate items in nine areas including: time, facilities and resources, community support and involvement, managing student conduct, teacher leadership, school leadership, professional development, instructional practices and support and overall. Results for the state, county and individual schools are posted at [www.tellmaryland.org](http://www.tellmaryland.org).

Charles County's results show that more

than 90 percent of educators feel they have access to sufficient resources, including technology, and that they work in school environments that are clean and well maintained. Additionally, more than 90 percent of respondents indicated they believe teachers provide parents and guardians with useful information about student learning and that the school maintains clear, two-way communications with the community.

Teachers also said they work in a safe school environment and students and faculty make every effort to stop bullying in school. Teachers indicated students at the school understand expectations for their conduct. The majority of teachers said they are working in a safe environment where the administra-

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## Notebook

### On the cover

Pictured on the cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at the Nov. 8 meeting. Pictured, from left, are Mary Kate Long, reading resource teacher, Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School; Lori Gould, prekindergarten/LEED instructional assistant, Malcolm Elementary School; Theresa (Wanda) Proctor, school counselor, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School; and Jillian Durr, elementary school teacher, Dr. James Craik Elementary School.

### Schools offering flu shot clinics

Charles County Public Schools and the Charles County Department of Health are offering free flu vaccinations for students. Students in middle and high school have the opportunity to receive the flu vaccine from the health department at school-based clinics that are open after school hours. An adult must accompany and sign for any student younger than age 18. Clinics are planned at the following schools: Thomas Stone High School, 3-7 p.m., Nov. 15; and La Plata High School, 3-7 p.m., Nov. 17.

### FEA students recognized

More than 220 Charles County Public Schools students were recognized for their participation in the Future Educators Association (FEA) during an induction ceremony held Wednesday, Oct. 26, at Maurice J. McDonough High School. Student members are asked to pledge to serve as role models for their participation in FEA by promoting a positive attitude toward education to enhance the quality of educational programs. Student chapters will participate in the fourth annual Charles County Public Schools local FEA conference on Friday, Dec. 9, at the College of Southern Maryland's La Plata campus.

### McDonough choir to perform

Maurice J. McDonough High School's chamber choir, Madrigal Lords and Ladies, will perform at the Mormon Visitor's Center in Kensington for the "Festival of Lights" program. The event will be on Dec. 7, with the choir performing at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m.

## AFLAC open enrollment ends on December 2

Open Enrollment for AFLAC Unreimbursed Medical and Dependent Day Care Flexible Spending accounts (FSAs) is November 14 through December 2.

The Unreimbursed Medical Flexible Spending Account now includes the debit card program. Plan participants can benefit from pretax savings on out-of-pocket expenses at doctor's offices and pharmacies with the card.

Current policy holders can change benefits, which could result in lower rates and better coverage. Employees who may have been previously denied benefits may qualify for this year only.

Employees must re-enroll in FSAs each year. The contributions do not carry over from year-to-year. AFLAC representatives are available to meet with employees at each school and center.

#### Nov. 14-15

- Henry E. Lackey High School, 7-3 p.m., Nov. 14-15;
- La Plata High School, 7-3 p.m., Nov. 14-15;
- Maurice J. McDonough High School, 7-3 p.m., Nov. 14-15;
- North Point High School, 7-3:30 p.m., Nov. 14-15;
- Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Nov. 14-15;
- Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Elementary School, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Nov. 14-15;

#### Nov. 16-17

- Thomas Stone High School, 7-3 p.m., Nov. 16-17;
- Westlake High School, 7-3 p.m., Nov. 16-17;
- Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 7:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 16-17;
- General Smallwood Middle School, 8-3:30 p.m., Nov. 16-17;
- Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 16-17;
- Dr. James Craik Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 16-17;

#### Nov. 16

- Annex 1, 8-5 p.m., Nov. 16;

#### Nov. 17-18

- Indian Head Elementary School, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Nov. 17-18;

#### Nov. 18 & Nov. 21

- Milton M. Somers Middle School, 7-2:30 p.m., Nov. 18 & Nov. 21;
- Mattawoman Middle School, 7-2 p.m.,

Nov. 18 & Nov. 21;

- John Hanson Middle School, 7:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 18 & Nov. 21;
- Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 8-3:30 p.m., Nov. 18 & Nov. 21;
- J.P. Ryon Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 18 & Nov. 21;
- CCPS Maintenance Shop, 8-5 p.m., Nov. 21-22;

#### Nov. 22 & 28

- Eva Turner Elementary School, 7:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 22 & Nov. 28;
- William B. Wade Elementary School, 7:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 22 & Nov. 28;
- Matthew Henson Middle School, 8-4 p.m., Nov. 22 & Nov. 28;
- Berry Elementary School, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Nov. 22 & Nov. 28;
- William A. Diggs Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 22 & Nov. 28;

#### Nov. 28-29

- Mt. Hope/ Nanjemoy Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 28-29;
- Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 28-29;

#### Nov. 29-30

- Mary B. Neal Elementary School, 7:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 29-30;
- Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, 8:30-4 p.m., Nov. 29-30;
- Malcolm Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 29-30;
- C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 29-30;
- J.C. Parks Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Nov. 29-30;

#### Nov. 30 & Dec. 1

- Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 7-2:30 p.m., Nov. 30 & Dec. 1;

#### Dec. 1-2

- F.B. Gwynn Educational Center, 7-2:30 p.m., Dec. 1-2;
- Piccowaxen Middle School, 7-3 p.m., Dec. 1-2;
- Gale-Bailey Elementary School, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Dec. 1-2;
- T.C. Martin Elementary School, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Dec. 1-2;
- Mary H. Matula Elementary School, 8:45-4:30 p.m., Dec. 1-2;
- Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 8-4:30 p.m., Dec. 1-2; and

#### Dec. 2

- Arthur Middleton Elementary School, 8:30 - 4:30 p.m., Dec. 2.



## New ethics policy limits gifts, provides regulations for conflicts of interest

The Board of Education on Nov. 8 approved changes to its ethics policy that provide more stringent financial disclosures and conflict of interest standards as well as reduce the value of gifts employees may receive.

Major differences for employees are conflict of interest and gift regulations. Conflicts of interest are more clearly defined, especially concerning business entities in which an employee has any interests. The new ethics policy does not allow participation by an employee with a business entity in which the employee or an immediate family member has a financial interest. For example, if an employee's spouse works for a company doing business with the school system, the employee should not be involved in any school system transactions with that company.

In addition to financial matters, conflicts of interest also include post-employment restrictions, using prestige of office, acceptance of gifts, use of confidential information and procurement restrictions. Gift limitations were changed this year to match state regulations. The limit for individual gifts has been lowered from \$50 to \$20, but a series of gifts may be accepted up to \$100 in value. This change took effect immediately when the Board approved the new policy.

Additionally, changes were made to disclosure of confidential information. New language states that employees may not use confidential information that they acquire through their employment for their economic benefit or the economic benefit of another person.

Most changes affect only Board of Education members and candidates filing to run for the Board. The largest change requires Board members and candidates to file more detailed forms that include interests in real property, interests in corporations and partnerships, interests in entities doing business with the Board, employment with entities doing business with the Board, indebtedness to entities doing

business with the Board, lists of family members employed by the Board, sources of earned income and gifts received.

Certain employees, including the Superintendent, executive staff, principals and some administrative employees, must file an annual statement with the Charles County Board of Education Ethics Panel that discloses gifts received from any person that contracts with or is under the authority of the school system and any potential conflicts of interest. Employees required to file financial disclosure statements are listed in the policy.

Legislation passed in 2010 by the Maryland General Assembly mandated that boards of education adopt ethics regulations that are as stringent as the state's rules.

The three-month process to change the ethics regulations included review and preliminary approval by the State Ethics Commission. The Board now submits its approved ethics regulations to the state for final approval or disapproval.

The Charles County Board of Education Ethics Panel consists of five members appointed by the Board of Education. Panel members serve four-year terms and their terms begin on July 1 prior to the regular election of Charles County Board of Education members. Panel members are William F. Olmstead, Jessie Morris, Anthony Rainey, Ray Johnson and Lorence Kessler. Olmstead, a local attorney, is the chairman.

Anyone who knows of an ethics violation may file a complaint directly with the Charles County Board of Education Ethics Panel, P.O. Box 2770, La Plata, MD 20646.

A complete copy of the new ethics regulations can be found in the Board policies located in BoardDocs or at <http://www2.ccboe.com/staffservices.cfm>.

## TELL

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tion supports teachers' efforts to maintain classroom discipline and policies.

Steve Perakis, coordinator of evaluation, presented results this week to the Board of Education and said a supportive environment is important to help teachers and students to do well. The survey, he said, is a measure of how supportive a school is in terms of community, student conduct, professional development and more. In most categories, he said, teachers ranked their positive responses higher than the state averages.

Deputy Superintendent Ronald Cunningham said the results help principals by reaffirming many of the things they know are going well and by pointing out areas where we need to do more work. The responses, Cunningham said, are from "the people who are living in the buildings and they are reporting back that they are feeling good about their school facilities year round."

Highlights from Charles County Public Schools survey include:

- Teachers gave positive marks to the availability of reliable technology and working in school environments that are clean and well maintained. In both areas, at least 92 percent of teachers agreed.
- Most teachers supported the statement that the physical environment of classrooms in their schools support teaching and learn-

ing, that they have access to appropriate instructional materials and resources and that they are generally happy teaching at their current school.

- Countywide, teachers indicated they use assessment data to inform their instruction, but they do not feel state assessment data are available in time to impact instructional practices. Teachers also gave lower marks when ranking their autonomy to make decisions about instructional delivery, such as pacing, materials and pedagogy.

- Teachers indicated they would like more input in decision-making – both at the classroom and school level. Teachers also indicated they would like more staff development opportunities and new teacher support through mentors.

The results are from a survey taken in the spring by nearly 46,000 educators statewide and 2,518 Charles County Public Schools teachers and site-based licensed educators. Charles County Public Schools 90.6 percent response rate was well above the 51.9 state average. This is the second time teachers have responded to the survey, and the 2011 survey included education support personnel, which includes school-based teaching assistants and clerical and office staff who provide support to teachers and administrators. The first TELL survey was conducted in 2009.

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## Board of Education honors exemplary employees

Four exemplary Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) employees were honored by the Board of Education on November 8. Honored were Theresa (Wanda) Proctor, Lori Gould, Mary Kate Long and Jillian Durr.

Proctor is a school counselor at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School. She was nominated for working with outside organizations to bring programs to Stoddert, taking leadership courses to improve her skills set and working beyond the regular work day to help any student, parent or staff member in need. Stoddert Principal Robert Babiak said Proctor plans to eventually become an administrator and works with the administrative team, team leaders and department chairs to make certain the counselors are supporting the instructional program for all students. "Proctor has an excellent rapport with staff, students, parents and the community," Babiak wrote in a nomination letter.

Gould is a prekindergarten/LEEP instructional assistant at Malcolm Elementary School. She was nominated for demonstrating the highest level of expertise as she works with students, excelling in all aspects of her work and volunteering for extra duties and activities. Malcolm Principal Wilhelmina Pugh said Gould shows a sincere interest in students as individuals and is consistently fair in dealing with them. "Gould truly understands the importance of fostering positive relationships with

students and their families," Pugh wrote in a nomination letter.

Long is a reading resource teacher at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School. She was nominated for recognition for providing staff development opportunities at the school and county levels, successfully coordinating the reading interventions at the school for students needing additional reading support and taking on extra duties. Higdon Principal Kathleen Morgan describes Long as a "jack of all trades" for the many tasks that she does every day to make the school a better place for teaching and learning. "It is a great honor to have such an exceptional teacher such as Mrs. Mary Kate Long working with students and families at Dr. Higdon Elementary School," Morgan wrote in a nomination letter.

Durr is an elementary school teacher at Dr. James Craik Elementary School. She was nominated for recognition for expanding her professional skills, providing help to countless committees and always willing to work with teachers, students and parents to ensure her students are getting everything they need to grasp concepts being taught to become independent learners. Craik Principal Penny Nye said Durr is a teacher that goes above and beyond to help her students be successful. "Miss Jillian Durr is a great asset to Dr. James Craik Elementary School," Nye wrote in a nomination letter.



## Staff notes

### Job Openings

**Food Service Assistant Manager** – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Nov. 14.

**Secretary** – Instruction, Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 15.

**Switchboard** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 18.

**Kindergarten Instructional Assistant** – Dr. James Craik Elementary School, 10-month position. Apply by Nov. 18.

**Special Education Inclusion Resource Teacher** – General Smallwood Middle School, 10-month position. A minimum of five years experience is required. Apply by Nov. 18.

**Special Education Teacher** – Mary B. Neal Elementary School, 10-month position. Ap-

ply by Nov. 18.

**Building Service Manager** – Malcolm Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 22.

**Building Service Assistant Manager** – Dr. James Craik Elementary School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 22.

**Building Service Worker** – Theodore G. Davis Middle School, 12-month position. Apply by Nov. 22.

**Autism Teacher** – Location to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by Nov. 30.

**Media Specialist** – J.P. Ryon Elementary School, 10-month position. Master's degree required.

**HVAC Teacher** – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position.

**Food Service Program Support Manager** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position.

**Title I Instructional Specialist** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Master's degree and five years experience required.

**Math Teacher** – Benjamin Stoddert Middle School, 10-month position.

**Inclusion Resource Teacher** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 10-month position.

**School Counselor** – Mary B. Neal Elementary School, 10-month, part-time position. Master's degree in guidance and counseling and five years experience required.

### Extra pay position

**La Plata High School** has the following openings:

- Varsity baseball coach

Contact Cliff Nagle, athletic director, 301-753-1754, to apply.