

School News



Important Dates Coming Soon

Last day of school

The last day of school for students is Monday, June 20. The last day for teachers is Tuesday, June 21. June 15, 16, 17 and 20 are two-hour early dismissal dates for students.

Teacher of the Year

Stephanie Fara Harris-Walent, a language arts teacher at Milton M. Somers Middle School, is the 2011 Charles County Public Schools Teacher of the Year. She has been teaching seventh grade at Somers since 2000. A complete story about her award and teaching career will be available in the May 27 edition of *School News*.

Airing now on Channel 96

Airing now is a new episode of News-Break 96, a monthly show produced by the communications department that features Charles County Public Schools staff, students and events. This episode highlights Superintendent of Schools James E. Richmond's recent win of the national Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award, highlights the Career and Research Development program and annual employee/employer breakfast and introduces viewers to folklore during a performance at Indian Head Elementary School.

The show airs on Comcast Channel 96 and Verizon FiOS Channel 12, and can also be viewed at any time on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboc.com/publicinfo/channel96/vod/>.

History Day honors

Kristen Barrett, a social studies teacher at Milton M. Somers Middle School, was named the 2011 History Day Teacher of the Year for Charles County at the Maryland History Day event held April 30 at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Richmond proposes step increase for employees

Superintendent James E. Richmond presented a \$299.2 million budget proposal to the Board of Education on Tuesday, which is a \$4.4 million or 1.5 percent increase over this school year.

The Superintendent's proposal includes a reserve for step and scale adjustments for eligible employees, a one-time payment for employees not eligible for a step increase, technology upgrades, fuel and utility cost increases, and pension administration fees. If approved, the step increase leaves employees one step behind. Employees did not receive a step this school year. Step increases are contracted periodic increases in an employee's rate of basic pay from one step of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step of that grade.

Funding increases reflect an additional \$5.3 million from the state and maintenance

of effort, or \$324,100, from the county. The fund balance was reduced by half, to \$1.3 million, in order to shrink the school system's reliance on year-end savings to fund operations, said Paul Balides, assistant superintendent of finance, business administration and technology. Additionally, a reduction of 27.5 vacant positions provides approximately \$1.5 million to balance the budget.

Other funding adjustments include moving items previously covered by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, which ends in September, to the federal ARRA Ed Jobs funding program, which is restricted to employee compensation and continues to fiscal year 2013. Transferred salary costs include teacher substitute payments, tuition reimbursement, extended day

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Insurance premiums hold; prescription plan changes

Health insurance premiums are not increasing; however, there are several changes coming to the pharmacy and CareFirst PPN/PPO plans, effective July 1. Employees can learn more about the changes by attending one of a series of informational meetings or by watching a live streaming video of the May 19 meeting.

Open enrollment for health insurance benefits is May 11-25. Employees who want to make changes to their insurance plan or enroll must do so during this time. Flexible spending accounts have a separate open enrollment in October. Premiums are not increasing for fiscal year 2012; however there are several changes coming to the pharmacy and CareFirst PPN/PPO plans, effective July 1.

Human Resources is hosting the open enrollment meetings to provide information and to answer employee questions about the changes. The schedule is as follows:

- Monday, May 16, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., Henry E. Lackey High School;

- Wednesday, May 18, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., Theodore G. Davis Middle School; and

- Thursday, May 19, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building

The May 19 meeting will be streamed live on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboc.com/boe/live/>. Viewers can submit questions by e-mail to be answered during the meeting. Send questions to boardmail@ccboc.com.

Employees will also receive a welcome packet next month with information regarding the changes.

Pharmacy changes

- The prescription drug plan for employees and retirees insured through Blue Cross Blue Shield/CareFirst plans will be administered by CVS/Caremark for both retail and mail order prescription drugs. It is encouraged that employees use the new plan at a CVS location, but it is not required. Employees can continue to fill their prescriptions at the location of their choice. The new plan with CVS/Caremark saves the school

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On the cover

Pictured on the cover are employees honored by the Board of Education at their May meeting. Pictured, from left, are: Earl Harrod, building service assistant manager, T. C. Martin Elementary School; Jennifer DeAtley, reading resource teacher, Mary B. Neal Elementary School; and Margaret Woodley, library media specialist, Mattawoman Middle School.

School News

School News will not be mailed to employees during the summer. All newsletters can be accessed on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/staffservices/newsletters.cfm>. A link to each newsletter will be provided to employees by e-mail each payday and limited copies are available in schools/centers during the summer. Newsletters will be mailed to any employee who requests printed copies during the summer. E-mail your request, name and address to Kara Gross at ksgross@ccboe.com to be placed on the mailing list.

Grote golf tournament

The Charles County Retired School Personnel Association is sponsoring the 20th annual Ken Grote Open golf tournament on Monday, June 27. Interested participants should contact Dale Cornette at idcornette@yahoo.com for more details.

End-of-year activities

Charles County Public Schools is holding county assessments for elementary and middle school students from May 16 through May 26. County assessment for high school students begin May 23. High School Assessments (HSA) testing begins May 16 and ends May 27. The 2011 graduation schedule is as follows: Monday June, 6 – La Plata High School, 9 a.m.; Westlake High School, 2 p.m.; and Thomas Stone High School, 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 7 – Maurice J. McDonough High School, 9 a.m.; Henry E. Lackey High School, 2 p.m.; and North Point High School, 7 p.m. All graduations will take place at the Showplace Arena in Upper Marlboro, with the exception of North Point's, which will be held at the school.

Budget

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stipends, pay for hourly special education instructional assistants and staff development.

"This budget begins to address some of the areas hardest hit due to the economy and does not further reduce or eliminate successful programs and school improvements. We continue to build on our academic success and provide strong support to the classroom, our students and our staff," Richmond said.

The Superintendent is requesting authority to take a \$3 million loan to provide technology upgrades, including five-year replacements of aging computer equipment and the addition of Telepresence rooms, a state-of-the-art teleconferencing technology, that connects Charles County students globally, to four more high schools. Westlake and Maurice J. McDonough high schools have Telepresence labs. Loan repayment would be \$500,000 annually.

Transportation costs include fuel price increases, 25 bus replacements and four

new buses. A pension plan increase, passed on from the state, charges \$163 per participant in the State Retirement system. There are 2,846 Charles County Public Schools employees in the state system. Health insurance increases were offset by changes to the school system's coverage, including cost saving measures on employees' prescription drug plan.

The Superintendent's proposal brings the per pupil operating cost to \$11,476, an increase of \$118 from FY 2011. Sixty-eight cents of each dollar is dedicated to classroom instruction. Nearly 80 percent of the school system's operating budget is committed to employee compensation.

A copy of the Superintendent's fiscal year 2012 budget proposal and presentation is available at <http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/budget.cfm>.

The Board will hold a budget work session, 6 p.m., May 23, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building.

Insurance

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system considerable amounts of funding.

- All employees and retirees with insurance benefits through Blue Cross Blue Shield/CareFirst will receive new identification cards for medical, dental and prescription. As of June 30, all new identification cards will need to be presented for prescription coverage.

- For all mail order prescription requests through the CVS/Caremark program, participants will need to supply a new prescription form from their doctor and submit it along with the CVS/Caremark prescription order form available at https://member.benelogic.com/CoreProdA/CharlesBOE/2011/forms/RX_mailorder.pdf.

To review group rates and plan summaries, visit the employee self-service benefits section of the Benelogic system Web site at https://member.benelogic.com/CoreProdA/CharlesBOE/2011/beneguidedocs/beneguide_toc.htm.

CoreFirst PPN/PPO plan changes

- As of July 1, the PPN/PPO plan will be considered a non-grandfathered plan, meaning federal law is requiring insurance

companies to make certain changes. These include the elimination of co-payments for network preventative services such as well-child visits, adult routine physicals, immunizations, routine gynecology visits and cancer screenings.

- There is a new claims appeal process, which will be discussed at open enrollment meetings. CareFirst has developed new guidelines to follow when members appeal a denied claim.

To enroll or change benefit selections, visit the benefits Web site at www.ccboe.benelogic.com. First-time users will need to log in with their Social Security number as their user name, and use the last four digits of their Social Security number as their password. Users will be prompted to change their password, and can then follow the instructions to enroll for benefits. Remember to select the "finish" button to save your changes. Changes made during open enrollment are effective July 1.

Contact Christeda Warner, 301-934-7459, or cwarner@ccboe.com for additional information or with questions.



Marjorie Brown, left, Catherine Stottlemeyer, center, and Kelli Gutierrez, right, are the middle school winners from Piccowaxen Middle School in the group nomination category.



Robyn Cataldo, left, and Anita Grimes, right, were named the elementary winners from Berry Elementary School in the group nomination category.

Parents recognize staff for making a difference for special needs students

The Charles County Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) recognized more than 115 Charles County Public Schools staff members at its fifth annual Teacher and Staff Appreciation Awards ceremony held Wednesday, April 27, at the Greater Waldorf Jaycees Community Center.

Staff members are nominated for recognition by students and parents in the community. Recognized were teachers, instructional assistants, school bus drivers and attendants, school counselors, psychologists, administrators, occupational, physical and speech therapists, and other staff members who make a difference in the lives of special needs children.

Award winners are nominated and selected in six categories: individual elementary; individual secondary; elementary group; secondary group; support staff; and related services.

In the individual elementary school category, Robyn Rolison, a special education teacher at William A. Diggs Elementary School, was named the overall winner. Cherelle Holland, a special education teacher at Theodore G. Davis Middle School, received the overall award in the individual secondary category.

The elementary winners in the group nomination category are



Cherelle Holland



Daniel Goldring



Dawn Trotter



Robyn Rolison

Robyn Cataldo, special education teacher, Berry Elementary School, and Anita Grimes, special education pre-school instructional assistant, Berry. The middle school winners nominated for the secondary group

award are Marjorie Brown and Kelli Gutierrez, instructional assistants, Piccowaxen Middle School, and Catherine Stottlemeyer,

long-term special education substitute teacher, Piccowaxen.

In the support staff category, Daniel Goldring, building service assistant manager at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School, was selected as the winner. In the related services category, Dawn Trotter, a speech therapist at J. P. Ryon Elementary School, was named the overall winner.

The SECAC is organized to provide a forum for issues pertaining to children with special education needs. Members advocate for recommendations and assist the school system about the education budget, inclusion assessments, support services and other issues concerning children and special education, and related services.

A complete list of award winners and staff members nominated for SECAC awards is available on the Charles County Public Schools Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/pr/>.

Charles County Board of Education plans work session for the end of May

The Board of Education is holding a public work session at 6 p.m., Monday, May 23, in the Board room at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. On the agenda are the FY 2012 budget and a report item on handwriting.

The meeting will be aired live on Comcast Channel 96 and Veri-

zon FiOS Channel 12, and is also streamed live on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/live/>.

All board meetings are also available as videos on demand on the school system Web site at <http://www2.ccboe.com/publicinfo/channel96/vod/>.

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Haan awarded Horace Mann/Lincoln Fellowship

Debra Haan, a physical education teacher at Arthur Middleton Elementary School, was recently awarded one of 50 nationwide Horace Mann-Abraham Lincoln Fellowships. The fellowship offers educators the opportunity to study the life of Abraham Lincoln during a weeklong institute and participants are eligible to receive college credit.

Robert McLeod, a local agent with Horace Mann Insurance, surprised Haan with the announcement during a schoolwide assembly held at the school on Tuesday, May 3. Haan is the only recipient in Maryland to receive the fellowship and will travel to Springfield, Illinois this summer to study at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Haan was shocked that she was selected as a finalist in the program. "I dress as Lincoln each year on his birthday and this is the fourth time I entered this program. Lincoln has been a big part of my family. My dad loves to learn and read about Lincoln and this is a dream

come true for my family," Haan said.

As part of the fellowship, Haan will tour various historic sites in Illinois including Lincoln's New Salem State Historic site, Lincoln's home and tomb and the Old State Capitol State Historic site. Past topics include Lincoln the lawyer, Lincoln the president, political cartoons in the classroom, Civil War medical practices and ghosts of the library.

The annual program is open to nationwide full-time teachers who teach students in grades kindergarten through 12. Applicants must submit a resume and answer essay questions, and are judged by a panel of educators for the final selection. The curriculum is geared toward teachers of students in elementary, middle and high



Middleton Principal Greg Miller, left, Vice Principal Patricia Mooring, second from right, and Horace Mann insurance agent Robert McLeod, far right, congratulate Debra Haan, second from left, on receiving the 2011 Horace Mann Abraham Lincoln Fellowship.

school.

For more information on the program, visit <http://www.horacemann.com/teacher-lounge/fellowship-program>.

Staff notes

Job Openings

Secretary to the Director of Student Services – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Two years of administrative experience is required. Apply by May 25.

Assistant Food Service Manager, Food Service Department – Location and hours to be determined, 10-month position. Apply by May 17.

Food Service Worker – Eva Turner Elementary School, four-hour, 10-month position. Apply by May 25.

Extra pay positions

La Plata High School has the following openings:

- Head girls' basketball coach
- Head boys' varsity basketball coach
- Soccer coaching positions

Contact Cliff Nagle, athletic director, at 301-753-1754 for information or to apply.

Henry E. Lackey High School has the following openings:

- Cheerleading coaches

Contact David Anderson, athletic director, at 301-743-5431 by May 16 to apply.

Summer School openings

The 2011 Summer School program at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center is seeking certificated teachers for positions in the following areas:

- high school Biology
- high school earth science
- middle school language arts
- middle school mathematics
- middle school science

Contact Doug Lamb, dlamb@ccboe.com, or 301-932-1003 for more information.

New application system

Charles County Public Schools is using a new job application system located on the school system Web site, www.ccboe.com. Application data stored on the old system

does not transfer to the new system. All employees, including temporary staff and substitutes, need to complete a new application on the new system when applying for a position. Old data from the previous system cannot be accessed.

To access the new system, select the employment opportunities link posted on the home page of the system Web site. The human resources department will continue to manage the system. For additional information call 301-934-7255.

Summer office hours

Charles County Public Schools has changed summer office hours for the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building to 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., beginning Monday, June 27. The schedule will remain in effect until Monday, Aug. 15. Additional schools and centers will operate on the summer hour schedule. A complete listing will be available at www.ccboe.com/pr later next month.