



School News

Where success is measured one student at a time • December 22, 2006 • R-260

Board members take oath of office

The members of Board XIV were sworn into office Monday, Dec. 18, in a ceremony at North Point High School. The new Board will hold its first meeting on Jan. 9 when it will elect a chairman and vice chairman.

Charles County Clerk of the Court Sharon Hancock delivered the oath of office to the members, who then gave individual comments and thanks to their supporters.

Members of the Board of Education are: Jennifer S. Abell, Collins A. Bailey, Charles E. Carrington, Maura H. Cook, Pamela A. Pedersen, Donald M. Wade and Roberta S. Wise. Andrew Van Woerkom is the student member on the Board and served as the master of ceremonies.



The newly elected Board of Education members were sworn into office Dec. 18. Pictured, from left, are Maura Cook, Collins Bailey, Jennifer Abell, Donald Wade, Pamela Pedersen, Charles Carrington and Roberta Wise.

May your holidays be filled with joy and good cheer and may the New Year bring you peace and happiness.

*James E. Richmond,
Superintendent of Schools*

Designed by Shane Jones, North Point High School, Grade 8, 2006

Each year, Superintendent James E. Richmond selects a holiday card design created by a Charles County Public Schools student to send greetings from the school system. This year's card was designed by Shane Jones of North Point High School.



Adult education program helps adults earn their high school diploma

General Educational Development (GED) Program

Imagine a classroom where the students are eager to learn and where they come because they want to, not because it is a requirement.

Those classrooms exist at the Lifelong Learning Center (LLC) where adults come to earn their high school diploma. "People come here because they want to be here. They're enthused about learning," said Elizabeth B. Sinnes, the adult education programs coordinator.

One woman enrolled at the LLC to prepare to take the GED. While a stroke temporarily derailed her efforts, she came back two years later to finish, Sinnes said.

"At the center, you get to help people better themselves and improve their life for themselves and their children. There's nothing like it," said Peggy Monaco, managed information systems specialist for the GED program.

Students age 16 and above enroll in classes at the LLC for one of three reasons: to prepare to take the GED, to gain basic knowledge or to improve their skills in the area of English.

The GED tests students in the areas of math (including algebra and geometry), reading, writing, science and social studies. Some adults come to the center, take a practice test, which runs for five and a half hours, and are ready to take the real test. Others enroll in the classes offered by the center and may or may not take the GED at a later time.

The classrooms and teachers offer a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere. Students sit at round tables and enjoy small, intimate educational settings. Because many students did not succeed in kindergarten through grade 12, the center's instructors wanted to



Adult education staff discuss their programs. From left, Wanda Howell Pingitore, EDP regional coordinator; Lucy Detig, adult education instructional specialist; Diane McPherson-Savoy, intake assessment specialist; and Elizabeth B. Sinnes, adults education programs coordinator.

set up a different educational environment, Sinnes said.

About one third of the center's population is made up of English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Upon entering the program, run by ESL facilitator Mary Vargo, instructors test students' skills through an oral interview. Those at the beginning or intermediate level take classes at the center. The advanced class is taught at the College of Southern Maryland.

Classes are offered Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. to accommodate all students. Classes are free, but students are asked to pay for their books if they can

afford them. There is a \$45 registration fee for the GED and a \$15 fee to take the practice test.

For more information on the GED, Adult Basic Education or ESL programs, call 301-753-1774 or 301-645-4549.

External Diploma Program

Another option for adults looking to obtain their high school diploma is the External Diploma Program (EDP) housed in the Stone Annex. The EDP is uniquely suited to the needs and experiences of adults at least 18 years of age. The EDP allows students to demonstrate their high school level skills by applying them in real-life situations.

Many of the adults that enroll come to the program with real-life experience. "They know what it's like out there without the diploma. It's hard to find a job," said Wanda Howell Pingitore, regional coordinator for the EDP.

The EDP is self-directed and contains a diagnostic phase and

continued on page 3

Did you know?

- The GED and EDP programs collectively serve about 1,000 adults. About 200 students graduate each year.
- The Lifelong Learning Center (LLC) will begin teaching classes in Bel Alton beginning next year.
- The LLC offers free childcare on its grounds while parents are in class.
- VanGo's bus routes include stops at both the LLC (home to the GED program) and the Stone Annex (home to the EDP).
- Drop-in tutoring is offered every Monday from 1 to 3 p.m. at the LLC for adult education participants.
- Charles County Public Schools supports the adult education programs by providing the facilities and paying administrative salaries. Teacher salaries are paid through a grant.

Adult education (continued)

an assessment phase. During the diagnostic phase, staff evaluates each student's skill level in the areas of reading, writing and math. If a student needs work in a specific area, he or she will work on those areas on their own and come back to be re-evaluated. The student also completes a self-assessment of current skills and their occupational interests. Free tutoring is provided as well as adult basic education classes for those who need more extensive review.

After completing the diagnostic phase, students move into the assessment phase where they must demonstrate 100 percent competency in 65 different skills revolving around the following themes: communication, computation, self awareness, social awareness, consumer awareness, occupational preparedness and technological awareness. The student must also show competency by completing an occupational verification or assessment, a special skill assessment, an advanced academic assessment or a certified training documentation.

The final phase of the program involves creating a portfolio, which is reviewed by EDP staff.

Overall, the program is a good option for students who have test anxieties or who do not perform well in a traditional classroom setting, Pingitore added.

The program takes an average of eight months to a year to complete, but it depends upon the skill level and motivation of the client. Students work at their own pace at home and meet regularly with an EDP assessor to check their progress.

To enroll in the program, students must pay a \$200 fee through an installment plan and sign a contract that can be terminated if the student is inconsistent in meeting with their assessors. The program is flexible where work, illness, childcare and other obligations occur.

When Pingitore first started with the program, she didn't envision being here 27 years later. But she said she stayed because "it's rewarding to know that what you do for a living has a positive effect in people's lives."

For more information on the EDP, call 301-609-3690 or 301-870-3910.

School system testing new communication system

Charles County Public Schools is using a new way to communicate with parents and students about attendance, school events or information that may require special attention at a child's school.

Parents should receive a telephone recording this week notifying them of the new system. Parents with e-mail addresses on file with their child's school will also receive an e-mail message. The change in the notification system is part of the school system's continuing efforts to improve communication to parents.

Next week, the school system plans to send out a test message with new technology that enables it to send voice and email messages to parents and guardians at the numbers and email addresses provided on their children's emergency cards. The system will be used to deliver notices and reminders to parents and will enhance communication from schools to the home.

The system will also be used to notify middle and high school parents about student absenteeism.

While the system can be used to notify parents of individual school emergencies, it will not be used to notify parents of inclement weather closures due to the amount of time it takes to notify more than 20,000 households. Parents should continue to monitor local radio and television stations, call the 24-hour information line at 301-934-7410/301-932-6656, or the school system web site at www.ccboe.com for the latest emergency or inclement weather closing information.

Principals ask that parents make sure their contact information on file with the school is up to date so that they can receive all information. The school system and schools plan to begin using the system in January and expand its use throughout the remainder of the school year.



Notebook

Board names school

The Board of Education on Tuesday approved Mary Burgess Neal as the name of the new elementary school to be built off Piney Church Road in Waldorf. The school is scheduled to open in August 2008.

Mary Burgess Neal is a former teacher, counselor, principal and school administrator who spent her 31-year career with Charles County Public Schools. She started her teaching career in 1944 at Bel Alton School, where she was later named as principal in 1949. She also served as principal of the Port Tobacco School from 1952-1961 when she was appointed as supervisor of elementary schools. She held that position until she retired in 1975.

A graduate of Mensesa High School in Pennsylvania, she received her bachelor's degree in early education from Bowie State College and her master's degree from New York State University.

Mrs. Neal was a member of the Eastern Star and Delta Kappa Gamma Society. Ms. Neal worked with the Children's Aid Society in Waldorf and chaired numerous committees within her church. Ms. Neal was born Oct. 21, 1908, and passed away on May 2, 2005.

Cover photos

Pictured on the front are exemplary employees honored by the Board of Education on Dec. 12. From left: Joy A. Sheff, secretary, Gale-Bailey Elementary School; Mary L. Boyd, Reading Recovery teacher, Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School; Monique W. Varlas, science teacher, Mattawoman Middle School; and Kristin Josen, instructional specialist, Matula Elementary School.

Personnel

Apply for positions at www.ccboe.com/hur, or in writing to the personnel office. All positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted.

Job openings

Temporary Secretary – Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Center; 12-month position.

Senior Project Manager – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; 12-month position. Bachelor's degree in construction management or related field required.

Food Service Worker – William B. Wade Elementary School; three-hour, 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 27.

Food Service Manager – William B. Wade Elementary School; 10-month position. Apply by Dec. 27.

Specialist in Transportation – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; two or more years of college with directly related course work. Apply by Dec. 28.

Student Data Account Clerk – Matthew Henson Middle School; 11-month position. Apply by Dec. 28.

Food Service Worker – North Point High School; 10-month, three-hour position.

Building Service Worker – General Smallwood Middle School; 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 29.

Building Service Worker – William B. Wade Elementary School; 12-month position. Apply by Dec. 29.

RPG/JAVA Programmer Analyst – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; 12-month position. Bachelor's degree in computer science or related discipline. Apply by Jan. 2.

Food Service Manager – Benjamin Stoddert Middle School; 10-month position.

Food Service Worker – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; 12-month position.

Building Service Manager – Theodore Davis Middle School; 12-month position.

Building Service Assistant Manager – Theodore Davis Middle School; 12-month position.

Interim Individual Sensory Integration IA – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; 10-month position.

Instructional Assistant – Maurice J. McDonough High School; 10-month position.

Technology Facilitator – Indian Head Elementary School; 10-month position.

Mathematics Teachers – Ten-month positions available at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, Henry E. Lackey and La Plata high schools, Mattawoman and Piccowaxen middle schools.

English Teacher – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; 10-month position.

Family and Consumer Science Teacher – John Hanson Middle School; 10-month position.

Reading Resource Teacher – Dr. James

Craik Elementary School; 10-month position.

Chemistry Teacher – Maurice J. McDonough High School; 10-month position.

Music Teacher – Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School; 10-month position.

Business Teacher – La Plata High School; 10-month position.

Life Skills Teacher – Gale-Bailey Elementary School; 10-month position.

Special Education Teachers – Math/science positions available at Henry E. Lackey High School and Mattawoman Middle School; 10-month positions.

Special Education Teacher – Thomas Stone High School; Prep Plus and Local, State and National Government; 10-month position.

IEP Facilitators – Eva Turner and Gale-Bailey elementary schools; 10-month positions. Apply by Jan. 12.

Special Education Teachers – Henry E. Lackey High School and Mattawoman Middle School; math and science; 10-month positions.

Extra pay positions

North Point High School has the following positions open:

- Varsity softball coach
- Varsity baseball coach

Call Principal Peter Cevenini, 301-885-2012, to apply.

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

Board of Education Members
Collins A. Bailey, Chairman
Donald M. Wade, Vice Chairman
Jennifer S. Abell
Charles E. Carrington
Maura H. Cook
Pamela A. Pedersen
Roberta S. Wise
Andrew Van Woerkom, Student Member

Superintendent of Schools
James E. Richmond

Editor/Writers
Katie O'Malley-Simpson
Jill Caniglia

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

Charles County Public Schools
Post Office Box 2770
La Plata, Maryland 20646
(address service requested)

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 66

The mission of Charles County Public Schools is to provide an opportunity for all school-aged children to receive an academically challenging, quality education that builds character, equips for leadership, and prepares for life, in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.