

CCS Superintendent Message

A publication from Dr. Rosa S. Atkins for the
Charlottesville City School Division community



April 25, 2012

Dear Community Members:

Spring is an inspiring time of the year! Not only are the flowers and trees coming into bloom, but our students are coming into their own and showcasing their talents in a variety of ways. CHS senior Jessie Press-Williams received a \$30,000 scholarship from the Emily Couric Leadership Forum in recognition of her academic achievement and leadership. Jessie was recently named a U.S. Presidential Scholar and she has distinguished herself as a leader at CHS in many ways: editor-in-chief of the school newsletter, president of the debate club, president of the CHS Science Club (BACON: Best All-around Club of Nerds), and an active community volunteer.

At the Science Olympiad this month, the 15-member BACON team came home with nine awards as well as the Team of the Year Award for bringing the most spirit, positivity, energy, and ingenuity to the event. All of this follows on the heels of a spring trip to Europe where students saw, among other sites, the Large Hadron Collider at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland. Another group of students from Mandarin Chinese classes went to China at the same time.

Closer to home, the Charlottesville High School Music Department—and all of the students who participate in orchestra, band or choir—traveled to Orlando April 18-22 for the WorldStrides Heritage Festival of Music. The CHS Orchestra String Ensemble, the CHS Band, and the CHSO String Orchestra each won first place gold medals. The CHS Orchestra and CHS Band won the Instrumental Sweepstakes; the CHS Choir won a third place silver medal. Best of all, the three musical ensembles (orchestra, band, and choir) were honored with the Festival Sweepstakes Award, also known as the Grand Championship.

Our school programs also attract visitors to Charlottesville. Alice Waters, founder of the Edible Schoolyard program in California and a notable public policy advocate for organic food, visited the City Schoolyard Garden at Buford Middle School last week. This outdoor learning lab is used regularly to teach biology, environmental studies, nutrition, cooking, and more. It is an excellent example of the project-based learning that we use to actively engage students.

These are but a few of the exciting and exemplary things that are going on in our schools. The spring flowers may soon fade but our students, supported by teachers and staff, continue to flourish and grow!

April 12, 2012 School Board Meeting

Educational Highlights

Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Gertrude Ivory introduced Principal Jim Kyner and others from the Greenbrier Elementary School community to present an overview of the school's work in the Hearthwood neighborhood. The staff, students, and parents were acknowledged for their efforts to support learning and promote health at school and at home.

Dr. Tracie Daniels and other members of the Jackson-Via Elementary School community presented "Highlighting the Class of 2026," showing ways that post-secondary education is promoted at the school.

Charlottesville High School Principal Dr. Thomas Taylor and the CHS basketball coaches recognized the school's basketball teams. The CHS boys basketball team was 4th in the regular season, Jefferson district tournament champions, and Region II semifinalists. The CHS girls basketball team was 4th in the regular season, Jefferson district tournament runner-ups and Region II quarter-finalists.

Student and Staff Recognitions

The Greenbrier Elementary School staff was recognized by the Board for attaining "Title 1 Distinguished School" status for the ninth consecutive year. The Burnley-Moran Elementary School staff was also recognized for its "Title 1 Distinguished School" status this year.

Action Items

The Board voted to meet on May 10, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. at the CHS Media Center to review the upcoming budget in light of the approved State budget.

Information Items

11.1 Performance/Project-Based Learning - Gertrude Ivory introduced Science Coordinator Jessica Kalagher, who presented a progress report on project-based learning and assessments. She also described professional development plans for integrating STEM initiatives and field experiences into the K-12 curriculum.

Ms. Ivory presented a preliminary plan for encouraging post-secondary studies division-wide. Highlights included college campus tours, the *Fourth Grade Goes to College* program, and monthly College Shirts/Colors Days.

Ms. Ivory presented information regarding the adoption and purchase of reading textbooks. In December, a division-wide committee consisting of representatives from each of our schools began the process of selecting Language Arts and English textbooks for adoption. Teacher feedback, surveys, and staff meetings were used to collect feedback and the field was narrowed down to the top two publishers. Materials were again made available at the February professional development day and recommendations for adoption were made. When available, electronic versions will also be made available to students. Based on the textbook adoption process, the selected textbooks will be displayed for Board and public review Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., May 5 until May 9, at the Division Administration Annex in the lower level of Charlottesville High School.

Ms. Ivory presented a Planning District 10 Regional Adult Education Memorandum of Understanding. The Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAE) has changed both the fiscal responsibility and service area effective July 2012. A request for proposals issued in January 2012 outlines these new requirements. Planning District 10 will be a unified region for adult education services, with a single point of contact, fiscal agent, and increased accountability in all areas. Adult Basic Education (Federal) and General Adult Education (State) funds continue to be tied to and must be used to benefit the locality. Susan Erno and Carol Coffey, on behalf of Charlottesville City Schools, have been working on a proposal to be the fiscal or lead agency for PD 10.

Director of Special Education and Student Services Dr. Beth Baptist presented the Special Education 2012-2013 Annual Plan. The document is submitted to the Department of Education for accessing federal funds for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The funding for 2011-2012 was approximately \$1,027,000. Directors have been advised to write the plan for 2012-2013 for the same amount we received in 2009-2010 which is \$1,016,906. The second grant is for early childhood special education programs, and the amount is \$45,091. If either funding award is different than expected, a budget amendment will be written.

Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services James Henderson presented the 2012-2013 Career and Technical Education Local Plan. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins IV) regulates career and technical education from the federal level and provides funding to states and local school divisions. Under the provisions of Perkins and regulations governing career and technical education in Virginia, local educational agencies desiring federal assistance from Perkins are required to submit a one-year plan and budget to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Disbursement of funds is contingent upon local and state approval of the application/plan.

Ed Gillaspie, Director of Finance, presented a budget update to the Board on the 2012-2013 Budget.

Director of Human Resources Carole Nelson and Mr. Gillaspie presented information regarding the Health Insurance Carrier change. CCS will transition from Anthem to Coventry Health Care, effective July 1, 2012.

Gertrude Ivory presented a request for a *City of Promise* Steering Committee Appointment. The Steering Committee for Charlottesville City's *City of Promise* Grant has identified a position for a Charlottesville City School Board Member. Ms. Leah Puryear was selected by a unanimous Board vote.

CCS Special Achievements and News

Charlottesville High and Buford Middle schools were well represented among winners at the Virginia Piedmont Regional Science Fair March 12. CHS students Charlotte and Emily Keeley won the Grand Award Best of Show and First Place in Engineering-Materials and Bioengineering. Twenty students from Buford Middle School brought home 20 Junior Division Category Awards from the fair. The two CHS “scientists” will represent Central VA at the International Science and Engineering Fair in Pittsburgh this May. Their project title is *Validating the Smart Bandage: Computer Modeling the Diagnostic Potential of an Oxygen-Sensing Nanoparticle-Embedded Polymer*. The project is a continuation from last year's award-winning project.

Students in the Charlottesville High School Chinese language program traveled to China over spring break. The language immersion experience included visits to Shang Hai, HangZhou, Bei Jing, and Xi An plus an opportunity to stay in the homes of Chinese families. The trip marks a new phase in the school's growing Chinese language program.

Second graders visited Africa, thanks to the installation of a National Geographic Society Giant Traveling Map at the Boys and Girls Club. Designed to promote geographic literacy, the 110-pound map and related activities incorporate physical movement and games to teach students place names, physical geography, and cultural geography as well as map reading skills.

Buford Middle School students made the grade at the Division 4 regional competition for National History Day. Four students were second place winners who moved on to the State competition and eight students received Honorable Mentions. At the State History Day event, Chris Hays placed second for Historical Paper. He will move on to the National Competition in June.

Congratulations to two staff members who received 2012 Phi Delta Kappa awards. Abigail Kayser from Burnley-Moran won the Outstanding Elementary Teacher Award, and Preschool Coordinator Ann Dublirer won the Sylvia Henderson Early Childhood Educational Leadership Award.

Open Houses for kindergarten registration will be held at all elementary schools **April 26 from 3:30 to 6 p.m.** Parents may also register a child **any time** after the Open House at any elementary school office---the earlier, the better! A child must be five years old by September 30, 2012 to enroll in fall classes. For more information, contact any Charlottesville City elementary school office or call 245-2817.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

May 3—School Board Meeting, 5 p.m., CHS Media Center

May 10—School Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., CHS Media Center (Special budget session)

June 7—School Board Meeting, 5 p.m., CHS Media Center

July 5—School Board Meeting, 5 p.m., CHS Media Center

**The CHS Class of 2012 will graduate on Saturday, June 2, at 4:30 p.m.
The ceremony will be held at the John Paul Jones Arena.**