



Dorchester County
Public Schools
Every Child A Success

SUPERINTENDENT'S STAFF BULLETIN

Henry V. Wagner, Jr., Superintendent

May 1, 2011

Volume 1, Issue 11

Teacher of the Year

On April 12, **Ms. Valerie Lomax**, social studies teacher at **North Dorchester Middle School**, was selected as the DCPS **Teacher of the Year for 2011–2012**. **Miss Mary Collins**, special education teacher at **Choptank Elementary School**, was selected as the **First Class Teacher of the Year for 2011-2012**. Ms. Lomax will go on to the Maryland State competition with the finalists announced state-wide in **October, 2011**. The First Class Teacher of the Year is a locally-sponsored recognition intended for a first year teacher who has demonstrated exceptional skill and dedication.

As part of the celebration that evening, I offered the following reflections:

It is vitally important that we express our admiration for teachers whenever we have the opportunity. Their job will always be “job one” - the only one we could never do without! As I continue to visit classrooms throughout our school system, I am struck by the fact that our very best teachers are a study in contrasts. They adapt on a daily basis to the complex needs of students, yet cling tenaciously to standards of excellence. They are guided by collections of data, yet see each of their students as having unique gifts. They teach effectively to high stakes tests, yet their students remember them for so much more than that. And while they are grounded in reality, they never cease to dream of that better life for their students. In short, our teachers thrive on the wisdom that great teaching is both art and science. For all that they are and all that they do, we salute them today! Congratulations!

The celebration was planned and carried out with great skill by **Dr. Jim Orr, Ruth Clendaniel, Brenda Davis, and Tracy Murphy** of our **Human Resources Office**.

STAFF APPRECIATION IN MAY

The month of **May** has been set aside for a variety of employee appreciation observances. DCPS is designating the first two weeks of this month as general **Staff Appreciation Weeks**. Additionally, **food service workers** are being honored on **May 4**, **May 11** is **School Nurses’ Day**, and the week of **May 16** is **Pupil Personnel Workers’ Week**. The bottom line is that we value all of the employees of our school system. Our parents and families rely on you for the well-being of their children *in loco parentis* each and every day, regardless of your official role!

PRESS RELEASES IN DCPS

Several staff members have inquired about the many **press releases** that we have issued over the last ten months. I am determined to broadcast the “**good word**” about DCPS at every opportunity because there is so much of which to be proud! In addition to having **Art Renkwitz** post and archive them on our **website**, **Chris Dayton** forwards them to **media outlets**. Any staff member who has a potential news item should clear the story with their principal or supervisor and forward it to Chris for final preparation. **Photos** are always a good idea, if available; please identify persons in the picture and verify that parental permission for their use is on file.

INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATE

As I mentioned in the January Bulletin, DCPS has established a variety of **task forces** to address the special issues that affect various educational levels and/or stakeholder groups. These task forces (which consist of **teachers, administrators, parents, community representatives, and district leaders**) have been vitally important sources of collaboration, consensus building, and problem solving.

I am pleased to report on a **sampling** of the **accomplishments** of the task forces during this school year. The **Minority Achievement Task** under the leadership of **Dr. Gwen Handy** has continued our efforts to provide mentoring services, conduct college visits, present some of our practices at multicultural conferences, and carry out the vision of last summer’s mathematics preview classes. The **High School Task Force** under the leadership **Mr. Michael Johnson** has produced the *High School Program of Study* for 2011-2012 and is monitoring the transition to the new DCTC programs. The **Middle School Task Force**, led **Mrs. Patricia Vickers**, has produced the *Middle School Program of Study* for 2011-2012 and monitored curriculum, scheduling, and vertical articulation issues. Finally, the **Elementary School Task Force** has addressed instructional and assessment matters under a rotating leadership model. All of these and other standing task forces are maintaining the reform momentum in DCPS, leading to enhanced achievement for all students!

COVEY UPDATE

A staff member recently sent me a summary of Covey’s **90/10 Principle**, which states that **10%** of life is made up of what happens to you, but **90%** of life is decided by how you react to it! This very **empowering** concept is central to the rest of Covey’s ideas, because it speaks to what makes us unique among all creatures. We have the ability to apply thoughts, beliefs, principles, and habits when we are faced with a stimulus. The **most effective** persons among us remember and apply this most of the time.