



## MSDE BULLETIN

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### **SIX TEACHERS FROM ONE SCHOOL EARN NATIONAL TEACHING HONORS**

Six teachers at Cold Spring Elementary School in Montgomery County have earned National Board Certification, a designation reserved for educators who demonstrate superior teaching skills. After testing in 10 categories, and on their first try, Anne Cain, Christine Frank, Diane Kuykendall, Kathleen Pappano, Karen Stiefel, and Terry Testa all achieved scores that earned them certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, based in Arlington, Va.

**“Officials from the National Board say it’s the first time this has happened in Maryland, and one of the few times it’s happened in the country,”** said Maryland Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick, who recently visited the school. She added that the teachers stand “as models for their profession.”

The National Board Certification process is an extensive yearlong series of performance-based assessments. It includes an examination of teacher portfolios, student work samples, videotapes of classroom work, and a thorough analysis of teacher and student learning. The educators also complete a series of written tests that probe the depth of their knowledge of the subject matter and their understanding of how to convey that material to students.

This year, 65 Maryland teachers earned the distinction, bringing to 136 the number of teachers that have achieved national certification since the state began participating in the program. They joined 6,500 teachers in 49 states and the District of Columbia, selected from a pool of 16,000 candidates, according to the NBPTS.

Dr. Grasmick is a member of the board of directors of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and a proponent of the certification program. ■

### **FIFTH GRADERS AT FOREST KNOLLS ELEMENTARY RECEIVE SPECIAL LESSON**

State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick, Judith McHale, Chief Operating Officer and President of Discovery Communications, Inc., and Montgomery County Public Schools Superintendent Jerry Weast took part in a lesson in "What Has News Value" at Forest Knolls Elementary School in Montgomery County earlier this month.

The class, taught by Susan Michal, is part of a unique public/private partnership between Discovery and the Maryland State Department of Education to help students critically view the media – from television to the Internet – through the use of the free curriculum resource, *Assignment: Media Literacy*. Maryland was the first state to establish a comprehensive initiative in media literacy that crosses several academic disciplines.

Visitors from MSDE, Discovery, and Montgomery County Public Schools worked in small groups with students as they applied the principles taught in the lesson to the articles they read. The groups tried to identify how the articles fit certain criteria that editors use to determine what has news value.

Media literacy is a set of skills that enables students to access, analyze, and critically evaluate all forms of media messages. "Media literacy provides students with the skills to look at the barrage of media messages they are exposed to on a daily basis through critical eyes," said Dr. Grasmick. "These are not only essential life skills but enhance the study of language arts, social studies, and other academic subjects."

Mrs. McHale is a former State Board of Education member and created *Assignment: Media Literacy* in conjunction with MSDE in the wake of the tragedy at Columbine High School in Colorado several years ago. Almost 2,000 educators from across the state have been trained to incorporate this resource into their classroom activities. Separate lessons for elementary (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>), middle school, and high school are available.

For more information about training or to obtain kits, contact Lynn Widdowson, Education Specialist, at 410-767-0277 or e-mail [lwiddowson@msde.state.md.us](mailto:lwiddowson@msde.state.md.us). ■

### **MSDE, PRINCE GEORGE’S SCHOOLS START UNIQUE JUVENILE JUSTICE PILOT PROJECT**

Maryland State Department of Education officials joined leaders from Prince George’s County last week to launch a new Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

The Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) have been awarded nearly \$2.5 million from MSDE to establish the program, aimed at assisting schools plagued by juvenile crime

(more)

## **MSDE, PRINCE GEORGE'S SCHOOLS START UNIQUE PILOT PROJECT (Cont.)**

and disruptive behavior in the classroom. The system will be granted \$1,957,597 to implement the program in school year 2002-03, and another \$450,000 to renovate a school in fiscal year 2002 to house the program.

**The Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program** is a result of a partnership between the school system, MSDE, the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court of Maryland, Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice, Prince George's County Health Department, Prince George's County Department of Social Services, and Prince George's County Career Connections®. The program is designed to provide the students with the social skills and educational expertise necessary to be successful in the next phase of education or in the work place.

"Our goal in Maryland is to serve all children, including those who have had some difficulty in the traditional school structure," said State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick.

MSDE selected PGCPSS from the state's 24 systems. State officials consider this an important effort to educate troubled youths, and will be monitoring closely the success of the Prince George's project to see if it merits expansion into other systems in the state.

The program was created by House Bill 825, which authorized MSDE to establish the pilot, encouraging the local school system to partner with the circuit court in that county to oversee the project. The bill was proposed by Dels. Joseph F. Vallario and Mark K. Shriver.

*For more information about the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program in Prince George's County, contact Dr. Patricia Green, Acting Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, at 301-952-6331. ■*

## **STUDY SHOWS EDUCATION REDUCES CRIME IN MARYLAND, TWO OTHER STATES**

Prison inmates who take part in education programs are far less likely to wind up back in jail than those who don't, according to the results of a new study.

*The Three State Recidivism Study* of inmates in Maryland, Minnesota, and Ohio, conducted by the Correctional Education Association and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Correctional Education and released last month, found that the likelihood of re-incarceration was reduced by 23 percent when inmates participated in education programs.

"The results speak highly of the critical importance of providing quality educational opportunities at all levels," said Maryland State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick.

"Correctional education programs not only provide positive opportunities for the inmates but are cost effective. **Translated into savings every dollar spent on education returns more than two dollars to the citizens in reduced prison costs.**"

For Maryland, that means that last year's \$11.7 million state budget for correctional education returned more than \$23 million to the state. The Correctional Education Program is administered by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Dr. Grasmick has been outspoken about her belief in the effectiveness of prison education and said, "Now, we have real evidence that education reduces crime. It is time for the state to look at ways to increase our investment in a program that does so much for its citizens. While the savings in dollars are important, the reduction in crime itself cannot be so easily translated into dollars. But we know that less crime is the ultimate savings to the community." ■

## **NINE MARYLAND SCHOOLS HONORED AS 2002 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS**

State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick recently announced nine public middle and high schools that have been selected as 2001-2002 Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.

This year's winners are:

- Crofton Middle School, Anne Arundel county, Principal Richard Berzinski
- Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Baltimore City, Principal Ian Cohen
- Catonsville Middle School, Baltimore County, Principal Thomas Evans
- Mt. Airey Middle School, Carroll county, Principal Virginia Ashmore
- Milton Somors Middle School, Charles County, Principal Joseph Warfield
- Windsor Knolls Middle School, Frederick County, Principal Donna Faith
- Thomas Spriggs Wootton High School, Montgomery County, Principal Rebecca Newman
- Northern Middle School, Washington County, Principal Valerie Novak
- Snow Hill High School, Worcester County, Principal Mark Record ■

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