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VOLUME 1
ISSUE 13



MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

A MONTHLY INSIGHT INTO THE HAPPENINGS AT MSDE

THE MSDE PULSE

Special points of interest >>>

- MSDE CONNECTIONS SUMMIT
- STATE BOARD ACTIONS & ORDERS
- SCHOOL SAFETY

MSDE's Connections Summit

Register TODAY!

← RESEARCH + POLICY + PRACTICE

MSDE, in partnership with Mid-Atlantic Regional Education Laboratory, is hosting the 2018 Maryland Connections Summit June 6-7, 2018 at the [West Village Commons](#) at Towson University. This summit brings together education professionals from across Maryland to highlight the vital role data plays in education decision making.

Please register yourself, or spread the word! For more information on date, time, locations and themes visit >>> marylandpublicschools.org/connectsummit2018

Information about sessions and schedules will be updated regularly, so check the website often or follow @MdPublicSchools on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram or use the following hashtags:

#MSDESummit2018 #MSDEData
#ConnectionsSummit #EdDataWorks

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH!

MSDE is proud to recognize our April 2018

Employee of the Month:

Lou Valenti, Jr.



Lou Valenti, Jr., April 2018

Lou Valenti, Jr. is the Branch Chief for Licensing in the Office of Child Care, Division of Early Childhood Development. Lou was nominated by the Licensing Staff of Regions 6 and 13.

Below is a summary of the nomination for Lou:

Mr. Valenti has served as the Regional Manager of Howard and Carroll Counties for the Licensing Branch in the Office of Child Care (OCC) since 2003. In July, 2017, he willingly accepted the additional challenge to oversee the Baltimore City OCC on a temporary basis until a Regional Manager could be hired for that region. In December 2017, he assumed the role of Branch Chief, Licensing and is still overseeing Carroll and Howard Counties.

Mr. Valenti is truly a **child advocate**. He goes **above and beyond** his duties to see that children are in positive, healthy and safe environments. He has worked diligently with Licensing Specialists and the attorneys in the A.G.'s Office to protect the health, safety and welfare of children in child care. Lou has testified regularly in court hearings, closing homes and facilities that are unsafe for our children. He is well known all around the state for his **knowledge** of the regulations and his enforcement actions. His **dedicated service to the children and families** in the child care community has made a huge difference in the lives of children.

Mr. Valenti has been able to make enforcement decisions, which are a safety benefit to children's welfare. He has been able to

approve new centers and providers in the community. He continues to respond to community needs by attending community events such as the Family Child Care Association meetings and Community Partnership meetings. **His leadership has been an immeasurable benefit to all staff and communities.**

These are just a few of the many areas in which Mr. Valenti has excelled in his role. Mr. Valenti supports so many people and is ALWAYS responsive, rapid and thorough. He responds to questions immediately. He follows up, and he is conscientious. One could say that all of this is "doing your job" and that is correct. But, Mr. Valenti's commitment and responsiveness makes us grateful to consider him as part of our team. The way he does his work is an example for all of us.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS OUR EMPLOYEE NOMINATION FORM](#)

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH!

Congratulations, Debra Hines!



Debra Hines, May 2018

MSDE is proud to announce our May 2018

Employee of the Month:

Debra Hines!

Debra (Deb) Hines is a Guidance Counselor for the Green Ridge Youth Center with the Juvenile Services Education System. Deb was nominated by one of her colleagues.

Below is a brief summary of the nomination for Deb and why she was selected for this award:

Deb goes **above and beyond** to meet the needs of her students and her coworkers, she has been called upon to demonstrate counseling techniques and **has helped many students to succeed and make positive choices in their lives.**

Deb is **extremely friendly, funny, welcoming and maintains a positive attitude.** Her hard work and collaboration with others to problem solve, especially technical issues, makes her a **role model** for her students and colleagues.

Deb brings **many years of experience** to her job and she is able to build an instant rapport with her students and **helps them to become successful in academics, future career goals and with social skills.**

Deb helps our communities by making sure to treat each of her students as individuals who will eventually return to their respective communities and one day make a positive contribution. Deb is never too busy to assist someone or to help with problems and offer guidance. **She is well respected by her peers for her contributions to her division and our agency.**

Way-To-Go, Deb!

Please consider submitting a nomination for one of your employees or colleagues!

Nominations are currently being accepted for the June 2018 EOM!

All nominations are reviewed by the Office of Human Resources to ensure that the most recent PEP (performance evaluation) has at least an overall rating of **satisfactory**, and to verify that the employee has **no disciplinary** actions within the preceding twelve (12) months. For more details, please refer to the *EOM Instructions and Form* from the OHR Google Site.

Nomination forms can be obtained in the Office of Human Resources, or downloaded from the [OHR Google Site](#).

Nomination forms should be submitted to:

Michelle Pair
Office of Human Resources
[200 West Baltimore Street](#), First Floor
Telephone: [410-767-0153](#)
Email: michelle.pair1@maryland.gov

State Board Meeting Actions: April 24, 2018

The following actions were taken at the April 24, 2018 State Board of Education meeting:

- Granted permission to publish the repeal of Regulation .06 Educational Programs for Pregnant Girls under Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.08.01 General Regulations. Regulation .06 is out-of-date and the provisions of the regulation are covered in Maryland statute and other COMAR regulations. Specifically, the Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article 7-301 - Compulsory Attendance, COMAR 13A.05.05.01-.04 – Coordinated Programs of Pupil Services, COMAR 13A. 04.18.01— Comprehensive Health Education Instructional Programs for Grades Prekindergarten – 12, and the Maryland Student Records System Manual contain the necessary provisions for all students, including students identified in COMAR 13A.08.01.06.
- Granted permission to publish amendments to Regulation .06 Classification under COMAR 13A.06.03 Interscholastic Athletics in the State. The amendments change how schools are classified for parity and equitable participation in interscholastic athletics.
- Granted permission to publish amendments to Regulation .04 Length of School Year under COMAR 13A.02.01 Local Boards of Education. The amendments enable the Maryland State Department of Education to monitor local school systems' make-up recovery plans on a timely basis and update the Maryland State Board of Education on the make-up recovery plans, if needed.
- Approved requests from Kent County and St. Mary's County public schools for a one-day waiver of the 180-day instructional requirement for the 2017-2018 school year.

- Approved a request from Baltimore County Public Schools to waive eight hours of the 1,170-hour high school instructional requirement for the 2017-2018 school year on the condition high school hours are increased in the 2018-2019 school calendar, as well as in subsequent years.
- Denied requests from Caroline County, Howard County, Queen Anne's County, and Somerset County public schools for a two-day waiver of the 180-day instructional day requirement for the 2017-2018 school year.
- Denied a request from Cecil County Public Schools for a one-day waiver of the 180-day instructional requirement for the 2017-2018 school year.
- Recognized Allison Felton, a mathematics teacher at Annapolis High School in Anne Arundel County, as Maryland's 2017-2018 Milken National Educator.

The following Opinions were rendered:

- *Wallce and Marlene D. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education – student suspension – Opinion No. 18-14*
- *Mercy I. v. Howard County Board of Education – residency – Opinion No. 18-15*

Meeting materials, Opinions, and Order can be found at:

**[http://
marylandpublicschools.org/
stateboard/Pages/default.aspx](http://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/default.aspx)**

The next meeting of the Maryland State Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at the Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building, 200 West Baltimore Street, 7th Floor Board Room, Baltimore, MD, 21201.

Appropriate accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Eight business days notice prior to the event is required.

Please contact Charlene Necessary at (410) 767-0467 or TTY at (410) 333-6442 so arrangements can be made.



Allison Felton, 2017-2018 Milken National Educator and State Board Members during the April 2018 meeting.

Strengthening Education in Maryland

Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement

STRONGER LEADERS RESULT IN STRONGER SCHOOLS

The Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement is charged with providing leadership, support, and technical assistance to local school systems to improve low-performing schools and foster the growth of effective leaders. The Maryland State Department of Education reorganized several of its offices to provide services to staff in local school systems in a more effective manner. The Office of Teacher/Principal Evaluation and the Breakthrough Center were dissolved and in their place the Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement was established.

SUPPORTING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- Participated in cross-divisional monthly central support team meetings with Baltimore City Public Schools, Baltimore County Public Schools, and Prince George's County Public Schools to discuss and analyze data and strategies towards meeting school improvement goals.
- Developed a draft memorandum of understanding to provide targeted support to Baltimore City's priority schools.
- Began development of school improvement resources.
- Led Innovative School Schedule Workgroup in developing draft recommendations on innovative schedules that can enhance student learning in low-performing and at-risk public schools.
- Revised support to low-performing schools section in Maryland's draft ESSA plan.

FOSTERING THE GROWTH OF EFFECTIVE LEADERS

- Conducted Promising Principals Academy with 48 assistant principals representing 24 Maryland school systems. The Promising Principals Academy provides intensive professional learning experiences designed to equip assistant principals with the skills, knowledge, and practical experience to successfully take on the challenging role of the principal in the near future.
- Conducted statewide meeting with principal supervisors

- from local school systems to analyze teacher and principal effectiveness ratings and discuss strategies to incorporate the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders into principal evaluations.
- Participated in Southern Regional Education Board Educator Effectiveness Convening to share effective practices and lessons learned about teacher and principal evaluation systems in other states.
- Participated in the Hopkins Greater Impact Conference to discuss strategies for recruiting, training, placing and supporting effective school leaders.
- Collaborated with Prince George's County Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools and the Nation Urban League as part of the Wallace Foundation's ESSA Leadership Learning Community.

"These types of "above and beyond" training topics are great examples of how the Promising Principals Academy rises a step above traditional leadership training programs."

- Promising Principals Academy Observations by the Southern Regional Education Board

School Safety: Working Together to Keep Students Safe

This April, MSDE, The Maryland Center for School Safety and The Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) made student and school safety a priority. As a response to recent school safety concerns that many students, parents and educators have brought to light in the wake of tragic gun violence situations, MSDE has worked hand in hand with these organizations to create discussion opportunities for students and educators alike to voice their concerns.



The Maryland Association Of School Councils held its School Safety Forum in Annapolis on Monday, April 2nd. Students from across Maryland flocked to Annapolis to participate in this forum that offered students an open floor to express their concerns, frustrations and ideas, as well as share their emotions around the topics of school safety, gun violence and mental health. Most importantly, students were given the chance to meet with and hear from local delegates and representatives from several Maryland counties, and held student-delegate discussion groups.

The Maryland Center for School Safety held the Maryland State Summit on School Safety on April 19th, during which Deputy Blaine Gaskill, the school resource officer credited with quickly ending the Great Mills High School shooting in St. Mary's County, was honored by Governor Hogan and State Superintendent Dr. Salmon for his heroism. The summit focused on state-of-the-art preparation and prevention ideas and protocols and allowed School system administrators and guidance staff to discuss safety with their local law enforcement, fire departments, EMTs, and emergency management officials.



MSDE CLASSIFIEDS

WHAT'S NEW?

Say Hello >>>

Who's new to MSDE? Check back each month for an updated list!

Darrell Anderson, Child Care Licensing Specialist Trainee
(Division of Early Childhood Development)

Derek Berger, Academic Teacher APC
(Juvenile Services Education)

Tony Edwards, Academic Teacher APC
(Juvenile Services Education)

Cynthia Egbujar, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist II
(MSDE/DORS/Region VI/Lanham Office)

Jennifer Ejk, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist II
(MSDE/DORS/Region I/Westminster Office)

Vanessa Felder, Education Program Specialist I
(Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment and Accountability)

Shirley Frazier, Fiscal Services Administrator III
(Division of Business Services)

Monica Gaines, Fiscal Services Administrator I
(Division of Early Childhood)

Zion Parker, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist II
(MSDE/DORS/Region VI/Wheaton Office)

Debra Rausch, Autism Waiver Liaison
(Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services)

Krystal Small, Child Care Licensing Specialist Trainee
(Division of Early Childhood Development)

Mary Vido, Administrative Aide
(MSDE/DORS/WTC/Medical Services)

Jacqueline Woodruff, Staff Specialist III
(Division of Early Childhood Development)



CUSTOMER SERVICE CORNER

Customer Service Heroes!

Rani Lepcha

Division of Rehabilitation Services

“Rani Lepcha is a wonderful caseworker. Don't think I could have done it my own without her support.”

Bruce Lesh

Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability– Social Studies

“It was a pleasure to work with Bruce and his staff. They were very helpful and understanding of the curriculum process.”

Judy Kowarsky

Office of Leadership- Professional Learning

“Judy Kowarsky provided detailed information regarding the use of the curricular support materials platform.”