



Douglas County
School District

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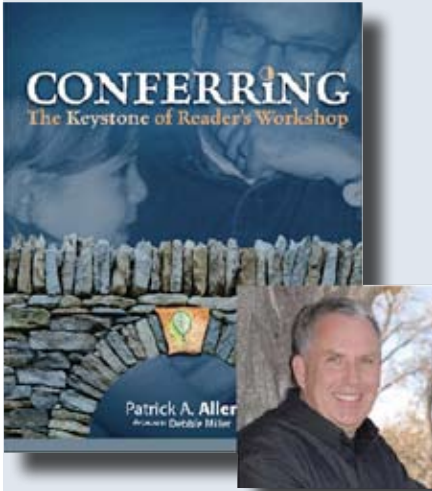
NEWSLINE

A weekly news source from Douglas County School District

www.dcsdk12.org

October 22, 2009

Photo of the week ...



Frontier Valley teacher publishes book

Patrick A. Allen, third grade teacher at **Frontier Valley Elementary**, has authored a book, which will be coming out on November 3.

"It is a book about the individual conferences we have with the learners in our classrooms," says Allen. Allen previously coauthored another book, *Put Thinking to the Test*, in 2008. Both books are available online, and through Stenhouse Publishers, www.stenhouse.com.

BOE candidates debate, Oct. 23

The candidates for the Board of Education will participate in a debate on Castle Rock Radio. The debates will be broadcast online at www.castlerockradio.com on October 23 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Four seats on the Douglas County School Board are up for election this November 3. This is a mail-in ballot election, and all ballots must be **received, not postmarked**, by November 3.

For more information on the candidates, visit their websites. A list can be found on the District website, www.dcsdk12.org > Board of Education > About the Candidates.

BOE Election is Underway

By Interim Superintendent Dr. Steve Herzog

As citizens of Douglas County, you should have received your mail-in ballot for this upcoming election. Four of the seven seats for the Douglas County School District Board of Education are on the ballot. I'd like to take this opportunity to speak to the roles and responsibilities of Board of Education members that are elected by the public to serve in this role.

The Board of Education (BOE) works for the students, parents and patrons of the District. The Board sets the policies that guide the public education of the students in the community. Board members regularly assess community needs and aspirations to develop an educational program consistent with community resources. Some key volunteer committees support the Board in its efforts:

- The District Advisory Committee, consisting primarily of parents and community members, acts as an advisory council making recommendations for the improvement of the educational program of the District and the prioritization and expenditure of District resources. This Committee works closely with the School Advisory Councils (SAC) at each school site. The purpose of the SAC is to provide opportunities for parents, staff and community members to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their individual school's instruction programs along with being a representative voice for the community.
- The Long Range Planning Committee, a citizen based group, studies school district facility and capacity needs. This committee makes recommendations to the Board of Education on capacity needs, school locations, attendance boundaries and other facility related issues.

I mention these committees as they are made up of your neighbors and community members and the committee members are great resources for information concerning the District. Additional information on these committees is found under the Board of Education page of the District website at www.dcsdk12.org.

In addition to acting as an advocate for students and public education, the Board of Education creates the District's vision. Douglas County School District's vision statement, referred to as its "End Statements," speaks to students acquiring the knowledge and abilities to be responsible citizens who contribute to our society. It also explains in greater detail the elements of this vision including critical thinking, ethical decision making, the application of knowledge, demonstrating leadership and more. Students who graduate with these skills are well prepared for the 21st century work-force and for whatever the future holds.

Another key responsibility of the Board is the monitoring of student achievement and the approval of changes in the academic program. A couple of common measures used to indicate student proficiency are CSAP and ACT exams. We can proudly state that our students on CSAP exams not only exceeded the state average in every grade and every subject tested, but also led the Denver area in reading, writing and mathematics. The District also outpaced the state average on the ACT assessments, which measures how well students have mastered the state standards and is taken by all 11th grade students in the state.

In addition to these common measures, you can find additional measures related to student well-being, critical thinking, leadership and all the elements of the End Statements in the Monitoring Reports under the Learning Services page of the website. I believe DCSD is leading the state, if not the nation, in its innovative efforts and 21st century vision. The work the staff has accomplished in these areas is to be commended.

As the Interim Superintendent for Douglas County School District, it is essential I take this opportunity to impress upon you the importance and influence the Board of Education has on the future direction of the District. Please take a moment and familiarize yourself with the candidates. The Board of Education page of the District website contains an "About the Candidates" document that provides the websites for all the candidates. As a community, we have choices to make that will have long lasting impacts on the future of education in Douglas County.



Second pedometer challenge results

The results are in from round 2 of the Wellness Champions challenge.

The average participant logged:

- 1.9 hours/day
- 5,209.80 steps/day
- 2.25 miles/day
- 194.90 calories burned/day

Overall, participants:

- Walked/ran 40,670.70 miles
- Burned 3,528,004 calories

The highest times for individuals were (in minutes):

- **Andrew Patch of Cougar Run Elementary:** 9,861
- **Karen Sangster of Mountain Ridge Middle School:** 9,637
- **Deborah Rolph of Pine Lane Primary:** 9,572

The highest step counts for individuals were:

- **Eloise Young of Operations & Maintenance:** 588,752 steps
- **Barbara Buster of Transportation:** 531,696 steps
- **Deborah Rolph:** 519,696 steps

The highest times for teams were (in minutes):

- "Hooked on Sonics": 14,011
- "XXL Classified": 10,082
- "Summer Weight": 9,751

The highest steps for teams were:

- "Hooked on Sonics": 761,349
- "Physical Education Dawgs": 595,854
- "Bulldog, Butterfly & Batman": 543,526

The next pedometer rollout will begin in the last week of October. United Health Care is partnering with the District to provide pedometers to employees at no cost.

The pedometer program is leading the District efforts to become the Healthiest School District in America by 2015!

ADMINISTRATION

Steve Herzog, *Interim Superintendent*
 Bill Hodges, *Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources*
 Annette Fante, *Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services*
 David Hart, *Chief Finance Officer*
 Randy Weldon, *Chief Information Officer*

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kristine Turner, *President*
 Emily Hansen, *Vice President*
 John Carson, Clifton Stahl, Ryan Stuart,
 Timothy L. White and Justin G. Williams, *Directors*

BOARD BRIEFS

This section summarizes highlights of the October 20 Board of Education worksession not featured elsewhere in this publication.

- The Board approved the Hope Online Learning Academy contract extension.
- The Board accepted the ratification of votes by the ATU, DCFCE and DCFT of their new Master Agreements.
- The Board approved the 6-7-8 Grade Configuration change to Ponderosa High School Feeder Area and Legend High School Feeder Area.
- BOE accepted the Internal Monitoring Report End Statement 1.7-1.10 Responsible Citizens: Student Achievement as reasonable.
- BOE accepted the Internal Monitoring Report End Statement 1.7 Protection of Assets as reasonable.
- BOE adopted resolutions on Policy Revisions: End Statement 1.0, subends 1.1 and 1.2.
- BOE adopted the recommendation of the Board committee to award the consultant contract for the Superintendent search to Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, Ltd.
- Meeting minutes and agendas are available on the Board of Education page of the District website.

DCSD maintains its excellent credit ratings

On Wednesday, October 21st, 2009, DCSD refunded a portion of its outstanding general obligation bonds in the amount of \$87.8 million resulting in a savings to Douglas County taxpayers in the amount of \$4.2 million. The refunding takes advantage of the District's strong AA rating and lower interest rates available in the current market.

The District underwent a thorough review of its finances and operations by the independent credit rating agencies of Fitch Ratings and Moody's Investors Service. Fitch reaffirmed DCSD's credit rating of "AA" and Moody's reaffirmed the "Aa2" rating.

Rating analysts noted the strong performance of the District coupled with a demonstrative will to make difficult budgetary reductions as reasons for maintaining our high AA ratings. In particular Fitch commented upon the District's "moderate debt levels" and noted that the "management team has adopted a comprehensive, conservative budgeting approach designed to reduce the District's reliance on periodic voter-approved O&M overrides".

The presentations to Fitch and Moody's credit analyst teams demonstrated the District's prudent responses to the recent budget challenges. Between 2007-08 and 2009-10, the District has reduced budget by approximately \$55M. The budget challenges were based upon slowing enrollment, reduced per pupil revenue growth, and increasing expenses for medical and retirement benefits. Further, fiscal pressures were experienced as a consequence of the failure of the mill levy override and bond election in November 2008.

"Despite the recent budget cuts, changes in District management, and the pending election for four seats to the Board of Education," stated Interim Superintendent Dr. Steve Herzog, "the District maintained its excellent credit ratings. To have these national credit rating agencies reaffirm the District's credit status, ratings that are among the highest available for Colorado School Districts, clearly demonstrates Douglas County School District has the discipline necessary to effectively operate during these turbulent economic times."

News, Information and Resources

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

ASIST is a FREE 2-day workshop designed to teach the skills to competently and confidently intervene with a youth at risk of suicide. Developed by LivingWorks Education, Inc., the workshop prepares Youth Gatekeepers to integrate principles of intervention into everyday practice.

Workshop Dates: Nov. 9-10, 2009; March 22-23, 2010; June 7-8, 2010

Workshop Details: Individuals select one, two-day workshop offered for DCSD personnel and community members. DCSD registrants will receive one hour of relicensure credit or horizontal advancement credit if the workshop is not taken during contract time.

Workshops will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at: New Hope Presbyterian Church, 2100 W. Meadows Parkway, Castle Rock, CO 80109

Sponsored by the Kiwanis of Castle Pines and Douglas County School District. To register, community members contact Jill at scootsnoop@aol.com.

Recycle/Reuse Resource Guide now online

The Douglas County Recycle/Reuse Resource Guide is available on the Douglas County website! The guide lists recycling/reuse options available to Douglas County residents. The guide can be accessed at: http://www.douglas.co.us/community/Publications_and_Packets.html.

If you have comments, questions, suggestions, or a submission to *Newsline*, contact:

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