



Douglas County
School District

Learn today. Lead tomorrow.

NEWSLINE

A weekly news source from Douglas County School District

www.dcsdk12.org

August 13, 2009

Board of Education Meeting Preview

The next Board of Education meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 18, beginning at 5 p.m. in the third floor Board Room of the School District Admin Building (620 Wilcox Street) in Castle Rock. Meeting agendas and minutes are available on the District website at www.dcsdk12.org under the Board of Education link.

Photo of the week ...



Plum Creek Academy principal Dale Jenkins greets guests at the Grand Opening of this interim placement center for special education students.

DCSD earns top marks for accountability

In an effort to make the School District's employee review process more meaningful and drive accountability for performance, the HR team overhauled its talent management process and automated its program with Halogen Software. With this new process in place, DCSD is now more accountable to its key stakeholders:

Students & Parents – Receive a top notch educational experience with the Board of Education's focus on employee engagement, clear communication and coaching support for its employees.

Employee & Supervisors – Improved performance accountability and review consistency across the District.

Board of Education – Meets state requirements for 100% completion of reviews.

Taxpayers – District realizes a savings exceeding \$10,000 a year alone in the elimination of paper processing.

DCSD leads metro area in reading, writing & math scores!

The 2009 CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) results are in. For another year, Douglas County School District exceeded the state average in every grade and every subject tested by 11 to 21 percentage points! Compared to 2008, DCSD maintained or gained in 20 of 27 tests. **DCSD processed 91,557 CSAP exams in the 2008-09 school year. The results show that:**

- ALL elementary schools' averages were at or above the state average in 6th grade reading and writing.
- ALL middle schools' averages were above the state average in 7th grade reading, writing and math.
- In mathematics, 7th grade students increased their average by 10 percent and exceeded the state average by 21 percent.
- In science, gains were made in all three grades tested (5, 8 and 10). 10th grade results were 5 percent higher than last year and exceeded the state average by 14 percent.
- In writing, 3rd grade students showed a 5 percent increase and exceeded the state average by 13 percent.

Comparing 2009 results to the average of the previous four years shows:

- In mathematics, gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency were shown on 4 of the 8 tested grade levels compared to the 4-year average.
- In writing, gains were shown on 4 of the 8 tested grade levels compared to the 4-year average.
- In reading, gains were shown on 3 of the 8 tested grade levels compared to the 4-year average.
- Because of new standards in 2007-08, a 4-year comparison of science results is not possible until 2011-12.

"We are very proud of our students and teachers for these exceptional results," says Superintendent Jim Christensen. "Even in adverse times, our community remains focused on and committed to student learning."

These results continue to confirm that Douglas County School District is one of the top districts in the state. Our top schools continue to have a positive impact on the quality of life in Douglas County.



Students challenged to be ready for disasters

Northridge Elementary School (NRE) in Highlands Ranch was the beneficiary of a school readiness party hosted by Radio Disney in partnership with READY-Colorado. The event featured music, games and prizes, along with information about how students, teachers and families can make a difference by being ready for disasters.

NRE is one of 10 school readiness parties being held throughout the Denver metro area this fall when many kids are returning to school and teachers are preparing classrooms for the school year. Each NRE classroom received a bright yellow, "School READY Kit," (a backpack filled with shelter-in-place supplies such as food, water, a whistle, a first aid kit, an emergency blanket, and a flashlight) to assist teachers and students for up to 12 hours in the event of an incident. The kits are valued at \$65 each and were purchased with Denver Urban Areas Security Initiative grant funds. Bags of readiness information handouts were also distributed to each student at the end of the assembly as a take home for family members including items such as Pack-a-Kit Brochure, READY Colorado pencil and bookmark and a FEMA Activity Book.

For Pack-a-Kit Brochures and more information about disaster readiness by making a plan and making a difference, visit www.readycolorado.com.



- **Debbie McGee, DCSD Director of Human Resources**, is currently serving as the Colorado Association of School Personnel Administrators (CASPA) President. CASPA is made up of human resource professionals who are dedicated to finding the best and the brightest teachers for students in Colorado and encouraging them to pursue teaching careers in our state. **Bill Hodges, DCSD Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources** adds, "CASPA has recognized Debbie for her remarkable participatory leadership, organization and communications skills. I am so very proud of her, and her dedication to this 3-year commitment."
- DCSD has been awarded the *Project Safety Net* grant through the Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention. **Leslie Clemensen, Coordinator of Student Wellness**, will lead the community-based efforts which will streamline suicide awareness, prevention, early identification and early intervention. The Douglas County Suicide Prevention Alliance, comprised of representatives from law enforcement, area hospitals, Douglas County Schools and mental health agencies, will also work to create inter-agency protocols to serve our county's suicide prevention needs.
- **Ron Kingery, DCHS Physics teacher**, was recognized at the *Boettcher Foundation Teacher Recognition Awards* program last week. The TRA program was created in 1992 to provide an opportunity for Boettcher Scholars to extend their gratitude to teachers, counselors, principals and superintendents who have dedicated themselves to providing the youth of Colorado with an outstanding education. 2009 Boettcher Scholar Stephen Kissler nominated Mr. Kingery as a teacher who made a significant contribution to his growth and education and impacted his life. In addition to a plaque, Kingery received a \$1,000 grant to be used toward a special program or project.

ADMINISTRATION

Jim Christensen, *Superintendent*
 Bill Hodges, *Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources*
 Annette Fante, *Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services*
 Steve Herzog, *Chief Operating Officer*
 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*

News, Information and Resources

Reminder: changes in Nutrition Services

Families, please be aware of changes in Nutrition Services regarding the school lunch program that are now in effect. Items of note include the fee changes, the department moving to paperless lunch menus, a new online payment plan, and a fee for returned checks.

For more information, go to the School District website (www.dcsdk12.org) and look for a link to more detailed information, or click on Business Services > Nutrition Services > Summer 2009 Newsletter.

Reminder: Transportation redesign

DCSD recently redesigned bus transportation routes for the 2009-10 school year due to budget reductions. As you prepare your students for the coming school year, please familiarize yourself with the changes. Bus route maps for 4-track, conventional and modified calendars are available from the front page of the District website (www.dcsdk12.org). To submit comments in regard to transportation redesign go to feedback central. (From the home page select **Feedback Central** from the right hand column.)

Call for nominations for school directors

The Board of Education of Douglas County School District in the Counties of Douglas and Elbert calls for nomination of candidates for school directors to be placed on the ballot for the regular biennial school election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2009.

The offices to be voted on are School Directors from the Douglas County School District Director Districts B, D, E, and G, each for a four (4) year term. To be qualified, a candidate must have been a registered elector of the School District for at least twelve consecutive months before the election and a resident of the Director District which will be represented.

Nomination petitions may be obtained at the Douglas County School District Administration Office, 620 Wilcox Street, in Castle Rock. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Completed petitions should be submitted no later than 4 p.m. on August 28, 2009 to: Nona Eichelberger, Secretary, Board of Education; Douglas County School District Re. 1; 620 Wilcox Street; Castle Rock, CO 80104; 303-387-0258.

Don't forget student insurance

All schools are back in session, and with the new year comes the endless list of things to complete. When the list is long, items sometimes get overlooked.

While most students have health insurance, there may be extenuating circumstances where a student may not have the coverage they need. DCSD does require that all students who participate in outdoor education programs have health insurance.

Providing a safe learning environment is a top priority. Once again, the District has joined forces with United Healthcare Student Resources to offer student health insurance for a small fee. There are several different insurance programs available for families.

You will soon receive your student health insurance enrollment form. You can contact your school for additional forms or check out the online enrollment form at www.k12StudentInsurance.com. For additional information, contact Brennan Mendus, Assistant Director of Risk Management at 303.387.0038.

Birth certificates necessary for enrolling

Certified birth certificates are needed to enroll children in school, sports and numerous after-school programs. They are also required when applying for a driver's license, social security card or passport. A souvenir baby footprint birth certificate from a hospital is not acceptable as a legal document.

Certified Colorado birth certificates are available from Tri-County Health Department in person, by mail and over the internet. The cost is \$17 for the first certificate and \$10 for each additional copy. The administrative office, located at 7000 East Belleview Avenue, is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Birth certificates can be ordered online at the Tri-County Health Department web site at www.tchd.org. For more information, call 303.220.9200.

Save the Date: Youth Congress 2009

The Partnership of Douglas County Governments will be holding *Youth Congress 2009* on Saturday, October 3 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Villa Parker, 10936 North Pine Drive, in Parker. Help change the world! Highlights of the day include meeting your elected officials, meeting the founder of PeaceJam, learning policy process, helping influence laws and meeting other involved youths. Participants will also receive volunteer credit hours and awesome take-aways. If you are between the ages of 13 and 19, you can be a youth delegate. RSVP to Carla Turner at 303.688.4825 x5327 or cturner@douglas.co.us.

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

Douglas County School District, Communications Office, 620 Wilcox Street, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104.
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