



Douglas County
School District

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NEWSLINE

A weekly news source from Douglas County School District

www.dcsdk12.org

September 3, 2009

Photo of the week ...



Correspondent Tom Bearden talks with Kelli Mueller while filming for an episode of *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer.

District H1N1 talk on primetime

District Nurse Consultants **Kelli Mueller** and **Celia Flanigan** were interviewed this week for a story on school preparedness for H1N1. The story will appear on *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer in coming weeks. Correspondent Tom Bearden also interviewed Interim Superintendent **Steve Herzog** and Assistant Director of Student Wellness **Paulette Joswick**.

Community Meetings for proposed grade configuration changes

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC), a citizen-based committee of the BOE, will be presenting information regarding the proposed grade configuration change to add 6th grade to Sagewood Middle (Ponderosa feeder) and Cimarron Middle (Legend feeder).

The 6-7-8 grade configuration has already been proven effective at Rocky Heights Middle School and is an educationally sound design. District staff and Learning Services leadership will provide further information on the proposed change and provide parents with the opportunity to provide feedback.

Meetings for the PHS feeder will be September 9 and 10, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Sagewood Middle School.

Meetings for the LHS feeder will be September 16 and 17, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Legend High School.

The LRPC will also present at the October 20 Board Meeting.

Reading Recovery results show great success

DCSD continues to make gains in student achievement. Results for the fifth year of Reading Recovery in the District show that 91% of students who went through the full program achieved grade level or higher proficiency in reading.

Reading Recovery is an intervention program for children having difficulties with early literacy and who have the lowest achievement in the first grade. Children work one-on-one with a specially trained teacher for 30 minutes a day, for an average of 12 to 20 weeks. Teachers who wish to become certified in Reading Recovery complete 9 semester graduate hours during a year-long training. In the intensive 30-minute daily lessons, students can accelerate quickly toward the goal of meeting grade level proficiency. Reading Recovery is implemented in more than 10,000 schools all over the U.S.

This is the fifth year for Reading Recovery in DCSD, and the number of successes has climbed every year. In five years, 735 first grade students received one-on-one intervention. There are now 18 elementaries in the District offering Reading Recovery, and 32 teachers currently teaching the program.

In 2008-09, 91% of students who had the full series of lessons successfully exited the program at grade level proficiency or above. Even the students who attended Reading Recovery for less than the full series of lessons saw a high rate of success – 74% brought up to grade level or above.

“It is truly amazing how Reading Recovery instruction delivers measurable results in 12-20 weeks. These struggling readers progress quickly thus closing the reading achievement gap,” says Kathy Tirrill, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader. “By intervening early, students get off to a good start in literacy learning before confusion begins, and there are lasting effects. This also delivers cost benefits because it reduces referrals and placements to special education.”

Reading Recovery directly addresses one of the District’s three Student Learning Goals, to close achievement gaps for students who are not proficient in the essential skills of reading, writing and mathematics by achieving a year or more growth. “The ongoing success of this program over five years has allowed us to fulfill that goal in a measurable, hands-on way that puts these kids on the path to success,” says Superintendent Jim Christensen. “Students who received one-on-one intervention with the program continue to make gains over time, proving the long-term effects of early intervention. We’re very proud of the program.”



Y.E.S.S. program begins with Sierra and Rocky Heights Middles

DCSD is partnering with the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office on a new middle school program designed to increase awareness of personal safety and positive life choices. The new program started this week at Sierra and Rocky Heights Middle Schools.

The Youth, Education & Safety in Schools (Y.E.S.S.) program will be offered to 7th grade students this year, with lessons on:

- *Teen Relationships*: setting boundaries, risky behaviors, sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- *Internet/Cyber Safety*: cyber bullying, predators, identity theft, “sexting,” gambling/gaming.
- *Substance Abuse Education*: illicit, over-the-counter and prescription drugs, peer pressure, prevention.

The program replaces D.A.R.E. at the middle school level and addresses issues that more directly affect this age group. “We know that the topics we are teaching are very relevant to middle school students based the research that has been done,” says Phyllis Harvey, the Youth Education Project Coordinator for the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office. “The subject areas were chosen with collaboration between teachers, administrators and the Sheriff’s Office to hopefully reduce risky behavior and increase positive social and life skills.”

The program will begin expanding to other District middle schools in the next few weeks, as their health class curriculums get underway.

For more information about the Y.E.S.S. program, contact Phyllis Harvey at the DC Sheriff’s Office, 303.814.7033 or pharvey@dcsheeriff.net.



- **Northeast Elementary School** would like to recognize **Theresa Weickum** as the recipient of the 2009 Wal-mart Teacher of the Year. Ms. Weickum has taught at Northeast for 21 years, including 4th and 6th grades and physical education. She continually spends time and energy well beyond the school day to enhance the school experience. She has sponsored a school-wide Walk-a-thon to build awareness and raise contributions for Teen With A Dream. She is a staff sponsor for the Kids Running America Club, which culminates in students running their 26.5th mile at the Denver Marathon. She has sponsored a Learning Fair six times in the last 18 years. Wal-mart awarded \$1,000, which goes toward any grant funded through the DCEF, and Ms. Weickum received a \$100 gift certificate.
- The following students achieved a perfect 800 score on a portion of their SATs.

Reading:

Rachel Gross, TRHS
Kenzie Simmons PHS
Linnea Woodruff, PHS

Math:

Kristen Indegrand, CHS
Emily Marso, CHS
Evawere Ogbe, CHS
Kelsey Spaur, MVHS

Critical Reading:

Madison Lips, CHS
Emily Marso, CHS
Katherine Poling, MVHS

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*

BOARD BRIEFS

This section summarizes highlights of the September 1 Board of Education worksession not featured elsewhere in this publication.

- Representatives from Douglas County, Highlands Ranch Community Association, Highlands Ranch Metropolitan District, Douglas County School District and Ice Colorado/Sphere Sports shared the conceptual planning of cooperative development of Wildcat Regional Park. Board of Education provided positive feedback on the concept.
- An update on the District work related to social/emotional wellness as part of End Statement 1, subend 1.6, was presented to the Board. The focus was on exemplars in Positive Behavior Support, the Crisis Response Team and Suicide Prevention.
- The BoE confirmed the September 22nd regional forums hosted by the District Advisory Committee (DAC). ThunderRidge High School will be the gathering site for all Highlands Ranch feeder area School Advisory Committees (SAC). Castle View High School serves as the meeting place for all Castle Rock SACs and Ponderosa High School for all Parker SACs. All regional forums will begin at 6:30pm. The BoE has requested that the DAC work closely with our School Advisory Committees to review school improvement efforts, monitor the effect of programming and service changes due to recent budget reductions as well as study the issues of transportation fees and school innovation.

Superintendent search update

At the September 15 meeting, the Board plans to approve a Request for Proposal (RFP) from interested consulting companies to assist with the District's Superintendent search.

School Board candidates finalized

The list of candidates for the next school board election has been finalized as follows:

District B: John Carson, Sue Catterall
District D: Daniel Gerken, Kevin Leung

District E: Douglas Benevento, Kristine Turner
District G: Emily Hansen, Meghann Silverthorn

News, Information and Resources

Becoming a Love and Logic Parent class available

Douglas County WrapAround, a program under the DC Youth Initiative, will be offering the *Becoming a Love and Logic Parent* training course beginning September 8. The class will be offered on Tuesdays from September 8 to October 27, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the CSU Extension Office at the Douglas County Fair Grounds.

There is no cost for families to attend, and WrapAround will be arranging for daycare. For more information, contact Carla Turner at the Douglas County Youth Initiative, 303.688.4825 or cturner@douglas.co.us.

2nd Annual Colorado Rapids Community Night

This year's DCSD Colorado Rapids Community Night, sponsored by the Douglas County Educational Foundation, will be held on Saturday, September 5, 2009.

The Colorado Rapids will host Toronto FC at Dick's Sporting Goods Park, starting at 8 p.m. Beginning at 5 p.m., Douglas County High School will play Rock Canyon High School in a varsity boys soccer game. Tickets are \$12 for seating in the South Stands, a \$20 value, and parking is included with the cost of each ticket. Additionally, \$2 of each ticket sold will be donated back to the DCEF directly benefiting Douglas County Schools!

To order tickets contact your local DCSD school or visit <http://schools.dcsdk12.org/dcef> and click on the Colorado Rapids Night ticket link.

Save the date – Grand Opening of new ECC South!

Come celebrate the new Early Childhood Center South on Wednesday, September 9. Speakers will include Superintendent Jim Christensen, Assistant Superintendent Annette Fante, Early Childhood Coordinators Kerry Goudy and Mary Byrd and a parent guest speaker. Renaissance Expeditionary Magnet School will provide a drum performance; preschoolers will entertain with singing; there will be a ribbon cutting, building tour and refreshments. Festivities begin at 11 a.m. at the new facility at 3950 Trail Boss Lane, Castle Rock.

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. 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:

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