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Wednesday, January 9, 2008

DPS targets people adept at math, science

By [Nancy Mitchell](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/>> , Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/contact/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/contact/>>)

Wednesday, January 9, 2008

Denver Public Schools is targeting career-changers with expertise in math and

science in a new teacher recruitment program called the Denver Teaching Fellows.

Applicants should hustle - the early application deadline is Monday. The final application deadline is March 10.

Applicants should have a bachelor's degree, but they don't need any prior education experience. About 50 will be picked for the program and will go through "intensive" summer training before heading into classrooms this fall.

Then the fellows will learn to teach on-the-job, completing alternative licensure requirements while teaching full time.

"We go out and actively recruit career-changers, people with math and science backgrounds who are looking for a change in their careers and want to give back," said Kate Bernan, site manager for the Denver program.

In addition to math and science educators, DPS is seeking special education and bilingual Spanish teachers. Applicants can be recent college grads.

Apply online and learn more at www.denverteachingfellows.org.

Police investigating if report was made

By [Nancy Mitchell](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/>> , **Rocky Mountain News** ([Contact](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/contact/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/nancy-mitchell/contact/>>)

Denver police are investigating whether the principal of Skinner Middle School in northwest Denver failed to report a crime at the school as required by law.

Police spokesman Sonny Jackson confirmed the investigation Tuesday of Nicole Veltze, but declined to release further details. Veltze could not be reached for comment.

DPS spokesman Alex Sanchez said her position with the district is unchanged.

Veltze came to Denver from Seattle in 2002 to run the failing Cole Middle School in north Denver. For her efforts there, she was one of 15 principals nationwide - and the only one in Colorado - to be named a MetLife Foundation Ambassador in Education.

Denver Post

Wednesday, January 9, 2008

School waiting on autonomy

Teachers' union delays vote on waiving contract rules

By Jeremy P. Meyer
The Denver Post

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A Denver school seeking autonomy will have to wait after the teachers' union postponed making a decision Tuesday on allowing the school out of the contract.

Teachers and administrators at Bruce Randolph School in northeast Denver want control over the school's budget, teacher time, incentives and hiring decisions and to be free from union and district red tape that they say is impeding progress.

The Denver Classroom Teachers Association board, however, wants more clarification on what exactly should be waived from the 98-page teacher contract. The decision to seek more information was approved by a 19-2 vote of the union leadership, said Kim Ursetta, president of the teachers' union.

"We want to find out exactly what Bruce Randolph has identified in the contract that is an impediment to student success," she said. "We want to rectify that for all (Denver Public Schools) teachers. We want to have more conversations. We would love for additional thoughts. We are committed to working with them."

The union leadership's motion said it wants Bruce Randolph teachers to submit a proposal that would not require a waiver from the union contract.

A special meeting has been scheduled for Jan. 22 to take up the matter again, Ursetta said.

"We're disappointed that they didn't vote," said Greg Ahrnsbrak, physical education teacher and union representative at the school who helped write the proposal. "We think the document we created speaks for itself. It's clear and concise. . . . In no way are we suggesting this is for other people. We simply know what is the best for us."

A union vote on the waiver is the last hurdle for the proposal unveiled a month ago, which has been approved by a majority of Bruce Randolph teachers and the Denver

school board.

Foundations put more than \$100,000 on the table to encourage Bruce Randolph's approval, and Colorado Senate President Pro Tem Peter Groff is proposing legislation to enact a similar programs statewide.

"The proposal is an excellent proposal, and I'm interested in what the (union's) view is," said DPS Superintendent Michael Bennet.

Jeremy P. Meyer: 303-954-1367 or jpmeyer@denverpost.com
<<mailto:jpmeyer@denverpost.com>>

7 News

Tuesday, January 8, 2008

DPS Considers Maternity Leave For Students

Policy Change Would Allow New Moms Time Off With Newborns

[Russell Haythorn](mailto:russell_haythorn@thedenverchannel.com) <mailto:russell_haythorn@thedenverchannel.com>, *7NEWS Reporter*
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DENVER -- The Denver Public School District could soon be giving new teen moms some time off from classes after the birth of a child.

The maternity leave could last four to six weeks. Currently, there is no language within the district's attendance policy that states how much maternity leave a new mother should receive.

"It's about the communication between the student, the parent, the doctor and the school," said DPS spokesman Alex Sanchez of the current policy regarding how much time off a pregnant student receives after giving birth.

The potential policy change comes after a group of counselors and students from Denver's East High School brought the issue to the attention of the Board of Education last month.

The group argues the current policy requires new mothers to return to class just days after being discharged from the hospital in order to avoid unexcused absences.

"They need support. They don't need to be badgered, and made to feel bad because they are pregnant," said East High senior Laqoya Thornton. "Give them a computer so they can do their schoolwork from home. So they can be with their newborn. They need that attachment and that bond."

"I give them props because it's hard to be pregnant and attend this school. There are a lot of stares and there is a lot of peer pressure. So for them to even come to school and not drop out, that says a lot. They realize they made a mistake, but they're still trying to do the right thing," said East High sophomore Lelia Hobley.

Many experts said the district should have a policy in place that is supportive of teen mothers and the tough decisions they face.

"I'm all for the DPS taking this as a very serious issue so that young mothers can become good mothers," said Maureen Yockey, CEO of Alternatives Pregnancy Center in Denver. "There should be a policy that gives students a certain number of weeks off if they so choose."

The student services department is reviewing the policy and is expected to make its recommendations to the superintendent later this month.

The superintendent will then decide whether to implement any changes.

"We can then discuss whether it should be three weeks, whether it should be six weeks, whether it should be up to the doctor, whether it should be up to the family," said Sanchez.

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