

# insideDPS

A NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS / SEPTEMBER 1, 2002 / ISSUE NO. 2

## specialists move to area offices to better serve schools

In some places, they are still living out of cardboard boxes. Some are in brand-new schools, while others office in DPS' historic buildings. Whether they are in an elementary or middle school classroom, the new area specialists are near the schools they serve, and that should be an asset to all students and teachers.

Bringing resources closer to the schools is the thrust of the new specialist teams located in the four area offices. Each office has a team of about 10 specialists in the areas of assessment, literacy, math, early childhood education and ELA compliance. The specialists have joined the area and assistant area superintendents, greatly enlarging the field-based instructional staff.

"Moving content specialists to the area offices is another step in our effort to decentralize the district to improve service to the classroom. This move is designed to increase support to the schools as they continue their improvement efforts," said Superintendent Jerry Wartgow.

"This system gives the area superintendents' offices more resources with which to serve the classroom. It's more efficient, and we expect it to be more effective," said Ricardo Concha, assistant superintendent for the Southwest Area.

The area specialists will work with the school-based literacy coaches and teachers to provide ongoing staff development. The area specialists include staff members who have served

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Mitchell Elementary School third-grade teacher Krissy Graham (left) was among the dozens of teachers who fanned out around the city on Saturday, August 3 to meet their students' families. Teachers brought backpacks and other school supplies and talked with parents about their needs. The Community Walk was a joint effort of Denver Public Schools and LARASA. A similar event was held August 24.



### ...Of Laurie Bourg, Literacy Coach Barrett Elementary School

“Okay Jalen, you can return to your seat now, and I need you to get back to your independent reading,” says Laurie Bourg, Barrett Elementary School's new Literacy Coach.

Mixed with a long moan and a slow sigh, the second grader balks. “No, no more reading,” he says. But Bourg holds firm. “Oh yes,” she says, “and remember what we talked about last time.” As though an alarm had been sounded, the second grader stands up without hesitation, gathers up his books and returns to his desk. Bourg turns to the room's second-year teacher, who has been observing, and begins sharing observations about the brief session.

As InsideDPS took a look at “a day in the life” of a new Literacy Coach, Laurie Bourg, we discovered a deep passion for her work.

“I love my job,” says Bourg. “This is my dream job. In fact, I think it was written specifically for me!”

Bourg is one of 167 new literacy coaches hired and trained by the district to assist with the implementation of its new literacy model. The ambitious program, which has seen successful results in cities like Los Angeles, New York City, Fort Worth, and El Paso, requires three hours of instruction time every day, including: 90 minutes in a reading block, 60 minutes in a writers workshop, and 30 minutes in a skills block.

While the program is expected to meet high expectations, Bourg believes the district is off to a good start. “I am very impressed with the emphasis the district has placed on this program,” commented Bourg. “It seems well planned and well thought out.”

While observing Bourg, it became clear she approaches her work from the idea of fun. During the whole-group session with the

See **A DAY IN THE LIFE** on page 6

# new and improved pay stubs

offer more information

**W**hen you received your most recent paycheck, you may have noticed a new look to the pay stub. The district has made several changes geared to provide employees with more information and protect confidentiality.

One change is the descriptions of pay types to more easily identify the source of pay. Categories include regular pay, flex, in-service and uniform allowance. A full description of the pay types is available on the district's web site at <http://budgetandfinance.dpsk12.org/newpaystub>.

The new pay stub organizes deduction information into two categories: before-tax deductions and after-tax deductions. (See sample.) The before-tax deduction section indicates deductions that reduce the amount of taxable income. Maximizing before-tax deductions can significantly increase retirement savings. These deductions include dental, health and vision insurance as well as pension contributions.

The after-tax deduction sections indicate items, such as fees, that are taken from pay after taxes are calculated.

Other items on the redesigned pay stub include:

- Earnings subject to tax
- Full pay before deductions
- Total of all deductions taken
- Take-home pay
- Direct deposit information
- Federal, state, Medicare and local taxes deducted
- Important district messages

The pay stub now comes in a new envelope designed to protect confidentiality in transit. Social security and bank account numbers have been removed as a further security measure. ■

## Direct deposits benefit employees

**I**t's winter break, and you could really use your paycheck to finish your gift shopping. But your school is closed for the vacation, and there's no way to get your check!

Want to avoid those holiday paycheck blues? Consider direct bank deposit of your paycheck. There are several advantages to direct deposit: The money is in the bank on payday; you don't have to drive over to the bank; if you move, your bank still gets the check; and you get the money on time even if school is out. Pay stubs will still be mailed to your home so you have a paper record of earnings, taxes and hours of leave.

As an added incentive, Denver Public Schools Credit Union and local banks (UMB and US Bank) are offering free checking accounts and free checks to DPS employees who use direct deposit.

It's easy. Just call the Disbursements Office, 303-764-3715, and request the direct deposit form.

All new employees are required to use direct deposit as of June 1, and many long-time employees have taken advantage of the program. As a result, the number of lost and misdirected checks has decreased, and the district and the employees are saving time and money. ■

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1  
DISBURSING OFFICE  
908 Grant Street • Denver, CO • 80203

NAME		PAY DATE		CHECK NO.	
JOE, JOHN		08/15/02		12345	
GROSS EARNINGS		GROSS PAY		NET PAY	
CURRENT	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
YTD	\$1,600.00	\$1,600.00		\$1,600.00	
GROSS EARNINGS		EMPLOYER BEFORE-TAX DEDUCTIONS		EMPLOYER AFTER-TAX DEDUCTIONS	
TYPE	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
REGULAR	40.00	REGULAR	40.00		
IN-SERVICE	10.00	IN-SERVICE	10.00		
UNIFORM	5.00	UNIFORM	5.00		
STIPEND	5.00	STIPEND	5.00		
TOTAL	60.00	TOTAL	60.00		
TAX DEDUCTIONS		FEDERAL TAX		STATE TAX	
DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
FEDERAL	10.00	FEDERAL	10.00	STATE	2.00
STATE	2.00	STATE	2.00	LOCAL	1.00
LOCAL	1.00	LOCAL	1.00	TOTAL	3.00
TOTAL	13.00	TOTAL	13.00	TOTAL	3.00
DIRECT DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS		CHECK		BALANCE (END)	
ACCOUNT TYPE	AMOUNT	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
CHECKING	47.00	CHECK	47.00	CHECKING	1,553.00
TOTAL	47.00	TOTAL	47.00	TOTAL	1,553.00

MESSAGE: For more information, please visit our website at <http://budgetandfinance.dpsk12.org/newpaystub>.

*City Councilman Ed Thomas presented a check for \$20,600 to Morey Middle School principal Kristin Waters and the school faculty on August 15. The funds were raised through a golf tournament sponsored by Councilman Thomas at the Wellshire Golf Course. Some 160 golfers teed up for the tournament and 55 Morey students served as volunteer caddies. Morey plans to use the money to support its after-school programs. This is the fourth year in a row that Councilman Thomas has raised money for a school – previous recipients were Bromwell, Dora Moore, and P.S. 1 Charter.*



# election year curriculum materials: kids voting

By Gil Munoz, Curriculum Specialist for Social Studies

**G**et in on the action! The 2002 national election season is upon us, and as teachers, we are expected to incorporate our instruction as much as we can around the candidates and issues that will be on the ballot. However, it's not difficult to teach the electoral process or the importance of voting when you participate in the Kids Voting program that is now available to all schools. Kids Voting is a grassroots, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization which has designed a program to make lifelong voters of today's schoolchildren, while also increasing current voter turnout among adults. Kids Voting will prepare students in grades K-12 for the 2002 general election by providing schools with a special curriculum on voting and the democratic process. After learning the curriculum in September and October, students will be able to accompany their parents to the polls and cast mock ballots on Election Day.

The Kids Voting curriculum, including homework assignments that encourage students to debate candidates and issues with their families, is designed to stimulate conversation about voting and elections between children and adults. Kids Voting requires just six to twelve hours of classroom instruction between the start of the fall semester and Election Day, November 5, 2002. There is a specific curriculum for each grade level, so teachers don't necessarily need to modify it themselves. The curriculum is inter-disciplinary as well, allowing teachers to meet standards in not only in civics, but also in language arts, music, art and math. Kids Voting is not just another program that teachers need to try and fit into their busy schedules. The curriculum is a valuable tool that helps teachers teach what they are already supposed to be covering in their classes. In addition, the curriculum is available for the first time in Spanish, and ties in to Latino culture and family life to make it more accessible to our English Language Learners. The Kids Voting curriculum was mailed out to your schools during the first week of school and should be available to you now (check with your department head). You can also see some sample lessons at: <http://www.kidsvotingusa.org/education2.html>

In addition, the entire curriculum will be available online to DPS teachers. You will be receiving the password and instructions for logging on in the mail as well.

I think you will find the curriculum flexible, easy to use and fun for the students. Furthermore, you will have plenty of support from the district and many community organizations that are also involved in helping to make Kids Voting a success. They can provide logistical support such as volunteers and guest speakers. Trainings will be August 27, September 5, and September 9. Each one will be in a different quadrant. Locations TBA. Please plan ahead so you don't miss out!

We would like to see every school participate, so get a team together, even if it is just one class, and take advantage of this great opportunity to make civics education a hands-on experience.

For more information, please contact me at (303) 764-3632 or e-mail [Gilberto\\_Munoz@dpsk12.org](mailto:Gilberto_Munoz@dpsk12.org). ■

## Fairmont principal honored

**M**elanie Byers, principal of Fairmont Elementary, does whatever it takes to make her school successful. That includes lunch duty, removing graffiti from walls, painting doors and going door-to-door in the neighborhood to invite students back to class.

This summer, Byers was one of only three principals in the state to receive the prestigious Wright Way Award from the Colorado Principals' Center. The award, named after UCD faculty member Lance Wright, honors principals who demonstrate creativity, reflection and collaboration. Byers was honored at the CASE convention in Breckenridge in August.

Principal of Fairmont for seven years, Byers' goal has been to develop a school that is comfortable and welcoming. "Our parent involvement has increased; our kids feel good about coming to school; and our staff wants to be here," Byers said.

This year Fairmont's third grade reading CSAP scores improved significantly, and staff focuses on ensuring students know the skills required of them. The emphasis on literacy is evident throughout the building,



*Award-winning Fairmont Elementary School principal Melanie Byers.*

from the reading activities happening in every classroom to the books stacked in Byers' office, the bulletin boards about reading and the color-coded library books that help students select books at their level.

Fairmont, built in 1924, has an old-world charm, and Byers is proud of the improvements to the grounds, including the courtyard with a community-produced mural and the new play area with a sculpture where students love to sit and read.

With a population that is 91 percent Hispanic, Fairmont offers classes in Spanish and English, and the staff is incredibly adept at changing languages in mid-sentence to gently correct a student or greet a visitor.

Discipline problems at Fairmont have decreased since the school initiated the Second Step program, Byers said. Every morning students receive instruction in conflict mediation and behavior management. Parents have been involved in the program too.

Byers is principal of the University of Colorado at Denver partner school and works closely with the university to train student teachers. She is looking forward to training 12 new student teachers this year, as she has done for the past eight. "We train them, and then I can hire them to work here," she said, with a twinkle in her eye. Seven Fairmont teachers were student teachers at the school.

Byers has been with DPS for 17 years and previously taught in New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma.

"I love being here at Fairmont. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else," she said. ■

## October 2 is Walk Your Children To School Day

**E**ight schools in DPS are already signed up but there is plenty of time for others to join "Walk Your Children to School Day," scheduled for October 2.

The event, sponsored by Denver Metro SAFE KIDS Coalition, is designed to build awareness about pedestrian safety and to give parents and students an opportunity to learn and practice safe pedestrian behavior.

During the event this year, students will be asked to complete a "walkability assessment" to help the city learn about pedestrian hazards and other concerns that will assist with the city's pedestrian master plan. The information may also be used by the Denver Police Department in case there is a need for enforcement.

Pedestrian injury is the third leading cause of death in the United States for children ages 5 to 14. The number of children injured as pedestrians by motor vehicles each year is about 25,000.

Interested schools should contact Allison Frankel, 303-377-7086. (Schools signed up so far are Bromwell, Grant Ranch, Lowry, Park Hill, Sabin, Steck, Traylor and Slavens.) ■

# Comings & goings

## APPOINTMENTS

Mary Lewis: Principal, Manual Millennium Quest  
 Erica F. Ramlow: Assistant Principal, Eagleton  
 Katherine A. Salaz: Principal, Gilpin  
 Richard Sinclair: Assistant Principal, Gilpin  
 Dennis Thompson: Interim Principal, Bromwell  
 Nicole Veltze: Principal, Cole  
 Robert S. Bartlett: Library Media Spec, Mitchell  
 Chris W. Belshe: Assistant Principal, Manual/Leadership  
 Mark Hernandez: Assistant Principal, Munroe  
 Gail G. Axt: Library Media Spec, Crofton  
 Meredith P. Chamberlain: Teacher, Amesse  
 Susan E. Daley: Teacher, Cole  
 Claudia A. Gallegos: Teacher, Swansea  
 John R. Gaskell: Teacher, Manual/Millennium Quest  
 Ann K. Gazin: Teacher, Fallis  
 Beatrice Z. Gerrish: Library Media Spec, Archuleta

## TEACHER APPOINTMENTS

Tammy Adenbrook: Park Hill  
 Jennifer R. Alevy: Horace Mann  
 Jennifer J. Anderson: George Washington  
 Paula M. Anderson: Cheltenham  
 Steve K. Andres: Cowell  
 Maria Anglade: Abraham Lincoln  
 Carolyn M. Ayars: Randolph  
 Elizabeth Aybar: West  
 Kristina M. Ballenberger: Barnum  
 Clarice Basti: Hamilton  
 Shannon Brannan: Smith  
 Kelly L. Breyemeier: North  
 Carolyn A. Brown: Remington  
 Gray B. Budelman: Smith  
 Cheryl A. Cambra: Johnson  
 Susan J. Carley: West  
 Kathryn Checkalski: Mitchell  
 Courtney L. Claussen: Asbury  
 Jerry Q. Clayton: West  
 Julie A. Cohen: Skinner  
 Richard M. Coil: Cole  
 Ryan M. Cole: Skinner  
 Ellen C. Cross: Cole  
 Laura Csuhata: Cheltenham  
 Michelle Daining: Maxwell  
 Susan L. Danley: George Washington  
 Cleasie Davis: Columbian  
 Maria A. Desantis-John: North  
 Jessica Dickerson: Mitchell  
 Donald L. Dunphy: Cheltenham  
 Linda E. Durgin: Cory  
 Maida Finch: Hill  
 Cathrine A. Floyd: Education  
 Kirk C. Framke: Grant  
 Olympia M. Frascone: Fallis  
 Erika N. Freeman: Randolph  
 Allison A. Fulton: Smedley  
 Ann Gazin: Fallis  
 Elizabeth M Geier: Bryant-Webster  
 Roger R. Germann: Johnson  
 Lorraine H. Giron: Barnum  
 Teddy Goldman: George Washington  
 Krystal M. Graham: Mitchell  
 Elana L. Green: Bryant-Webster  
 Gary H. Guenther: Cory  
 Michelle L. Hanks: Sandoval  
 Mark E. Harmon: Johnson  
 Karen A. Hauch: Gilpin  
 Allison M. Hawk: Phillips  
 Diane Henderson: Barrett  
 Susan D. Hoffman: Ford  
 Tori D. Hoffman: Amesse  
 Donna A. Hudson: Eagleton  
 Kathleen H. Huron: Noel  
 Omar Isham: West  
 Ronnee M. Johnson: Abraham Lincoln  
 Sue Johnson: Horace Mann  
 Barbara B. Judd: Mitchell  
 Elizabeth A. Keldin: Bromwell  
 Elizabeth E. Klein: Columbian  
 Melissa Kobar: Brown  
 Janelle L. Kowal: Baker

Alex M. Kreutzer: Randolph  
 Terri L. Kung: McGlone  
 Guillermo Lazo: Del Pueblo  
 Korla Leaman-Miller: Del Pueblo  
 Amanda Ling: Beach Court  
 Irma V. Long: Johnson  
 Xai Lor: North  
 Maria E. Luna: McGlone  
 Andrea K. Mancina: Cheltenham  
 Ryan C. Marini: Abraham Lincoln  
 Jerome J. Martinez: Wyman  
 Rhonda S. McClenahan: Hill  
 Ellie M. McConkey: McGlone  
 Willie C. McNeil: Green Valley  
 Stacy E. McNutt: Ashley  
 Beth R. Micholes: Smith  
 Keith A. Millner: Smith  
 Donna P. Moore: Noel  
 Nikki E. Moore: Mitchell  
 Glenton N. Muller: Randolph  
 Elizabeth W. Mullett: Crofton  
 Alicia I. Muniz: Edison  
 Celia M. Newhart: Fallis  
 Jane E. Nordin: Fallis  
 Brenda Olivas: Valdez  
 Susan L. Olson: Hill  
 Marcia Omafray: Carson  
 Maryjane Ornelas: Valdez  
 Maria J. Panther: Sandoval  
 Maggie A. Papenhausen: Smedley  
 Faunnie B. Parker: Bryant-Webster  
 Terry D. Parker: Whittier  
 Sarah Pauli: Ellis  
 Ana Pelaez: Coffax  
 Michael Pfister: Gove  
 Julie Phenicie: Gove  
 Roger Predmore: Newlon  
 Julie Primm: Greenlee  
 Katherine M. Quintana: Abraham Lincoln  
 Laura P. Rawson: West  
 Aaron B. Risch: McGlone  
 Tracy J. Rivero: Gilpin  
 Eric J. Rodriguez: North  
 Nora Rodriguez: Smedley  
 Anita Rodriguez-Leong: Abraham Lincoln  
 Rebecca L. Rosas: Cowell  
 Cheryl O. Sage: Cheltenham  
 Arturo P. Samora: Manual/Arts & Cultural  
 Vikki L. Scharnhorst: North  
 Amy Schneider: Remington  
 Sarah A. Schull: Eagleton  
 Joan T. Schunk: North  
 Vanessa M. Segura: Noel  
 Elizabeth M. Seligman: Hill  
 Carrie E. Shen: Edison  
 David W. Shindolf: Sandoval  
 Scott Sobota: Ebert  
 Amy Spetnagel: Cheltenham  
 Caleb D. Sunderwirth: Baker  
 Norma R. Tarin: Barnum  
 Deborah A. Trexler: Columbian  
 Kelli M. Troy: Noel  
 Jamie A. True: Skinner  
 Rebecca Verdia: Del Pueblo  
 Rejeter O. Vinopal: Grant  
 Jessica A. Walker: West  
 Christopher G. Webb: Eagleton  
 Hannah N. Weeks: Skinner  
 Twana Weiler: Asbury  
 Chadwick J. Welty: Grant  
 Paula S. Wilson: Ashley  
 Patricia A. Wright: West  
 Megan A. Gilman: Manual/Leadership  
 Michelle A. Golla: Lake  
 Sue A. Johnson: Horace Mann  
 Steven P. Mandelstran: South  
 Rhonda S. McClenahan: Hill  
 Zachary D. McDowell: Lake  
 Melissa L. Mendoza: South  
 Patrick J. Millmore: Randolph  
 Gladys Montero-Salas: Ford  
 Sarah C. Pauli: Ellis  
 Jessica R. Perkins: Montbello  
 Julie A. Phenicie: Gove  
 Stuart D. Ritchie: Montbello  
 Nora H. Rodriguez: Smedley  
 Hallie M. Salazar: McGlone  
 Arturo P. Samora: Manual/Arts & Cultural  
 Stefani R. Sarvadi: Green Valley  
 Scarlett Scarafioti-L'heureaux: McGlone

Ivan W. Scott: Cole  
 Elizabeth M. Seligman: Hill  
 Emily B. Seligson: Smith  
 Michael J. Seymour: Randolph  
 Erin E. Smolenski: Noel  
 Kymberly J. Synnott-Scipione: Ford  
 Louella C. Tanguma: Swansea  
 Richard A. Thompson: Hallett  
 Van Tonnun: Ford  
 Donna Trigg: Greenlee  
 Heidi M. Vertrees: Swansea  
 Jessica A. Walker: West  
 Antoinette E. Wallace: Smith  
 Janet L. Weiner: Barrett  
 Katherine Werder: Smith  
 Karen A. White: Noel  
 Shawnda M. Zahara: Randolph

## CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT

Chuck Babb: Interim Principal, Philips  
 Danna Barker: Interim Principal, Force  
 Jennifer Barton: Assistant Principal, Cole  
 Janet Belt: Interim Principal, Slavens  
 Inez Catbagan: Principal, Eagleton  
 Connie L. Cornelius: Assistant Principal, Moore  
 Vicki Cyr: Assistant Principal, McKinley-Thatcher  
 D'lese A. Delmonico: Area Specialist, Southwest Area  
 Leonard Fox: Interim Assistant Principal, Hill  
 Betty Golembeski: Assistant Principal, South  
 Deanna E. Kline: Assistant Principal, Lake  
 Scott H. Mendelsberg: Principal, EGOS Second Chance Program  
 Jai Palmer: Interim Principal, Whittier  
 Angela Pegues: Assistant Principal, Amesse  
 Damon L. Smith: Assistant Principal, Noel  
 Deborah Stidham: Assistant Principal, Education  
 Cynthia Summers: Assistant Principal, Sabin  
 John Tricarico: Assistant Principal, Henry  
 John Youngquist: Assistant Area Superintendent: Northeast Area  
 Karen A. Higel: Athletics Manager, Education

Faith Arbo: Teacher, Fairmont  
 Jeff W. Leone: Teacher, West  
 John McCall: Teacher, Manual Leadership  
 Kevin Brooks: Assistant Principal, John F. Kennedy  
 Elizabeth B. Celva: Interim Principal, East  
 Mary E. Chavez: Assistant Principal, Baker  
 Sandra Mendez: Assistant Principal, Force Elementary  
 Rory L. Pullens: Assistant Principal, Denver School Of The Arts  
 Steven Wera: Assistant Principal, Slavens  
 Juana Cenicerros: Manager Food Service III, Cheltenham  
 Faith Arbor: Teacher, Fairmont  
 Melissa A. Kobar: Teacher, Brown

## REAPPOINTMENTS

Sandra R. Gardner: Teacher, Smith  
 Tamara Glessner: Teacher, Whiteman  
 Kelsey Haddock: Teacher, Morey  
 Janice E. Pacheco: Teacher, Mitchell  
 Melissa Torres: Teacher, Coffax  
 Antonio Arrieta: Teacher, Mitchell  
 Maryjane Ornelas: Teacher, Valdez

## RETIREMENT

Marsha E. Chavez: Interim Principal, West  
 Shirley M. Lucero: Teacher, Kunsmiller  
 Barbara J. Petersen: Teacher, Marrama  
 Henry J. Stein: Teacher, Contemporary Learning Academy

as teachers on special assignment, classroom teachers, assistant principals and principals. Their work began this summer as they worked with teachers at the Leadership Institute, Refocus Training and Math Institute.

Team members are:

### **NORTHEAST AREA, LOCATED AT RANDOLPH MIDDLE:**

Carla Santorno, Area Superintendent; Richard Smith, Assistant Area Superintendent; John Youngquist, Assistant Area Superintendent; Lance Martinez, Assessment Specialist; Diana Picconi, ECE Specialist; Mary Corro, ELA Compliance Specialist; ELA Literacy Specialists Monica Dilts, Elizabeth Johnson, Jill Pitner, Mikel Royal, Roxanne Wilderman and Donna Winter; Delessia Rucker, Secondary Literacy Specialist; Marisol Chavez, Elementary Math Specialist; Kim Ortiz, Secondary Math Specialist; and secretaries Dona Gapuzan and Lola Rockette.

### **NORTHWEST AREA, LOCATED AT SANDOVAL**

#### **ELEMENTARY:**

Joe Sandoval, Area Superintendent; Dave Debus, Assistant Area Superintendent; Assessment Specialists Diana Lopez and Mary Ann Baca; Tammy Brown, Early Education Specialist; Helen Martinez, ELA Compliance Specialist; Literacy Specialists



*Northwest Area math specialist Julia Linkous (left) takes notes as literacy coach Lori Ross offers some thoughts about Fairmont Elementary School. Linkous is among the staff now based in area offices. On this day, the northwest team was visiting schools, interviewing every staff person – not just teachers – and learning more about the particular needs at each schools.*

Heather Craig, Abigail Johnson-Brown, Peggy Loader and Joanna Martinez; Math Specialists Sonja Hassler and Julia Linkous; and secretaries Bernadette Rodriguez and Carolynn Suazo.

### **SOUTHEAST AREA, LOCATED AT LINCOLN ELEMENTARY:**

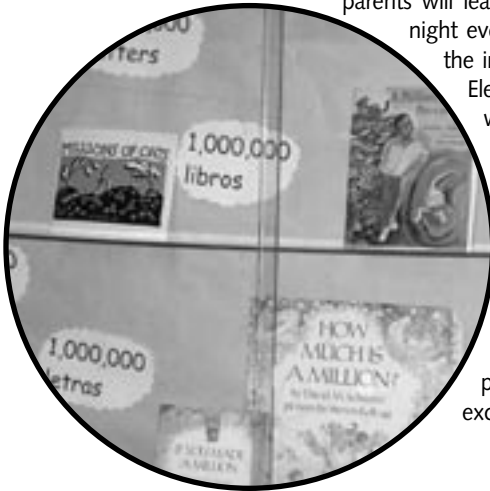
Irene Martinez-Jordan, Area Superintendent; Beth Biggs, Assistant Area Superintendent; Brette Pond, Assessment Specialist; ECE Literacy Specialists Ann Christensen and Kim Kelly; Catherine Gonzales, ELA Compliance Specialist; Roma Pitt, ELA Literacy Specialist; Elementary Literacy Specialists LaDawn Baity and Susan Santini; Juli Reutter, Elementary Math Specialist; Secondary Literacy Specialists Debbie Dedrick and Margarita Jaramillo-Hall; and secretaries Jo-Ann Orozco and Benita Lopez-Provencio.

### **SOUTHWEST AREA, LOCATED AT SABIN ELEMENTARY:**

Melanie Haas, Area Superintendent; Ricardo Concha, Assistant Area Superintendent; Katherine Adolph, Assessment Specialist; Amy Green, ECE Literacy Specialist; Anna Sellars, ELA Compliance Specialist; Wendie Shumacher, ELA Literacy Specialist; Elementary Literacy Specialists Linda Abeyta and D'lese Delmonico; Julie Murgel, Elementary Math Specialist; Secondary Literacy Specialists Barbara Askinazy and Kris O'Clair; Brian Bowles, Secondary Math Specialist; and secretaries Andrea Banks and Darlene Lajimodiere. ■

# reading a million words

**F**airmont Elementary School is kicking off its Million Word Campaign with books about a million, including "How Much is a Million?" in English and Spanish. This bulletin board on the campaign is outside the main office, and parents will learn about the project during back-to-school night events. The Million Word campaign is part of the independent reading component of the DPS Elementary Literacy Program. Each DPS student will be expected to read one million words in a year. For kindergartners, this will mean reading two to four familiar books a day. Third grade students will read 30 chapter books a year. Enthusiasm is already growing among students, and a major district effort to inform parents and the community will be launched in mid-September. Watch for a campaign slogan and logo, posters, fliers and media coverage of this exciting and important reading initiative. ■



*The second annual S.T.A.R.\* Party At the Zoo included some swing music from the Dean Bushnell Orchestra. Teachers and administrators gathered at The Denver Zoo to celebrate the beginning of a new school year. The event is collaboration between the Denver Classroom Teachers Association and Denver Public Schools.  
\* Strengthening Teachers And Administrator Relationships*

## Community groups join to get students ready for school

**M**ore than 2,000 DPS students got a head start for school during the Third Annual Community Back-to-School Festival sponsored by Life Development Institute and Praise Center Church.

The event, held Aug. 10, provided students with school supplies, health screenings and immunizations. Food, games and entertainment were also part of the program. Students and their families were able to go inside the Jared Polis Education Station, a school bus filled with educational technology. The Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition and Assets for Colorado Youth made presentations and distributed materials.

"Last year, we had 950 students participate, so we were very excited about this year's turnout," said organizer Deborah Watson Acosta. "We targeted K-12 students in the Westwood community, but also invited the general public."

Schools that benefited were those in the 80219 zip code area, including Barnum, Castro, College View, Denison, Doull, Force, Gust, Johnson, Knapp, Munroe, Newlon and Schenck elementary schools; Kepner and Kunsmiller middle schools; and Abraham Lincoln High School.

Doctors and nurses from the Rocky Mountain Youth Providers and Channel 7 Health Mobile provided free checkups as well as the immunizations students need to attend school.

Life Development Institute is dedicated to promoting educational programming and services to improve literacy, academic achievement and graduation rates in the Westwood community. The Institute and Praise Center Church contributed \$25,000 to the event. ■

# Pat Lopez

Manager, Psychological Services

Years with DPS: Starting 24th year.



**Greatest or Latest Accomplishment:** Receiving two federal grants that brought about \$2 million to the district. One is an elementary school counselor grant, operating in eight schools, and the other is the Middle School Coordinator for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention, operating in three middle schools.

**The Most Challenging Part About My Job:** Providing services to schools within budget constraints.

**The Most Rewarding Part About My Job:** Collaborating with other DPS departments and community agencies. One example is the three-year project with the Metro Denver Gang Coalition to provide training for crisis teams.

**I've also worked:** At a special education cooperative in Kansas and at a community mental health center.

**When I'm not working I am usually:** Doing something with my family. I am helping to raise my 18-month-old grandson.

**Hometown:** Born in Denver. Attended Bear Creek School in Jefferson County.

**Favorite restaurant:** Ruth's Chris Steak House.

**Favorite book:** The Bible.

**Family:** Husband, Leroy Lopez, former DPS associate superintendent and currently superintendent in Elbert County. Four children and nine grandchildren.

**Philosophy for life:** Life is absolutely enriched by giving and doing for and with others.

**Volunteer activities:** Recently appointed by the Mayor to Department of Safety Community Corrections Board; Cornerstone Institute; Juvenile Justice Project; G/T Advisory Council.

**Final words:** When I moved back to Denver in 1977 after living in Kansas, I had other job options, and I chose to come to DPS. I have never been sorry. I've always had a great deal of freedom to provide the best possible services to students.



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second graders, she playfully reminds an eager student to wait for the rest of the group before leading them in a read-a-loud exercise.

From what we found, her approach to working with students and teachers is grounded in mutual respect. Throughout the day we watched her successfully engage students and teachers with the same level of enthusiastic commitment. Before meeting with each student she always asked questions related to reading interests, which she later used to help them. For the teacher, she went back and forth, constantly asking, "You see what I did then..." or "Do you see why I did that..." and then sincerely treating every question and response as though it were the best she'd ever heard. Both student and teacher appeared to be very comfortable and open with Bourg, which is crucial in most learning situations. So as it turns out, she gets respect by giving it.

Bourg attributes her experience to the Barrett staff and her passion for teaching reading, writing, and literacy. "The staff at Barrett is great," says Bourg. "I'm fortunate to have a principal that's very supportive and a group of teachers that have great attitudes about this program." She also attributes her success to just being in a job that allows her to bring together several of her passions. "I love teaching reading and writing, and I also love working with adults and kids. So I jumped at the chance to take on one of these positions."

Bourg should also attribute some of her success to her own ability to generate mutual respect. Throughout the day we watched her successfully engage students and teachers with the same level of enthusiastic commitment.

A six-year veteran of DPS, Bourg is one of two coaches at Barrett and has had stints as a fourth grade teacher at Gilpin and Oakland elementary schools.

When asked about the challenges related to the job, she points to the difficulty in quickly getting into all of the classes and getting them up and running. "It's challenging trying to provide the appropriate amount of time to the other classes since our focus for now is on third and fourth grade," says Bourg. "It sometimes feels like I'm not providing the quality needed to achieve the results we want."

Bourg notes that the best thing about the new literacy program is that it teaches children at a young age to become independent learners. "This program is good because it gets kids while they're young and lays a good foundation," she says. "As they get older, they can progress independently."

As a coach, Bourg's job is to make sure all aspects of the literacy plan are appropriately implemented. She works side by side with teachers, demonstrating how the program components work, and provides feedback on each teacher's classroom work. In addition, Bourg is responsible for providing staff development to teachers on a weekly basis by bringing the latest research, articles, and topics for training and discussion.

On this day, Bourg's schedule began at 8:00 a.m. with her weekly staff development meeting with the teachers. From there, she provides leadership to a combined second grade class where she gracefully jumps back and forth from teacher to coach between the children and the classroom teacher. She spends the afternoon repeating the morning schedule with a group of fourth graders.

Bourg adamantly notes that she is only one of several dedicated coaches working on this project. However, with the heart of a teacher and the spirit of a coach, the Barrett program seems to be in good hands.

BY WIL ALSTON, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE TEMPORARY STAFF

*Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of stories profiling the wide variety of people and talents who work together 'insideDPS.'*