

inside dps

change abounds as school revitalizations take root

Twelve schools are rolling out new programs this year – one of the 12 got an early start last year – thanks to \$2.5 million from Denver voters to identify attractive educational programs and increase student enrollment in neighborhood schools.

A sampling of opinion from principals indicates the new programs are rekindling enthusiasm among parents, students – and principals themselves.

Back-to-school night at **Henry Middle School** was “packed,” said principal Wendy Lanier. “We had three to four hundred parents who were very excited about the new program. They love the fact that every child has to take a foreign language and they are glad we are back to the middle school model – music, arts, P.E. and technology.”

Henry is implementing the International Baccalaureate (IB) middle years program, which provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills for students aged 11-16 years. The program emphasizes the holistic, or interrelatedness, of subjects and calls for an international awareness from students.

For all students at Henry, the curriculum includes learning a foreign language, humanities, history, geography, biology, chemistry, physics, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, probability and statistics, visual and

performing arts, physical education and technology.

At this point, Henry is capped to non-neighborhood students, but new enrollees were still showing up at the end of the first week of classes, Lanier reported.

Across town at **Hill Middle School Campus of Arts and Science**, principal Don Roy is thrilled with a “new spirit of camaraderie” among the faculty and a summer of getting ready for all the changes.

Half of the staff spent a week this summer “solidifying and beefing up the honors curriculum,” said Roy, “and another team went to a large AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) conference and came back with many best-practices ideas, including a system to help students learn to take better notes.” There’s also new dance and drama classes, he said, and a “really cool” block schedule that’s working well.

Roy said he stopped in the sixth-grade honors mathematics room recently and was impressed by how students were grasping difficult concepts so readily.

The Hill Middle School Campus of Arts and Science will infuse state-of-the-art computer technology into all areas of student learning and expand the elective arts program and after-school enrichment and tutoring.

“I told my wife, ‘I’m almost afraid to jinx it; it feels so good.’ But it’s worth celebrating,” said Roy after the first week of classes drew to a close.

At **Bradley International School**, where the revitalization efforts began a year ago, both first-grade classes are full, the kindergarten classes are brimming with students, and the Early Childhood Education program is garnering increased interest from parents, too. The program is an international curriculum that focuses on the students’ social, physical, emotional and cultural development in addition to academic growth.

And Mary Firth, who is the school’s coordinator of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, said she has received early word that the school may soon be named as a candidate for official certification from the international governing authority, the International Baccalaureate Organization.



under new management

Welcome Superintendent Michael Bennet! The new school year also opened with management changes in 26 schools.

Four interim principals are principals of the schools they led last year – Columbine K-8 School, Stephen Wera; Cowell Elementary School, Tom Elliott; Knight Fundamental Academy, Leonard Fox; and Rishel Middle School, Sylvia Bookhardt.

Another 22 schools have new principals for the 2005-2006 school year:

School Principals New to Denver

- Brown Elementary School, Suzanne Loughran (from a principalship in Cherry Creek Schools)
- Del Pueblo Elementary School, Dan Villescascas (from a principalship in Jefferson County Public Schools)
- Montbello High School, Antwan Wilson (from a principalship in Wichita, Kansas)
- Morey Middle School, Dori Claunch (from an assistant principalship in Adams County School District 50)
- Palmer Elementary School, Michael Crawford (from the director of elementary education position in Adams County School District 50)
- Remington Elementary School, Veronica Benavidez (from the director of human resources position in Boulder Valley Public Schools)

Denver Assistant Principals to Principals

- Bromwell Elementary School, Brette Pond (from Park Hill K-8 School)
- CEC Middle College of Denver, Scott Springer (from Denver School of the Arts)
- Godsman Elementary School, Timothy Fitzgerald (from Godsman Elementary School)
- Schenck Elementary School, Kristin Nelson-Steinhoff (from Fairmont Dual Language Immersion Academy)
- Smedley Elementary School, Tracy Dorland (from Oakland Elementary School)

Denver Principals to New Schools

- Archuleta Elementary School, Erlinda Archuleta (from Bryant-Webster Dual Language K-8 School)
- Bruce Randolph Middle School, Kristin Waters (from Morey Middle School)
- Bryant-Webster K-8 School, Pat Salazar (from assistant area superintendent in the Northwest Office)
- Ellis Elementary School, Khoa Nguyen (from Rosedale Elementary School)
- Horace Mann Middle School, Linda Torres (from Baker Middle School)
- Mitchell K-8 School, Jennifer Barton (from interim principalship at Cole Middle School)
- Oakland Elementary School, Reggie Robinson (from Mitchell Elementary School)
- Thomas Jefferson High School, Sandra Just (from principal on special assignment in the Northwest Office)
- University Park Elementary School, Dennis Thompson (from Bromwell Elementary School)

Contract Schools with New Principals

- Escuela Tlatelolco (7-12), Nita Gonzales
- Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning (K-12), Jim McDermott



A Decade of Dictionaries for Third Graders

For the tenth year in a row, Denver third graders will receive a dictionary and a thesaurus of their own courtesy of Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation's (INC) Dollar Dictionary Drive.

Superintendent Michael Bennet joined INC volunteers, City Councilman Rick Garcia and members of the Sloan's Lake Citizen's Group in kicking off this year's drive at Colfax Elementary School, whose third graders were the first to receive this year's volumes.

This year's dictionary distribution also includes world maps, the U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence, presidential biographies, state and country information, and pictures and descriptions of the planets.

Each year since 1996, 8,000 third-grade students have received these resource tools to use in the classroom and at home.

Donations come from businesses, neighborhood organizations and individuals. All money donated goes toward the purchase of dictionaries and is tax deductible. Contributions can be sent to Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation, Dollar Dictionary Drive, PO Box 18347, Denver, CO 80218.

Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC), a consortium of Denver neighborhood organizations, created the dictionary drive in 1996 to provide a personal dictionary and thesaurus to every third-grade student in Denver Public Schools. ■

when did that happen?

Be in the know. It's easy to sign up for free email updates about news in DPS. A lot or a little, choose the information you want – get this newsletter by email, for example.

Sign up at <http://piolists.dpsk12.org>. Be sure to give us your correct email address and click "continue" and "finish" until you receive a confirmation that you're signed up.

inside ProComp

Welcome back!

Inside ProComp is a monthly addition to Inside DPS about the Professional Compensation System for Teachers, a groundbreaking compensation system designed to reward teachers for professional accomplishments and more closely link teacher compensation to the Denver's instructional goals.

The teacher pay reform is drawing attention from media, politicians and educators on a local, state and national basis and should be of interest to all employees. For the latest information about ProComp, access www.denverprocomp.org.

Professional Development Unit field test begins

The ProComp Professional Development Unit will be field tested this year by 150 teachers, coaches and student services professionals. The PDU is one of the major salary building blocks in ProComp.

During the field test year, participants can earn four hours of graduate credit paid by the district.

This credit may be applied to CDE recertification credit or toward the required 30 credit hours to advance on the traditional salary schedule.

Participating teachers who opt into ProComp may apply the PDU earned this year to a permanent salary increase during 2006-07, following passage of the mill levy election.

The field test will also include five teams of reviewers to provide feedback and guidance to the teachers and specialists completing PDUs. Reviewers can be teachers, coaches, student services professionals, teachers of special subjects and administrators.

Educators can earn a PDU by choosing a topic or skill to study, demonstrating it in the classroom or their practice and reflecting on the experience. The PDU is a way to reward teachers for continuing to grow professionally in order to improve student performance.

Fifteen sample PDUs have been developed for teachers, coaches and specialists at elementary, middle and high school levels, including special education teachers, CADD instructors, counselors and psychologists. Teachers and specialists can adapt the sample PDUs or craft their own plan following guidelines set forth in the PDU handbook. ■

Orientation sessions for the PDU field test will be offered in all four quadrants:

Tuesday, Sept. 13 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

- Northeast Office – Bruce Randolph Middle School, 3955 Steele St.
- Southwest Office – Sabin Elementary School, 3050 S. Vrain St.

Thursday, Sept. 15 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

- Northwest Office – Academia Ana Maria Sandoval, 3655 Wyandot St.
- Southeast Office – Lincoln Elementary School, 710 S. Pennsylvania St.

For more information, contact Shirley Scott at 720-423-3626 or Shirley_Scott@dpsk12.org.

ProComp language approved for November 1st Ballot

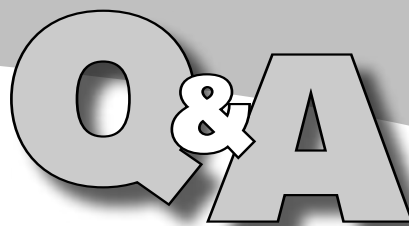
The Denver Board of Education has officially approved language for the ProComp ballot measure that will go before Denver voters on November 1. The voters are being asked to pass a \$25 million mill levy to fund the new teacher compensation system.

In June the Board unanimously approved the resolution to put ProComp on the November ballot. The ballot language includes an index for inflation so the fund does not lose value over time.

Incoming DPS Superintendent Michael Bennet has voiced his support for ProComp, and new DCTA President Kim Ursetta also has thrown her support to the measure.

"This has been a long time in coming," she said. "We are very pleased with the final ballot language. It is important that we remain steadfast in our efforts to work collaboratively to improve student achievement."

If the measure is successful, teachers will be able to join ProComp almost immediately. The first opt-in opportunity takes place between November 9 and December 31 for the 2005-2006 contract year. Teachers who join will receive their first ProComp payments in January 2006. Teachers hired as of January 2006 and later automatically will be placed in ProComp. ■



Q. What about the schools that achieve well and continue to achieve well? How does ProComp address that issue?

A. ProComp directly addresses high-performing schools as well as academically-challenged schools. As part of the student growth component, teachers who work in distinguished schools will receive incentive pay of 2 percent of the ProComp index, now valued at \$666 per year. These schools will be determined annually based on multiple measures of student performance. Academically challenged schools are addressed by the hard-to-serve incentive bonus in the market incentives component.

Q. How can we be certain the money raised by the mill levy will go toward ProComp and not be diverted?

A. The November ballot language presented to Denver voters specifically states that the money raised through the mill levy "shall be used solely and exclusively for, and none of which will be spent for any purpose other than, funding ProComp." In addition, the money will be placed in a trust fund administered by a board of teachers, administrators and citizens. The trust fund will be audited annually by an independent agency to see that the money is being spent appropriately.

Student growth objectives handbook improves for users

The Student Growth Objectives handbook has been revised to make it easier for teachers, Student Services Professionals (specialists) and administrators to use. The handbook has more sample objectives and is now available in five versions customized according to user:

- **Elementary teachers**
- **Secondary teachers**
- **Teachers in ECE-8 schools**
- **Student Services professionals assigned to a school or department**
- **Itinerant Student Services professionals with no home school**

The changes were made following feedback last spring gathered in two ways: 1) an online survey of teachers and specialists and 2) separate focus groups of elementary and secondary teachers, principals, Student Service professionals and their managers.

The handbook can be viewed and printed from the DPS website: http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/obj_sgo.htm.

Hard copies of the relevant handbook will also be distributed to supervisors so they can be available for reference. ■

ProComp field specialists will help schools and departments

ProComp staff have been organized into a team of field specialists to support teachers, administrators and DPS staff with the implementation of ProComp-related initiatives. The field specialists will attend area staff and principals meetings and collaborate with Human Resources to supply training and assistance to principals and teachers. They will be available to assist principals and teachers who need help with the objective-setting process and developing teams of instructional leaders in their buildings. They can also assist with implementation of related curriculum activities.

Field specialists are assigned by quadrant

Northwest	Henry Roman, 720-423-3628	Henry_Roman@dpsk12.org
Northeast	Shirley Scott, 720-423-3626	Shirley_Scott@dpsk12.org
Southeast	Jeff Buck, 720-423-3789	Jeff_Buck@dpsk12.org
Southwest	Connie White, 720-423-3539	Connilee_White@dpsk12.org
Student Services	Sarie Patterson, 720-423-8419	Sarie_Patterson@dpsk12.org

ProComp

The Professional Compensation System for Teachers was designed jointly by the Denver Public Schools and the Denver Classroom Teachers Association.

For more information about ProComp, visit www.denverprocomp.org or email Brad_Jupp@dpsk12.org.



comings & goings

Appointments

Elke A. Baca: Night Custodian Helper, North High School
Balyn Bates: Office Support II, West High School
Samiksha Bindra: Senior Programmer/Analyst, Administration
Gloria F. James: District Buyer II, Operations
Bradley S. Kivett: Programmer III, Administration
Mark A. Lyons: Senior Systems Administrator, Administration
Veronica A. Martinez: Secretary I, Sandoval Elementary School
Josephine L. Morgan: Night Custodian Helper, North High School
Oswaldo J. Riggi: Education Technical Specialist I, Montbello High School
Fred K. Sanchez: Employee Benefits Specialist I, Administration
Nicholle R. Torrez: Night Custodian Helper, North High School

Reappointments

Linda Y. Brown: Accountant, Education
Maria Kanavalov: Secretary II, Education

Changes in Assignment

Devin C. Auble: Area Specialist, Education
Renee L. Barela: Human Resources Generalist, Administration
Cynthia L. Bjork: Area Specialist, Education
Christine K. Blach: Area Specialist, Education
Beverly Cloyes: Business Services Specialist, Administration
Joncee A. Feakes: Central Curriculum Coordinator, Education
Robyn L. Fergus: Food Services Supervisor, Operations
Kathryn Garth: Office Support III, Administration
Debra K. Grieve: Office Support II, Emily Griffith Opportunity School

Jennifer V. Grissom: Custodian Assistant I, Maxwell Elementary School
Colleen K. Jackson: Office Support II, Denver School of the Arts
Christopher M. Johnson: Computer Center Lead Operator, Administration
Ronnie Leyba: Facility Manager II, Centennial Elementary School
Richard P. Machado: Web Services Manager, Administration
David J. Muniz: Night Custodian Helper, South High School
Kay K. O'Clair: Central Curriculum Coordinator, Education
Charles M. Pacheco: Custodian Assistant I, Swansea Elementary School
Robin L. Payne: Business Services Specialist, Administration
Nadine Perez: Secretary I, Colfax Elementary School
Elena A. Sodano: ELA Compliance Coordinator, Education
Patti S. Roberts: Area Specialist, Administration

Michelle L. Snyder: Business Services Specialist, Administration
Lynne L. Tucker: Educational Pro-Tech, Education
Danielle M. Williams: Planning/Research Analyst II, Education

Retirements

Carol J. Carpenter: Office Support II, Career Edu. Center Middle College
Carol D. Esquibel: Bookkeeper II, Baker Middle School
Lydia G. Hoague: Central School Counseling Coordinator, Education
Sigrid B. Moss: Special Ed. Assistant, Sabin Elementary School
Danny O. Neal: L3 Carpenter, Operations
Dee Taylor: Employee Benefits Specialist I, Administration
Mary L. Trujillo: Secretary II, Force Elementary School
Leroy M. Young: L3 Heavy Equipment Operator, Operations

new board meeting dates

The Board of Education last month approved a new meeting schedule for the balance of the 2005-2006 school year that establishes a regular, extended study session for Board members on issues directly related to student achievement. The new schedule is online at <http://board.dpsk12.org>. ■

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Online Employee Directory

Searching for someone? The employee directory is online at <http://phonebook.dpsk12.org> - or from the "staff" link on the district's home page, www.dpsk12.org. Search by name, school or department. Features include a printable school list with phone numbers, addresses, fax numbers, website links and principal names. Questions? Please contact the DoTS Hotline at 720-423-3888.

focus on

Julia Miller Shepherd Area Arts Specialist Southeast Area Office

Years With DPS: 8

Greatest Or Latest

Accomplishment: I completed my principal's license in May at UCD. I also was just appointed co-president of the DU ART! Board, a support group for the University of Denver's School of Art and Art History.

The Most Challenging Part

About My Job: Having enough hours in the day to accomplish everything I would like to get done.

The Most Rewarding Part About My Job: My colleagues and all the fabulous arts teachers I work with at DPS.

When I'm Not Working I Am Usually: Catching up with friends, family and art exhibits in town.

I've Also Worked: As the visual arts and GT teacher at Bromwell Elementary School. Before that I was in museum education for almost 20 years working at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Smithsonian, the Denver Art Museum and with my own business, World Art Explorers.

Hometown: Glencoe, Illinois.

Favorite Movie: "My Fair Lady" (1964) directed by George Cukor.

Favorite Art in Denver: "I See What You Mean," the new big blue bear sculpture at the Denver Convention Center by Lawrence Argent.

Favorite Book: "Harold and the Purple Crayon" by Crockett Johnson from my teaching years.

Family: Two daughters who are graduates of George Washington High School.

Philosophy For Life: Always be learning (Bromwell's character education motto).

Final Words: The arts are vital to a great society and a great education and they also help DPS students to achieve academic excellence.



Revitalization on page 1

Other schools involved with revitalization efforts are:

Brown and Sabin elementary schools also are implementing International Baccalaureate (IB) primary years programs.

Ford Elementary School is converting to a "comprehensive instruction system for student-centered learning." The four areas of focus are teaching and learning, climate and culture, parental engagement and community engagement.

Gilpin K-8 School is creating a full-time English language development specialist to support English language learners and native English speakers in developing academic and social language; developing a professional learning community among staff; platooning curriculum delivery (teachers in fourth through eighth grades specialize in the subjects they teach); reorganizing into a lower school through third grade and an upper school for grades four through eight; adding a full-time math coach; partnering with Earth Force to create a service learning system for natural science, social sciences and technology courses; fostering a school-wide approach to positive behaviors and character education; and supporting increase parental and community engagement.

The plan at **Montclair School of Academics and Enrichment** calls for implementation of the early High Strides program and the School-wide Enrichment Model. Early High Strides is an accelerated instructional model for highly motivated students built on the premise that learning should be individualized. The Schoolwide Enrichment model is a detailed blueprint for total school improvement that is based upon the vision that schools are places for talent development. As part of revitalization, the school also renovated entirely its library from books to bookshelves.

The Core Knowledge Program is headed to **Remington Elementary School**. Core Knowledge is a rigorous content-driven program that builds on vocabulary and allows for the creation of a common language through shared information and terminology. The Core Knowledge Program is flexible enough to use curriculum units developed by the district's El Alma de la Raza project, which includes 75 multicultural, relevant units. Remington also adopted mandatory uniforms for students.

At **Skinner Middle School**, the revitalization process is leading to full implementation of the district's studio literacy and connected math programs; continued professional development of the district's secondary teaching and learning project; development of accelerated options in selected content areas; and implementation of AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination) programming. Skinner also will launch integrated arts and artistic focus areas, with every Skinner teacher and administrator engaged in the Young Audiences "Aesthetic Arts Institute."

Stedman Elementary School is transforming into a "high achieving learning community for student success." The four main areas of focus are: academic achievement, school climate and culture, parental engagement, and marketing and communication. The Stedman plan: fully implements a professional learning community; delivers science and social studies curricula through experiential education, including creating an outdoor learning laboratory and hiring a full-time technology teacher; expands full-day kindergarten; builds a state-of-the-art learning landscape; implements a school-wide approach to positive behaviors and character education; involves all parents in their child's education; and develops a formal marketing plan and materials.

A year from now, **Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School** will become Martin Luther King Jr. Early College and reorganize from a traditional middle school with grades six through eight to an early college high school with multiple career path options. The transition to high school will occur with the addition of one grade every year beginning in August 2006.

insideDPS is a newsletter for and about Denver Public Schools employees. It is published monthly during the school year.
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