

Des Moines Public Schools

# DMPS COMMUNITY REPORT

October 2012

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Since 1991, a total of 291 Des Moines Public Schools students have been named AP National Scholars.

## Record Number of Students are Advanced Placement Scholars in 2012

One hundred and ninety students who take Advanced Placement classes at Des Moines Public Schools have earned AP honors from the College Board, an increase of nearly 50% in the number of awards compared to last year.

And among the honorees are a record number of 29 students who have been

recognized as AP National Scholars. To earn the prestigious AP National Scholar Award a student must take eight or more AP exams and receive a near perfect score of four or higher (on a scale of 1-5) on each exam. Last year 19 DMPS students earned AP National Scholar recognition.

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Zac Christensen, Perkins Elementary Teacher, PAEMST Finalist

## DMPS Teachers Rank With the Best

There was a surprise party in the library after school on September 13th at Perkins Elementary. Arranged by principal Danny Koss, it was in celebration of Math Leader Zac Christensen's selection as one of three Iowa finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math & Science Teaching (PAEMST).

There to present Zac with a memento and cake was Judith Spitzli from the Iowa Department of Education.

But Zac isn't alone as a DMPS finalist for this year's award. The day before, Spitzli visited the Downtown School to make the same presentation to Josie Burg,

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## The 2012-13 school year is off to a terrific start in Des Moines.

Two of the most essential ingredients in a successful school district are great teachers and great students. In this issue of the DMPS Community Report, you will see why Des Moines has the people it takes to succeed.

Already this year our teachers are being recognized as among the best in the state and nation. For example, Heather Anderson of Cowles Montessori School is one of five finalists for 2013 Iowa Teacher of the Year. Josie Burg of the Downtown School and Zac Christensen of Perkins Elementary School are two of Iowa's three finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math & Science Teaching. And Jessica Gogerty was honored by the White House as a "Champion of Change" for her work at North High School.

This year's early success by our students is just as impressive. For example, Des Moines Public Schools had a record number

of Advanced Placement Scholars this year. A total of 190 students, representing all five high schools, were honored as AP Scholars. In addition, 21 high school seniors have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship program as either Semifinalists or Commended Students.

While our teachers and students are off to a great start in the classroom, many other important issues are underway in the school district. The School Board has begun the Superintendent selection process, recently selecting a search firm to help identify the best candidate for the community. We are working on new attendance areas for our secondary schools – the first time this has been done in 25 years – to create feeder zones for middle and high schools. And from United Way's Day of Action to the 4th annual Reach Out to Dropouts, our schools are receiving tremendous support from volunteers throughout the community.

It's my honor to be a part of this school district, and my pleasure to share



Tom Ahart, Interim Superintendent

with you some of the examples of how Des Moines Public Schools provide young people with the best educational opportunities in Iowa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas A. Ahart". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Thomas Ahart, Interim Superintendent

## DMPS Boasts Nine National Merit Semifinalists for 2013; Twelve Seniors Named Commended Students

Nine Des Moines high school seniors have been chosen as semifinalists in the 2013 National Merit Scholarship competition, placing them among the top young scholars in the state and nation. An additional 12 seniors have been named Commended Students. The Des Moines students were selected based on their strong performance on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) test taken earlier this year.

"Des Moines Public Schools is home to many brilliant and talented students, and these seniors are terrific examples," said Tom Ahart, superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools. "From great teachers to great educational offerings, the opportunities available in Des Moines are helping these and every

student prepare for their next step in education and beyond."

The National Merit Semifinalists are:

- Jillian Brown, Roosevelt
- Daniel Comito, Roosevelt
- Ashley De Haan, East
- Karina Foster-Middleton, Roosevelt
- Crystal Hou, Roosevelt
- Nathan Leys, Roosevelt
- James "Luke" Sheeley, Roosevelt
- John Shumway, Roosevelt
- Seth Van Helten, East

The National Merit Commended Students are:

- Kirsten Benson, Roosevelt
- Henry Fender, Roosevelt
- Rivkah Gardner-Frolick, Roosevelt
- Jennifer Hugg, Roosevelt

- William Karr, Roosevelt
- Sofia Kaut, Roosevelt
- Matthew Lippold, Lincoln
- Alex Lopez, North
- Dmitri McDonald, Roosevelt
- Samuel Norland, Roosevelt
- Benjamin Sides, Lincoln
- August Stangl III, East

All of the students also take classes at Central Academy.

Semifinalists are now eligible to receive college scholarships of at least \$2,500 from the National Merit Scholarship organization or their corporate sponsors. Scholarship recipients will be announced next April. Of the 1.5 million students who take the PSAT, only about 16,000 enter the semifinalist level of the competition and approximately 15,000 are recognized as finalists. ■

## Record Number of DMPS Students are AP Scholars

*Continued from Page 1...*

There are also two firsts this year for AP National Scholars who attend DMPS: at least one student from each of Des Moines' five high schools was recognized and one student earned the award as a sophomore.

In addition, each year the College Board names one male and one female State AP Scholar to recognize the students with the highest average score on Advanced Placement exams. This year's winner of the female State AP Scholar for Iowa is Kayleigh Hauri, a 2012 Roosevelt High School graduate now attending Georgetown University. Since 1991, 34 of the 42 students receiving the State AP Scholar for Iowa Award have attended Des Moines Public Schools.

"The great success of these students is an inspiration, and their nationally recognized accomplishments in the classroom are testament not only to their talent and intelligence but also to the great teachers and educational opportunities that are available here in Des Moines," said interim Superintendent Tom Ahart.

Recipients of the AP National Scholar Award for 2012 are:

### SENIORS (Class of '12)

- Jack Bequeaith – Roosevelt (Williams College)
- Philip Bui – East (Iowa State University)
- Philip Dobrinov – WDM Valley (University of Chicago)
- Brady Edwards – Lincoln (Northwestern University)
- Emma Fisher – Roosevelt (St. Louis University)
- Tyler Foley – Roosevelt (University of Wisconsin)
- Corey Grief – Roosevelt (Northwestern University)
- Kayleigh Hauri – Roosevelt (Georgetown University)
- Will Hemminger – Roosevelt (Elon College)
- Rachel Jacobs – Roosevelt (Northwestern University)
- Zach Lindeberg – Roosevelt (Baylor University)
- Sarah Liu – WDM Valley (MIT)
- Margaret Long – Roosevelt (University of Notre Dame)
- Matthew Mackay – Roosevelt (University of Toronto)
- Stephanie Manivanh – Roosevelt (Harvard University)
- Megan Mansfield – Roosevelt (MIT)

- Sarah Mansfield – Roosevelt (Tufts University)
- Naveen Nath – Roosevelt (Duke University)
- Samuel Norman – Roosevelt (Creighton University)
- Rebecca Rasmussen – Roosevelt (Grinnell College)
- Yeltsin Rodriguez – East (University of Iowa)
- Takashi Yanagi – WDM Valley (University of Notre Dame)

### JUNIORS (Class of '13)

- Eric Chen – WDM Valley
- Ashley DeHaan – East
- Thanh Lai – Hoover
- Nathan Leys – Roosevelt
- Luke Sheeley – Roosevelt
- Julius Tembe – North

### SOPHOMORE (Class of '14)

- Max Pilcher – Roosevelt

In addition to 29 AP National Scholars, 67 Des Moines students were recognized as AP Scholars with Distinction, 22 as AP Scholars with Honor, and 72 as AP Scholars. Since 1991, Des Moines Public Schools students have earned a total of 2,221 AP Scholars awards, including 290 AP National Scholars. ■



## Annual Perkins Parade

Students, school staff, and parents at Perkins Academy kicked off the new school year in style with their second annual parade. It was a great day to march around the neighborhood and show school pride. ■

## DMPS Teachers Rank With the Best

*Continued from Page 1...*

making DMPS home to two of this year's three Iowa nominees.

Zac and Josie are two in a long line of DMPS teachers recognized as finalists for the PAEMST. In fact, in 2010 the district was home to all three finalists, and Barb Leise from the Downtown School was ultimately named a national awardee that year. Since the award originated, nine DMPS teachers have earned the national honor.

No wonder the district keeps producing AP Scholars in steadily increasing numbers.

The PAEMST is the highest distinction a public school math or science teacher can achieve. Both Josie and Zac are now eligible for a \$10,000 cash prize and a trip to Washington, DC where awardees get to meet the president. Established by Congress in 1983, the program authorizes the bestowal of up to 108 awards each year. PAEMST alternates between the elementary and secondary levels.

Joining in the celebration at Perkins were Zac's colleagues there

who applauded upon his arrival in the library.

"I love being at Perkins. It's a privilege to work on this staff and with such a great, diverse bunch of kids," said Christensen.

It's fair to say the privilege is mutual.

While the party may have come as a surprise, Zac's selection as a state finalist certainly didn't. It's happened before, in 2010. Zac is in his second stint at Perkins, and proud to be a third generation DMPS teacher.

The Iowa Department of Education annually selects the state finalists from a pool of nominees, and Spitzli says the caliber of applications is steadily rising along with the increased emphasis on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education. The national awardees will be named next spring.

Zac, a Johnston native, is in his 12th year as a teacher, all of them spent with Des Moines Public Schools. He received his bachelor's degree from Simpson



Downtown School teacher Josie Burg (left) with Judith Spitzli from the Iowa Department of Education.

College and a master's degree from Viterbo University.

Josie is from Decorah and has taught in Des Moines Public Schools for the past seven years. She holds a bachelor's degree from UNI and a master's degree from Drake University.

Zac and Josie – along with Cowles teacher Heather Anderson, a finalist for 2013 Iowa Teacher of the Year – will be honored at an awards luncheon hosted by the Iowa Department of Education later this month.

More information about the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math & Science Teaching is available at [www.paemst.org](http://www.paemst.org). ■

## Cowles Educator Named Finalist For Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Heather Anderson of Cowles Montessori School who was named one of five finalists for the Iowa Teacher of the Year award by the Iowa Department of Education.

Heather has taught at Cowles since 2004 and to say she's had an impact there is putting it mildly. When she arrived the school didn't offer much in the way of extra-curricular activities for students.

Since then Heather has overseen the implementation of a number of physical fitness opportunities including basketball teams, indoor soccer, golf clinics, yoga classes, cheerleading clinics and a running club which is preparing for the Cowles

community's third annual 5K run/walk event that Heather established in 2011.

No wonder Cowles received a "Healthiest School in Iowa" award in 2010. This year Heather wrote the school's Fuel up to Play 60 grant and Cowles was awarded \$4,000 which will be used to expand on the physical fitness programs already in place, and two years ago helped with Cowles' successful application for a Farm to School grant from the Iowa Department of Agriculture.

Nothing indicates Heather's level of dedication more than the fact that practically all of her innovations at Cowles are in addition to what goes on in her



Heather Anderson, Cowles Montessori School

classroom between she and her own designated students. She has created opportunities for not only all of the students at Cowles but for their families and the surrounding community as well. Truly, her level of dedication rises above and beyond the call of her assigned duties. ■



## Renewed Opportunity Knocks in Reach Out to Dropouts IV

North High School was a real beehive on the morning of Saturday, September 22.

There was a big swimming meet going on in the pool which was being dedicated as the Lonny Kerman Natatorium in honor of the school's longtime coach and community amphibian.

In the gym the annual free throw marathon was underway to raise money for the Polar Bear basketball program. Shooters paid pledges based on the number each sank out of 100.

But the main event was the fourth annual Reach Out to Dropouts (RO2DO), a schools/community joint effort to get kids back in school and across the finish line to graduation. North was headquarters for RO2DO-IV and the troops who patrolled that area going door-to-door at homes of dropped out kids were given their marching orders in pep talks from Jason Glass, the Director of the Iowa Department of Education; Tom Ahart, the interim DMPS Superintendent; Matt Smith, North High School Principal; Mary Sellers,

President of United Way of Central Iowa and Karen Lynn representing corporate sponsor, Aviva USA.

Squads of district and community volunteers fanned out from each of the district's high schools. They combed the city and either spoke directly with ex-students they found at home or left invitational packets for those they missed. Meanwhile back at HQ, Ruth Wright, the district Coordinator of Communities in Schools and driveshaft of the district-wide canvass gathered reports from the field and tallied results. Consider this:

- 259 volunteers visited 303 homes
- Only one student declared absolutely no interest in returning to school

Other outcomes ranged from the five kids who re-enrolled on the spot to the 15 who had either earned or were pursuing a GED to the 57 whose listed addresses were no longer current to the 27 who expressed interest in an appointment with school officials to

the 118 who weren't home and were left door-hangers with additional information.

Wright says RO2DO has gone from being practically a stand-alone event to the capstone of an ongoing, year-round reengagement campaign that features academic support labs in each of the district's five comprehensive high schools.

"Those labs can adapt to the unique circumstances presented by each dropout, many of whom are forced out of traditional school by the necessity to work fulltime in support of their families," she pointed out.

In the first three years of RO2DO over 100 kids have either earned their diplomas or come back to school and resumed working toward them. When you consider that high school grads earn an average of \$648,000 more than non-grads over their lifetimes RO2DO volunteers aren't so different than the Publishers Clearing House patrols that knock on the doors of sweepstakes winners - except they're offering guarantees to at-risk kids instead of congratulations to a one-in-a-million lucky stiff.

Wright credits Bryce Amos, the district's Executive Director of High Schools and Learning Services, with changing the whole culture around dropouts in DMPS. The RO2DO idea is one he brought with him from the Houston, TX schools where he previously worked.

Amos was so pumped for this year's event that he challenged Polar Bear principal Smith to a free throw duel in the gym while they waited for the volunteers to come back and file their reports. Like a machine, he pumped in 87 out of 100 to Smith's 62. But if his free-throwing is anything like his educating the 13 he missed are the ones he can't stop thinking about. ■

# Lincoln Leaders are Science and ISU Bound

Lincoln High School was recognized as the 2011-12 High School of the Year by Science Bound, Iowa State University's premier pre-college program to increase the number of ethnically diverse Iowa students who pursue degrees in agriculture, science, technology, engineering or mathematics (ASTEM).

The award was presented to Lincoln students and teachers at the kick-off event for 2012-13, held at DuPont Pioneer headquarters in Johnston.

The Railsplitters earned the award with high levels of participation, attendance and academic achievement.



## Samuelson Elementary

hosted a group on September 18 that included State Representative Greg Forristall, Chairman of the Education Committee of the Iowa House, for a demonstration of the Imagine Learning software which helps ELL students learn to read. ■



Des Moines Public Schools is home to some of the nation's top science programs.

"I am very proud of both the accomplishments of our Science Bound students and the dedication of our teachers," said Lincoln principal Paul Williamson. "We are working hard to not only help students continue their education after high school but also be prepared for the careers of the future."

The Science Bound program teachers at Lincoln High are Becky Wildman-Swartz and Jessica Hart.

In addition, Lincoln High senior Yadira Cano was co-awarded as Science Bound Student of the Year. She maintained the highest GPA among seniors in Des Moines Public Schools. Junior Santiago Guerrero, Sophomore Nick Parker and Freshman Luis Martinez also led their respective grade levels in GPA.

Many Science Bound students participated in research projects at Iowa State this summer and excelled at other summer enrichment programs.

Science Bound isn't just another impressive-sounding program that hands out participation certificates and pads students' college applications. It packs a real life-changing financial punch.

Students who successfully complete the high school program, meet admission requirements to Iowa State and pursue an ASTEM

degree at ISU receive a full tuition scholarship from the university.

Science Bound has offered scholarships to more than 200 program graduates so far. More than 40 were enrolled at Iowa State in 2011-12. Sixty-six Science Bound grads now hold degrees from ISU. The program also boasts a number of master's graduates and a Ph.D. in biology from Cornell University in New York.

So it's not easy.

Enrollees must complete a science fair project and an essay while maintaining a grade point average of at least 3.0 and involvement in 75% of the program activities. An annual oral justification is also required to continue in the program.

Regular meetings with teachers and visits to the Iowa State campus are at the program's core. Additionally, students participate in the summer programs, overnight retreats, and study tables.

Enrichment opportunities provide resources and professional development for supervising teachers. Parent workshops are also provided since parental involvement is critical to student success and is a requirement of Science Bound.

Additional information about Science Bound is available at [www.sciencebound.iastate.edu](http://www.sciencebound.iastate.edu). ■

# Celebrating Our Achievements

This regular feature of the *DMPS Community Report* highlights awards and achievements of district students and staff. Please let us know if you have a notable achievement to share by e-mailing Sarah Taylor at [sarah.taylor@dmschools.org](mailto:sarah.taylor@dmschools.org). Here are some achievements from the past few months.

Five DMPS graduates who completed the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme requirements at Central Academy earned the world-renowned IB Diploma. The five students were seniors at Roosevelt High School during the 2011-2012 school year: **Cole Bates-Norum**, **Alyssa Bean**, **Dhynasah James**, **Andy Troxell** and **Lansing Wei**.

Roosevelt High School teacher **Cindy Weeks** won the Iowa JumpStart Sponsorship to the National JumpStart Teacher's Conference to be held in Chicago in November. JumpStart promotes financial literacy.

**Salvador Aguirre**, a behavior interventionist at Meredith Middle School; **Jessica Gogerty**, a School Improvement Leader at Roosevelt High School, and **Cindy Wissler**, principal at Monroe Elementary have been appointed to the Teaching Standards and Teacher

Evaluation Task Force by the Iowa Department of Education.

The **21st Century Community Learning Centers** afterschool program was awarded a \$51,430 grant by State Farm® to implement a financial literacy curriculum at all seven DMPS middle schools where the program currently exists.

Walnut Street School third-grader **Ajani Patton-Imani** was one of 54 children invited to First Lady Michelle Obama's first ever Kids' "State Dinner" at the White House in August. His winning healthy recipe submitted for the Healthy Lunchtime Challenge was Yummy Corn Wraps.

**Jessica Gogerty**, a School Improvement Leader at Roosevelt High School and an educator in DMPS for 15 years, was recently honored by the White House as one of 12 "Champions of Change" in education. ■

## Congratulations to the Lincoln Marching Rails

The band competed in Fort Dodge at the North Central Iowa Marching Band Invitational and marched away with several honors. Lincoln not only took 1st place in class 4A division but also won the Overall Championship Award as the Best Marching Band of the day. The marching band also set a personal best by receiving their highest score ever achieved at this competition.

In addition, Lincoln also received awards for Best Drumline, Best Brass and Best Marching Execution

To learn more about the Lincoln marching band, visit [www.railsband.com](http://www.railsband.com).



Hillis Hosts VIPs for AmeriCorps Summit

On September 28th Hillis Elementary was the site of an ad hoc summit conference on AmeriCorps and the profound impact it's making in the district. Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), Iowa Congressman Tom Latham, and Governor Terry Branstad were the big names on campus but they were all there to see the real VIP's in action; the Hillis students and the Americorps troops that serve them.

Hillis is one of nine DMPS elementary programs benefitting from AmeriCorps staff assigned to alleviate problems associated with growing ELL populations and large class sizes by serving as adjunct teacher/mentors. The others are Cowles Montessori, Downtown School, Hanawalt, Hubbell, Jefferson, Phillips Traditional, Pleasant Hill and Wright.



Lt. Gov. Reynolds Pitches In at Edmunds

Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds visited Edmunds Elementary on September 10th to practice what she and Governor Terry Branstad are preaching.

Earlier in the day the state's two chief executives had formally issued a "call to service" challenging all Iowans to volunteer at least 50 hours per year and boost us from #2 behind Utah in volunteerism per capita into the top spot by 2015.

After touring the school with Edmunds principal David Perrigo, Lt. Gov. Reynolds joined right in with one of art teacher David Borzo's classes creating posters in support of Iowa's effort to become the most voluntary state in the country.



# Students Step Up to Help Meals From The Heartland

DMPS was well-represented last month in the 5th annual Meals From the Heartland crusade against world hunger. Hundreds of students from several middle and high schools showed up for various shifts during the massive effort staged by an army of more than 15,000 volunteers at Hy-Vee Hall August 29 through September 1.

Leading the way was the Wolf Pack from Harding Middle School which sent a contingent of 156 lifesavers one afternoon to fill the bags that filled the boxes that filled the pallets that filled the trucks. Thirty-six bags per box, 66 boxes per pallet... spoon, weigh, seal, pack; repeat, to the tune of more than five million meals over the course of the four days.

## Olympic Gold Medalist Visits King Elementary

Cullen Jones, an Olympic gold medalist swimmer, spoke to King Elementary School students about the importance of water safety on August 27th.



Hundreds of DMPS students join volunteers to pack Meals From the Heartland.

Other groups from the district pitching in included 65 kids from the North High School Communities in Schools (CIS) program, culinary arts students from Central Campus, delegations from the girls' swimming and drama programs at Roosevelt High School, the "Railettes" from Lincoln High School, one table crew from Callanan Middle School and a squad from Hiatt Middle School working in conjunction with their business partner from the Federal Home Loan Bank.

Chase Young, the CIS coordinator at North, said the Polar Bear contingent was the fourth largest that participated in the Student Challenge on the opening night of the event when the packing floor was open only to student groups from Central Iowa schools, each of them volunteering outside of normal school hours.

"We had students who are refugees from Africa and the Middle East that participated in packaging meals," Young said. "I think this event was especially meaningful for them because many of the meals were shipped to their native countries."

Young said the group was further motivated by the presence of the school's Polar Bear mascot and school board members Connie

Boesen and Bill Howard. He thinks the level of participation among DMPS students is on the rise.

"I am certain that North will have even more students participate next year," he predicted. "I've also had other CIS staff ask about this experience and how they can promote this opportunity next year with their students."

The goal is for the Student Challenge to grow into a year-round effort that provides leadership opportunities for students, brings education about global hunger into the schools, informs students of career opportunities impacting food production, encourages a life-long spirit of volunteerism, and helps Meals from the Heartland sponsor and package food to support families in need in Iowa, the United States and worldwide.

Meals From the Heartland has distributed more than 23 million meals to starving people, most of them children, around the world since its inception.

This year it got a lot of helping hands from a school district where scores of languages are spoken and two out of three students qualify for free and reduced price meals. In other words, DMPS is the world in a nutshell. ■



## Breakfast Served in the Classroom for Elementary Students

Des Moines Public School students will benefit from a nutritious morning meal throughout the school year thanks to the expansion of the Breakfast in the Classroom program, funded by the Walmart Foundation.

More than 6,000 students at 15 local schools will now participate in the free breakfast program, allowing them to reap the nutritional and academic benefits associated with a morning meal. The addition of Des Moines Public Schools brings the total number of school districts benefitting from Breakfast in the Classroom to 15 this year.

Through a \$5 million grant from the Walmart Foundation, the program reworks how school breakfast is delivered, by offering it to all students at no charge and moving it from the cafeteria to the classroom, in an effort to improve participation in the federally-funded School Breakfast Program and boost learning and health.

“As a program, Breakfast in the Classroom provides noticeable improvements to child behavior and concentration, as well as decreased tardiness and absenteeism,” said Sandy Huisman, Food Service Director for Des Moines Public Schools. “This year, we look forward to seeing the benefits of the breakfast program impact the daily lives of our students and staff.”

Des Moines Public Schools was selected as one of 10 U.S. school districts to participate in the second phase of Breakfast in the Classroom, which is a joint initiative from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation, National Education Association Health Information Network and School Nutrition Foundation – collectively known as the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom. The Partners also are working in conjunction with the Food Bank of Iowa. ■

## School Meals Get Healthier

Des Moines Public Schools has implemented new federal requirements for healthier school meals.

The school district has been a leader in providing healthier and more nutritious food in our schools, and these new requirements will build on that work to provide more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and healthier entrees in our school cafeterias.

Some of the new requirements include:

- Increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables.
- Reducing the sodium in meals over the next 10 years.
- Setting calorie limits for the first time.
- Increasing whole grains.
- Limiting the amount of meat/ meat alternatives and grains.

Des Moines Public Schools had already made progress toward meeting the new requirements. Some of the things the district has been doing include:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables are served every day.
- Sandwiches are served on whole wheat buns.
- All pasta served is whole grain.
- Only low-fat or fat-free milk is available.
- Main dishes have been changed to reduce sodium.
- Dark green and orange vegetables are served on a weekly basis.
- Dried beans have been incorporated into some of the recipes.

The DMPS school nutrition program will work hard to make these healthy changes for our students and make each meal something our students will enjoy. For more information on school meals and the healthier changes, visit the [USDA's Food and Nutrition Service](#). ■

# School Board Moves Forward With Superintendent Search

The Des Moines School Board is beginning the next phase in the selection of a new superintendent as they hire a search firm to provide support to the process. On October 2, the Board unanimously voted to contract with Ray and Associates as the search firm to assist them in the process of hiring the next superintendent for Iowa's largest provider of public education.

"We had some very good firms to choose from, but the combination of Ray and Associates' emphasis on public engagement, commitment to identifying a diverse field of candidates, and deep familiarity with Iowa made them the best fit

for Des Moines Public Schools," said Dick Murphy, chair of the Des Moines School Board. "The hiring of a Superintendent is one of the most important things a School Board ever does and I am glad that we have a good team in place to work with ourselves and the community to find the best possible leader for our district."

Ray and Associates, founded in 1975, is based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Following the completion and signing of a contract, Ray and Associates will begin work immediately with the Board. Among the support they provide to the Board during the hiring process includes seeking community input on the qualities of the

best Superintendent, creating a profile for the ideal candidate, and recruiting and screening top applicants from across the state and nation.

Other firms that submitted proposals and were interviewed by the Board were BWP & Associates (Libertyville, IL), McPherson & Jacobson LLC (Omaha, NE), and Proact Search (Wilmette, IL).

Thomas Ahart is serving as the district's interim superintendent. The school board plans to have a permanent superintendent named and in place by the start of the 2013-14 school year.

For additional information about this process, visit [SuperintendentSearch.dmschools.org](http://SuperintendentSearch.dmschools.org). ■

## Proposed Attendance Area Changes Will Better Align Middle and High Schools

District officials have reviewed secondary attendance areas and proposed some improvements – 25 years after the last changes were made.

The most significant improvement aligns the middle and high schools to create a more consistent feeder system.

If approved, the new attendance areas would take effect with the start of the 2013-14 school year. Approximately 350 middle school students and 250 high school students will attend a different school in the first year.

"The changes, which were first proposed by the district's Facility Advisory Committee, will better serve our students and meet the needs of our schools,"

said Bryce Amos, Executive Director of High Schools.

"Among other positives, these new attendance areas will allow school leaders to be able to better communicate with families in their school-communities."

The plan will be "grandfathered" in for many students as follows:

- **High Schools:** Students who are part of the 2014 and 2015 graduating classes may complete their time at their current school. Students who are part of the 2016 and 2017 graduating class will move in the 2013-14 school year to their new attendance area high school.
- **Middle Schools:** Students who are 8th graders for the

2013-14 school year can complete their time at their current school. Students who are 6th and 7th graders for the 2013-14 school year will move to their new attendance area middle school.

Input regarding the proposed attendance areas has been received in a variety of ways. Community meetings have been held at all five high schools and a parent survey was posted online.

The school board will discuss the proposed attendance areas at the October 16 meeting. For additional information about the proposed attendance areas, visit [attendanceareas.dmschools.org](http://attendanceareas.dmschools.org). ■



## Volunteers Visit Schools for United Way's Day of Action

On September 12, United Way volunteers spent time reading with DMPS third graders at ten DMPS schools: Carver, Cattell, Edmunds, King, Lovejoy, Madison, McKinley, Monroe, Stowe and Willard. Every third grade student also received a literacy kit and the book, *Good Enough To Eat*, by Lizzy Rockwell.

Day of Action is an opportunity for community members to help students become more confident with their abilities to read and write.

"We are always looking for ways to connect with our community partners to improve the learning environment for students," explained Susie Tallman, DMPS Executive Director for Elementary Schools.



The East High School Scarlets 2012 football season began on August 24, just a little over three weeks after a fire at Williams Stadium caused an estimated \$850,000 of damage. Support from the school district, along with other high schools and colleges, made the season kickoff against Ames possible.

## More DMPS News and Information Available Online and On Air

Des Moines Public Schools is the largest provider of public education in Iowa, which means one newsletter alone cannot provide all of the information or share all of the stories about everything taking place in your school district. More news and information is always available online and on air.

### ONLINE

You can find information on our schools, news stories, data, contacts, and more on the DMPS web site at [www.dmschools.org](http://www.dmschools.org). In addition, follow DMPS on the following social media sites:

- Facebook: [facebook.com/dmschools](https://www.facebook.com/dmschools)
- Twitter: [twitter.com/dmschools](https://twitter.com/dmschools)
- Tumblr: [dmschools.tumblr.com](https://www.tumblr.com/dmschools)
- Pinterest: [pinterest.com/dmschools](https://www.pinterest.com/dmschools)

### ON THE AIR

Tune in to **DMPS-TV on Mediacom Cable channels 85 and 97-3** at any time to see stories about programs and events from throughout the school district. If you do not subscribe to cable television, you can still view stories online at [www.dmschools.org](http://www.dmschools.org). And if you're in the mood for interesting talk and music, tune into Des Moines Public Schools' own radio station - **KDPS 88.1** - where your hosts are students from Central Campus and GrandView University.

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### The DMPS Community Report OCTOBER 2012 | Vol. 5 No. 2

The *DMPS Community Report* is now published every other month by the office of Community Relations.

Editor/Writer: Phil Roeder, Sarah Taylor, Mike Wellman

Designer: Adam Rohwer

Photographer: Kyle Knicley, Jon Lemons

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