



... Value in Education

Des Moines Public Schools
DMPS COMMUNITY REPORT
Spring 2010



Welcome to reading the first electronic-only issue of the *DMPS Community Report*.

With spring fast approaching, Des Moines Public Schools continues to develop strategies to address the challenges we face next year. But, at the same time, I urge parents, students, the community, and staff not to lose sight of everything the district continues to do well.

In this *DMPS Community Report*, we celebrate achievements of some of our outstanding students and staff, and we celebrate the progress the district has made to recover students who have dropped out of school. We also celebrate the improvements taking place in school buildings that will enhance the learning environment for our students.

As the school year comes to an end, we also can celebrate our graduating seniors on their accomplishments and wish them the best as they continue on to exciting opportunities that lie ahead. We have some of the best students and staff in the state!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Sebring".

Nancy Sebring
Superintendent
Des Moines Public Schools

THINK.

LEARN.

GROW.

P.S. This first issue of the newsletter has been automatically sent to you. If you don't wish to receive future issues of the *DMPS Community Report*, just visit the DMPS Web site to [unsubscribe](#).

The Des Moines Public Schools prohibits discrimination in educational and employment programs and activities based on age, race, creed, color, sex, marital status, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with Mary Lynne Jones, the district's Compliance Officer, Title IX Coordinator and 504 Coordinator at 901 Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, (515) 242-7781.



Joe Herman, Jackson Elementary site manager, checks on the new geothermal heating and cooling unit.

DMPS Becomes Leader in Energy Savings

It's a team effort at Des Moines Public Schools to save energy and we're doing so in a big way. In May 2009, DMPS became an ENERGY STAR® Partner and committed to adopting ENERGY STAR strategies by measuring and tracking energy use and implementing a plan to improve energy performance. Since then, 26 schools have been designated as ENERGY STAR schools by reducing energy consumption in their buildings. The district tied with one other district for having the third highest number of ENERGY STAR schools in the nation for 2009, and also three of the oldest ENERGY STAR schools (Oak Park, Greenwood, and McKinley).

ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy to reduce energy consumption. To qualify, schools must meet strict energy-performance standards set by the EPA, use less energy, be less expensive to operate, and cause fewer greenhouse gas emissions than their peers.

Under the guidance of Chief Operations Officer Bill Good, students and staff in the district have made behavior changes to save energy, save money, and save the environment. Changes include lowering temperatures in rooms, turning off lights in a room when it isn't being used, turning off computers and copiers, and reducing the number of convenience appliances, such as coffee pots and refrigerators. Strategies that have been taking place for years in our schools include recycling paper and using recycled products, such as paper towels and toilet paper.



Jamie Wilkerson, DMPS environmental and safety specialist, reviews the district's energy usage.

"We have had to relook at our behaviors. Our country is the most wasteful in the world. We need to recognize not only the significant financial impact we can make by saving energy, but also the environmental impact," commented Good.

Energy conservation is apparent throughout the district. Twenty buildings in the district have geothermal heating and cooling, which is now installed during all school renovations. The Facility Management Department has replaced equipment, such as windows in an entire building, energy management systems, and other energy-saving devices.

Another energy-efficiency strategy DMPS has implemented is utilizing T8 fluorescent lamps and compact fluorescent bulbs in all buildings. Other lighting strategies, such as the use of occupancy sensors, direct/indirect lighting and day lighting (the practice of positioning windows or other openings and reflective surfaces so that during the day natural light provides effective internal lighting)

Celebrating Our Achievements

This new regular feature of the *DMPS Community Report* will highlight 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@dmps.k12.ia.us. Some achievements from the past few months (August-January)* are:

John Freude, a junior at Roosevelt High School, received the Herbert Hoover Uncommon Student Award for creating a charity benefit battle of the bands event.

Jessica Gogerty, North High School physics teacher, was named a state finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) in August.

Matthew Rogowski, a senior at Lincoln High School, was selected to the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y.

Lori Rogerson, a Des Moines Public Schools social worker, was named the Iowa School Social Worker of the Year by the Iowa School Social Workers Association (ISSWA).

The Hoover Challenger newspaper won the prestigious George Gallup Award for the first time in 43 years. This is the highest honor available for a scholastic publication from The Quill and Scroll Society.

Warren Brown, Technology Education teacher at Goodrell Middle School, was chosen as the Iowa Industrial Technology Education Middle School Teacher of Excellence.

Recipients of the AP National Scholars Award for 2009 from Des Moines were **Spencer Abbe** (Lincoln), **Charlie Caris** (Roosevelt), **Alex Crichton** (Roosevelt), **Zach Flickinger** (East), **Maxwell Hawkins** (Roosevelt), **Jane Hommerding** (Roosevelt), **Jacob Lewin** (Roosevelt), **Alexandra Nassif** (Roosevelt), **Neel Nath** (Roosevelt), **Jaqueline Oberlander** (Roosevelt), **Kate Perdock** (Roosevelt), **Joel Schneider** (Roosevelt), and **Katherine Walsh** (Roosevelt).

Ken Esveld, art teacher at Brubaker Elementary School, was named Art Educator of the Year by the Art Educators of Iowa (AEI).

Srda Vasiljevic, Roosevelt High School senior, was awarded an All-State Performance award at the State Thespian Festival in November for his work in the all-chapter show *The Laramie Project*.



Central Academy math teacher Michael Marcketti and students (L to R) Kerrick Staley, Joel Schneider and Luchang Wang.

Marcketti Wins Math Award

Michael Marcketti, a mathematics teacher at Central Academy, was selected as a winner of the Edyth May Sliffe Award for Distinguished High School Mathematics Teaching by the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). Marcketti was one of 22 teachers selected from all of the high schools in the United States and Canada for this international recognition. He was nominated by Joel Schneider, Kerrick Staley and Luchang Wang, students at Central Academy.

Marcketti has been a mathematics teacher for 17 years. He has been teaching at Central Academy for two years and before that he taught at Roosevelt High School for five years. He is one of only two Iowa teachers to have received the Sliffe Award twice — he first received it while teaching in Iowa City in 1995.

“Walk into Mr. Marcketti’s Advanced Problem Solving class and you’ll see math taught as a high-energy, social sport,” said Barb Adams, K-12 mathematics curriculum coordinator. “His dynamic teaching style and his commitment to his students’ success make him an inspiration to all educators.”

In addition to Marcketti’s honor, 49 Central Academy math students won All-Academic honors at the 37th Annual High School Mathematics Contest held at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. Fourteen of the students submitted perfect papers: **Eric Chen, Brady Edwards, Rachel Jacobs, Jay Kakade, Zach Keyt, Varun Ramaswamy, Joel Schneider, Luke Sheeley, Kerrick Staley, Rachel Suen, Luchang Wang, Kevin You** and **Yale Zhu**. The team of **Joel Schneider, Kerrick Staley** and **Luchang Wang** took first place in the competition.

The SUCCESS Program of the Des Moines Public Schools received the prestigious 2009 National Dropout Prevention Center/Network’s Crystal Star Program Award of Excellence in Dropout Recovery, Intervention, and Prevention.

DMPS students participating in the 2009 All-State Music Festival in November were **Katie Hawks**, Hoover; **Allison Kaiser**, Hoover; **Elizabeth Lockin**, Hoover; **Steven Best**, Lincoln; **Deborah Chaplin**, Lincoln; **Kelsey Edwards**, Lincoln; **Brandon Louis**, Lincoln; **Aly Olson**, Lincoln; **Caleb Peterson**, Lincoln; **Kourtney Richards**, Lincoln;

Becky Stangl, North; **Greta Dahlberg**, Roosevelt; **Sam Jones**, Roosevelt; **Sophia Kaut**, Roosevelt; **Reuben Kebede**, Roosevelt; **Nina Liu**, Roosevelt; **Allison MacKay**, Roosevelt; **Megan Mansfield**, Roosevelt; **Katie Marcus**, Roosevelt; **Michael Terrell**, Roosevelt.

Brubaker Elementary School and **Madison Elementary School** received the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) designation in December for school counseling.



Ruby Van Meter teachers Melanie Overton and Kate McInroy work with a ninth-grade student on a video modeling project.

Prairie Meadows Community Betterment Grants Awarded to 10 DMPS Programs

Grant money totaling \$106,000 from Prairie Meadows Race Track and Casino has been awarded to the Des Moines Public Schools to support school programs and initiatives.

The Prairie Meadows Community Betterment Grants are given to projects in one of four categories: arts and culture; economic development; education; or health and human services.

Des Moines Public Schools grant recipients for 2010 are the Central Campus Foundation; East High School; Harding Middle School; Hiatt Middle School; the Library Support Group; Morris Elementary School; the North High School Alumni Foundation; Ruby Van Meter School; Sisters for Success; and the Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB).

“We are grateful for the generous contributions Prairie Meadows continues to make to the Des Moines Public Schools,” said Dr. Nancy Sebring, superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools. “The grant funds received by our schools and programs will provide many needed resources, such as new books and school uniforms for our students, and the opportunity for the use of innovative learning tools, such as the video modeling project for autistic students at Ruby Van Meter.”

Morris Elementary School is the recipient of a \$10,000 grant to implement the Tiered Intervention Model.

“Through the Tiered Intervention Model, all students will receive extra time, explicit instruction, and additional resources to further engage them in a particular subject,” explained Todd Martin, principal at Morris. “Students are grouped as cohorts according to specific needs and then receive the appropriate amount of additional instruction according to the group’s needs.”

Prairie Meadows has given more than \$1 billion through taxes, grants and charitable donations to the state of Iowa. More than \$435 million of that has remained in our community to promote education, economic development, agriculture, jobs and tourism.

A Grant Advisory Committee reviews all applications received. Grant applications are rated on demonstration of need, leverage of other funds secured and applied for, community support, community impact, population served, proposed evaluation of results, and strength of the organization.

In addition to the Community Betterment Grants, the district also received another \$478,961.38 grant to support online learning and technology purchases for classrooms.

2010 Prairie Meadows Community Betterment Grant Recipients:

- Central Campus Foundation — \$2,500 for the Marine Biology Program
- East High School — \$10,000 for new books to support literacy goals at the Ninth-Grade Academy
- Harding Middle School — \$10,000 for student uniforms
- Hiatt Middle School — \$10,000 for student uniforms
- Library Support Group — \$10,000 for the Rainbow Reading Project
- Morris Elementary School — \$10,000 to implement the Tiered Intervention Model
- North High School Alumni Foundation — \$10,000 to fund scholarships through the North High Dollars for Scholars
- Ruby Van Meter School — \$10,000 for the Video Modeling Project for autistic students
- Sisters for Success — \$10,000 for the Sisters for Success retreat
- Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB) — \$10,000 start-up funding

DMPS Prepares for the Worst, Hopes for Better

As Des Moines Public Schools' leadership pieces together the puzzle of next year's financial picture, district officials are faced with making some very tough decisions that could include having to cut about \$30 million from the district's operating budget. It's not hard to understand why cuts may have to be deep: there is virtually no more federal stimulus money (in 2010 the district received \$14 million), and previous across-the-board cuts from the last two years must be sustained (\$3.3 million in 2009 and \$17.5 million in 2010). Even if the Iowa Legislature funds 2 percent allowable growth for 2011 and restores \$100 million from the state's cash reserves, which Gov. Chet Culver recommended, there will still not be enough to cover the total expected shortfall.

Months ago the district began preparing a "worst-case scenario" 2011 budget, which evolved into the proposed FY 2011 "Likely" Working Budget presented to the Board of Directors on March 9. Still, many variables remain unknown, most notably how much money the district will receive from state foundation aid and the results of compensation negotiations with the district's unions.

Budget cuts must come primarily from state foundation aid (sometimes referred to as the general fund), because many other sources are "untouchable," designated only for certain programs and cannot be used to pay for anything else. (For examples of the "untouchable" sources, see below). A substantial piece of the district's financial puzzle is staff compensation, which accounts for more than 84 percent of the district's operating budget. To accommodate the unprecedented cuts, the district proposed reductions across all staff groups: administrators, teachers, associates, specialists, paraprofessionals, clerical, operations and crafts employees.

"We really won't know until the end of March or later how much money we're getting from the state," said Patti Schroeder, chief financial officer for Des Moines Public Schools. "In the meantime, we're preparing for the worst and hoping for better, trying to figure out how to leverage other funding sources and make reductions in staff and programs. Even in the face of this challenge, our highest priority is doing what is best for our students with the resources we have."

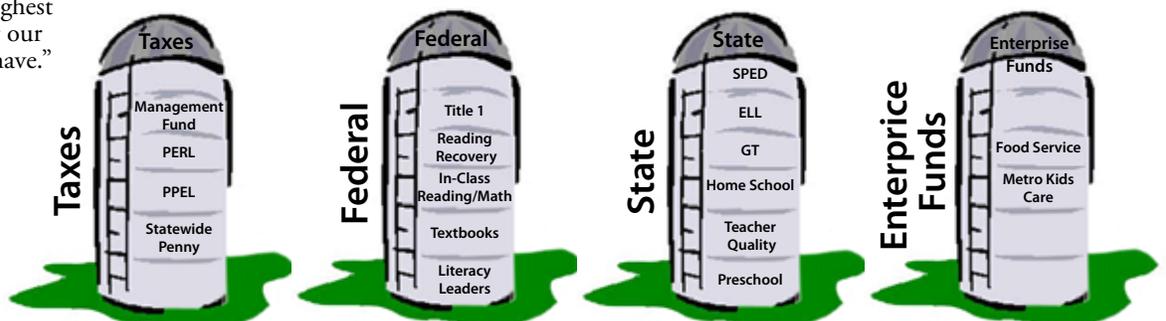


"Likely" Working Budget
Proposed Budget FY 2011 Staffing Cuts

	Total FTEs	Total Regular Prgm FTEs	Reduced FTEs	Percent FTEs	Special Prgm Reduced FTEs	Percent Reduced
Administrators	130.0	110.0	19.0	17%	1.0	15%
Specialists	120.8	69.4	3.0	4%	4.6	6%
Associates	495.4	79.6	12.0	15%	22.0	7%
Clerical	170.8	144.2	10.0	7%	-	6%
Paraprofessionals	194.1	92.4	10.0	11%	1.0	6%
Operations	292.0	293.0	41.0	14%	-	14%
Transportation	138.0	138.0	0.0	See*	See*	See*
Crafts	54.0	54.0	9.0	17%	-	17%
Teachers	2,766.0	2,013.0	267.2	13%	79.3	13%
Total	4,361.1	2,993.9	371.2	Net 12%	107.9	Net 11%

* Part-time staff reductions may result from reduced driver hours.

DMPS "Untouchable" Funding Silo Examples



What's the Scoop on "Students First"?



The 1-cent local option sales tax approved by Polk County voters in 1999, commonly referred to as the Schools First money, expires June 30, 2010. Three final projects being paid for by this money are underway at the Central Campus Career & Technical Center, Roosevelt High School and Jackson Elementary School.

The statewide 1-cent sales tax enacted by the Iowa Legislature in 2008 will replace the 1999 1-cent sales tax. In Des Moines, we are calling the renovation projects paid for by the new statewide 1-cent sales tax "Students First." In September 2009, voters approved the district's plan for using the money, which includes improving safety and security, replacing obsolete, inefficient, or worn-out equipment or systems; improving buildings that have not received major improvements; installation of air conditioning; and technology infrastructure upgrades.

Howe, Madison, Mitchell, Park Avenue, and Wright schools are the first projects to begin under the statewide penny funding. Projects will be happening

at several buildings at once, including new windows, new geothermal systems, lighting upgrades, and technological improvements.

"Many of these first projects will begin this summer, because we were able to sell sales tax revenue bonds earlier this year," explained Bill Good, chief operations officer for Des Moines Public Schools. "Because revenues for Students First are considerably less than the current Schools First program, we are concentrating on basic needs, which are based upon priorities recommended by the superintendent's Facilities Advisory Committee."

Current Projects Using Schools First Money



The new marine biology area is taking shape at Central Campus.

Career & Technical Center Budget \$14,003,353

The project began in spring 2009. Exterior renovations were completed in summer 2009 and renovations to the third floor, including classrooms, will be completed in summer 2010. Exterior renovations included sidewalk improvements and new windows. The elevators in the building will be renovated and highlights of the third-floor improvements include career clustering, an interactive learning environment and improved accessibility. A portion of the roof will be replaced beginning in May 2010.



Roosevelt's new gym is getting a final coat of paint.

Roosevelt High School Budget \$28,559,846

The project began in May 2009. Exterior renovations included a new parking lot and new windows. Major renovations are taking place inside the building, with six additional classrooms, an expanded café space, climate control, new electric and water services, lighting upgrades, a centralized support area, and improved technology. In addition, a new fine arts wing is being built with money raised by the school's parent- and alumni-led fundraising organization. All renovations at Roosevelt are scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2011.



Construction is underway at Jackson.

Jackson Elementary School Budget \$6,048,128

The project began in spring 2009 and is scheduled to be completed for the start of the 2010-11 school year. Highlights include geothermal heating and cooling, vastly improved classroom space, technology enhancements, security improvements and additional student restrooms.



Scavo students work on assignments.



Dropout Recovery Efforts Prove Successful

Over the past year, Des Moines Public Schools has worked diligently to keep kids in school and bring back the ones who have left. Data show these efforts have been successful — 63 percent of the students who left school and re-enrolled in September 2009 are still in school.

“Through the contacts we made with students over the summer, the Reach Out to Dropouts event in September, and some students re-enrolling on their own, we were able to bring 255 students back to school,” stated Jennifer Farley, dropout prevention specialist. “As of December 2009, 160 of those 255 students have stayed in school and some have chosen to pursue or obtained their GED.”

The DMPS Learning Services Department will continue with strategies to help students stay in school. This spring, they will survey re-engaged students about the barriers that led to them leaving and what and/or whom assisted with their return.

“Our Learning Services staff members have done an excellent job connecting with students who have left school, helping them find the best option to return,” said Farley. “Students have been successful once they return because of the options our district provides like Future Pathways, Scavo, and the Academic Support Lab at Hoover.”

The Learning Services Department has found ways to better utilize the district’s Infinite Campus system in the past year to track students. A “re-engagement tag” was created to identify students who have dropped out but are recovered. The department also is currently working with the Technology Department to establish an “interventions tab” in Infinite Campus,

which will keep records of all interventions that have taken place for at-risk students. The data collection for students who drop out will become more extensive on Infinite Campus, as well, to include staff notes and records.

The Early Indicator System (EIS), new this year, also has helped the district to better identify potential dropouts.

“Utilizing the EIS system has allowed the district to become more focused on using data to strengthen our programs and strategies,” said Bryce Amos, executive director for Learning Services.

Several support systems have been created this year to assist the students who have returned to school. Scavo Alternative Campus and the Future Pathways program have provided options for returning students to earn credit and graduate. Additionally, the district plans to expand Academic Support Labs at Hoover and North High School. This credit-recovery strategy has been proven to help recovered students stay in school.

During the 2010-2011 school year, the district will utilize dropout prevention funds specifically for credit recovery at many buildings. Staff will be encouraged to be innovative in the design of credit recovery opportunities offered to students.

“We will continue our efforts to help students stay in school and re-engage those who return by collaborating with district and community agencies to identify supports, strategies and funding,” commented Farley.

Next year’s Reach Out to Dropouts event will be Saturday, Sept. 25, 2010.

School	Total Number of Re-Engaged Students (Dec. 2009)			
	Summer	RO2DO	Self	Total
East	48	6	23	77
Hoover	8	4	7	19
Lincoln	28	2	15	45
North	25	2	22	49
Roosevelt	10	4	9	23
Scavo	23	1	17	41
Other (Hiatt MS)	0	0	1	1
Total*	142	19	94	255

* Some students participate in the Future Pathways programs at Central Campus.

School	Percentage of Re-Engaged Students Still Enrolled (Dec. 2009)			
	Summer	RO2DO	Self	Total
East	69%	50%	43%	60%
Hoover	75%	100%	86%	84%
Lincoln	75%	100%	86%	84%
North	64%	50%	59%	61%
Roosevelt	100%	25%	67%	74%
Scavo	61%	100%	35%	51%
Other (Hiatt MS)				100%
Total*	68%	63%	63%	63%

* Some students participate in the Future Pathways programs at Central Campus.

2010 Des Moines High School Graduations

East High School
Saturday, June 5
2 p.m., Vets Auditorium

Hoover High School
Friday, June 4
7 p.m., Vets Auditorium

Lincoln High School
Saturday, June 5
9 a.m., Vets Auditorium

North High School
Thursday, June 3
7 p.m., Vets Auditorium

Roosevelt High School
Saturday, June 5
7:30 p.m., Vets Auditorium

Ruby Van Meter School
Tuesday, June 1
7:30 p.m., Roosevelt High School

Scavo Alternative High School
Friday, May 28
10 a.m., Hoyt Sherman Place



School Hours Adjusted for 2010-2011



On Jan. 5, 2010, the DMPS Board of Directors approved the 2010-2011 school district calendar to include a 90-minute adjusted dismissal every Wednesday of the school year for all schools. Teachers will use those Wednesdays for professional development.

The adjusted dismissal schedule for **Wednesdays** during the 2010-11 school year is:

Elementary Schools

Tier A: school day ends at 1:30 p.m.

Tier B: school day ends at 1:50 p.m.

Perkins: school day ends at 1:45 p.m.

Smouse: school day ends at 1:35 p.m.

All Middle Schools: school day ends at 1 p.m.

All High Schools: school day ends at 12:55 p.m.

District Goes Online to Auction Used Equipment

Since last fall, DMPS has been auctioning items online through a Web site called purplewave.com. DMPS must dispose of surplus items in compliance with Iowa State Code section 297.22 and Board policy. These items include transportation vehicles, food processing equipment, classroom and office furniture, as well as other items necessary to operate a school

district. Using the Web site makes the process much more efficient and user-friendly. This is a great opportunity for companies and individuals to purchase good products at very reasonable prices. New auction items are added regularly. [View the items currently up for auction.](#)



Continued from page 1 ...

also contribute to energy savings. Gym lighting has been improved in many buildings, which provides more lighting but uses less energy.

Monthly Energy Report Card Communicates DMPS Energy Savings

A monthly *Energy Report Card* produced by the Facility Management Department shows energy usage at each building, highlights energy-saving efforts, and gives tips on how to save energy. The latest issues of the *Energy Report Card* can be found on the DMPS Web site.

Two different software programs are used to track energy usage at each building. One of the programs is Portfolio Manager, developed by the EPA. This program compares building performance to similar buildings across the U.S. The average school building in the U.S. uses 83 kBtu per square foot.

The district's building average is significantly less — 60 kBtu per square foot. The second program used to track energy usage is LPB Energy Management's Utility Manager Pro, which allows the district to make building-to-building comparisons. By analyzing the data, the Facility Management Department can identify buildings that may have energy-related issues, such as mechanical or operational problems.

The Facility Management Department welcomes ideas about how the district can reduce energy consumption. E-mail Lisa Simpson at lisa.simpson@dmps.k12.ia.us.



“The statewide cutbacks we are now experiencing give us an additional cause to prioritize our limited resources,” explained Good. “Once energy is used, it is never seen again. Educating a student can last forever.”



ENERGY STAR®-labeled DMPS schools for 2009:

- Brubaker Elementary School
- Callanan Middle School
- Capitol View Elementary School
- Carver Community School
- Cattell Elementary School
- Findley Elementary School
- Garton Elementary School
- Goodrell Middle School
- Greenwood Elementary School
- Hanawalt Elementary School
- Hiatt Middle School
- Hillis Elementary School
- Howe Elementary School
- Hubbell Elementary School
- McKinley Elementary School
- Morris Elementary School
- Oak Park Elementary School
- Perkins Elementary School
- Pleasant Hill Elementary School
- River Woods Elementary School
- Samuelson Elementary School
- South Union Elementary School
- Stowe Elementary School
- Weeks Middle School
- Windsor Elementary School
- Wright Elementary School

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 schools, news stories, data, contacts, and more on the DMPS Web site at www.dmps.k12.ia.us.

ON THE AIR

Tune in to Mediacom **Channel 12** at anytime to see stories about programs and events from throughout the school district. If you do not subscribe to cable television, you can still view Channel 12 stories on the Web at www.channel12online.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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