



A Message from Dr. Nancy Sebring



Welcome to the Fall/Winter edition of the DMPS Community Report.

As we near the halfway point of the 2011-12 school year, I'm happy to report great work by our students, teachers and schools. For example, we learned that five of our high school students earned perfect marks on their ACT exams, East High was nationally recognized for their efforts to improve student attendance, and North High became the largest one-to-one laptop school in Iowa. Be sure to read pages 7-8 for more on recent accomplishments of our students and teachers.

We have also been honored that our top elected officials have had the opportunity to recently get a first-hand look at some of the great programs at Des Moines Public Schools. Senator Chuck Grassley was on hand to welcome the arrival of a Learjet to our aviation technology program, which his office helped the district acquire. Senator Tom Harkin visited classrooms at the Downtown School, and then spoke about changes to No Child Left Behind. Governor Terry Branstad was the special guest reader to students at Morris Elementary, and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds took part in the afterschool robotics program at Hoyt Middle School.

Speaking of our elected officials, the School Board is already looking ahead to the next session of the Iowa General Assembly and working with our local legislators on the importance of support for our public schools. And Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds were both back at DMPS holding a town hall meeting at Central Campus to talk about their education reform effort.

Finally, our new web site – dmschools.org – is now live and online. The site is better-organized and better-looking, and will serve as our new platform to share information with the community. Be sure to read the story on page 12 for an overview of some of the new features on the web site.

Thank you for your interest in Des Moines Public Schools, and best wishes for the winter holidays and the start of a New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Sebring".

Nancy Sebring
Superintendent

Des Moines Public Schools

DMPS

COMMUNITY REPORT

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Five DMPS Students Earn a Perfect ACT Score of 36

Each year, less than one-tenth of one percent of students earn a perfect composite score of 36 on the ACT test, the college entrance examination. This year, five members of that select group are students who all attend Roosevelt High School and Central Academy in Des Moines.

Three students earned the highest possible composite score of 36 when they took the ACT exam in April and two students earned a perfect score on the test in June. They are: Jack Bequeaith, senior, the son of Mark Bequeaith and Suzanne Stewart; Corey Grief, senior, the son of Mark Grief and Mary Kelly-Grief; Matthew MacKay, senior, the son of Robert MacKay and

Marina Gabourel; Megan Mansfield, senior, the daughter of Edward Mansfield and Cathy Mansfield; and Luke Sheeley, junior, the son of John Sheeley and Cynthia James.

The future is certainly bright for these talented students. Although undecided on where he will attend, Grief plans on possibly pursuing engineering in college.

"I am planning on going to college and majoring in some math or science-related field, possibly engineering," he said. "I am also definitely going to continue to play the french horn."

Sheeley, a junior, has over a year left of high school, but is already looking into his future options.

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DMPS Students Named 2011 Advanced Placement Scholars; Roosevelt Grad Named State AP Scholar for Iowa

One hundred and twenty-nine Des Moines Public Schools students, representing all five of the district's high schools, were identified in September as Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars for 2011. Among the honorees are 19 National AP Scholars as well as this year's male State AP Scholar for Iowa – Joel Schneider. Other awards include AP Scholars, AP Scholars with Honors, and AP Scholars with Distinction.

Recipients of the AP National Scholar Award for 2011 are:

Jack Bequeaith

Roosevelt High School

Molly Bird

Roosevelt (Northwestern University)

William Bolte

Hoover (Wooster College)

Wesley Clark

Roosevelt (Eckerd College)

Sarah Eikenberry

Roosevelt (UNI)

Joseph Harper

Lincoln (Iowa State University)

Kayleigh Hauri

Roosevelt High School

Tam Le

Roosevelt (Carnegie Mellon University)

Matthew MacKay

Roosevelt High School

Megan Mansfield

Roosevelt High School

James Nassif

Roosevelt (University of Wisconsin)

Alysa Olson

Lincoln (UNI)

Ian Pierson

Hoover (University of Minnesota)

Kevin Porter

Roosevelt (Purdue University)

Varun Ramaswamy

Roosevelt (MIT)

Joel Schneider

Roosevelt (MIT)

Anna Walker

Roosevelt (University of Iowa)

Jason Walsh

Roosevelt (Case Western University)

Conor Wells

Roosevelt (Drake University)

Students Earn a Perfect ACT Score of 36

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“As a junior, I have not started looking too deeply into specific colleges, however I am eyeing the east and west coasts,” he explained. “I have however narrowed down my area of study to mathematics and/or mathematics as applied to physics, especially astrophysics, or chemistry.”

Over the past five years, six to eight Iowa students per year received a perfect composite score. In Iowa, nearly 23,000 students

in the Class of 2011 took the ACT exam.

“Anyone who thinks Des Moines does not offer the best educational opportunities to students does not know Des Moines,” said Crista Carlile, the supervisor of Central Academy. “Our students are not only preparing to compete in the world but to help lead the world. It is exciting to watch them learn, grow and succeed as they get ready for their next steps in life.” ■

North Stars Point the Way With Laptops

There's a storm brewing at the new North; a perfect one of rising student achievement, campus renovation, dynamic new leadership, and technological innovation. The Polar Bears have got it goin' on.

Right on the heels of the school's impressive showing in the 2010/11 Iowa Test of Educational Development [ITED], North High has become the largest school in Iowa to implement a 1:1 laptop program. In conjunction with parent/teacher conferences in October, every student at North was issued a laptop computer for use both in and out of school. The program was made possible by a federal School Improvement Grant [SIG]. It's just the latest in a series of energizing developments at the corner of 6th and Holcomb and will make a fitting capstone for the extreme makeover there, the



bricks- and-mortar aspect of which was completed when the students returned in August.

Overseeing the turnaround at North is Principal Matt Smith who's in his second year there. Already it's clear that his enthusiasm is infectious. It's palpable in his presence and has spread throughout the North community. Smith says that since the remodeling work was

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North Stars Point the Way With Laptops

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finished, the campus “looks the way we feel.” And he has no doubt the laptops will be just the tool for building on the foundation of success he and his staff laid in year one.

North’s ITED scores were up nine percent in math last year. As impressive as those results are, they were doubled by 19 percent gains in both science and reading. And the school’s 98.5 percent participation rate was an all-time high.

Smith and Mike Vukovich, a School Improvement Leader at North and the coordinator of the laptop initiative, emphasize that the computers are being used to sustain improvement that’s already underway, not to jumpstart a struggling student body.

“We had a pep assembly right before ITED’s last year,” said Vukovich, “and a celebration assembly when the scores came back.”

If that scenario sounds reminiscent of what goes on before and after big football games in high school, it’s no accident. Smith and Vukovich have made low expectations North’s arch rival and use them to motivate their kids the way coaches have been known to use disparaging remarks about their team as “bulletin board material” in the locker room.

“We let them know right from the start that our expectations for them were high,” said Smith. Vukovich feels the North students rose to meet them and earned the laptops.



“[Director of the Iowa Department of Education] Jason Glass and [U.S. Secretary of Education] Arne Duncan talk about kids being 21st century learners and digital citizens,” he said, “and that’s what the laptops are about.” In effect, they will extend the school day by allowing students to re-access teachers’ classroom presentations via podcasts, to cite just one example of what the laptops will make possible.

The laptops are equipped with filters restricting their usage and “Computrace” software which is an effective and multi-faceted insurance policy against damage and loss. When seniors graduate their laptops will rotate to incoming freshmen.

“Part of this deal is also teaching the kids responsibility,” explained Smith.

Though the biggest, North is one of about 80 Iowa schools with a 1:1 laptop program this year. As many as 200 may be involved next year. Smith and Vukovich know that other schools will be watching and are eager to lead by example after thoroughly researching experiences elsewhere while training their own staff.

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Vukovich explained he deliberately played devil’s advocate as North prepared itself, going out of his way to anticipate potential problems.

“Every teacher here was on one of the committees we formed to train for this,” he said.

The SIG funding will sustain the program at North for four years. By then it’s expected that community groundwork already happening coupled with documented benefits will galvanize enough fundraising to sustain the program going forward.

There’s a lot of turning around going on at North these days, but there’s no turning back. ■

Reach Out to Dropouts (RO2DO) Is No Knock-Knock Joke

The results are in and it appears that the third annual RO2DO event reaped a record harvest despite having less ground to cover.

On Saturday, September 24, 16 students walked back into Des Moines high schools and re-enrolled after being invited and encouraged to do so by a legion of volunteers who fanned out across the district and went door-to-door to pull them back up through the cracks.



Outreach to Teach

A group of future teachers helped beautify Studebaker Elementary School on September 30, 2011. The effort was part of a program called Outreach to Teach, taking place during the Iowa State Education Association's Student Conference.



Two years ago volunteers knocked on almost 500 doors during the inaugural RO2DO event. Since then the district's ongoing, year-round strategies for re-engagement and development of multiple pathways to graduation such as academic support labs at each of the five comprehensive high schools have reduced the number of students who are dropping out in the first place (down 87 between 2007-08 and 2009-10) and bringing some who do back. Those who leave may be gone but they are not forgotten. And sometimes a direct invitation to try again turns out to be the offer they can't refuse.

For the record, here are some of this year's salient numbers:

Out of 399 homes visited by 281 ambassadors from DMPS, corporate partner Aviva, and the community at large, good news was learned at 143 compared to only 22 where the response was a flat "not interested." Besides the 16 who went straight back to re-enroll on the spot, 17 others had already re-enrolled, 13 had enrolled elsewhere, 18 had earned a GED

since dropping out, 28 are pursuing a GED, and 51 requested follow-up information or contact. The rest of the addresses were either not current or no one was found at home. In the latter case an invitation back to school was left hanging on the knob.

But raw numbers don't tell the stories any more than the address on a house reveals what goes on inside.

DMPS employee Linda Sanny, who volunteered for RO2DO, came back from her rounds impacted by the experience.

"We stopped at one house and learned that the student had completed his GED since dropping out," she said, "but as we were leaving the parents asked if we could help them with their other, younger son. Mom said he is still in school but told us some reasons why she feels he is on the verge of quitting. We arranged for some follow-up and hopefully it will help, but there's a kid who probably would have slipped away," if someone hadn't opened the door when a second chance came knocking. ■

Global Perspective Continues in Des Moines Public Schools

The rapid pace of technological change is often cited as the catalyst for the virtual shrinking of the planet and rightfully so. It has revolutionized ways of life and institutions worldwide. Here in Des Moines Public Schools it is certainly a factor in the adoption of a more global perspective, the capstone of which is the implementation of the International Baccalaureate curriculum at all levels in the district. But DMPS has been operating on an international scale for quite some time, as witnessed by its longstanding role at the helm of the Global Youth Institute (GYI).

GYI was created as a partnership between The Friendship Force of Greater Des Moines and DMPS in 1990 and makes this bold Mission Statement: “The Global Youth Institute will create a community of international learners committed to cooperatively investigating and seeking solutions to problems of global consequence.”

GYI has been hosted by Friendship Force Clubs in 10 countries on five continents. Over the years students from the following 22 countries have participated in the program: Russia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, France, Egypt, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, Republic of the Philippines, Indonesia, South Korea, Ireland, Kuwait, Colombia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Japan, Peru, China, and the USA.



This year Des Moines was the host city for the 21st annual GYI from July 3-22. It marked the ninth time DMPS has welcomed the world as 13 local students from Central Academy joined in the event with 21 from China, Russia, Taiwan and Germany. In keeping with the GYI motto, the participants “met as strangers, we grew as friends, we parted as one.”

After the group dispersed each student was asked to submit some reflections on the experience. This excerpt from Des Moines host student Nora Dietz-Kilen’s thoughts sums up the group consensus:

“It stretched my life from being an only child to having a big brother from Russia. It expanded my friendships across the world to other high schoolers. One memory I will especially cherish is riding down the river with everyone, hand in hand, giggling and laughing without a care in the world for which country we came (from). That day proved to me that borders are just bridges for potential ideas and friendships to grow and connect. Even having Kostya, my exchange student, stay in our home was eye opening to the culture from which he came. It’s not only

In keeping with the GYI motto, the participants “met as strangers, we grew as friends, we parted as one.”

possible, but rewarding to connect with people from different cultures, religions, and backgrounds to come together for one purpose. We are all equal human beings. None of us chose to be born into the life we’re in, but some of us are luckier than others. It astounds me that these people in GYI share similar feelings and have the empathy, intelligence, and determination to go out into the world and make it a better place for those less fortunate.”

Clearly this is more than just a far-flung summer camp.

Dr. Thomas Forsgren, who teaches at Central Academy, is

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Global Perspective Continues in Des Moines Public Schools

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the GYI Director. He was assisted by fellow DMPS teachers Jean Ellerhoff and Susan Stroope as well as Carol Brown and Adrienne Moen from Friendship Force.

“Our theme this year was ‘Global Food Security’ so we planned trips to Pioneer Hi-Bred to learn about plant genetics, the Art Institute of Chicago for a studio workshop with a focus on trade in agriculture, and Seed Savers in Decorah to observe how a local

initiative evolved into a global network to preserve plant diversity,” said Forsgren. “This program is often a transformational experience for students. They learn how to collaborate with students from different cultures, to understand that many of the challenges in this world require a global response, and acquire the tolerance and respect required for participation in a civil society. It empowers students to think broadly and

gives them greater purpose and meaning for pursuing their future.”

Next year’s GYI will be hosted by Shijiazhuang, China. That may sound like a faraway place but it’s getting closer all the time.

If you’re looking for a summer camp like no other in 2012, here’s a link to the GYI web site: <http://homepage.mac.com/tforsgren/gyi/gyihome.html> ■



DMPS Aviation Program Welcomes Learjet To Teaching Fleet

Teaching science and technology reached a new height in October as the Des Moines Public Schools’ Aviation Engineering Technology Program took possession of a Learjet Model 35. The aircraft will be based at the program’s lab, located at the Des Moines International Airport, and used as a teaching tool for high school

students studying aviation technology and maintenance.

“At a time when science and technology education has never been more important, we are providing students in Des Moines with a hands-on, high-tech learning experience that will prepare them for great opportunities after high school,” said Jerry Bradley, director

of the Aviation Technology Program. “The addition of this Learjet to our ‘teaching fleet’ puts us on the leading edge of high school aviation programs.”

Des Moines Public Schools’ Aviation Engineering Technology Program is one of only three high school programs in the nation certified by the Federal Aviation Administration to teach aircraft maintenance. In fact, the program in Des Moines is the only one of its kind among the nearly 4,000 school districts in the Midwestern states.

The Learjet Model 35 – also classified as a C-21 because of its use as a military transport – is a surplus aircraft from Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi. It was acquired at a cost of \$4,000.

“Des Moines Public Schools is committed to providing students and families with the best educational choices to meet their needs and interests,” added Superintendent Nancy Sebring. “This is one more example of a great opportunity, providing students with a rigorous education and technical skills available in only a few school districts throughout the nation.” ■

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@dmps.k12.ia.us. Here are some achievements from the past few months.

For the fourth consecutive year, **North High School** was named High School of the Year by the Iowa State University Science Bound Program.

Cowles Montessori School has been chosen to receive \$4,000 to support its Fuel Up to Play 60 initiatives, which will help the school jumpstart and sustain nutrition and physical activity improvements.

The **East High School** 4-H “Stitch This” contestants won top awards at the Iowa State Fair. Two of their dresses will be made and marketed at Stacey’s Prom and Bridal for their Prom 2012 line.

Kiwanis Club of Des Moines (Downtown) recognized **Margaret Peterson** of Greenwood Elementary as 2011 Teacher of the Year.

Central Academy has received a \$7,917 grant from the Aviva Charitable Foundation to cover costs of Advanced Placement testing for low income students. The grant also will pay for transportation to the testing site for all students, facility rental, and test proctors.

East High School history teacher **Chris Kannapel**, was nominated by the Daughters of the American Revolution as US History Teacher of the Year.

Mark Schnurstein, Hoover High School ninth grade Earth Science Teacher, was recently recognized as Air Force Association General

Horner Chapter of Des Moines Teacher of the Year.

North High School student **Anthony Walker** received the Central College Upward Bound Math & Science Scholar of Excellence Award.

Hoover High School publications adviser **Timm Pilcher** was published in the fall edition of the Wall St. Journal’s juried Dow Jones Adviser Update with an article entitled “Nothing is Ever Finished, It Only Meets a Deadline.”

Central Academy’s math team made an impressive showing at the 39th Annual High School Mathematics Contest held at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville on November 2, 2011, placing first out of 49 participating teams from Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin.

Stefanie Rosenberg Wager, Curriculum Coordinator in Des Moines Public Schools, attended the 2011 Leader to Leader (L2L) Conference hosted by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Roosevelt High School English I instructor **Emily Bollinger** presented at the National Council of Teachers of English annual convention.

Lowe’s Charitable and Educational Foundation awarded a \$23,000 Lowe’s Toolbox for Education® grant to **Hiatt Middle School** to support the renovation of the school’s auditorium.

Becky Johnson, a veteran art teacher at Roosevelt High School, was named Outstanding Secondary Art Educator by the Art Educators of Iowa.

Central Campus Broadcasting & Film students **Trey McIntosh**, **Sarah Challenger**, **Lenna Chisala**, **Brittney Gambill**, and **Dalton Viggers** showed their films at the Wild Rose Independent Film Festival held at the Fleur Cinema & Café in November.



Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds awarded the Governor’s Volunteer Award to **Nina Liu**, a senior at Roosevelt High School. The governor’s volunteer award is awarded to individuals and groups nominated for their continued volunteering in Iowa. Nina received the award for her work with the Chinese Association of Iowa, IPTV, Deerfield Retirement Home and multiple orchestra benefit concerts.



East High Wins Regional Attendance Challenge

East High School made an impressive showing in the Get Schooled National Attendance Challenge this fall, receiving first place in the Central Region for their three percent increase in attendance over a seven week period. East’s improvement bests the national average of a two percent annual gain in attendance. The competition included nearly 80,000 students at 73 schools in 17 states between Oct. 3 and Nov. 18.



The Lincoln High School football team won the CIML Metro Conference and qualified for the state playoffs. Their coach is Tom Mihalovich.

2011 All-State Music Festival

Students selected for the 2011 All-State Music Festival from Des Moines Public Schools were:

All-State Band: Corey Grief, Roosevelt High School; Jennifer Hugg, Roosevelt High School; Allison Kaiser, Hoover High School; John Lewis, Roosevelt High School; Sarah Mansfield, Roosevelt High School.

All-State Orchestra: Conner Daza, Hoover High School; Elizabeth Fisher, Roosevelt High School; Grant Goss, Roosevelt High School; Madison Helton, Roosevelt High School; Patrick Hiatt, Roosevelt High School; Vaughn Hommerding, Roosevelt High School; Jessica Jensen, junior, North High School; Mila Kaut, Roosevelt High School; Sofia Kaut, Roosevelt High School; Nina Liu, Roosevelt High School; Hannah Marks, Roosevelt High School; China Mauck, Roosevelt High School; Elaina Steenson, Roosevelt High School; Joe Wandro, Roosevelt High School.

All-State Choir: Josie Bowen, Lincoln High School; Caleb Ceretti, Lincoln High School; Bailey Johnson, Lincoln High School; Joshua Joy, Hoover High School; Caleb Lusk, Lincoln High School; Caleb Peterson, Lincoln High School; Allison Richter, Lincoln High School; Dan Schnathorst, Lincoln High School.

2011 Fall Athletic Recognitions

Lincoln High School sophomore swimmer **Brittany Purscell** captured Lincoln’s first girls’ state swim championship, winning the 100 meter breast stroke event. Her time was the sixth fastest in state history and she is the current school record holder in the event. Her coach is Brayton Weber.

The **Roosevelt girls’ cross country team** qualified for and placed ninth in the state cross country meet. Seven girls competed at state: **Emma Huston, McKenzie Carney, Emma Buchanan, Megan Schott, Jordan Summers, Julia Robinson, and Carson Cary.** They are coached by Jacob Kaemmer.

Roosevelt High School senior **Matt Mackay** won the CIML Metro Conference cross country meet and qualified for the state meet. The Roosevelt boys are coached by Steve Brown.

Eight DMPS student-athletes signed letters of intent in November to play college sports next year. They are: East softball players **Riley Fisher**/Iowa State; **Jessica Grochala**/Grand View; **Meredith Henriksen**/Indiana State; **L.J. Putzier**/Mount Mercy; **Janie Smith**/Missouri Western; Roosevelt wrestler **John Meeks**/Iowa State; Roosevelt baseball player **Sam Norman**/Creighton University; and Lincoln softball player **Chelsea Blaylock**/Drake University.

DMPS 21st Century Afterschool Program Honored

Des Moines Public Schools' 21st Century Community Learning Centers afterschool program (21CCLC), which exists at 10 elementary and middle schools, received second place out of 66 entries in the 2011 Outstanding Community and School Partnership Award competition sponsored by the Iowa Network for Community and School Partnerships.

The 21CCLC program has been in existence since 2007 and provides academic assistance, educational enrichment and family literacy to students and families at Callanan Middle School, Carver Community School, Goodrell Middle School, Harding Middle School, Hiatt Middle School, Hoyt Middle School, McCombs Middle School, Meredith Middle School, Moulton Extended Learning Center, and Weeks Middle School. The program is funded by a grant from the Iowa Department of Education.



Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds spent time with students and teachers at Hoyt Middle School to get a first hand look at their afterschool robotics program.

“Exceptional community partnerships and strong program implementation have made the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program at DMPS a leader in the state of Iowa,” said Heidi Brown, 21CCLC district grant coordinator. “We understand the value of partnerships with the community and we recognize the unique resources that can be shared through those partnerships. Our staff works every day to provide enriching opportunities for our students during out of school time.”

Over 8,400 students have been served through the 21CCLC program since 2007. The program

bridges the gap between school, family, and community and provides a comprehensive support system to help youth succeed academically and socially. After school activities include daily educational enrichment activities, family literacy classes, and service learning projects which require volunteering in the community.

Governor Terry Branstad and Iowa Department of Education Director Jason Glass presented the award to the 21CCLC staff at the Iowa Association of School Boards annual convention in November where they also received a \$500 cash award. ■

DMPS Recognized for Excellence in Financial Reporting



Des Moines Public Schools was once again recognized by two national organizations – the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and the Association of School Business

Officials (ASBO) – for excellence in financial reporting and governmental accounting. Both organizations recognized

the school district for the fourth year in a row.

“It’s an honor that two organizations which monitor the financial reporting of public entities across the country recognize Des Moines Public Schools as being among the very best,” said Thomas Harper, Chief Financial Officer for the school district. “The staff and leadership of the district is committed to the highest standards in the accounting and reporting of the public’s tax dollars, and this recognition by both GFOA and ASBO confirms that commitment.”

GFOA awarded its highest honor, the Certificate of Achievement, for the school district’s most recent comprehensive annual financial report. The award is made to organizations that demonstrate a “spirit of full disclosure to clearly communicate its financial story.”

ASBO presented the school district with its Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting award, also in recognition of the most recent comprehensive annual financial report. The award is presented for “commitment to financial accountability and transparency.” ■



Students in the Iowa Energy and Sustainability Academy program visited a wind farm in Walnut, Iowa.

The Greening of DMPS

Color the Des Moines Public Schools green, from the boiler room to the classroom.

Under the direction of the district's Chief Operations Officer, Bill Good, the DMPS energy mission is "to decrease the district's overall consumption and reduce its environmental impact through education, equipment and system upgrades, and responsible energy use. Schools are often the center of a community, and this provides the opportunity to model energy

"We believe that by educating students to make energy-smart decisions, they will learn to be conscientious energy consumers throughout their lives."

– Bill Good, Chief Operations Officer

efficiency to our students, staff, and the entire community. DMPS models energy efficiency. We believe that by educating students to make energy-smart decisions, they will learn to be conscientious energy consumers throughout their lives," said Good.

And the mission is being accomplished. For example, 92 percent of district classrooms are now air conditioned, up from 66 percent five years ago even though, over the same period of time, energy costs have dropped by more than \$1.4 million. Put another way, air conditioning has increased by nearly 40 percent and energy costs have dropped 20 percent simultaneously! No wonder DMPS was recognized recently by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an "ENERGY STAR® Leader."

Collaborating with the ENERGY STAR program has provided resources for benchmarking building energy performance, as well as educational tools like webinars that are distributed and shared with staff and students. The district is also a pledge driver for the "Change the World, Start with ENERGY STAR" campaign.

The district has achieved an average ENERGY STAR score of 76, up from its baseline score of 54. Between fiscal year 2007-08 and fiscal year 2009-10, DMPS reduced energy use by 60,913 mBtu, preventing the emission of almost 5,700 metric tons of carbon dioxide; equivalent to the annual greenhouse gas emissions from more than 1,100 passenger vehicles.

"The saved energy costs over that period of time amount to 29 first-year teachers or 47 custodians," explained Good.

Efficiencies are in place district-wide, ranging from seemingly micro strategies like removal of personal appliances including coffee pots and mini-fridges to macro ones such as installation of geothermal HVAC systems as part of building renovations. Lights and computers are turned off when not in use, thermostats are controlled based upon occupancy, and each school has developed an individual energy plan. Whiteboards are used in classrooms in lieu of overhead projectors.

In addition, the district has completed energy efficiency upgrades in lighting, motion and CO2 sensors, and energy efficient window replacements. The district also tracks and monitors energy data and utility rates. An energy team reviews all utility use on a monthly basis against baseline data to make sure systems are operating as they should. Forty-three district buildings now qualify for Energy Star status and 27 buildings are equipped with geothermal systems which use the natural fluctuations in the earth's temperatures to heat and cool water.

As justifiably proud as Good is about the results achieved in operations, he is quick to point out the importance of integrating energy consciousness into district curricula.

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The Greening of DMPS

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“Students get it better than adults,” Good claimed, citing the Energy & Sustainability class taught by Larry Beall at Central Campus as nationally unique for the high school level.

“There are many environmental classes in DPMS, other districts, and around the country,” Beall stated. “But I think our program is special because it’s hands-on/project-based, offers college level instruction and credit in math and environmental science and incorporates extensive field experience to reinforce classroom activities.”

A major component of Beall’s program is alternative energy.

“Last spring we used a grant from the Iowa Power Fund to purchase a small scale wind generator/solar panel system. To put it in simple terms we are playing an extremely sophisticated version of ‘Sims House’ where we can manipulate energy systems, make comparisons, and look at the working parts of the technologies,” he explained.

The class also visited a wind farm in Walnut, Iowa.

“Mid-American Energy did a great job of going over all aspects of the operation of the wind farm,” Beall said. “Our class is also visiting one of the factories where the wind generators are manufactured. I don’t know of any other program anywhere that’s doing things like this at the high school level.”

Another emphasis of the curriculum is recycling which led to a recent field trip to Minneapolis. The class toured both the Mall of America and Target Field, home of the Minnesota Twins, to examine how large public facilities implement recycling and energy saving programs. At Target Field the lead engineer explained how energy efficiency was integral to the stadium design.

The average age of the schools in Des Moines is well past half a century but that’s not stopping Bill Good from teaching those old dogs some of the same new tricks Larry Beall’s students are learning for future generations.

IESA Receives Generous Donations

The Iowa Energy & Sustainability Academy recently received two substantial donations to their program at Central Campus. The Iowa Power Fund granted the program \$43,000 to support the project-based energy and environmental science class. The grant funds are being used to pay for student field experiences and general classroom lab supplies, and to purchase a solar/wind training system which includes state-of-the-art components and curriculum to demonstrate how wind turbines and solar cells are being used in the consumer and industrial markets to supplement the world’s power needs. IESA also was awarded a \$10,000 grant from Vernier to purchase equipment and software that will enable students to do intricate weather, air, soil, and water quality testing.

One Incumbent, Three New Members Elected to School Board

Three new school board members were elected on Sept. 12, 2011 to serve 4-year terms and one incumbent, Dick Murphy, was elected to fill a vacant board seat for the remaining two years of that term. New members are Cindy Elsbernd, Bill Howard, and Pat Sweeney. Incumbents Ginny Strong and Jeanette Woods, whose terms were up for re-election, did not run for office. Both served six years (two terms) on the board.

All seven board members voted for Tere Caldwell-Johnson to serve as Board

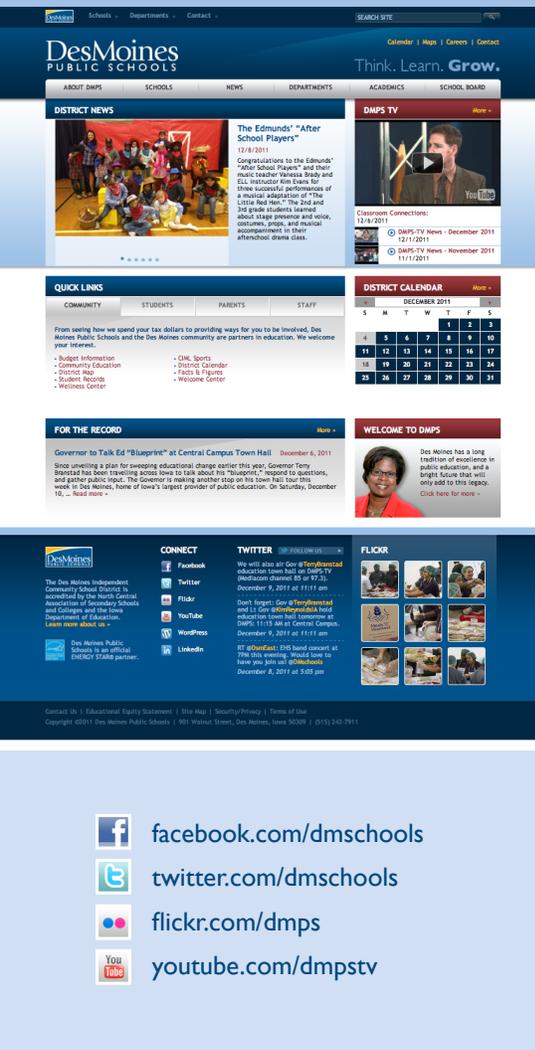
Chair for the 2011-2012 school year and Dick Murphy to serve as Vice-Chair.

Also on the ballot for the school board election was a public measure to change the way the school board directors are elected so three members would be elected at-large and four members would be elected from director districts, beginning with the next election in 2013. The measure passed with 3,872 yes votes and 1,943 no votes.

School Board elections are now held every two years. ■



Renovations have been completed and school board meetings are being held once again at Central Campus, 1800 Grand Ave., in the new board/multipurpose room on 2nd floor. The room will be used for the Central Campus Culinary Arts Café, board meetings, and other meetings.



A New Online Home: dmschools.org

In many ways, a web site is the front door to an organization. It invites you in, welcomes you, and helps you find what you are looking for once inside.

Des Moines Public Schools has done some remodeling to our front door.

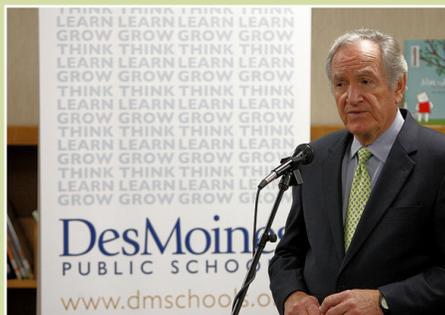
The district's new web site – dmschools.org – is now live and online. Some features that help make this a more useful site include:

- ▶ First, a shorter address. Fewer dots and numbers than our old address and easier to remember, but if you go to the old address, don't worry; you'll be automatically directed to the new site.
- ▶ For the first time, a district-wide calendar of events is now available. From orchestra concerts to football games to hundreds of other activities, you can now make one stop to find out what's happening across the district.
- ▶ A better organized "Quick Links" section with the links and resources most frequently used by parents, students, staff and the community.

- ▶ A more prominent "District News" section, so from an emergency announcement to recognition of a student to new programs in our schools, it will be front-and-center.
- ▶ A more informative school directory, including not only contact information but also a photo and brief description of each school in Des Moines.
- ▶ A Google map noting the location of each school and district office.
- ▶ Easier access to DMPS-TV programming, which now is available not only on Meiacom Channel 85 or 97.3, but their most recent stories can be viewed right on the home page.
- ▶ Better descriptions and contact information about curriculum areas, departments and offices throughout the district.
- ▶ More integration with our social media sites, including a feed from our Twitter and Flickr pages embedded at the bottom of the home page. ■

Elected Leaders Get First-Hand Look at DMPS

Des Moines Public Schools had the honor to host visits by Iowa's top elected officials in recent weeks, with both U.S. Senators, the Governor, and the Lieutenant Governor stopping by schools in the district.



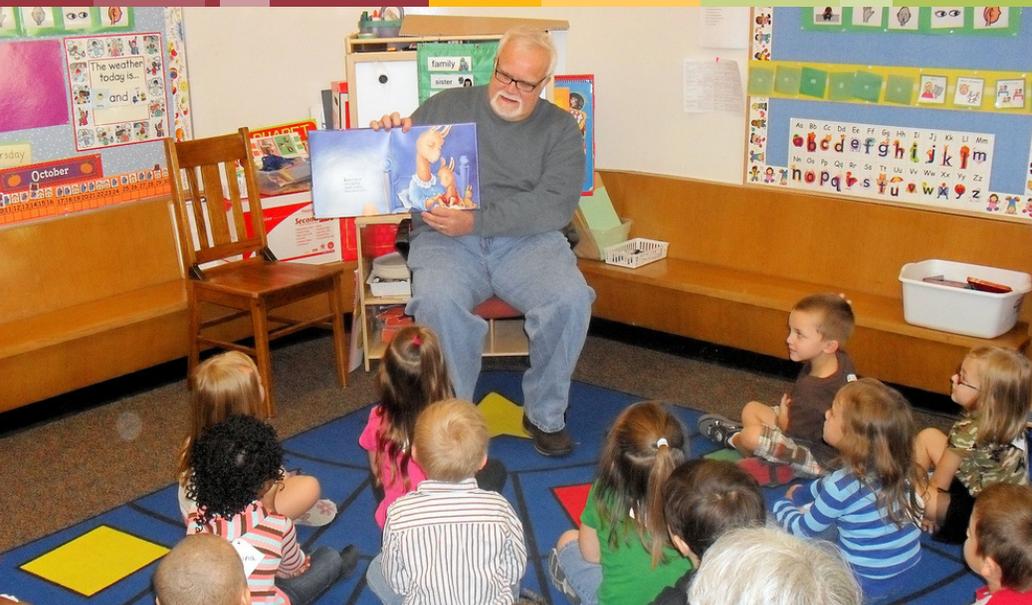
Senator Tom Harkin, who also chairs the U.S. Senate committee on education, spent a morning at the Downtown School. He visited classrooms to see the unique educational approaches at the school, and then spoke with educators and local media about changes he is working on to the No Child Left Behind Law.



Senator Chuck Grassley was on hand to greet the arrival of a Learjet for use by the district's aviation technology program. The Senator's office helped the program acquire the plane, which was a military transport. Des Moines is home to one of only three FAA-licensed high school aviation technology programs in the nation.



Governor Terry Branstad was the surprise "mystery" reader at Morris Elementary School. The Governor had a chance to tour the school, read with the 5th grade class, and was presented with a "Home of the Bisons" sweatshirt.



Read for the Record

4,500 preschool students in Des Moines were read “Llama Llama Red Pajama” on October 6, 2011 as part of the Read For The Record Campaign. School Board member Bill Howard is pictured reading to students at McKee.

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.dmschools.org, and at facebook.com/dmschools and twitter.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. 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

The Des Moines Independent Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator Patricia Lantz, General Counsel, 901 Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309; phone: 515.242.7837; email: patricia.lantz@dmps.k12.ia.us

WINTER RECESS REMINDER

Des Moines Public Schools will be on Winter Recess from December 22 to January 1; there will be no classes on those dates. In addition, all school district offices are closed on December 23, 26, 29 and 30. Classes will resume on Monday, January 2. The district realizes that January 2 is a holiday for federal, state and some other employers. Unfortunately, it is too late to make changes to the school district's 2011-12 calendar. We apologize for any inconvenience.

The DMPS Community Report FALL/WINTER 2011 | Vol. 4 No. 2

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