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Employees Offered Retirement/Separation Options

In these difficult economic times, it is imperative school districts look at all options to manage costs. Downsizing and resource reductions are occurring in school districts across the country and Douglas County School District is not immune. District administrators and Union officials have been researching and considering various employee options allowing the school district to manage payroll costs while maintaining a high quality of education for students.

For a select group of certified/classified employees, the school district has agreed to offer a one-time voluntary separation program in which participation will result in increased retirement/separation benefits for those who wish to take advantage of the program.

Participation in these programs is completely voluntary. Those choosing to take advantage of an early retirement/resignation opportunity are free to pursue other employment outside DCSD or PERA retirement while still receiving the enhanced retirement benefit made available through these programs. Option 2 and 3 will only be offered during spring 2009. The school district will **not** make this available in future years. Informational meetings have been scheduled to answer your questions. Prior to this meeting, you may want to request an estimate of your retirement benefit from PERA to help you make an informed decision. Please call PERA a 303.837.6250 to schedule an appointment.

Important dates to remember:

- **April 15:** 4:30-6:30 Wilcox Building Board Room in Castle Rock
- **April 16:** 4:30-6:30 ThunderRidge High School Cafeteria in Highlands Ranch
- **April 21:** 4:30-6:30 Legend High School Cafeteria in Parker
- **April 22:** 4:30-6:30 Highlands Ranch High School Cafeteria in Highlands Ranch
- **April 23:** 10:30-12:30 (for ATU) Highlands Ranch Library (Shea A Room) @ 9292 Ridgeline Blvd. Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Deadline for acceptance: May 15, 2009

****To download the entire Early Separation Agreement (ESA), go to DCFT.net.**

President, Brenda Smith worked with Aon's Chick Stienburg and AFT's Jewell Gould on the Early Separation Agreement.



*Douglas
County
Federation*

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Union Member Spotlight

Name: Pat Nicholson
School: 7th Grade Social Studies Teacher/Cresthill Middle School
Years with DCSD: 21

Union Position: Executive Board Member

Why you became a Union member: Being a system was not enough. My first few years in Douglas County I was in awe of what advocates the DCF was for teachers. We are the only district in the nation to have a successful extensive pay performance, skill block support, E,R&D, and the close relationship between the district and union. No one works harder, eats, drinks and sleeps to make our jobs better than our present union office. .

What you like best about working for DCSD: I feel we are the most progressive thinking district around. DCSD supports and honors teachers through skills blocks and an aggressive motion of staff development. Somehow even in the most challenging times morale is higher than most districts. As a parent, when you buy a home in Douglas County you are guaranteed the best education for your child.

What you enjoy doing in your spare time: Working on our old Victorian house in the mountains (AKA "The Haunted House"); Reading, baking, and most of all shopping.

Name: Larry Herrington
Site: O&M
Hvac Technician

Years with DCSD: 13

Union Position: Classified Executive Board Member and Building Representative

Why I became a union member: To help give an even playing field for all employees.

What do you like best about working for DCSD: The part I like best about working for Douglas County is the kids.

What you enjoy doing in your spare time: I enjoy fishing and hunting.



Name: Kelly DeVol

School/Site: Cherry Valley Elementary Classified Building Representative

Years with DCSD: 10

Why I became a union member: Being able to have a voice in negotiable areas for classified employees, and also a great way to stay informed on items/areas that affect DSCD employees.

What do you like best about working for DCSD: The staff I work with and working in an elementary school, being able to see children advance and grow, from Kindergarten on through 12th grade - because even though they move on to middle and high school, they continue to visit us at CVE!

What you enjoy doing in your spare time: My family is involved in 4-H and National Little Britches Rodeo Association, so right now, my spare time is spent with my kids.



Name: Denise Rucks
School/Site: Building Resource Teacher
Franktown Elementary School

Years with DCSD: 21

Union Position: Building Rep.

Why you became a Union member: I believe in the power of a group working together for the needs of the whole. The DCFT has proven time and again that all teachers win when we are organized as a group who cares for the well being of the district as a whole.

What you like best about working for DCSD: DCSD has been a great organization to work for. The commitment to professional development to keep our district in the lead is by far the best experience about working for DCSD.

What you enjoy doing in your spare time: I love to ride my bike whenever the weather permits. Spending time with my family doing anything is what I enjoy most.



Classified Membership Drive Continues



The Douglas County Federation of Classified Employees continues its annual membership drive. Members of the DCF have been meeting with employees at various sites throughout the district to recruit new members and answer questions. The meetings occur during employee breakfast and lunch times – with DCF providing food and beverages.

These site visits have proven to be successful and have advanced the membership of the classified to 805. DCF encourages those employees who have not yet joined our organization, to check out our website at DCFT.net and/or to call the office if you still have questions.

Membership Update!

Certified Membership:
2480

Classified Membership:
805



Elitch Gardens Community Night

The 6th Annual Douglas County School District Community Night at Elitch Gardens will be held on Friday, May 15th from 5-11 PM. Tickets will be \$20 (save 50% per ticket as regular admission is \$39.99) and \$3 of each ticket sold will be given back as a fund-raiser to the participating schools. To purchase tickets in person please contact the DCSD school or purchase them online through the Douglas County Education Foundation. Type your school code into the "Enter Promo" box located in the upper right corner of the webpage and then click "GO".

To read more about the Elitch Gardens Night please refer to the Douglas County Education Foundation's website at:

<http://schools.dcsdk12.org/education/dept/dept.php?sectionid=1310>

DCFCE Members Attend PSRP Conference

The 2009 AFT Paraprofessionals and School Related Personnel Conference was held in Baltimore, Maryland from March 19 to March 22. Andy Pippin, Julie Weatherman, Tiffany Osland and Courtney Smith, representing the Douglas County Federation of Classified Employees were attendees at the annual event. Brenda Smith, DCF President and Peggy Mueller, Office of DCSD Staff Development, presented "Staff Development: The Douglas County Model." The conference, held annually, provides classified employees the opportunity to avail themselves of valuable information – everything from membership mobilization training to Developing Teacher/Classified Teams, to Professional Development. Randi Weingarten, President of AFT, was the keynote speaker.



Andy Pippin, DCFCE Field Representative, is seen here with the Loretta Johnson, AFT Executive Vice President - Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel.

Did You Know???

The **American Federation of Teachers** represents more than 1.4 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators.

The **Douglas County Federation** represents all teachers and classified personnel in Douglas County Schools.

The DCF was first chartered in 1972 when it became a member of the American Federation of Teachers.

The regular working day, for teachers, shall consist of seven and one-half (7 1/2) consecutive hours, including a duty-free lunch period of twenty-five (25) minutes, not including passing time.

Compensation rates for Teacher On Special Assignment positions will be determined by the negotiated teacher salary schedule. TOSA's who work extended days beyond their contract will be compensated at their per diem daily rate of pay.

The licensed employee sick leave bank was created by reducing licensed employees' sick leave yearly accrual by one (1) day. Prior to the creation of the sick leave bank, licensed employees accrued ten (10) such days per year. After the creation of the sick leave bank, they accrued nine (9) days per year.

Benefits of the sick leave bank shall be used only when the teacher is deemed unable to work due to illness or disability as defined in policy and procedure established jointly by the District and the DCFT. Benefits do not cover illness or disability of family members.

Regularly employed certificated personnel will be allowed up to five (5) consecutive contracted days of leave of absence without loss of pay immediately following the death of any member of the teacher's immediate family.

Tuition Reimbursement Programs are available for certified and classified personnel through the DCF office.

Low Cost Loans are available for certified and classified personnel through the DCF office.

Save the Date!

April 23

Retirees General
Membership Meeting
Sand Creek Elementary
4:30 PM

