

Shaping Tomorrow Today

JCEA/JPS contract helps recruit, retain quality teachers

Jeffco Public Schools and JCEA have officially ratified the tentative agreement reached on May 3 of the reopener of their four-year contract. This is the third year of the contract; salary and other mutually agreed upon items were subject to negotiations this year.

The agreement includes a 4.2% cost of living increase and a \$12 per month increase in benefits. The mileage reimbursement was also increased for traveling teachers.

The parties have also agreed to establish two task forces regarding additional performance pay. One will study changes in current pay for high school level teachers and coaches. The other will study implementing additional performance pay at the middle and elementary school levels for teachers sponsoring student activities.

The Agreement recognizes the increased demand placed on teachers by the state-mandated assessments and allows for two

days each school year to bring smaller groups of students to the school for testing.

Under the agreement, teachers new to the district will be given one year of credit on the salary schedule for each year of teaching experience outside Jeffco to a maximum of seven years. An additional three years of credit may be granted in hard-to-fill areas.

JCEA President Dale Gatz said, "This year JCEA focused on improvements on the salary schedule—necessary to recruit quality teachers, and workload issues— necessary to retain them. We are pleased with the outcome of this year's talks," said JCEA President Dale Gatz.

Board of Education President Jon DeStefano said, "We are pleased to reach this agreement with our teachers' association. We value our employees, and we think it's important to offer them a package that recognizes their hard work. We know that

quality teachers are critical to our success, and we want to recruit and retain the best and brightest.."



JCEA's 2001 Negotiating Team are: Front : Robb Grove, Standley Lake HS; Chair Connie Brasher, Kendallvue; Jim Hodges, JCEA executive director. Back: J.R. Lesko, Arvada HS; Mike Jagel, West Jefferson; Corrie Hitchens, Evergreen MS; Liesel Urban, Westgate; and Dale Gatz, JCEA president).

CSAP reading scores continue to exceed state average

Seventy-nine percent of third graders in Jeffco Public Schools scored proficient or advanced on this year's Colorado Student Achievement Program (CSAP) reading test. That is an increase of five percentage points over last year - Jeffco's highest year to year increase ever.

Jeffco third graders continue to surpass students statewide, scoring seven percentage points higher than the state average —Jeffco's highest point spread ever over the statewide average.

"To see this kind of jump in student achievement takes the dedication of every single staff member in this school district and the support of our parents and community," said Jane Hammond. "We're thankful that our community supports the children of Jefferson County."

CSAP scores count toward Performance Promise

This year's third grade CSAP reading scores will help determine the results of the first year of the Jeffco Performance

Promise to increase student achievement.

Jeffco Public Schools became the first large school district in the nation to tie funding to student achievement when Jefferson County voters approved the 1999 Performance Promise mill levy to increase funding to schools by \$25 million. The promise commits the district to increasing the number of students scoring proficient or advanced on CSAP tests by 25% in the next three years in order to receive an additional \$20 million.

The baseline score, established from the 1999-2000 school year, is 53.2 %; the goal by the end of the 2002-2003 school year is for 66.5 % of students to score proficient or advanced. The eight CSAP tests included in the Performance Promise are: third grade reading; fourth grade reading and writing; fifth grade math; seventh grade reading and writing; and eighth grade math and science.

"Because Jefferson County voters approved the 1999 Perfor

See **CSAP** on **page 4**.

Quality Teaching Alliance issues report

A task force of 35 Coloradans concerned about public education has released a 14-page report, *Quality Teaching in Colorado*, which outlines a series of recommendations to improve the quality of teaching throughout the state.

Westgate Elementary teacher and former JCEA President Paul Schmidt and Ron Brady, CEA president, were among the members.

The document includes 19 recommendations, 55 strategies and seven study items aimed at ensuring "every child has a quality teacher in the classroom, every day," the mission of the Alliance founded in 1998 and funded by Rose Community Foundation.

Recommendations are organized into four broad goals: attracting quality teachers; ensuring quality teachers and teacher accountability; retaining quality teachers; and supporting quality teachers and system accountability.

The Alliance for Quality Teaching is a bipartisan coalition of school board members, administrators, teachers, parents, legislators, members of the business community, various constituency groups, and representatives from higher education to take an in-depth look at ways to improve quality teaching.

Last year there were 5100 teacher vacancies in Colorado's public schools and only 2600 candidates graduating from

Colorado's teacher education programs. Colorado looks to out-of-state applicants to fill many of those jobs, but states like Texas offer as much as \$10,000 a year more than Colorado. In 1999 Colorado was ranked 24th in the nation for beginning teacher salaries.

In order to attract teachers and reduce critical shortages, the report makes several recommendations: providing state funding to assist districts in paying competitive salaries; financial incentives such as housing, signing bonuses, state tax credits and property tax relief; and state funding for tuition reduction and scholarships/fellowships in high-need content areas.

Among the other suggestions are improved teacher benefits such as day care, sabbaticals, training opportunities and teacher exchange programs, providing part-time teachers full-time benefits, and eliminating barriers to job mobility. The group also wants to find ways to attract quality substitute teachers.

The Alliance's report also details recommendations for teacher accountability, retention and system accountability.

Cal Frazier, former Colorado State Commissioner of Education, Clair Orr, past Chairman of the Colorado State Board of Education, and Kay Shaw, Director of Staff Development in the Aurora Public School District have been tri-chairs of the Alliance.

Ellison wins JCEA scholarship



Lakewood High School's Hannah Ellison, daughter of Eiber Elem. teacher Sue Ellison, was the recipient of this year's JCEA Excellence Scholarship. Lou Ann Elliott, JCEA-retired presented the check during the May JCEA Council meeting.

JCEA endorses Jeffco's Serving Kids program

The JCEA Board of Directors has voted to join the administrators' and classified employees' associations in cosponsoring Jeffco's **Serving Kids From The Inside Out**. Now in its fifth year of service, this unique program was founded by longtime community volunteer and child advocate Nancy Hoffmaster.

As its name implies, **Serving Kids** addresses two needs of children from low income families. It addressed the "Inside" needs by making schools and families aware of available medical services. A comprehensive list of medical services is provided to each school. The "Outside" needs are met by providing "new or near-new" clothing to needy Jeffco school children.

The program is currently housed at 809 Quail St., Building 1, but will be moving to another location this summer. Volunteers are always needed to sort and launder donated clothing and arrange it properly on shelves and racks.

The three employee groups plan to assume program responsibilities in August—more information to come. Until then, volunteers can contact Hoffmaster at 303-696-9884.

JCEA welcomes new readers

JCEA is continually updating the mailing list for **Shaping Tomorrow Today**. If you are a new reader, welcome!

Obviously, this is a newsletter that reflects the thinking of the 5,000 teaching professionals in Jefferson County. We hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful and at times provocative. We want you to be able to trust the information you read in this newsletter, and we hope it reflects the integrity of the profession it represents.

Teachers represent JCEA at CEA Delegate Assembly



JCEA's 69 delegates, elected by the total membership, represented the Association at the annual policy-making meeting of the Colorado Education Association. JCEA President Dale Gatz (on the right) led the delegation.

Jeffco counselors seek to maximize student personal, social and academic growth

Whether it's a report about a life too early ended due to a popular party drug sold at school, the increasing number of sexually active students and the related incidence of teen pregnancies and STDs, or a lively legislative debate about the numbers of students who stay home for fear of being bullied, evidence is mounting that the personal and social development of our students is in need of immediate attention.

In fact, one can hardly open a newspaper or turn on the TV/radio and not be confronted by yet another example of school violence or other acts of senseless self-destructive student behavior.

So, among educators it is no longer debatable as to whether the personal and social developmental needs of students in classrooms today are significantly different from those of only a few short years ago. They know they are and see the negative impact on student learning every day. And, they are struggling—personally and professionally—with how best to address those needs while at the same time maximizing time spent on improving student learning.

A group of school counselors in Jeffco has been looking at this issue as it relates to the district's guidance and counseling programs. One of those is Ryan Collins, a counselor at WOTC.

"Counselors have heard from our classroom colleagues that the demands of testing accountability and the pressures to increase student learning are reducing their ability to teach the whole child. We know it's frustrating for both them and their students, It's frustrating for us as well," Collins said.

He explained that a significant element of the district's current counseling program review includes how counselors can help maximize opportunities for student personal

and social as well as academic and career development.

"Ironically, as student needs in this area have increased, teachers have less time to spend on them. Yet, we know if we are going to increase student success, we cannot ignore these developmental needs" Collins said. "That's why, as counselors, we are taking an in-depth look at what role we can play and how we can best use our specialized training."

The end result of the counselor review is a document, the "Jeffco Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Plan: A Vital Link to Building Bright Futures" that is aligned with the district strategic plan.

The purpose of the document and plan is to help schools plan, design, implement and evaluate comprehensive and systematic programs in kindergarten through twelfth grade. In order to do that, the plan provides structure and direction as schools make the transition from the guidance program of the past and present to the program of the future.

The plan addresses the issue of total growth and development—emotionally, socially, and educationally. Since student growth and learning are developmental, guidance programs must also be developmental and sequential. And they must begin at the elementary level where appropriate programming helps create a foundation for positive learning.

There are four basic components of the proposed program: Guidance Curriculum, Individual Programming, Responsive Services and System Support.

The Guidance Curriculum will provide guidance content in a systematic way to all students K-12. It will include career programming and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational and vocational development.

This new program will be piloted in all secondary schools next fall.


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mance Promise mill levy to increase student achievement, all of our schools received extra funding and support this year, and that's made a tremendous difference in our classroom," said Jane Hammond, superintendent. As part of the Performance Promise, we've been able to lower the size of every third and fourth grade classroom in the district and provide more instructional resources and training for teachers."

Next year, the second year of the promise, the district will maintain the programs started this year and strengthen them by hiring instructional coaches to work with every elementary and middle school in each of the district's 17 articulation areas and hire an additional teacher at the six middle schools that received only one new teacher this year.

Visit JCEA's new web site

JCEA's relatively new web site is full of information about the Association and has useful information for parents. Simple type in www.jcea-cea.org. Let us know what you think!



Shaping Tomorrow Today

Shaping Tomorrow Today is the community newsletter of the Jefferson County Education Association (JCEA) and is published periodically throughout the year. Comments may be mailed to: JCEA, 1050 Wadsworth Blvd., Lakewood, CO 80215. Our phone number is 303-232-6405; our FAX number is 303-238-2215.

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Helping Kids Thrive: 12 years of helping kids grow in positive ways

An estimated 600 parents have taken advantage of the 12th annual **Helping Kids Thrive** parenting workshops this winter.

Cosponsored by JCEA, the Jefferson Center for Mental Health's programs were offered February 24, 26 and March 3, 5. The four regionalized workshops sought to provide parents practical, hands-on information that could be used immediately.

For the last two years, the workshops have received major funding (\$10,000) from JCEA through NEA's Urban Grants programs. Also, for a second year the workshops incorporated the concepts of building youth assets.


JCEA celebrates Colorado Teacher Award Winners

Twenty-seven JCEA members were chosen by their faculties as outstanding representatives of their profession. The nominees were honored at a reception, February 28; those chosen as honorees will be recognized at a banquet on Wednesday, April 25 at the Denver Marriott West.

Steve Axelrath, Arvada HS; Valerie Branstiter Myers, Deer Creek MS; LuEllen Casler, Devinny Elem.; Rita Deschamp, Dakota Ridge HS; Eddie Ellington, Little Elem.; Alan Fettner, Leewood Elem.; Kendra Geise, Swanson Elem.; Shelia Grice, Witt Elem.; Paula Henderson, Moore MS; Dorothy Hensley, Powderhorn Elem.; Debbie Jochim, Ryan Elem.; Catherine Keck, Mitchell Elem.; Teri Kimbell, West Jeff Elem.; Linda Leonard, Lasley Elem.; Mary McNamara, Vanderhoof Elem.; Peter Mehlback, Lakewood HS; Nolan Nix, Jefferson HS; Ben Norby, Carmody MS; Joe Otero, Bear Creek HS; Peggy Richards-Pattie, Shelton Elem.; Tanya Rodgers, Peiffer Elem.; Patricia Spitzer, Conifer HS; Barbara Stover, Chatfield HS; Susan Toussaint, Evergreen MS; Roxanne Weaver, Westgate Elem.; Robin Warner, Everitt MS; Margaret Weir, Oberon MS

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Public Education



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"The Jefferson County Education Association exists to empower educators to promote professional rights, responsibilities and practices to achieve educational excellence within a changing society."