



# ESC Bulletin board

**September 12, 2008**

Internal Weekly Announcements  
for Grant Wood Area Education  
Agency Staff and Board

## Mark Your Calendars

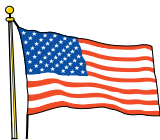
- Sept. 17** GWAEA Board Meeting  
5:30 p.m./33rd Avenue
- Sept. 17** Kids on the Block puppeteer sign-up deadline
- Sept. 18** Chair Massages at 33rd Avenue

## Announcements

•Due to 3E Company's Grand Opening, staff are asked not to park in the 3E lot September 15-26.

•The official Cedar Rapids District mailing address while displaced from the ESC will be:

ESC at Kingston  
907 15th St. SW  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404-1700



## Board to Consider Revised Separation Policy in September

Agency administration has been considering options for the future of a separation plan. A primary factor in this review is the Agency's inability to sustain the plan due to its increasing costs. You may recall the Grant Wood AEA policy committee met in April to review feedback from staff through the Agency Advisory Council, employee forums and emails to the administration. The group discussed a number of options, including the one that was emailed to all staff on Friday, April 4.

"After listening to various individuals' thoughts about the plan, the policy committee agreed that we should not rush to get something on the table," said Jim Green, GWAEA Board Chair. "The committee deferred the issue to the administration to review a variety of scenarios, since the old separation plan had become costly (defeating its original purpose), and it did not encourage valuable employees to continue serving the children of Area 10."

Said Green, "In only a couple more years, approximately 25 percent of the agency's staff will qualify for separation. We have many talented individuals in this organization. It is both the administration's and the Board's position that encouraging good people to leave while they are still highly productive and valuable to us does not make sense – especially in light of the impending problems we foresee of not being able to find talent to replace some hard-to-fill staff positions."

The policy committee has re-convened this fall and reviewed a variety of ideas based on the input received, and has prepared a plan to submit for first reading at the Board's September meeting. At the first reading of a policy, Board members may submit recommendations for textual changes, which the policy committee then crafts into a revised document for the second reading. The second and final reading for the policy should occur in October. According to the current policy, the Board must decide on the 2009-2010 policy by November.

The plan the policy committee will submit eliminates the current policy, effective June 30, 2009 and replaces it with a transition policy that would be in effect for three years, terminating June 30, 2012. It calls for the agency to administer the plan so that all employees who meet the eligibility criteria as of June 30, 2012 will be allowed an opportunity to participate in the plan. It does, however, give the Board the discretion to make changes to the plan if the agency's financial situation so dictates.

(Continued on next page)

### (Early Separation Policy-continued)

The proposed plan will offer a separation payment, not to exceed 30%, which would be calculated based on qualified employee's years of eligibility for the Transition Separation Plan multiplied by the average annual pay of the employee's highest three fiscal years. The window of eligibility for participating in the plan has been extended from three years to five years, and the year in which an employee first met or will meet the eligibility criteria will be considered year one of eligibility. (The eligibility criteria would remain at a minimum age of 58 and 20 years of Agency service.)

In the first two years that an employee qualifies, the separation plan would pay 20 percent. In years three and four, the plan increases the amount to 25 percent, and in the fifth year of qualifying for the separation package, an employee can receive 30 percent.

As it is currently written, the 2009-2010 plan would limit the number of staff who could participate in the program to 25 staff persons per year, but also gives the Board leeway to approve additional applications, if they believe it's appropriate to do so. The current plan, which will sunset at the end of this fiscal year, limits the number of participants to 15 individuals.

Staff wishing to see a copy of the proposed policy may contact Kim Martin, policy committee chair. It will also be published in the Board Book, which is normally placed in the break room, where staff can read it prior to the board meeting. The Board Book will also be available online beginning Friday afternoon, Sept 12.

### Agency and Staff Hit the News

KCRG-TV news featured the agency's Sixth Street office on the 10 p.m. news on Wednesday, Sept. 10 and again at 6 a.m. on Thursday. Claire Kellett delivered her introduction to the story live from the agency's Sixth Street office for the 10 p.m. newscast. If you missed the news story and would like to view it, it's still available on the station's Web site at the following link: <http://www.kcrg.com/news/local/28226739.html>. A few comments have been posted to the KCRG site related to the report. As of this Friday morning, all of them were positive about the agency.

**Todd Frank, Itinerant Vision Teacher** for Grant Wood AEA, made the front page of the Friday, September 12 Gazette. In his nonwork time, Todd is a guitar player. The Gazette article promotes a guitar music event, which Todd has organized. It's the fourth annual Guitar Jam featuring classic guitar folk artists from across the United States. The Jam will be held at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School this Saturday, Sept. 13 from 7 to 10 p.m. It will not be an "open mic" night. Rather, it will feature a number of guitar folk artists from around the country all performing here in Iowa.

The Gazette has added video clips to their Web site, and has a segment with Todd playing a song written by Tom Paxton, titled "Ramblin' Boy." [To view the article and on-line clip, click on this hyperlinked sentence.](#)

### So, You Want to Write a TQ Proposal?

Technical Assistance Session  
Tuesday, Sept. 23  
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.  
Room #221, 33rd Ave.

Information will be provided to assist staff in writing a teacher quality proposal.

If you have a draft proposal, bring a copy and receive individual assistance.

For questions: Kathy Dulle Ext. 6517.

### Reminder to Update Emergency Contact Information and Beneficiaries

In the event of an emergency, we want to be sure to have accurate, up-to-date emergency contact information on file for employees. To ensure that this information is current, employees are asked to review this information annually. As a reminder, in an emergency situation, we will always try to contact a spouse first, if identified, then Contact 1 or Contact 2.

To update:

- 1) Go to GWAEA home page, click on GWAEA Staff, click on Business Services/Human Resources, click on Employee Information ([www.gwaea.org/cfapps/StaffEmploy/SignOn.cfm](http://www.gwaea.org/cfapps/StaffEmploy/SignOn.cfm)).
- 2) Enter your first and last names and the last 4 digits of your Social Security number.
- 3) Click on Contact List (found under Navigational Links).
- 4) Click on the text under either 'relationship' or 'name' to update the record.
- 5) Click on Save Changes or Delete this Contact.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Human Resources Office at Ext. 6703. Thank you for keeping this information current.

*Please also remember to update beneficiary information as family changes occur.* Employees designate beneficiaries for the group life and IPERS benefits. Contact Cathy Kearns, Compensation/Benefits, at Ext. 6706, to make any beneficiary changes.

## Chair Massage Schedule

Terri Nicol, a Licensed Massage Therapist, and former GWAEA employee, has been coming and doing chair massages for us.

Massages cost just \$10. Appointments will be made in 20 minute increments but your massage will be 15 minutes in length. Some staff may need to get approval from their supervisor to adjust their break times so they can participate.

### 33rd Avenue Facility

Thursday, September 18

The first appointment time is 9:40 a.m. and the last is at 1:40 p.m.

To schedule, contact Karen Michalec at [kmichalec@gwaea.org](mailto:kmichalec@gwaea.org) or at Ext. 6415.

## Professional Development Opportunities

**9/15/08** A Review of IEP Documentation & Processes for AEA & District Staff

**9/16/08** An Introduction to the IEP for New Special Education Teachers

**9/24/08** Crisis Prevention Intervention Certification

**9/24/08** iPods in Education

**9/25/08** Quick Clicks & Tips

**9/26/08** Social Cognitive Deficits Across the School and Home Day: The ILAUGH Model of Social Cognition

**9/30/08** Instructional Practices Inventory: A Process for Analyzing & Improving Student Engaged Learning

For location, more information, or to register, go to the Professional Development web page.

## Student work highlighted in River of Words® IOWA Environmental Poetry and Art Exhibit

The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art (CRMA) is pleased to announce the opening of the scholastic art and poetry exhibition for students, River of Words®, on Saturday, August 30 through Sept. 21.

Every year, River of Words® conducts an international environmental poetry and art contest for children aged 5 to 19 in grades K-12, in affiliation with The Library of Congress Center for the Book. This free contest is designed to help youth explore the natural and cultural history of the place they live, and to express what they discover through poetry and art. Entries not chosen as finalists or grand prize winners in the international contest are returned to IOWATER, where they are judged in a statewide River of Words® competition.

The IOWATER Volunteer Water Monitoring Program of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources coordinates the IOWA River of Words® Environmental Poetry and Art Competition. This year, over 350 students from Iowa entered the contest. The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art is pleased to host a juried River of Words® IOWA Environmental Poetry and Art Exhibit of over 50 of the top entries.

For information, visit [www.crma.org](http://www.crma.org).

## Flu Shots Scheduled in October



The Grant Wood AEA wellness program is offering flu shots to staff.

October 14 is the deadline to notify Nancy Lochner at the 33rd Avenue Facility, or Barb Aanonson at the Coralville Facility that you want to participate.

The cost for GWAEA employees is \$15. The cost for spouses of employees is \$20. Checks will be collected that day and need to be made payable to Grant Wood AEA.

### **33rd Avenue Facility - Room 221**

October 20, 2008

7:00 – 9:00 a.m.

**Contact:** Nancy Lochner, Ext. 6737 or [nlochner@aea10.k12.ia.us](mailto:nlochner@aea10.k12.ia.us)

### **Coralville Facility - Room A**

October 21, 2008

7:00 – 9:00 a.m.

**Contact:** Barb Aanonson, Ext. 6211 or [baanonson@aea10.k12.ia.us](mailto:baanonson@aea10.k12.ia.us)

## Buy, Sell, Trade...

**FREE:** A quiet, affectionate, young stray cat needs a good home. Contact Ellen, 399-6792, if you can help.

**Bulletin Board** is published and distributed weekly to all GWAEA staff and Board members.

Buy, Sell or Trade items will be run for 2 weeks. Staff wishing to submit items should do so by Wed. of the week they wish the item to be printed. Send to Karen Michalec, Editor.

When submitting news, please remember that agency staff work in a variety of locations, and it may take two weeks to reach them with printed material.

Please note: the **Bulletin Board** is posted on the agency's Web site. We recommend you use your office or voice mail phone number instead of your home telephone number for any items listed in this newsletter.

Grant Wood Area Education Agency extends equal opportunities in its employment practices, educational programs and services, and does not discriminate on the basis of color, gender, race, national origin, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status or as otherwise prohibited by law. If you believe you or your child has been discriminated against or treated unjustly, please contact the Agency's Equity Coordinator, Maria Cashman, at 319-399-6647 or 1-800-332-8488 or TDD 319-399-6766, Grant Wood AEA, 4401 Sixth St SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

**VACANCIES  
2008-2009**

**CONTRACTED**

<b>Early Education Specialist</b> (Northern Facility/Agency-Wide)	<b>(Recommendation Pending)</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>
<b>Curriculum Consultant Reading</b> (Northern Facility/Northeast Region)	<b>(Recommendation to the Board)</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>
<b>Curriculum Consultant Science</b> 33 <sup>rd</sup> Ave/Northeast Region) (33 <sup>rd</sup> Ave/Northeast Region)		<b>(1.4)</b> (.4) <b>(1.0)</b>
<b>Parent Education Outreach Specialist</b> (33 <sup>rd</sup> Ave/Cedar Rapids Region)	<b>(Recommendation to the Board)</b>	<b>(up to 1.0)</b>
<b>Physical Therapist</b> (Northern Facility/Northwest Region)		<b>(.2)</b>
<b>Speech-Language Pathologist</b> (Agency-wide/Southwest Region)		<b>(1.0)</b>

**CLASSIFIED**

<b>Paraeducator</b> (Off-Site/SEAD)	<b>(Recommendation Pending)</b>	<b>(.72)</b>
(Off-Site/AWARE)	<b>(Recommendation Pending)</b>	<b>(.72)</b>
(Off-Site/Behavior Learning Center/Iowa City) (37.5 hours/week; school year)	<b>(Recommendation Pending)</b>	<b>(.72)</b>
<b>Secretary</b> (Southern Facility/Southwest Region)	<b>(Recommendation to the Board)</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>

**ASSIGNMENT OPENINGS**

In addition to the vacancy posting, assignment openings may also be available to contracted staff members for a period of five days. For a listing of those assignment openings, staff may call voicemail box x6302. (In-house: 6555, x6302; Cedar Rapids calling area: 399-6555, x6302; WATS line: 1-800-798-9771, x6302). Staffs wishing to be considered for a change in assignment are to submit the request in writing to both the identified Regional Administrator and the Associate Administrator. (For further information regarding assignment requests, please see Article 10, Paragraph D, of the Master Agreement for Contracted Staff)