

DCFT Holds Its 34th Annual Student Awards

The Douglas County Federation of Teachers held its 34th Annual Student Awards Ceremony at Chaparral High School on May 9, 2006. The annual ceremony recognizes one student from each of the schools in Douglas County for achievement in scholarship, school and community involvement, responsibility, cooperation with students and teachers, and creativity.

Pat McGraw, President of DCFT and Brenda Smith, ceremony coordinator, presented gift certificates to the Elementary and Middle School recipients. The seniors, representing their schools, received the gift certificate along with a \$750 academic scholarship to be used for advancing their education.

Morgan Markovic (center), her teacher, Andrea Rietsch, and Eagle Academy's Principal, Doug Seligman pause for a photo opportunity at the Student Awards Ceremony.



Virginia Vaughan receives her award and certificate from President, Pat McGraw (right). The Assistant Principal, Michele Radke (left) and her school's Principal, Lisa Phillips, were there to support her achievement.



Teacher Contract Ratification

The Douglas County Federation of Teachers and the Douglas County School District have reached tentative agreement on the 2006-07 Teachers' Contract. Members, as well as, non-members were notified of changes in the contract and members of DCFT were asked to cast votes by May 31.

This was the first year the groups attempted negotiations using a "Living Contract" model of bargaining. This type of negotiating is a "step up" from "Interest-Based Bargaining" used in previous years by

the teams. The model requires meeting on a continuous basis, rather than compacting sessions into 1 or 2 months. The process was viewed as favorable by the teams.

Proposed contract language changes, as well as, the new salary schedule have been posted online at www.DCFT.net under the heading of "Settlement 2006."

Colorado Coalition for Retirement Security Reaches PERA Compromise

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*"Making Teachers
Better Teachers"*

Senate Bill 235 passed through the State Legislature on May 10 leaving current Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) benefits intact. Current employees will not notice much of a change in their benefits. Employees hired January 1, 2007 and after will be affected.

Future employees:

- will not have the guaranteed 3% cost of living increase current retirees and active members get. They will receive the lower of 3% or the Consumer Price Index.
- will be eligible to retire using a "rule of 85" vs the current "rule of 80" meaning PERA members hired after January 1, 2007, may retire at age 55 when their years of service plus their age equals 85.
- will be allowed only 8% annual salary increases in the final 3 years of employment, a measure designed to limit "spiking" of pension benefits. The current limit is 15%.

PERA's Board of Trustees will increase to 15 members – three of which will be appointed by the Governor. The remaining members of the board will continue to be elected by PERA membership.

An actuarial study will be required before future benefit enhancements are granted.

The passing of Senate Bill 235 is the culmination of diligent work by the Colorado Coalition for Retirement Security, elected officials and PERA. The Coalition consists of ten employee unions including the American Federation of Teachers, AFT Colorado and Douglas County Federation.

DCFT would like to thank the membership for their support as we progressed through this very arduous process.

Upcoming Events

**June 19-26 ER&D Summer
Institute**

**June 21
– July 5 Office Closure**

**June 28 New Teacher
Orientation**

**July 18-22 AFT National
Convention**

