

THE GAZETTE'S EDITORIALS

Homers

What's going right

DAVE MARKWARD, in his first year as superintendent of Cedar Rapids schools, has reshaped his leadership team, adding Jay Marino as an associate superintendent of organizational effectiveness and accountability to focus on student achievement, accountability for achievement measures and reporting of results. Marino will join the district July 1 along with new top administrators Christine Rauscher and Bruce Brotzman. A combination of open positions and departmental reorganization allowed Markward to make the moves without no additional cost to the school district budget.

IOWANS ARE GRIPING about \$2-plus gas prices, but at least homeowners never got hit with the natural gas price spike everyone expected this year. Bills are up about 6 percent over last year, according to MidAmerican Energy, but increases of 15 percent to 20 percent had been predicted by the U.S. Department of Energy and some dire forecasts by others had hikes even higher than that.

BETTER TEACHER salaries, improved technology, reduced class sizes and more instruction time all are methods touted as ways to improve student performance. But research shows that what stands above all else for better educating children is having excellent teachers doing the instructing. College Community schools will try a new way of "teaching the teachers" next year with small-group professional development time most days before classes. "Training not applied does not have a student achievement effect," said district official Al Rowe. "We've got to step up with regards to professional learning because that's where we'll see the biggest bang."

