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## Quick news for Parents, Teachers and Students

## An e-newsletter by the Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Student and Family Support Services

## There's no 'l' in 'team'

 home."

That was in Minnesota. She then moved to Des Moines.
"I was nervous about the whole thing, thinking our horrible ex perience in Minnesota would be repeated here," she said. "So I called the school ahead of time and explained the situation."

And then she held her breath. But much to her astonishment, the team at Brubaker Elementary in Des Moines was ready to help.
"They listened," Rachel says in near disbelief. "At first I was shocked, but then greatly relieved. They not only helped him with what he needed but, honestly, I was relieved that I no longer had to be his only



Laura Olson, Kendall, and Rachel Anderson
"We use so much educational jargon! Talk to them so they can understand." Laura Olson

teacher."
And when Rachel refers to "they," she means it. The entire team - from principal to counselor to special education teacher view each and every child as "their" students. Everyone is involved. And the IEP is the center of educational decisions.
"The IEP is very overwhelming," says Laura Olson, a Brubaker educa-
"And remember hat we use so much educational jargon! Talk to the parents so they can understand After all, most of them are not educators.
"Above everything else, parents need to thoroughly understand that we are doing what we believe is the best for their child."

That was easy for Rachel to understand because of Laura's approach.
"Once in a while, Miss Olson would call me and say Kendall's had an awesome day, and that's all she would say," Rachel said. "So when Kendall would come home, I would reward him. It's great to be able to do that, and he doesn't automatically think there's trouble when school calls."
"That's really necessary in building up strong relationships not just with the parent, but with the student, as well," Laura said.

## Holiday opportunities during the break

The holiday break presents lots of education opportunities for your child or student - all of them fun. Try these:

- When you are cooking or baking, measuring ingredients is a great way to work in math instruction.
- Use the calendar as a countdown to the holidays, another way to bolster math (and, for younger stu-
dents, an understanding of the calendar).

Read seasonal stories to your child and, when finished, have the child explain what the story meant to him or her This helps build comprehension.

Make holiday decorations; this helps the child learn how to follow instruction

Writing thank-you

cards helps the child with his or her writing. It also reinforces good manners

Make sure the child reads at least 20 minutes a day.

