

DMEA TEMPO

Volume 25 Issue 9

Des Moines Education Association

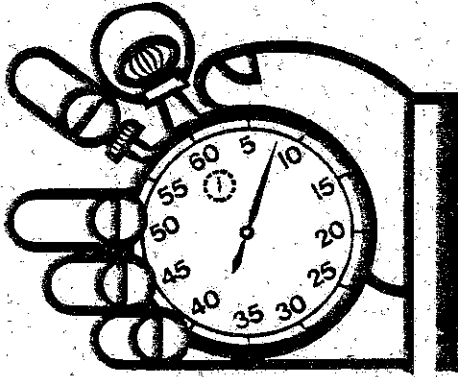
May 2001

Early Release Issues

The DMEA has worked with the District on two important early release issues. For teachers in schools that will be moving locations this summer, it has been agreed that there will be early dismissal on Monday, 4 June and Tuesday, 5 June. This is to allow those teachers to use that time to pack their materials and make ready for the move. This should allow them more control over the move.

The District, and particularly Jerry Wadden, have agreed on the early release hours for Wednesday, 6 June according to our negotiated agreement.

They are as follows:	Central Campus	9:40 AM
	High Schools	10:05 AM
	Middle Schools	11:10 AM
	Elementary Schools	12:10 PM and 12:30 PM



Early Retirement Update

We now have the new Early Retirement program approved. The DMEA members approved it by an overwhelming 90% vote. The School Board then approved it on a 6-1 vote. If we receive approval from the Internal Revenue Service as expected this summer, it will go into effect this fall.

The bargaining on this proposal has gone on for over 16 months. We have had the constant guidance of the Negotiating Cadre, the Executive Board and the membership. The DMEA argued for many positions that either wound up in the proposal or were modified in some way. It fought for the best interest of ALL members.

Now that it has been approved by both parties, it is a part of the contract and we will continue to fine-tune the program. One possible area to change may be to ease the financial hit for one day's sick leave.

This program allows people to have more control over their retirement bonus and gives them the opportunity for deciding for themselves how they want to handle it. It is extremely important that ALL members inform themselves about the program. Younger members have had a tendency to put off thinking about retirement until their late 30s or even into their 40s. With this program, NOW is the time to acquaint yourself with it.

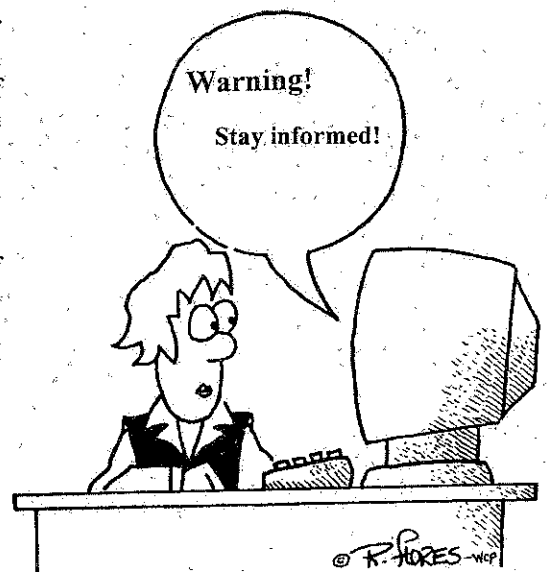
Warning! Warning! Warning!

Among other bad things passed in the *%*#^%\$%# Teacher Compensation Bill is the requirement for all districts to add an **ADDITIONAL TWO DAYS TO THE CALENDAR** for staff development. If this holds, the DMEA will encourage the district to use two of the optional Designated Days in next years calendar for that purpose. This was **NOT** a plot by the district to add required days.

The District, ISEA and DMEA are still trying to make sense of all the junk (I was chastised for swearing in an earlier Tempo, so I can't use the word I want) in the various education bills passed by the legislature. If the Governor signs them into law we will have a real mess with which we have to deal.

We will try to keep you informed as things shake out but much of it may happen this summer. You may want to check things out for yourself:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/GA/79GA/Legislation> and
http://www.isea.org/whatsnew/w_hollow.html



Leadership Conference

The ISEA Leadership Conference is a great opportunity to learn more about your Association and how it works. We have budgeted registrations for 15 members to attend. If you are interested, contact or stop by the office and fill out a form.

It is held from Tuesday, 7 August to Thursday, 9 August at Buena Vista College at Storm Lake, Iowa. It is a fun, educational opportunity. Come and join with us in this activity.

Graduation Rates

Your Faculty Representatives unanimously voted at the 10 May meeting to encourage the use of grade point averages, credits or some combination at the middle school level. The purpose would be to encourage students at that level to not rely on social promotion and thus be better prepared to deal with the high school requirements. The problem, as always, is what to do with those that don't meet the standard? Research and past practice say that retention does not work.

The district will be setting up a joint committee to discuss these and other issues. The FRs tabled until September any action on similar issues for the high school.

In conjunction with these issues are the Community Conversations planned by the District Graduation Rates Committee. It is critical for teachers and staff to attend these conversations and make sure their voice is heard. Look for information early on our return in the fall.

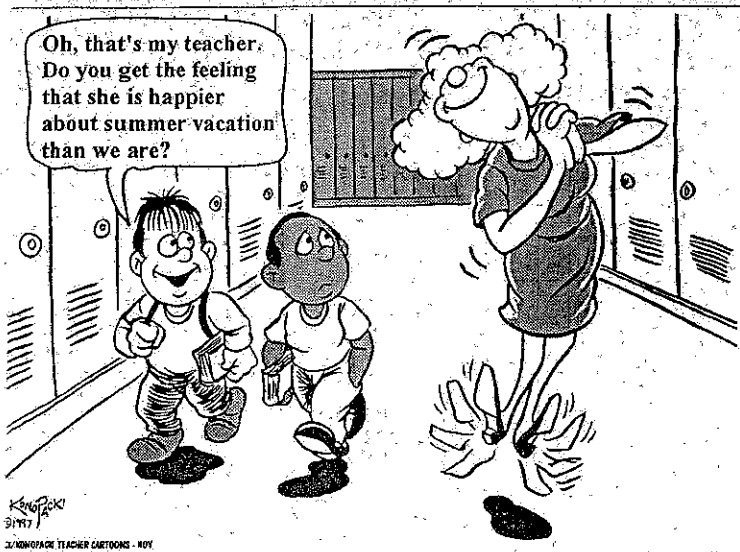
Salary Legislation

Governor Vilsack will sign today (5-23-01) the legislation creating a new salary structure for Iowa teachers and the companion appropriations bill authorizing 40 million dollars for 2001-2002. ISEA and DMEA efforts to convince the Governor to veto the legislation were unsuccessful.

All districts and associations must now wait until the Department of Education writes and approves the rules for implementation. The DMEA is scheduled to meet with District officials on June 12th to begin to examine the impact on Des Moines.

This is what we know at this time.

1. Participation is voluntary in 2001-02 and 2002-03. Starting July 1, 2003, participation will be mandatory. The district has the sole discretion to participate the next two years.
2. Dollars will be allocated for a mentoring program for each new teacher.
3. School building based incentives will be done only on a pilot project basis at first.
4. Districts must pay \$28,000 as a minimum for first year teachers (or work toward that goal) and \$30,000 for teachers with three years experience.
5. Des Moines is already at the above mentioned minimums so our dollars could be used elsewhere.
6. Eventually, a career ladder based on evaluation of skills and knowledge will replace the current system. Much needs to be worked out on this part of the legislation.



DMEA Summer Hours

The summer hours for DMEA will be 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday.

The office will be open 8:00 AM until noon on Fridays.

Any changes to the summer DMEA hours will be recorded on the DMEA answering machine.

Have a great summer!