



**United, Protected,  
Connected**

*Des Moines Education Association*

# DMEA TEMPO

## Discipline Problems Continue to be Hot Issue for DMEA

DMEA members continue to report that they are facing problems with student discipline. Members have reported incidents where they have been called names, hit, and pushed.

This is not an issue that is limited to Des Moines. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, from 1995-1999 teachers in this country were the victims of 635,000 violent crimes (rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault). Middle and high school teachers were more likely to be the victims of violent crimes than elementary teachers. Male teachers were more than twice as likely as female teachers to be victims of violent crimes. Teachers in urban schools were more likely to be victims than their counterparts in rural schools. The majority of crimes reported were simple assaults.

What constitutes an assault? An assault is any act that causes pain or injury to another. It can also be any action which causes fear of immediate physical contact, that would be painful or offensive, coupled with the ability to execute the act. Examples of this would be threats of violence or sexual contact. Actual physical contact does not need to take place.

What do we want you to do? If you, or someone you know, is the victim of a physical or verbal assault call DMEA immediately and report it. Be as specific and detailed as you can about the incident and

let us know if the child had any consequences.

If you are injured consider contacting the Des Moines police and ask to file a complaint against the student. If you're not comfortable doing this, contact our office and we will file a complaint for you.

In the last few months the issue of violence against members has taken an absurd twist. Some students have been disrupting the school and making threats toward staff. Principals, teachers and associates have been required to physically restrain these students to protect themselves and others. In several of these cases the offending students and parents have then filed complaints against the adults involved. The complaints range from child abuse reports, which can result in teachers losing their license, to complaints with Des Moines police.

These complaints tend to run in cycles. To the best of our knowledge, 11 such complaints have been filed. It is important to be especially cautious when touching students in any way. Members are urged to document any incident in which they are involved. DMEA is currently working with the District to find a way to protect members from bogus complaints from students and parents.

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**\*\*\*ATTENTION\*\*\***

**Walt Galvin Scholarship applications are due in the DMEA office by December 9, 2002.**

## Committee Involvement Increases for DMEA Members

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More and more members are volunteering to become involved with committees, both within DMEA and at the District level. DMEA currently has four active committees (Member Rights and Advocacy, Instruction and Professional Development (IPD), Membership, and Governmental Affairs).

The Member Rights and Advocacy Committee, chaired by Cindy Roerig, a teacher at Greenwood, is busy preparing to negotiate new contracts for the 2003-04 school year. The committee hopes to begin bargaining in mid-December.

The IPD Committee, chaired by Lisa

Krech (teacher at Greenwood) and Vicki Twedt (teacher at Willard) have been working to develop a survey to determine what instructional issues are of greatest concern to members. They hope to have the survey available shortly after Thanksgiving.

The Membership Committee chaired by retired member Pat Papenheim and Karen Reese (teacher at Brody) have completed one of the most successful membership campaigns in DMEA history. Membership is up by over 100 members from last year. This is the largest increase of any unit in the state. The committee is now turning its attention to scholarships and the annual

Recognition Dinner. The committee is also considering a Spring Membership Drive.

The Government Affairs committee, chaired by Deb Henry (teacher at Brody), recently organized members to participate in the collection of absentee ballots. They are currently working with Polk Suburban to plan the January 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative Reception and lobbying activities in February and March.

A number of members are also representing DMEA on district committees. Currently the district has committees working on mentoring, staff development, middle school and CIMS.

## Health Insurance Premiums Cause Concern Statewide

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As this issue of the *Tempo* goes to press, DMEA has yet to learn what the increase for health insurance premiums will be in Des Moines. Early estimates have ranged from 10-18%. While this may seem high to many of our members, this is much less than other schools in the state are encountering.

DMEA is one of 18 local associations in Iowa that have family health insurance fully paid by the District. The majority of districts in the state pay the

full cost of single health insurance for employees, with the employee picking up all, or a portion of, the remaining cost of family insurance.

Reports from around the state indicate that during the last year schools saw premiums increase by as little as 5%, while others saw increases that approached 50%. Monthly health insurance premiums in some districts are approaching \$2000. One district has reported that employees are contribut-

ing up to 70% of their take home pay to cover the additional cost of family health insurance.

What does this mean for DMEA members? At this time it is difficult to say. The Health Benefits Advisory Committee has yet to meet. In the meantime members should take care in how they use insurance and be wise consumers when seeking medical care. This will help to contain costs. DMEA will closely monitor this issue.

## Calendar of Events



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|--|---|--|
| • December 3, 2002<br>Associates Holiday Gathering<br>East High School | 4:15 p.m.   | 4:15 p.m.  |
| • December 9, 2002<br>Governmental Affairs Committee<br>4:15 p.m.      | • December 10, 2002<br>DMPS School Board<br>Open Forum 5:00 p.m.<br>Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. | • December 16, 2002<br>IPD Committee<br>4:15 p.m.        |
| • December 10, 2002<br>DMEA Executive Board                            | • December 12, 2002<br>Faculty Rep Assembly<br>North High School Cafeteria                    | • December 19, 2002<br>DMEA Executive Board<br>5:30 p.m. |

## DMEA Members Can Access NEA Attorney Referral Program

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The NEA Attorney Referral Program provides DMEA members with legal advice on personal matters. Each eligible member is entitled to two 30-minute consultation sessions *free* during each membership year.

In addition to free consultations, members may have specific legal work performed in five "core" areas at a 30% reduction of participating attorneys' normal fees. Your spouse and dependent children are also eligible to receive this discount. The five core areas are:

1. Wills and Estates-Attorneys can prepare your will, assist with estate planning, and assist if you are named the executor of the estate.
2. Real Estate-Assistance is offered

with the purchase or sale of property, disputes with landlords, and property disputes.

3. Domestic Relations-Members can receive assistance with proceedings on annulment, divorce, separation, alimony and custody issues.
4. Consumer Protection-You can receive support when you have disputes with creditors, finance agencies or in proceedings with retailers for defective merchandise.
5. Traffic Violations-Members can receive help with minor traffic violations and charges of operating under the influence.

In the Des Moines area you can contact the following attorneys:

- Becky Knutson  
Davis, Brown, Koehn, Shors & Roberts, P.C.  
666 Walnut, Suite 2500  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
288-2500
- James L. Sayre, P.C.  
13375 University Avenue, Suite 101  
Clive, IA 50325  
457-7086

Members can contact the above attorneys directly. Please identify yourself as an NEA member who wishes to participate in the NEA Attorney Referral Program.

## Free and Inexpensive Classroom Materials

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**Jo-Ann Stores, Inc.** recognizes and celebrates the many contributions teachers make. The company is please to offer a **Teacher Discount Card** to make purchasing classroom supplies a bit more affordable. You can register online (<http://www.joann.com>) or at your local Jo-Ann Store. Included with your card is a one-time Registration Coupon good for 25% off the total of your first purchase.

**Apple Computer** wants to provide every K-12 teacher in the United States with a free copy of **Mac OS X Jaguar**, its newest operating system. It features over 150 improvements. The offer is good for any teacher in the Des Moines Public Schools. You must agree to have the software shipped to your school address. To take advantage of this offer contact Apple at <http://>

[www.apple.com/education](http://www.apple.com/education).

**Krispy Kreme** offers special incentive programs for students. Its **Stick-With-It-Kids** program is a program to help your class achieve its goals. Krispy Kreme provides each classroom with a poster and stickers. When your class reaches its goal you can trade in the poster for two dozen doughnuts.

The **Krispy Kreme Good Grades Program** is designed to help individual students achieve excellence. Elementary students receive a free doughnut for each "A" on their report card. Contact your local Krispy Kreme outlet for more information on both programs.

The **Southern Poverty Law Center** offers the first-rate magazine,

**Teaching Tolerance**, free to educators. You can sign up by visiting the Southern Poverty Law Centers web site at <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/expand/res/index.jsp>.

**Visa** is offering a special free program to K-12 teachers called **Practical Money Skills for Teachers and Students**. You can register for the program by visiting <http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com>.

Teachers using technology may want to check out the free offer from **HOOPS3D**. The program offers the full HOOPS3D Product Suite free. The program is one of the software industries most powerful and popular graphics development components. To take advantage of this offer visit <http://www.hoops3d.com>.

## Des Moines Education Association

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## Department of Education Clarifies Evaluations of 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Teachers

Due to the hard work of ISEA, the Department of Education recently clarified its position on the Comprehensive Evaluations for all 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers. Previously the DE had indicated that a second year teacher would need to meet all 42 criteria that fall under the eight Iowa Teaching Standards. The DE now has indicated that this is not the case. There is no requirement that a 2<sup>nd</sup> year teacher must meet all 42 criteria. It will be possible for a teacher to meet all eight standards even though they did not meet all 42 of the criteria.

Local districts/buildings will be allowed to determine how many of the criteria new teachers will need to meet. The district has indicated that they still are encouraging building principals to help new teachers meet as many of the criteria as possible. They have also indicated that they want principals to take a liberal view of what meets the standards.

DMEA is currently working on an e-mail list of all 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers to keep them informed of the latest information.

## Labor/Management Committees Provide Input to District

DMEA leadership meets on a regular basis with district administrators as part of the Labor/Management Committee. Two groups currently meet. One involves the Associate and Clerical leaders and the other Teacher leaders.

The Teacher Labor/Management Committee, consisting of President, Chris Miller; Negotiations Chair, Cindy Roerig; and Executive Director, Randy Richardson recently met with administration. Among the items discussed were:

1. Low readership of the DMPS Today web site. The district wants to use this as their primary means of communication. We expressed our feelings that DMPS Today often seems like more of a PR tool for the district. We suggested that the district needs to clarify the purpose of DMPS Today.

2. Employee absentee rate. The number of teachers and associates who are missing school has shot up this year after a sharp drop a year ago. We discussed possible reasons for this.
3. The transfer date will be moved back to April 1, 2003.
4. Confusion over early retirement. Some principals were given incorrect information on the plan.
5. The district would like help in developing a list of employees who would like to take part in interviewing administrative candidates. If you would like to be involved in this process, please contact the DMEA office.

## In the Spotlight



**Paul Mann** (Central Campus/Scavo), former DMEA president and current ISEA Executive Board member, is currently serving as chair of the NEA's Peace and Justice Caucus. The caucus advocates for policies that reduce violence, promote tolerance and increase awareness for basic human and civil rights.

DMEA Secretary **Kris Mesicek** (Project Roots/Technology) was recently selected by NEA president Reg Weaver to serve on the NEA's Professional Standards and Practice Committee. They will be involved in studying such

issues as student achievement, alternative compensations systems, and distance education. Kris is a former DMEA president and served as vice-president of the National Council of Urban Education Associations.

**Karen Stiles**, Marine Biology teacher at Central Campus, was recently named as a winner of the Radio Shack National Teacher Award. The award was presented to 110 of the top science, math and technology teachers in the United States. Winners are given a cash stipend of \$3000 and their school receives a \$500 grant.