



United, Protected, Connected

Des Moines Education Association

# DMEA TEMPO

## DMEA/District at Impasse on Budget Cuts

The November 4<sup>th</sup> school board meeting saw the board approve nearly all of the recommended budget cuts. The board did, however, delay action on over \$500,000 in cuts that were scheduled to come from the lay-offs of 35 non-contract staff. The school board asked all employee groups to reconsider taking a one day furlough.

The DMEA Executive Board has taken a position opposing the furloughs. Members on both sides of the issue have contacted the DMEA office and passionately stated their positions. Several members have requested an all-member vote on the issue. The DMEA by-laws only call for all-member votes on contract ratification issues.

While furloughs may seem attractive on the surface, it is important to remember that they only provide a quick fix and that

they will not prevent the same people who took furloughs this year from lay-offs for next year. To the best of our knowledge no other district in the state has proposed such a draconian measure. The DMEA has received numerous e-mails from teachers across the state supporting our stand on this issue.

Regardless of the school board's decision on this issue, it is apparent that next school year will be worse. It is imperative that the district shift its attention to the next school year and bring all employee groups to the table to begin discussion on next year's budget.

The DMEA is working closely with ISEA to develop a strategy on increasing funding for education next year. Based

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## DMEA/DMPS Invited to Apply for \$2.5 Million Grant

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) has notified the DMEA that the Des Moines Public Schools will be one of five urban district across the country invited to apply for a \$2.5 million grant. The grant must be used to help close the achievement grant.

The full proposal must be completed by January 5<sup>th</sup>. NFIE will visit each district

this winter with the site selection announced in June, 2004.

The grant calls for collaboration between the school district, DMEA, ISEA, PTA and Drake University. Proceeds from the grant cannot be used for salaries. We will keep you posted as more information becomes available.

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More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly.

Woody Allen

## Wellness Corner



### Cold and Flu Fighters

Cold and flu season is just around the corner. To reduce your risk of getting sick it's a good idea to get a flu shot by mid-November. The FDA has recently approved an alternative treatment. A new nasal spray vaccine called Flumist is now available. Flumist is expected to cost \$46 per dose. It's not recommended for everyone and those people with medical conditions should consult with their physician for possible side effects. Before considering a request for Flumist, you might want to check to see if your insurance covers the vaccine.

If you are one of the unlucky people who get the flu don't request antibiotics. These drugs only fight bacterial infections, such as strep throat or sinus infection. It's best to rest in bed for the first day or two to help your immune system fight the virus. Hot chicken soup will also help.

If you're suffering from the flu or a cold, you might want to try the following.

- Soothe a sore throat by gargling with warm salt water.
- Take a warm, steamy shower or use a humidifier to relieve congestion. Rub mentholated ointment on the chest for additional relief.
- Use over-the-counter drugs with caution. Follow directions on the label precisely. Don't use more than one acetaminophen-based product on the same day.

## Impasse on Budget Cuts

(Continued from page 1)

upon the current economic data, there is a distinct possibility that districts may be facing a 6-10% cut for next year. Several community groups are organizing to look at ways in which they can help influence legislators to increase funds for education. Leaders

from DMEA have been meeting with these groups to offer support in their efforts. In addition, the DMEA Governmental Affairs committee will be organizing a series of Lobby Days for members to meet with legislators at the Capitol. It will be extremely important for members to participate in these activities.

## Access Cards Have Arrived

The new ISEA member Access cards should be arriving as you read this article. The cards were affixed to a "card carrier" which includes instructions of how to log-in and register.

Those people who are continuing members and those new members who signed up prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> will have Access cards mailed to their homes. Those people who became members after October 1<sup>st</sup> will have cards distrib-

uted to them by DMEA as soon as we receive them.

The member Access cards will allow members to obtain discounts of up to 50% at hotels, restaurants, and businesses in the Des Moines metro area and across the state. Please contact the DMEA office if you have questions about this program



## Hewlett-Packard Offers Technology For Teaching Grants



Hewlett-Packard has announced a new grant for K-12 public schools. Awards will be made to those teachers using a collaborative, team-based approach to implementing technology integration projects. The focus of the project must be on using technology to teach, rather than teaching students to use technology. Preference will be given to teacher teams specifically focused to support the project goal.

Approximately 150 teams of five teachers will receive awards totaling \$4.5 million. The award package, valued at some \$35,000 each, includes five Tablet PCs, five multimedia projectors, free help desk support for one year, a \$500 stipend per teacher and

customized professional development.

All teachers in a K-12 public schools are eligible to apply. Preference will be given to low-income schools and to projects that include integration of mathematics and/or science. HP requests that potential applicants register online. Applications will be accepted from January 15 to March 1, 2004.

HP will offer projects funded in 2004 through this initiative the opportunity to compete for additional, higher-value grants in 2005, based on project outcomes. For more information visit the HP web site at [www.hp.com/go/hpteach](http://www.hp.com/go/hpteach).

## IPERS Changes on the Horizon

A new report by a consultant studying IPERS has confirmed that contributions to the plan will need to be increased in order to protect retirement benefits for public employees.

The report states that the IPERS fund is not in any immediate danger, but that it faces a \$1.2 billion long-term shortfall. The consultant offered several options to maintain the fund's viability, including slashing benefits to retirees. However, the IPERS Benefits Advisory Committee, of which ISEA is a member, maintains that reducing benefits is not an acceptable

solution. Instead, the committee is expected to push for legislation that will gradually increase employer and employee contributions over the next few years.

The current contribution rate of 9.45 percent—5.75 percent for employers and 3.7 percent for employees—has remained unchanged since 1979. The IPERS committee is expected to recommend that the overall contribution rate needs to increase to 13.25 percent. Changes are not expected to go into effect until 2005.

## In the Spotlight



Despite all of the bad news we've been hearing about the district's finances, it's important to remember the high quality of instruction offered by members of our Association. Here are a few of our outstanding educators.

**Mark Stallman** (Lincoln) was recently named the CIML Boy's Cross Country Coach of the Year. **Dawn Stallman** (Lincoln) was named as the Girl's Cross Country Coach of the Year.

**Arlene DeVries** received the Iowa Talented and Gifted Association's Distinguished Service Award on October 13<sup>th</sup> for her commitment to serving the needs of gifted children and their families.

**Jeff Hepburn** (Central Academy) was honored with the Distinguished Service Award from Iowa Academy of Science

**Susan Crook** (Jackson Elementary) received the Iowa Educator of the Year award from the Iowa Technology and Education Connection.

**Gary Morris** (Meredith) was published in the National Science

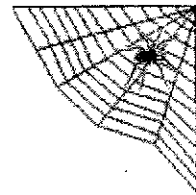
Teacher's Association journal for his environmental education program for at-risk kids.

**Dr. Sachiko Murphy** (Central Campus) has received the Elgin Heinz Outstanding Teacher Award. The award is given to a teacher who furthers mutual understanding between Americans and Japanese. Sachiko received \$2500 and \$5000 in project funds.

**Greg Holland** (North High) was selected as the winner of the My Favorite Teacher Award on Channel 5. Greg teaches business.

Eight Des Moines teachers were nominated for the Excellence in Education Award co-sponsored by ISEA, WHO Radio, Fox 17 and Outback Steakhouse. The nominees included **Jean Kile** (Lovejoy), **Jan Morris** (Brody), **Tina Olson** (Hillis), **Marilyn Ritz** (Callanan), **Beverly Stewart** (Wright), **Robin Vanderhoef** (Lincoln), **Marlys Wagner** (Lincoln), and **Jennifer Wilson** (Capitol View). The nominees will be honored at a dinner at the State Historical Building in November.

## Caught in the Web



It's Act III of the Budget Cut Follies. The state's 2.5 % cut will make classroom materials scarce. The following sites provide free resources for teachers.

### Teacher Related Freebies

<http://www.justfreestuff.com/teacher.html>

If you can ignore the pop-up ads, this site provides a treasure trove of free materials. Where else can you find a free pair of shoes for marching band directors?

### ESL Lounge

<http://www.esl-lounge.com/>

This site is just what the ESL teacher needed. It contains free lesson plans, worksheets, board games, books, flash cards and more.

### Free Stuff for Canadian Teachers

<http://www.thecanadianteacher.com/links/>

We're considering buying cheaper drugs from Canada so why not tap into some free teacher resources. Some of are only for Canadian teachers, but many are from U.S. sources.

### Federal Resources for Educational Excellence

<http://www.ed.gov/free/index.html>

The Federal government's free resource web site contains information organized by subject area. Much of it comes from the American Memory collection, but it also contains "freebies" from government agencies.

### Teacher Freebies Guide

[http://freebies.about.com/cs/teacherfreebies/?PM=ss16\\_freebies](http://freebies.about.com/cs/teacherfreebies/?PM=ss16_freebies)

You can subscribe to a "freebies" newsletter for teachers and can get free Krispy Kreme donuts (just what you need when you're stressed).

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## National ESP Day is November 19th

Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> is National Educational Support Professional's Day. Buildings are encouraged to recognize the contributions of associates, secretaries, bus drivers, campus monitors, custodians and cafeteria workers. These people work at some of the lowest paying jobs in the district and often don't receive the kind words and support they deserve.

As Iona Holloway, a former NEA Executive Committee member and ESP, said, "People who come to work for schools do it because they can think of nothing more rewarding than working with the students who are America's future. Our ESP members are an integral part of the education team in the Des Moines Public Schools.

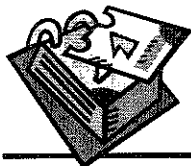
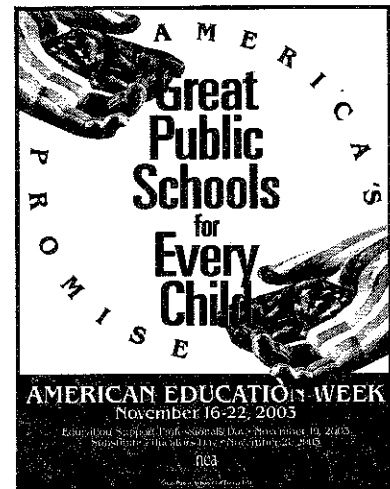
Our ESP members are the most vulnerable to budget cuts and lay-offs. With all of the discussions on those topics, many of our members are under a great deal of stress. Please take a few minutes on the 19<sup>th</sup> to let them know how much you appreciate what they do for you and the students in your building.

## American Education Week is November 16-22

American Education Week (Nov. 16-22) is fast approaching. There's still time to plan activities and generate local media coverage. Visit the NEA Web site at <http://www.nea.org/aew> for tips, sample proclamations, news releases, and more.

Did you know that the NEA was one of the creators and original sponsors of American Education Week? NEA and the American Legion were distressed that 25 percent of the country's World War I draftees were

illiterate and 29 percent were physically unfit. The conventions of both organizations subsequently adopted resolutions of support for a national effort to raise public awareness of the importance of education. Here's another little-known fact: In 1921, the NEA Representative Assembly, which was held in Des Moines, called for the designation of one week each year to spotlight education. That soon became known as American Education Week!



## DMEA Calendar

- November 10, 2003  
Governmental Affairs Committee  
4:15 p.m.
- November 12, 2003  
90 Minute Early Dismissal
- November 13, 2003  
FR Assembly  
North High School Cafeteria
- November 18, 2003  
DMPS School Board Meeting  
Public Forum 5:00 p.m.  
Regular Session 6:00 p.m.
- November 19, 2003  
National ESP Day  
4:15 p.m.
- November 20, 2003  
DMEA Executive Board  
4:15 p.m.
- November 26, 2003  
20 Minute Early Dismissal
- November 27-28, 2003  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
DMEA Office Closed