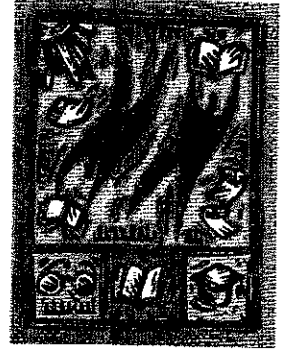


DMEA

# TEMPO

AUGUST 2005  
Volume 30, Issue 1



## RECORD NUMBER OF CANDIDATES FOR SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

Thursday, August 4, 2005 was the statewide filing deadline for school board candidates to file nomination papers for the upcoming September 13, 2005 elections. There was a record eight candidates who filed nomination papers for the Des Moines school board election.

Three seats of the seven-member board are up for election. Elected members will each serve three-year terms. The three open seats are those of Som Baccam, Margaret Borgen, and Jim Patch. Som Baccam is not seeking re-election. Incumbent Margaret Borgen is seeking a fourth term and incumbent Jim Patch is seeking a second term.

The election will come on the heels of the board's decision to close five Des Moines school buildings. Board member Borgen voted in favor of the closures while board member Jim Patch voted against the school closings.

There are six other candidates vying for the three open seats: Jeanette Woods, a Des Moines school district retiree and former president of AFSCME Local 2048; Michael Howland, an attorney; Jonathan Narcisse, president of the State of Black Iowa Initiative and publisher of the Iowa Bystander; Dick Murphy, an educational consultant; and Ginny Strong, former president of the Des Moines PTA.

The DMEA will once again take an active role in this important election. The DMEA GA Committee interviewed candidates on August 17, 2005. Following the committee's recommendations, the DMEA Executive Board will determine the three candidates that the association, on behalf of its members, will support. Notice of the supported candidacies will be passed along to membership before the September 13, 2005 election.

The election of school board members directly impacts you, the students, your classrooms, and the direction that the district takes. It is the school board that sets policy and directs the superintendent and administration on a multitude of issues, from discipline and attendance to your health insurance and wage increases. If you are a Des Moines resident, remember to cast your vote and urge your family members and friends to do the same.

**DES MOINES SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION IS SEPTEMBER 13, 2005**

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**2005 Excellence  
in Education Award**

ISEA is once again a partner in sponsoring the Excellence in Education Award. We encourage you to honor the profession and nominate a teacher who has changed your life or who has changed the life of someone you know.

You can nominate a teacher by logging onto the ISEA website at [www.isea.org](http://www.isea.org). Each nominated teacher will receive a certificate of thanks and the teacher who is selected to receive the award will win a cash prize for themselves and one for their school.

**HELP SHARPIE  
COLLECT ONE MILLION  
SIGNATURES FOR  
EDUCATION**

*Sharpie* is collecting one million autographs to raise \$1,000,000 in funds and school supplies for students and schools across the country.

By participating, there are opportunities for a \$50,000 scholarship, other prizes, or \$25,000 in supplies for your school.

You can enter at its website, [www.sharpie.com/virtual wall](http://www.sharpie.com/virtualwall).

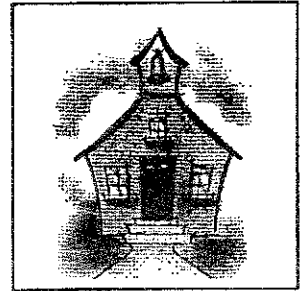
**PARENTS SUE  
DES MOINES  
SCHOOL BOARD**

On August 8, 2005, eight parents filed suit against the Des Moines school board for alleged violations of law when the board voted to close five buildings. The board had voted July 12, 2005 to close Adams, Cowles, Edmunds and Moore elementary schools between 2006 and 2011 due to a projected \$200 million revenue shortfall from the sales tax for school buildings. As part of the plan, the board voted to sell Central Campus.

The parents' petitions or challenges were filed with the Polk County District Court, the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Department of Revenue.

The Des Moines school parents are Marc Wallace, Gregory Wells, Shannon Boswell, Mike and Gayle Murray, Kathleen Gingerich, Tracy Lynch and Scott Neal. Collectively, they have 11 children in schools that are affected by the closings.

The basis of the parents' claims is that the board failed to give proper notice about the closings and was required to seek voter approval to change how the local-option sales tax revenue would be spent. The sales tax had been approved by voters in 1999.



"Education alone can conduct us to that enjoyment which is, at once, best in quality and infinite in quantity."

Horace Mann, *Lectures in Education*, 1845.

## WELCOME BACK

Well it is that time again, folks. Summer was definitely shorter this year. While some may not be quite ready for school to reconvene, some of our colleagues have already been back in school for a several weeks. We know you'll be ready when it matters. And we assure you that DMEA will be there for YOU as well when it matters.

Hopefully summer has still been a time of relaxation and rejuvenation, affording you the opportunity to refresh in preparation for the important and noble task you have in front of you in your classrooms and schools this fall. There is nothing nobler than making a difference in the life of a young person. Whether you are new this year or a veteran, every year is different, every year is new - new students . . . new hopes and opportunities.

And it is because we know how critical your efforts are, that we band together as professionals as members of the Des Moines Education Association to support and advocate for each other in this worthy, yet daunting, mission. We have far more strength together, than we have alone. If we are to have a voice and say what's best for students and public education, we must stick together and support each other, especially in the current context where so many outside of education are pushing things that aren't always best for kids. I continue to believe that real, meaningful, and lasting improvement in education can only happen with the deep, intentional involvement and insights of those who work most closely with students. That's us! That's the DMEA.

Because we know the vital role you play and the increasing challenges you face, DMEA is retooling and revitalizing itself to better meet your needs, address your concerns, and support you as you continue to make a difference in increasingly challenging times. We understand the growing complications and pressures that accompany the "so-called" NCLB provisions and the new teacher evaluation system, in addition to facing increasing daily challenges in our classrooms and schools. In light of these, we remain committed to responding quickly when urgent problems arise in your buildings and programs.

But we have finally realized that in order to thrive, not just survive, we can no longer wait until problems surface. We must proactively and constructively prevent problems and encourage positive conditions and relations through improving and increasing our presence, capacity, and constructive engagement at all levels in the district. DMEA must be felt on the "front end, not just the "back end" of building, program, and district decision-making and problem-solving. So, we are improving our capacity to advocate, serve, and communicate throughout our Association and within this District, which will become clearer as the year progresses. So look for more from your Association this year. 2005-06 will be a year of improved DMEA advocacy, support, and communication.

While some plans have already begun with more to come, none of our Association's increased presence can happen without YOU. We are DMEA. Increasing our presence and effectiveness means having members willing to step up as professionals within areas of interest, concern, and expertise. Member leadership is inextricably intertwined with DMEA success. And DMEA success absolutely improves your experience in the District. So having said that, DMEA will be offering more opportunities for YOU to grow and serve as professional educators and support professionals through our Association by participation on vital committees or through targeted activities. You don't have to do it all. Just do some . . . something more than the year before.

DMEA reps in your building will be asking what ways you might be willing to give of yourself. Work with us and through us so that we might be able to maximize our impact for your benefit. If each of us gives just a little more, together we can be a force for improvement in this District on behalf of the students and those who work most closely with them. That's us! You deserve a great school year. So let's help each other make this one to remember.

In solidarity,

Alan

*"There is nothing nobler than making a difference in the life of a young person."*



## DMEA MEMBERS ATTEND SUMMER CONFERENCE

The ISEA summer conference was held August 2-4, 2005, at Buena Vista College, in Storm Lake. Once again, it was a success. Eleven members represented DMEA at the conference. Professional staff conducted seminars throughout the three days. "Teaching Smart," "Bargaining 101," and "Using the Iowa Teaching Standards," were just a few of the presentations offered to members who attended. Senator Michael Gronstal, Co-Leader of the Iowa Senate, delivered the keynote address.

### **New Evaluation System for all Districts**

The Teacher Compensation/Teacher Quality law requires Iowa districts to implement evaluation systems for career teachers that include performance reviews and individual career development plans by the 2005-2006 school year. In compliance with the law (Iowa Code, Chapter 284), DMPS has implemented its new policy, "Performance Review for Career Teachers." This will not affect how often you are evaluated; this will remain the same.

If you have questions or concerns about the implementation of the new system, please direct them to your DMEA building representative. This will enable the representatives to determine if there are consistent problems or concerns throughout their building and we can address them in an efficient manner.

For a better understanding of the new evaluation system, "A Framework for Understanding the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria," is available from ISEA, for \$5. It outlines and describes each of the eight standards and the criteria for each standard. Many teachers have recommended this resource. You may request an order form from your DMEA representative.

## Mark Your Calendars

August 22, 2005

All Teachers Report

August 25, 2005

1<sup>st</sup> Day of School for Students

August 29, 2005

Deadline for Postmarks on Voter Registration Forms

September 1, 2005

DMEA Executive Board Meeting

September 2, 2005

Last Day to Register for Elections

September 5, 2005

No Classes-Labor Day-Office Closed

September 6, 2005

DMPS School Board Meeting

September 8, 2005

DMEA Rep Assembly

September 13, 2005

School Board Elections

### **Remembering September 11, 2001**

Please let us know of your classroom experiences surrounding or plans commemorating September 11, 2001. We will include your story in an upcoming newsletter.

### **Are You a Highly Qualified Teacher?**

See if you meet the requirements. Log onto NEA's website and follow the flowchart:

[www.nea.org/esca/qualification/teacher/index.html](http://www.nea.org/esca/qualification/teacher/index.html)