

THE DES MOINES
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Tempo

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 5

JANUARY 1993

JANUARY CALENDAR

Monday, January 4

GA/LA Committee
DMEA Office, 4:00 p.m.
Scholarship applications
in schools.

Thursday, January 7

Executive Board
DMEA Office, 4:00 p.m.

Monday, January 11

IPD Committee
DMEA Office, 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 14

Faculty Representatives
North Cafeteria, 4:00 p.m.

Monday, January 18

Human Relations Comm.
DMEA Office, 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 21

Executive Board
DMEA Office, 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 28

Dept. of Nurses
DMEA Office, 4:00 p.m.

For more information
on these or any other
DMEA meetings, call
277-6271

ISEA PRESS RELEASE

On December 7, 1992, ISEA President Angie King issued a press release, "New Priorities Needed for Iowa Children". A few weeks before this release, the Association had announced the need for an increase in public schools spending of \$116 million. Even though Iowans have consistently responded in diverse polls that they are committed to spending on public schools, ISEA was criticized and asked where we would find the funds in this budget crunch. Assertively, without apologies, the Association announced on Dec. 7 that there are sources of the necessary funds and listed them as follows:

1. Lower the state foundation level for school aid from 83% to 82%.
2. Fund school transportation costs - about \$70 million - from the road use tax fund. Currently we are using tax dollars to pay transportation costs for non-public school students with the rationale that transportation is not an educational expense.
3. Adopt a provider fee to help pay for continuing increases in Medicaid costs, thus freeing up money to fund other state programs. This proposal was supported by Governor Branstand last year and statewide polling we've done indicates this is the most acceptable way of dealing with Medicaid costs. Some 27 states are using the provider fee concept to cope with Medicaid increases.

These changes plus the amount the Governor says is available from existing state revenue would provide the \$116 million we believe Iowa schools will need next year.

The Association also suggested that there are other areas of the state budget which need to be considered as possible long-range change goals. Angie ended her statement by saying, "Iowa has tough financial choices to make. We're asking the Governor and the Legislature to provide enough funding to allow teachers and other educators to meet the needs of their students. We believe a majority of Iowans support this position and will oppose a reduction in school programs and the adverse impact that will have on children. Unless the Governor and the Legislature put a dollar priority on children, the quality of life in this state will deteriorate for all Iowans."

JOYCE BURCH Iowa Nurse of the Year!

Long-time Association member and leader, Joyce Burch has been named the Iowa Nurse of the Year. She will be honored by the governor on January 21, then received in honor at the Des Moines Public Schools Board meeting on February 2. Although Joyce says, it's just she's "been around for so long", we're delighted her super talents are appreciated and we couldn't be prouder!



From the Director...

SAFETY GRIEVANCE..

RESOLVED!

In a recent class action grievance filed in response to unsafe working conditions due to reroofing, the Association agreed to resolve the grievance with the

MARY D. LANGE
following conditions:

1. An ad hoc committee will be developed for the purpose of sharing concerns and brainstorming means of solving problems which occur when contractors' goals and activities are in conflict with the goals and activities of the school staff. The committee will include a classroom teacher, a building principal, the District architect, a contractor who has experience working in the District, Gene Clark, the DMEA Executive Director, the DMPS chief negotiator and the Head of Custodians.

2. Contracts with contractors will be designed to minimize the potential for conflicting activities and the District will increase and enforce penalties, including that projects which might interfere with the learning environment should be completed sufficiently prior to the beginning of the school year to allow time for preparation of the appropriate physical environment.

3. In situations where extenuating circumstances preclude completion of such projects, the District shall meet with the affected staff before students return to school to:

- a. advise of the current status of work
- b. advise of the specific criteria the contractor is to meet
- c. advise of the proper reporting procedure in cases where violations of the construction contract occur.

4. The District shall provide the Association with a completed copy on materials found in the ...building.

Both the teachers who filed this important grievance and the district administrators who worked with us to find a resolution are to be praised for their commitment, their fortitude and their cooperation! Please note this agreement and monitor its application in your building at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year.

PHYSICAL/SEXUAL ABUSE

The Department of Education is proposing some changes to our current Chapter 102 abuse rules. One recommendation would expand the definition of abuse to

include allegations of "sexual harassment." ISEA has asked the Department to rethink its position on this issue. Allegations of this type need to be investigated. Most districts, including Des Moines, already have mechanisms in place to handle these complaints outside of the requirements and restrictions of Chapter 102 investigations. The Iowa Civil Rights Commission also receives and follows up on these cases as part of their statutory duties. Each time a new category is added to Chapter 102 a new avenue of possible attack on our members is created. Please note that we are suggesting using the already existing mechanisms, *we are not suggesting that employees' rights supercede the rights of students.*

A LITTLE MAGIC IS "OUR BUSINESS"

In a recent issue of Iowa Commerce, Polk Suburban UniServ Director Pat Shipley was quoted as having wanted a magic wand when she was in the classroom. With one sweep she would have transformed all of her students into identical, and ideal students: enthused, energetic, respectful - eager and ready to learn.

Wouldn't we all have enjoyed the operation of Pat's magic wand? Instead, we are confronted daily with a diverse student population: apathetic, exhausted, disrespectful - neither eager nor ready to learn. Well, certainly all our students are not that extreme. But the truth lies somewhere in between Pat's best of all possible worlds and the latter definition of the worst of all possible worlds. Our staff is certainly challenged with a much less homogenous student population with significant social and emotional problems than were teachers not so very many years ago.

The amazing thing to me as I visit in various buildings throughout the district is that you really are creating "a little magic". Consequently, I enjoyed the juxtaposition of the headlines in the Iowa Commerce article:

Our Business

A Little Magic Goes A Long Way

You really are creating a *lot of magic* as you individualize, motivate, energize and respect your students so effectively that you are in fact waving that magic wand yourself and creating the kind of student attitudes that are necessary for meaningful, long-term learning to take place. **Keep up the good work!**



KRIS MESICEK

From the President...

Good things are happening every day in the Des Moines Public Schools. I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you just a few examples of how schools are changing to meet the needs of our students.

EAST HIGH

East High has entered into a long-range planning process for restructuring. As part of this process, the East High Staff proposed an Effective Teaching Course that incorporated the work of Ted Sizer. That proposal was accepted by the Professional Development Committee and East High Staff members had an opportunity to take the course this past August.

ROOSEVELT HIGH

Roosevelt High is one of the Phase III demonstration project schools for SBM/SDM. The staff has worked to develop a comprehensive school improvement plan. One outcome of this planning was a change in the timing of parent-teacher conferences to take place six-weeks into the school year. Both parents and teachers were pleased with this change.

CATTELL ELEMENTARY

Cattell Elementary has been awarded a New Iowa Schools Development Corporation grant. With this grant, the Cattell staff will redesign their curriculum to identify critical skills and competencies and develop more student-centered teaching strategies. They are exploring such innovations as flexible grouping, authentic assessment, integrated curriculum, and methods of increasing parental involvement. An additional component will be the "Success By Six" program that focuses on services to children from birth to age six as a way of laying the foundation for school success.

LUCAS ELEMENTARY

Lucas Elementary is another SBM/SDM demonstration project school that has also developed a comprehensive school improvement plan that has been supported by a site-based Effective Teaching course. The staff is excited about the opportunity

to redesign both the physical facility and the educational program.

ADAMS ELEMENTARY

Adams Elementary has developed a comprehensive plan that has reorganized the curriculum, ways of reporting student progress to parents with conferences, and the use of instructional time. The student day has been lengthened four days per week to accommodate early dismissal one day per week. This early dismissal gives teachers the needed planning time for staff development, team planning, and curriculum design.

What do all of these examples have in common? These changes were all initiated, designed, and implemented at the building level. They were not the result of a district committee or central office decision. Because of this, these changes directly benefit the students in a way that accommodates their needs. Teachers, working collaboratively with administrators and parents, played a central role in the design of each of these changes.

What also contributes to the success of these changes is the comprehensive approach taken. These schools are going beyond "quick-fixes" and "tinkering" to examine their educational program from a systemic perspective. These are positive changes, but it is only a beginning.

Summer Seminars for Teachers

The Division of Fellowships and Seminars of the National Endowment for the Humanities is sponsoring sixty-nine seminars on a variety of texts in the humanities for four, five, or six weeks during the summer of 1993. Each seminar will provide fifteen teachers with the opportunity to work under the direction of a distinguished teacher and active scholar in the field of the seminar. Teachers selected to participate in the program will receive a stipend of \$2,450, \$2,825, or \$3,200, depending on the length of the seminar. The stipend is intended to cover travel costs to and from the seminar location, books and other research expenses, and living expenses for the tenure of the seminar. Application deadline is **March 1, 1993**. If you are interested, please call the DMEA Office and we will send you information.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST

The Iowa Department of Education, in conjunction with Movies to Go Videostores, the Communicator Newspaper, and the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans are sponsoring an essay contest for Iowa high school students. The essay theme is the same as the national theme for African-American History Month, "Afro-American Scholars: Leaders, Activists and Writers".

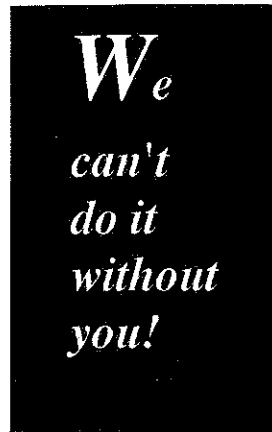
The contest is open to all Iowa high school students and closes on **January 15, 1993**. Prizes for winning essays will be awarded at a ceremony on February 11, 1992. The first prize is \$200 and a plaque, the second prize is \$150 and a plaque, and the third prize is \$100 and a plaque. See your Minority Achievement Program (MAP) Coordinator, history teacher, social studies teacher, or other school officials for details of the contest or call DMEA or contact the Iowa Department of Education.

IOWA EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY GRANTS

The Office of Educational Services for Children, Families and Communities of the Iowa Department of Education has announced the availability of grants for the Even Start Family Literacy Program. A Request for Proposal (RFP) may be obtained by calling Helen Clay at 515-281-3904. Applications are due at the Department on or before **January 6, 1993**.

NFIE GRANTS

There is still time to obtain information and apply for one of these valuable grants. The deadline is **February 17, 1993**. The grants are designed to develop and implement programs for promoting student success, building toward academic excellence, and reaching students at risk of dropping out of school. Since 1991, the partnership has created over 30 exemplary teacher-led projects. Approximately \$250,000 will be distributed in grants in the 1993-94 school year to public school teachers who have designed programs to benefit their students. Grants will be awarded in amounts from \$5,000 to \$25,000. Do remember that you will need a letter from your DMEA President, Kris Mesicek, saying that you have discussed the project with her and that it enjoys the support necessary to make it a success. In addition you will need a letter of support from an appropriate school or school district official indicating support. For the rest of the rules of the format, **call the DMEA Office.**



Does this logo look familiar to you? Not too surprising since it was featured in *Newsweek* Nov. 16, 1992. It is part of the media campaign which ISEA has mounted to tell the public that "...as hard as we try, we can't do our job without your support."

In case you missed it, the following is the text of the ad.

"We're your education team. Teachers, counselors, librarians, aides, administrators, custodians, secretaries, and dozens of others working together with one goal in mind...helping each child succeed.

But we can't do the job alone. Iowa is not sheltered from today's social problems. We're the only state where more than half the homeless population are children. Child abuse has risen by 49 percent in the last 10 years. The number of runaway children increased by 40 percent from 1986 to 1990. And last year, 29 percent of our high school students said they seriously considered suicide.

Iowa's children need us. And we need them, too, if we are going to prosper in the coming decades.

Spending on education is an investment. The quality of our public schools is a major factor when businesses decide where to build new plants. Educated, easy-to-train workers are the key to Iowa's economic development.

But we continue to ask our schools to do more with less. This year, 157 districts will get no increase in program funds; more than half will receive less than 2 percent.

Underfunding education today can lead to student failure and needless added expense tomorrow. School dropouts cost Iowa \$2 million a year in lost tax dollars, plus another \$2.4 million in increased welfare spending. And, dropouts are much more likely to end up in a correctional institution at an additional cost of \$18,506 per year. That's nearly four times what we spend to educate a child in Iowa's public schools.

We need elected officials with the courage to invest in our public schools. And we need to support them in these efforts. Education is an investment in our future that has an immediate economic impact today.

We're paying to present this information to you because we care about kids. And hard as we try, we can't do our job without your support."

Have all your friends and neighbors read this message? Why not share it today?