

THE DES MOINES
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Tempo

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 2

OCTOBER 1992

OCTOBER CALENDAR

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Thursday, October 1

Executive Board
DMEA Office
4:00 p.m.

Monday, October 5

GA/LA Committee
DMEA Office
4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 6

Member Services/
Public Relations Committee
DMEA Office
4:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 8

IPD Workshop
Hoover High School
4:00-8:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 15

Faculty Representatives
North Cafeteria
4:00 p.m.

Monday, October 19

Human Relations Committee
DMEA Office
4:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 22

Executive Board
DMEA Office
4:00 p.m.

Who Will Decide?

The Association has frequently repeated, "Every decision that affects public education is a political decision." The meaning of this phrase is sometimes lost in its repetition. Consequently, it behooves us to examine our rhetoric in light of the issues which affect our daily work.

Who determines class size? Public schools through their boards and administrators establish the number of employees to be hired by the district, based on the needs of the district and the funds available. Based on the funds available to the state, state aid decisions are made by the legislature and the governor. Even though not all school funding comes from state aid, the limitations of the per pupil expenditures are set by the state. The needs of the district are set by the elected members of the school board, based on the recommendation of the administration and other information provided to the board for its consideration.

Who determines teacher and support staff salaries and benefits? In most districts throughout the state, employees' salaries and benefits are bargained by the employees' sole bargaining representative and representatives of the employer (usually a team of administrators and board members and/or their designee).

What political decisions affect that bargaining? First, the parameters of bargaining were set by the legislature in chapter 20 of the **Iowa Code**. This includes everything from mandatory subjects, to timelines, to the way in which arbitrators determine their decisions. One of the chief considerations in bargaining is the available money. This is determined by the legislature and the gover-

nor. (The state's new timeline for determining school funding is covered in the President's Column.)

Is it true that there may be changes in public sector bargaining? The Association will fight diligently to protect Chapter 20 of the Code which provides for public employee bargaining, including having binding arbitration determined by an outside arbitrator. Without binding arbitration, decisions could be made unilaterally by the employer, thus negating the entire bargaining process. However, there are those parties who seem to be working against employee rights. The Iowa Association of School Boards has been asking candidates questions pertaining to the retention of binding arbitration, the Republican platform has stated that Chapter 20 of the Code should be rewritten to exclude binding arbitration, a northeast Iowa candidate for the Iowa legislature (Joe Kremer) has run radio ads stating that the state can save money by excluding binding arbitration, and Farm Bureau has been asking candidates their position on this issue.

Through your individual efforts to elect friends of education and lobby for responsible legislation you can have an impact on these decisions and many others which determine the conditions of your professional life and the future of our schools and students. We believe that collectively, through the association, our impact is increased exponentially. Join us in influencing and affecting those decisions.

In addition to your membership and representation through the association, what are **you** willing to do to **decide** what will happen to public education?



From the Director...

HARRASSMENT COMPLAINTS

Recently I met with Mary Lynne Jones, DMPS Director for Intercultural Programs. We discussed the Educational Equity and Employment Statement of the district and the Discrimination Complaint Procedure. The statement is:

MARY D. LANGE

“The Des Moines Public Schools prohibits discrimina-

tion in educational and employment programs and activities based on age, race, creed, color, sex, marital status, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. In addition, the District prohibits acts of intolerance or harassment toward employees or students that are not related to the individual's employment or education.”

You should have been made aware of the inclusion in your Staff Handbook of an abbreviated version of the Complaint Procedure. The complete version may be obtained from your school office. In addition, principals were to have given a brief explanation of the procedure at a staff meeting. [The following is that abbreviated version of the procedure.]

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A complaint procedure has been developed to handle these complaints. Employees, parents or guardians, students and volunteers can file a complaint. Briefly, the complaint procedure includes four steps.

1. Talk to the principal or immediate supervisor about the complaint to try to solve the problem. If the cause of the complaint is based on the conduct of the principal or immediate supervisor, the complainant should contact that person's immediate supervisor.
2. If not satisfied with the result of Step 1, a complaint form must be filed within 15 working days with the principal or immediate supervisor. A written response must be made within 10 working days by the principal or immediate supervisor. Individuals may obtain a complaint form from the District Compliance Officer by calling 242-7781. The Compliance Officer will be involved with the processing of the complaint.
3. If not satisfied, the complaint can be filed with the appropriate Director within 5 working days after receiving the response from the principal or immediate supervisor. The Director must respond within 10 working days.
4. If not satisfied, the complaint can be filed with the Superintendent within five working days after receiving the response from the Director. A response must be made by the Superintendent within 10 working days of receiving the complaint.

If still not satisfied, an individual can seek legal advice or file a formal complaint with the Des Moines Human Rights Commission, Iowa Civil Rights Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or other agencies.

Any formal complaint must be filed within 180 days of the incident giving rise to the complaint. If an individual seeks other avenues of redress, the District will not conduct the internal complaint investigation.

There are two very important things for you to remember:

In case an individual files a complaint against you with the Des Moines Human Rights Commission, Iowa Civil Rights Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or other agencies, the District will work **with** you to provide your defense.

In case you believe that there is an investigation which involves an allegation against you, you should **IMMEDIATELY CALL DMEA**. This applies to any employment situation in which you are asked to meet with administrators and you have reason to believe that **discipline** may come from this meeting. Remember the basic rules of those meetings:

If asked to meet with an administrator and you discover that **discipline** may result from this meeting, request that the meeting be postponed until you can have your DMEA representative present. If you are **required** to meet without representation, you should not say anything which may be used against you and should request a new meeting at which you have representation. NOTE: most meetings with administrators will not result in discipline, so you need not be fearful of regular meetings to discuss issues other than those from which discipline might occur.

USE OF PUBLIC MONEYS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES

Iowa Code 56.12A which became effective July 1, 1991, states:

“The governing body of a county, city or other political subdivision of the state shall not extend or permit the expenditure of public moneys for political purposes, including supporting or opposing a ballot issue. This section shall not be construed to limit the freedom of speech of the governing body of, or the officials or employees of the governing body of, a county, city or other political subdivision of the state.”

In addition the Des Moines Public School Board has adopted a policy (revised February, 1992) which prohibits posting of candidate information and use of students to engage in political campaigns.

The Association position on both the statute and the policy is:

that it is directed primarily at **employer** limitations; the association still has a right to distribute information to our membership, and members may wear buttons or have bumper stickers on our cars; we may **not** on school time be actively working on campaign.

If you have questions or concerns on these or any other topics, call me at DMEA.



KRIS MESICEK

From the President...

Iowa has long been known for its good schools. Iowans are proud that our students traditionally rank either number one or number two in the nation when it comes to ACT test scores. Our outstanding schools are used as a selling point for attracting businesses and new jobs to the state. But it has come to the point where the quality of our schools

is almost taken for granted. The state legislature, the governor, and some business leaders seem to think we can have first class schools at bargain basement prices.

At this point, we do not even know how much funding schools will receive in 1993-94. Legislation passed in the last session eliminated the forward funding formula for schools. Instead, each year, the legislature will determine the amount of funds for education. The legislators elected in November will be deciding in January how much money schools will receive. That is why this November's election is so critical.

In the words of Angie King, *"There are no Democrats or Republicans. There are only those who support education and those who don't."* Association members of ISEA-PAC have interviewed candidates and made recommendations in the state legislative races, as well as the 4th Congressional District. The list of recommended candidates has gone out to every member in the new GA/LA newsletter. Deb Henry and the members of the Governmental Affairs/Legislative

Action Committee are working hard to help these candidates get elected, but it takes more than just one committee. We need your help in these campaigns. Please consider volunteering for an hour or two. Just call the DMEA Office at 277-6271 for more information.

In addition to the state races, this year's presidential election may well determine the future of public education in this country. During the past four years, George Bush has cut the amount of real dollars going to education. His solution for improving schools is to use public tax dollars to fund private schools under the guise of "parental choice". Bush maintains that throwing more money at schools will not make them better, but somehow competition will.

Not only has Bush cut funds going to education, he has made our jobs more difficult in the classroom by eroding the quality of life available to our students. In the past four years the gap between the rich and the poor has widened. The fastest growing segment of our population living in poverty is children.

Governor Bill Clinton is a firm believer in the need for strong public schools. He knows that money spent on schools is an investment in our children's future and the future of this country.

Once again I'll say, this election is **vital** to the future of education. We need your help. Do it for your profession, your school, your colleagues, and most importantly, your students.

Hurricane Andrew Relief Procedures

The 200 largest local associations affiliated with NEA recently received a memo from NEA President Keith Geiger and NEA Executive Director Don Cameron requesting contributions to help the hurricane victims in south Florida and Louisiana. You may contribute as follows:

For Florida: Send contributions with check payable to Florida Relief Fund, P.O. Box 7000, Tallahassee, FL 32399.

For Louisiana: The Louisiana Association of Educators-NEA has set up a special fund to help re-equip hurricane-damaged school facilities. Send checks (or books and other supplies needed in schools) to LAE-NEA Classroom Disaster Fund, % Linda Day, President, Louisiana Association of Educators, Box 479, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.

United Way Campaign

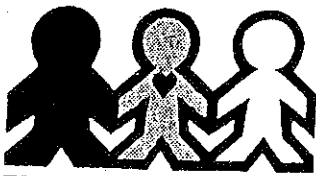
Once again the employees of the Des Moines Public Schools are participating in the United Way of Central Iowa's Campaign. As educators, we know we alone cannot solve all of the problems that our students bring with them to the classroom. It is becoming more important than ever that schools and United Way agencies work together.

An example of this collaboration is the SUCCESS Project at Moulton, Harding, and North. Schools and human service agencies are collaborating to assist students and their families in solving problems that would otherwise interfere with learning.

The list of how United Way benefits our students and our colleagues could go on and on. Please join in the "Together We're Better" campaign and make life a little brighter for so many.

Iowa PTA Convention

Every Child, Our Child



THE HEART OF IOWA
19 IOWA PTA 92
CONVENTION 92

Iowa PTA will be holding its annual convention at the Hotel Fort Des Moines starting November 13th, at 7:00 p.m. thru the 15th, with the theme "Every Child, Our Child in the Heart of Iowa".

The Keynote speaker at the November 14th, 7:30 p.m. banquet will be Pat Henry,

national PTA president. Four workshop sessions will focus on parenting skills, information on trends in education, advocating for Iowa's children, and leadership skills for PTA leaders. The Saturday luncheon speaker will be teacher Deadra Stanton.

Registration will begin Friday evening (11/13) at 6:00 p.m. Fees are:

- \$20.00 Early Bird by October 13
- \$25.00 by November
- \$30.00 On-site and non-member
- \$10.00 Sunday registration

For further information, contact:

Bev Smith
2839 Ridge Road
Des Moines, Iowa 50312
515-243-4122

Phase III

By now you should have your Phase III Career Level III-A application completed. The deadline is October 1, 1992! Let us know if you have any problems with this important process.

School Board Election

On September 8, Gloria Hoffman and Jonathan Wilson were re-elected to serve on the Des Moines Public School Board. At the organizational meeting of the board on September 15, Mrs. Hoffman was elected president of the board and Suzette Jensen was elected vice-president. We congratulate all of the board members on the recent election and anticipate that DMEA will continue our positive relationship with them for the benefit of the district and its employees. (Thanks to the Governmental Affairs Committee for the interviews and recommendations in this important election.)

Membership

Your membership enrollment should be completed by this time. Payroll deductions were to have been requested by October 1. As of September 21, our membership was 1733 teachers, 156 associates and 75 secretaries, or a total of 1964 members. Because we are currently (9/21) about ten days away from the deadline, this compares well with last year's numbers: 1766 teachers, 146 associates, 80 secretaries, or a total of 1992. By next month's *TEMPO* we will have the final numbers, including special recognition for those buildings with 90% or above membership. Congratulations!

ERA Iowa

The DMEA Human Relations Committee is involved in working to get this amendment passed in November's election.

