

# DMEA Tempo

Volume 20 . Number 3

November 1995

## An Opportunity



All three bargaining teams will hold an open forum following the Faculty Representative meeting on November 9th at 5:15 p.m. in the North High Cafeteria. Come and present your ideas and concerns directly or send them with your Faculty Representative. They want to hear from you. Items open for bargaining for the 96-97 contract are as follows:

**Teachers:** Salary, Insurance, Supplemental Pay, Phase III, Hours, Service Year, Safety Procedures

**Associates:** Salary, Insurance and Safety Procedures

**Secretaries:** Salary, Insurance, Transfers, Hours, Safety Procedures, and the Grievance Procedure

### Introducing the DMEA Bargaining Teams:

**Teachers** Russ Fisher, Chris Gammell, Paul Mann, Kris Mesicek, Garrett Nyman, Jean Phillips, Hance Throckmorton, Patty Trump, Barb Wiggins, Paul Wallendal

**Associates** Rhonda Anderson, Billie Bauman, Lois Blum, Helen Ringgenberg, Marijean Sears

**Secretaries** Dee Chambers, Holly Knause, Carolyn Nagel, Sharon Perkins, Jan Rouse

## \$ Not Unrelated!

Separate reports to the School Board in October revealed that the district again turned a profit in 1994-95 and that average elementary class sizes increased for the first time in several years.

The items should be reviewed together. First, the districts fund balance increased 2.4 million to a new level (June 30, 1995) of 14.6 million. A healthy fund balance is a good thing for a variety of reasons. But it also makes it difficult to swallow administrative claims that there is no money for program improvements.

Here is what the School Board heard about the 1995 elementary class sizes in K-5. In 1990-91 it was 25. Then it moved in the right direction as follows: 1991-92 24.4, 1992-93 23.9, 1993-94 23.1, 1994-95 23.1, 1995-96 23.5. The increase, though slight, is not due to a lack of financial resources as evidenced by a substantial fund balance.

## TIME

November will be a critical month for a District proposal on released time for collaboration and bell time changes. A report is due at semester time for consideration by the School Board.

All buildings were to seek reaction from Staff, PTA's and SBC's during October. Did you get your opportunity?

Last year's proposal, which the School Board postponed by a vote last May, will be rewritten in November and December. The same issues that caused concern last spring will provide obstacles again this year. These include:

- What will be the impact on secondary school schedules on the alternate Wednesday afternoons?
- How will the released time for collaboration be used and who will decide?
- Will it be necessary to add 10 minutes to the Middle School instructional day?
- Will the 3-tiered elementary starting times require some students to go to school earlier than desirable (8 a.m.)?
- Will elementary buildings with current weekly early dismissal be allowed to continue on that schedule?
- How will Central Campus programs be protected?



The DMEA position remains the same as it was last spring. Early dismissal to allow time for collaboration and other school improvement activities is desirable but one plan does not fit all district levels. Fortunately, this schedule allows time for reaction and problem-solving. Remain alert to the issues because something will be put together between now and the end of the semester.

### November Calendar

1	Executive Board	4 p.m.	DMEA
6	Governmental Affairs	4 p.m.	DMEA
9	Faculty Rep Assembly	4 p.m.	North
14	Dept. of Associates	4 p.m.	DMEA
16	Executive Board	4 p.m.	DMEA
20	IPD Committee	4 p.m.	DMEA
27	Human Relations	4 p.m.	DMEA

## THINGS

### (You May Want To Know)

- Some of you are contemplating early retirement. IRS regulations will not permit you to invest your early retirement bonus in the TSA plan through the district. Talk to your agent to discuss further. ISEA Legal Counsel agrees that that is the correct interpretation of the IRS regulations.
- The description of the new Blue Cross/Blue Shield Alliance Select health plan is available. Call Darlene Christiansen at 242-7711 to order a copy.
- If you are on Step 10 of the Teacher Salary Schedule, movement to step 11 requires 6 semester hours of approved course work in the last five years. Check your status through Human Resources.
- Remember that we celebrate American Education Week November 12-18. As part of that celebration, **NOVEMBER 15** is designated **Education Support Personnel Day**. It is a good day to remind secretaries, associates and others how much you appreciate their efforts to bring quality education to all students.

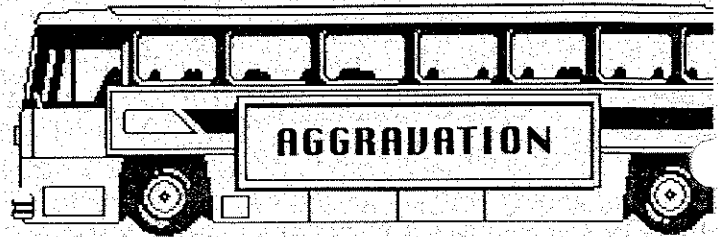


- The DMEA office still wants to receive reports of violence at schools.  
**HOTLINE # 277-6271**

• Come and have coffee with Polk County Legislators **November 11th at Denny's on Fleur between 9 - 11 a.m.** We need to begin dialogue with Legislators about Technology funds and IPERS. The session is not far away.

### GOOD NEWS ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

DMEA membership is up considerably. Final figures won't be available until later but it now appears we will have our highest total in some time. We should break 2000 for the first time since the declining enrollment and funding crisis in the early to mid 80's. Welcome to all new members and congratulations to the enthusiastic recruiters. Numbers make a difference.



We get calls at the DMEA office about a wide variety of issues. Since the school year started, two aggravating issues have been cited most often by callers. One is the late-running buses and the other is the substitute shortage.

The district does not have enough substitute teachers and associates. They say they cannot be hired in the numbers required. This is different from several years ago.

Last year the DMEA met with District Administrators to seek solutions and we continue to meet. Recall we agreed to a limit on professional leave days to control those absences. It helped but did not totally solve the problem.

The district needs to find a competitive advantage in attracting subs. Subs need to be treated with dignity and given appropriate support.

Additionally, employees who are forced to cover classes or have added students in classes should be compensated for overload. We will again take that position to the bargaining table.

DMEA wants to help solve the sub problem but let's not forget that the district is responsible for providing adequate personnel.

Finally, if you know anyone that might make a good sub, tell them to contact Human Resources. They need both teachers and associates.

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### PHASE III ALLOCATIONS

Each building has now received its 1995-96 School Improvement Allocation from the Phase III program. Check with your principal for your building total.

Recall that the Master Agreement specifies that the use of these Phase III dollars be determined collaboratively by the staff and that a quarterly report on how the funds are being used is to be given to the staff.

# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

