

DMEA Tempo

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The School Board election is September 10. Three of the seven seats are open and surprisingly, the 3 incumbents are not running. Obviously, big changes are coming.

Your colleagues serving on the DMEA Governmental Affairs committee, co-chaired by Beth Bishop and Linda Young, interviewed the 6 candidates on August 14 and recommended to the DMEA Executive Board that Margaret Borgen, Nadine Hogate and Mark Schuling be supported in the upcoming election. The Executive Board concurred. *see attached*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by President Paul Mann

Greetings! Welcome back to another school year! While you were away many of our association leaders were busy representing you in many ways.

1. The DMEA Executive board met to establish goals for 1996-97 (see the following article).
2. John Vint, our Executive Director, Kevan Mulder, DMEA Vice-President and I sat through many school board meetings (some of them quite heated).
3. John worked with several members and the administration on serious personnel matters.
4. John and I met with SUCCESS workers to complete the process of bringing this group into DMEA membership.
5. Sixteen leaders represented your interests at the NCUEA and/or NEA Conventions in Washington, D.C.; others attended the ISEA Leadership Development Workshop at Storm Lake; others attended the Technology Summit; and about 25 members of our DMEA ad hoc technology committee met many times to study, discuss and develop a

DMEA position on technology.

This report, entitled Technology for Teaching and Learning in the Des Moines Public Schools, has been adopted by the DMEA Executive Board and presented to each F/R and the public. The highlights are as follows:

1. Teaching and learning should be the driving force and central focus in integrating technology into the DMPS.
2. The professional expertise of teachers and instructional staff needs to be valued and recognized in the architectural design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of technology use. This means teachers must play an informed and central role in all decisions regarding technology in the district.
3. Access to technology must be equitable across the district and across grade levels.
4. Teaching and learning with the support of technology should develop student skills for the 21st century as outlined in the SCANS Report and School to Work Initiatives.
5. Teachers and instructional staff need substantial support in acquiring the skills needed to integrate technology into the instructional setting.
6. Appropriate technology must become a transparent but vital tool in all classrooms to prepare students for successful 21st century adulthood.
7. The district should operate on the principle of retaining at the individual classroom level as much choice in software and hardware as possible. Dual platforms should be implemented to allow students to become proficient on both IBM and Macintosh systems.

The report included important recommendations in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; of the educators' role in decision-making; training needs for teachers, associates and secretaries; on the development of acceptable use policies; and on management of technical support staff.

Space will not allow for a complete review of the recommendations proposed. See your F/R for the full report.

Many thanks to the following members

who provided vital expertise in developing the report:

Jerry Bell, Beth Bishop, Anna Deskin, Paula Hermann, Rowena Schweizer, Marjorie Crawford, Vicki Twedt, Corrine Reed, Dick McMahon, Paul Mann, Paul Herrin, Kris Mesicek, Don Murphy, Jim Wickham, Mara Brown, Sharon Clark, Margie Florence, Ann Defenbaugh, Jim Tredway, Jim Carrico, Elaine Peterson, Dick Craven, Barb Donery, Susan Seidenfeld, Kevan Mulder.



"I'm only attending school until it becomes available on CD-ROM."

DMEA 1996-97

The DMEA Executive Board has approved the following goals for 1996-97:

1. The DMEA will bargain improvements in teacher salaries and fringe benefits over the next few years that will make us the highest compensated teachers in the state (Total Package).
2. The DMEA will convince the administration to adopt new safety procedures to improve the health and safety of staff and students.
3. The DMEA will review with administration the elementary staff allocation formula, the effects of mainstreaming, and related class size data to avoid or eliminate unworkable class sizes.
4. The DMEA will work to elect moderate candidates to the DMPS Board and other elected offices.
5. The DMEA will work with the administration to implement the principles of shared decision-making as outlined in The Learning Organization.

TECHNOLOGICAL TURMOIL

by President Mann

This district has been in almost constant turmoil over technology and related matters for at least the past 6 months since the Maxtel report became public. Part of the problem appears to be deep divisions among administrators on the proper course to follow in making technological decisions in a district of this size, and part of the problem is that the Maxtel report calls for the sole use of IBM systems at the high school level rather than for dual platforms or for the MacIntosh systems currently in use. Many of our members are concerned that technological decisions are being made without teacher involvement, that little effective decision-making on the use of technology for teaching and learning is occurring, that a virtual freeze on new purchases of hardware and software is delaying implementation of new methods of teaching and learning, that we seem to be "behind" suburban districts, that we do not have effective levels of support to implement, support, repair, and replace technology, and there is no clear pathway to the promising technological classrooms of the future.

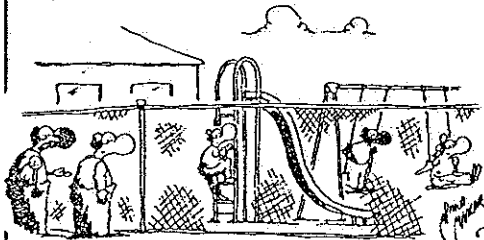
Things were moving fast in April when I became President. At least partially at our request, Dr. Wegenke recommended to the Board that the process be slowed down to allow staff greater input into the decision-making process through a series of technology summits and perhaps other forums. This greatly angered some School Board members, some administrators, and some of our own members who appear to be so hot to have IBM replace MacIntosh systems in our schools that they would ignore the wishes and needs of a majority of our members and our students. That is a luxury that the association cannot afford. Dr. Wegenke and most of our members would like to have a "dual system" of IBM and Mac and allow each faculty and perhaps each classroom instructor to decide which technology is more appropriate for

the curriculum being taught. It remains to be seen if a dual system, requiring, perhaps, dual support staff, is financially feasible. The real struggle will begin if we must choose just one system.

Those of you around during the summer to read the Register were given an almost daily dose of the significant inner turmoil in this district resulting in such bizarre things as: the filing of assault charges against our Director of Technology by another district employee (non member), of the placement of that administrator on administrative leave, of lawsuits against the district over alleged "secret files", of angry denials of any conflict of interest by a board member who has been heavily involved in the technology decisions for several years.

The continued turmoil will hurt chances for passage of Vision 2005 in December. It may also be a significant factor in the September 10 School Board race.

This district needs to clean house quickly, get key leaders and sufficient support staff in place, review what has been learned in the six pilot technology schools, develop a vision for effective technological implementation using principles of shared decision-making, establish priorities for the use of technology in teaching and learning, and make effective use of our new technology dollars. We need to do it soon.



"What kindergarten? That's a computer hackers' prison."

NEA Valuebuilders is looking for a full time agent for Des Moines and surrounding counties to promote and sell retirement savings products. Contact Mike Mimick at 1-800-360-6258



THANKS



Buildings and Faculty Representatives who distinguished themselves in last years membership drive were recognized at the annual Faculty Rep Kick-off Workshop on August 20th. The DMEA increased overall membership by 50. The following were honored in 3 categories:

- A. Highest % of members in building**
Stowe 97%-Rachelle Coomes, FR
Hiatt 94%-Pat Gronewold, FR
Phillips 89%-Susan Kotecki, FR
Monroe 84%-Chris Jordan, FR
Greenwood 84%-Cindy Roerig, FR
- B. Highest percentage increase**
Greenwood 25%-Cindy Roerig, FR
Phillips 21%-Susan Kotecki, FR
Studebaker 21%-Amy Arts, FR
Stowe 15%-Rachelle Coomes, FR
Watrous 15%-Mike Jones, FR
- C. Highest number of new members**
East 13-Bob Collins, FR
Lincoln 10-Jim Wickham, FR
Greenwood 8-Cindy Roerig, FR
Smouse 8-Kristi Wickre, FR

SECRET FILES ☹

Secret files have been in the news this summer. Is it likely that a file other than your official Personnel File is being kept? Possibly. Should you worry about it? No, you shouldn't. File material not brought to your attention cannot be used by the district in matters of discipline. If something is to be placed in your official file maintained by Human Resources Management, it must be promptly brought to your attention. You then have the right to file a written response for inclusion in your file. You also have the right to review your official file. Finally, if something is placed in your file that is inaccurate or unfair, you can file a grievance to seek its removal.

CALENDAR

- Sept. 6 Executive Board 4:15 pm
Sept. 9 GA Committee 4:15 pm
Sept. 12 Faculty Rep 4:15 pm
Sept. 12 All Associates 4:15 pm
Sept. 16 HR/IPD 4:15 pm
Sept. 19 Executive Board 4:15 pm
Sept. 26 Dept. of Nurses 4:15 pm

THE PROCESS

School Board Candidate interviews were wide-ranging. They included questions about budget priorities, technology, the neighborhood schools project, site-based management, Vision 2005 and anti-discrimination policies. We also asked for their opinions on the role of a board member and the strengths and weaknesses of the district. All candidates were invited to tell us why they are running for a board seat and any other perspectives they have about public schools in general and the Des Moines system in particular.

The three candidates recommended by the DMEA supported DMEA positions on critical issues, expressed strong support for public education and offered the most constructive suggestions for continuous improvement.

The following is a sketch of their backgrounds:

Margaret Borgen

A former teacher and administrator, Mrs. Borgen has volunteer experience at the local, state and national level. She has served on Site-Based Councils at Greenwood and Roosevelt and as President of the Iowa PTA. Mrs. Borgen has been supportive of Vision 2005. She expressed strong support for what she called "an excellent staff" and wants to enhance the role of SBC's and improve Site-Based Decision Making.

Nadine Hogate

Mrs. Hogate has long been a neighborhood leader on the East side of Des Moines and one of the early leaders in the Vision 2005 project. That leadership continues. She expressed unwavering support for the anti-discrimination policies of the District. Mrs. Hogate also identified the teaching staff as the districts major strength. She is committed to working with the Iowa Legislature to enhance the financial commitment to schools.

Mark Schuling

Mr. Schuling also brings considerable volunteer experience to the district. He is heavily involved at Greenwood and Callanan where his children are enrolled and serves on the district's audit committee where his background as a lawyer and CPA are put to good use. Mr. Schuling has a clear understanding of the board member's role as policy-maker, supports Vision 2005, is willing to explore the critical issue of class size and, like the other two recommended candidates, view the staff as the district's strength.

A summary of all interviews is maintained in the DMEA office for any member that wants to review it.

Support Our Neighboring School District

Our friends in the West Des Moines Education Association recommend that DMEA members who live in West Des Moines support Geanne Taylor and Pete Leo for the WDM School Board. They also asked for a yes vote on the PPEL Levy which is also on the September 10 ballot.

