

DMEA Tempo

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Des Moines Education Association

September 3, 1997

School Board Election September 9

The DMEA is recommending to members that they return incumbents **Elizabeth Goodwin** and **Laura Sands** to the School Board for another term. The election is September 9.

As in the past year, the DMEA Governmental Affairs Committee, chaired by Linda Young and Beth Bishop, interviewed the candidates on August 11. Based on past records and responses to questions, the Committee recommended to the DMEA Executive Board that Goodwin and Sands be recommended. The DMEA Board concurred.

Goodwin has 6 years' experience on the Board and Sands has served 3 years. Both have records that are substantially supportive of DMEA goals though neither was supportive 100% of the time. That's not unusual.

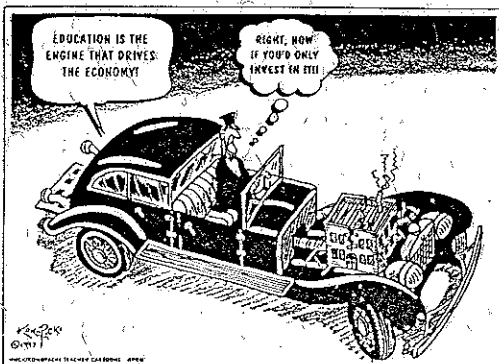
However, both have provided leadership in Vision 2005 efforts and in working with Polk County officials to get Prairie Meadows profits for the schools. Both supported efforts to get collaboration time in all buildings. Both were strong supporters of the anti-discrimination policy of the district when it was challenged.

In addition to good records, the DMEA Governmental Affairs Committee also thought it was important to retain experience on the Board. With 6 and 3 years experience respectively, Goodwin and Sands have the longest tenure on the current Board. A sense of history and some continuity was considered important by the committee.

The interviews conducted on August 11 are available on tape and notes taken by committee members are also available for review. Added to the issues already mentioned above, candidates were asked their views on class size, open enrollment, neighborhood schools, Central Campus, and programs to aid private schools.

Please call the office if you would like to volunteer for either or both campaigns.

VOTE ✓



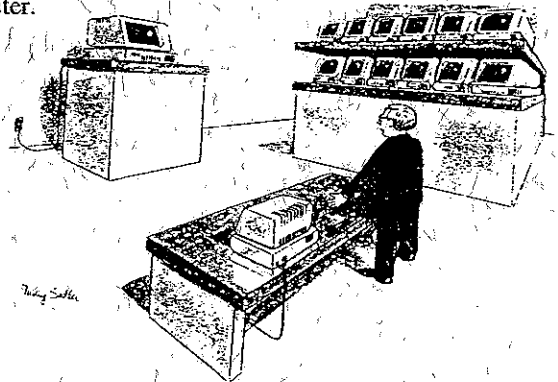
President's Message....Paul Mann

Welcome back to a HOT new school year!

Over the "long, hot summer" the school board acted to change many policies of the DSM public schools. Some of the changes are disturbing to many of us.

The strict, no nonsense attendance policy has been significantly weakened at the secondary level. Now, parents will be able to excuse their children from attending school without it counting toward the 6 days allowed, can excuse their children for illness, and will have the ability to pull them out for family vacations. We know from the past that some parents will cover for their children's truancies and absences. The cumulative effect will be to demoralize attendance staff and teachers who will once again be hendered in enforcing sound educational practice and strict attendance procedures.

Another change was announced by our new director of technology, Greg Davis. Mr. Davis suggested that secondary schools try to agree to a common platform across the district and believes that it should be a DOS based platform. He proposed to postpone ordering computers until October when the state money actually arrives for the secondary computers. At our request, Dr. Wegenke met with John Vint and me to hear our concerns about the delay in ordering computers and the frustration it would cause our members who heartily supported the initial planning and submitted their building plans last spring so computers could actually arrive in October and November for implementation by the end of the first semester.



"Your Honor, my client pleads 'not guilty' to all counts of incompatibility."

Mr. Davis met with building technology specialists in August and will meet with secondary building technology committees in September.

Apparently, the administration is unconcerned that many of our members feel this is just one more time that the administration has asked for our input and then began to manipulate us to change the decision. Technology planning is an ongoing process, but if the administration hopes to have staff using computer instruction extensively, they had better listen carefully to the needs of the most important people in the instructional process, the classroom teachers!

STAFF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

by Paul Mann

About four years ago I played a major role in encouraging ISEA and NEA to work for safe school legislation that would guarantee school staff members access to information on the records of transferring violent students. You can imagine my disappointment and dismay when DSM school administrators did not act quickly to comply with the new IOWA law.

For over two years we have worked behind the scenes with the administration to change the district policy on staff access to records of violent students. As most of you are aware, many administrators have felt that the suspension records of students were to be held in strict confidence. Even after the passage of the IOWA Safe Schools Law and verification from the US Department of Education, our administration was reluctant to change our policy.

There have been situations where teachers and other staff members did not find out until too late that a particular student had a hair trigger temper and a history of violent confrontations with staff.

This summer the school board finally changed the policy to make it clear to administrators and school staff that suspension and expulsion records of transferring students were to be made available to ALL staff who have contact with the student.

Central administrators and building principals have discussed ways to make this information available without compromising confidentiality. One way would be to designate a separate file in a school office where staff could quickly access suspension and expulsion records of transferring students. A weekly or monthly staff memo announcing names of "new" students and reminding staff that transfer records are available would be both acceptable and desirable. The memo could serve to remind staff to help make the new student feel welcome at the same time that it reminds staff of the need to learn all that they can about the needs and dispositions of new students.

We have worked very hard and long to assure that this information is available. Now is the time for you to ask your administrator how this information is to be accessed in your building.

We trust that you will use this information as intended to help make sound professional judgments on how best to approach students who have a record of difficult dealings with school staff so that you can discipline with dignity.



Your Gift to Them

Let's figure the "Charity Factor" or the amount each teacher member pays to provide benefits to non-members.

1. Number of DMEA teacher members	1747
2. Total dues per member	\$425
3. Total dues income (Multiply lines 1&2)	\$742,475
4. Total number eligible for membership	2250
5. Dollars to serve each eligible person	\$329.98
6. Charity factor--amount each member pays toward providing benefits to non-members (Subtract line 5 from line 2)	\$95.02

The Association believes that each of us has a definition of what the word "professional" means. We are sure that responsibility is a part of each definition.

Let us hope that each non-member will reconsider his/her position of non-participation and non-support for education affairs.

Many of us are members

Everyone should be!

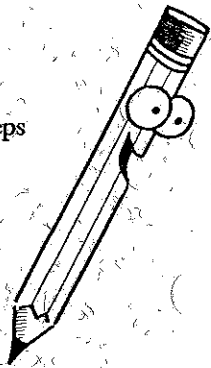
More help is needed for Faculty Reps

Be an advocate

Encourage others to take leadership

Remember to ask everyone

Soon we will see results



DMEA Calendar

Sept 8	GA Committee	4:00 p.m.	DMEA
Sept 9	All Associates/Secretaries	4:15 p.m.	North
Sept 11	Faculty Rep	4:00 p.m.	North
Sept 15	HR/IPD Committees	4:00 p.m.	DMEA
Sept 18	Executive Board	4:00 p.m.	DMEA

