



September 1998
Volume 1, Issue 1

OCTOBER CALENDAR

- 1 Executive Board
4 p.m. DMEA
- 5 GA Committee
4:15 p.m. DMEA
- 8 Faculty Reps
4 p.m. North
- 13 Executive Board
4 p.m. DMEA
- 20 Associate Board &
AR's 4 p.m. DMEA
- 20 Human Relations
4 p.m. DMEA

DMEA LEADERSHIP REPORT

With this issues we are introducing a new publication for DMEA Faculty Reps and Committee members. It will come to you approximately between Faculty Rep meetings and will include issue updates, alerts and news you can use.

The all-member TEMPO will continue to be published once per month. Contact the DMEA office with suggestions or questions you want to be addressed.

Reproduce the news (DMEA will supply paper), post it and or use it at DMEA building meetings.

* At the September FR meeting we told you that we had ordered an appraisal of the DMEA building to give all of us guidance about selling the building and moving to the new ISEA headquarters. That appraisal has been received and places the value at between \$200,000 and \$220,000. Asking price will be determined after the FR's decide about moving or staying.

* DMEA representatives will begin meeting with district administrators to work on a **1999-00 school calendar**. Any suggestions? How was the current calendar received? We started school on Thursday (8-27). Did members like that? We will discuss the issue on October 8th at FR meeting.

* NEA's **Attorney Referral Program** provides members with legal advice on personal matters. Each eligible member is entitled to two 30-minute consultation sessions *free* during each membership year. And if you need additional legal help, NEA's *Attorney Referral Program* lets you get that help at rates below participating attorneys' usual fees.

This unique program is designed to make sure that every NEA member has access to affordable legal advice.

* There has been some **confusion regarding insurance coverage for mammograms**. They are to be considered a part of a physical and should be paid. BC/BS is making the correction but if a member has been denied, have them call BC/BS at 245-5159.

* We received a call last summer about **bereavement leave**. The contract states that you get one day for the death of a person of unusually close personal relationship if it is outside the Greater Des Moines area. It turns to ½ day if within the area.

The call was prompted by learning that the district regards the Greater Des Moines area as being a 50 mile radius. We are told that that has been the policy for many years. If members need a full day, they can get it for good reason such as the time

of day the funeral is being held or serving as a pallbearer. People should contact DMEA if there is difficulty.

* Some people argue that because the **cost of living** is less in Iowa we don't need to pay teachers at the national average. There is no national cost of living index. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce does develop a cost of living index for selected cities across the nation. In their ranking released for the first quarter of 1998, three Iowa cities ranked above the U.S. city composite—Ames, Quad Cities, and Dubuque—and five ranked below the index—Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Iowa City, Mason City, and Waterloo.

The cost of living in small-town Iowa is comparable to most towns in Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Kansas. Yet teachers in those states earn considerably more than Iowa teachers.

The average Iowa public school teacher in 1996-97 was slightly older than 42 and had nearly 16 years of teaching experience. Nearly 28% had earned a graduate degree. 23% of the teachers are 50 and older.

* **The School Board met on September 15th to approve the hiring of a consulting firm to reorganize the business and financial operations of the district.** The DMEA supports the move but will object to any outcome that smacks of privatization of school services. Privatization of public services is overrated with many failures to look at and learn from.

Privatization is also part of the political agenda for groups opposed to public schools.

* We have for years held a **fall workshop** for members and leaders. Tight schedules for everyone at that time of year led to a decision to move it to February/March. More later!

* Thanks to all DMEA leaders for work on the **membership campaign**. More work needs to be done so please keep plugging away. New members will be invited to a dinner on November 10th at Hoyt Sherman Place.

* The DMEA wants to make every member and potential member aware of the services and savings available through **NEA Member Benefits**. Free and low cost insurance, travel miles using an NEA issued credit card and discounts are just some of the programs available. If you want to have a **DMEA building meeting** to discuss these programs as well as other issues the DMEA is working on please invite Paul or John and we will accommodate.

* Every year employees are asked to perform medical services for students with special needs. Many employees are uncomfortable with providing these services or taking time from instruction to carry them out. The Iowa legislature agrees. In July 1992, an ISEA-sponsored law took effect that allows school employees to decline to perform **intrusive medical services**.

280.23 of the Iowa Code says, "*The board of directions of each public school district and the*

authorities in charge of each non-public school shall not require non-administrative personnel to perform any special health services or intrusive non-emergency medical services for students unless the non-administrative personnel are licensed or otherwise qualified and have consented to perform the services." This applies to all students, not just special education students, and it covers all school employees.

Professional & paraprofessional school employees can opt out of providing medical services unless (1) they have received formal training pursuant to the Rules of Special Education (Division VI, 41, 21-3, Iowa Administrative Code), and (2) the employee has consented to provide the services. The only exception is an employee hired specifically to provide medical service, such as a doctor, nurse, or a special education paraprofessional.

The law permits employees to opt out at any time by notifying their supervisor that they do not wish to perform special health services. It does not matter whether the employee has been trained in the procedure or has yet to be trained. The law does not provide a way for an administrator to refuse to accept a employee's refusal to perform medical services. But all employees must still provide **routine administration of medicine and first aid, according to Department of Education rule (281) 12.3 (4) (256).**