

SC faculty contract expected soon

By TIM RICHARD

Schoolcraft College and Faculty Forum negotiators were expected this weekend to have finished hammering out a new two-year collective bargaining agreement and signs of dissension on both the board of trustees and in the faculty ranks.

Finalization notes are expected to be held the last week of October, according to a college spokesman with the faculty ratifying first.

A strike was avoided Monday when the faculty voted last Friday to accept the board's final offer on an economic package.

THERE WERE confused indications of how much the economic package will be worth to the faculty.

Forum President Richard Arlen said it would be worth three per cent the first year and 4.5 per cent the second.

A board source, however, put the actual cost in the four to 5.5 per cent range. The reason is that fringe benefits will increase by about one per cent as base pay increases.

These figures all exclude increments—the annual seniority increases teachers get. Increments are a minor factor at Schoolcraft, though, where 72 per cent of the full time faculty are at the top of the 11 step pay scale due to seniority and will get no further seniority increments.

CURRENTLY, Schoolcraft instructors get these base salaries for a 36-week work year:

- With BA degree, \$10,229 to start and \$16,611 after 10 years. There are 13 instructors in this category, and five are at the top of the scale.
- With MA degree, \$11,242 to start and \$19,479 after 11 years. There are 96 in this category, and 68 are at the top of the scale.
- With MA degree plus 30 credit hours, \$11,804 to start and \$20,078 after 11 years. There are 44 persons in this group, with 37 at the top of the scale.
- With PhD degree, \$12,367 to start and \$20,675 after 11 years. There are nine in this category with six at the top of the scale.

Altogether, Schoolcraft has 182 full time instructors and 118 are at the top of their scales.

Librarians and counselors get the base pay plus 25 per cent because they work proportionately more weeks during the year.

THE FACULTY accepted the board's final offer Friday by a margin of less than 1½ votes—72 in favor to 71 ½ opposed.

Reason for the fractional votes is that part-time instructors are entitled to less than a full vote.

With 182 full time and some 170 part-time instructors in the bargaining unit, it was clear that vast numbers of union members failed to vote.

Arlen called it the closest vote he has seen in his seven years of negotiating.

At least 700 members of the board of trustees privately indicated to the observer they were dissatisfied with the economic package, and one threatened to vote against it.

That board member thought the settlement too expensive in terms of what the financially strapped community college has available.

The college raised tuition this year and is considering further fees increases, among other options, to balance the budget because of a drop in credit hours being taken by students.

The board was further bothered by indications that the Faculty Forum negotiating team knew in advance how far the board was willing to go. Source of the continuous "leaks" was believed to be either someone close to the president's office or more likely, another member of the board.

THE COLLEGE administration declined to ratify the Faculty Forum for selling students to call the college last Monday to see if classes were being held.

Conceivably, the college switchboard operator could have received 10,000 telephone calls. But an announcement over radio station WJLJ early Monday that classes would be held apparently stopped some calls.

Switchboard operator Jean Wilson said she received "hundreds of calls" Monday and that the situation was "chaotic" from 7 a.m. when she started work, until 10:30 a.m.

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