

# Teachers unions edging toward regional pact

An O&E roundup

Oakland teachers unions don't have countywide bargaining yet, but they're moving in that direction.

Of 26 Michigan Education Association affiliates, 25 have contracts expiring this summer. Their goal, in the words of one local president, is "one master contract."

An unspoken goal is more bargaining clout. Teachers unions remember how the school board in Crestwood, in western Wayne County, was able to fire and replace nearly all 186 teachers after a strike five years ago. That would be almost impossible if all teacher contracts in a county expire at the same time.

THIS YEAR Region 7 has a Coordinated Bargaining Committee (RTCBC) and 24 MEA units are cooperating with it in some way, according to MEA official Grove Sandrock. Region 7 covers Oakland County.

"There are various levels of participation," Sandrock said.

Approximately 10 units have changed their bylaws to make ratification a two-step process. Any tentative agreement would have to be ratified by both the RTCBC and the local teachers, in the same way a bill must pass two houses of Congress to become law.

Southfield, Birmingham and Berkley, with which Sandrock deals, have taken this step, he said.

Others will simply have the RTCBC study the tentative agreement and advise local teachers whether they got a good deal by MEA standards. Sandrock calls that "step one" participation.

THE MEA is studying other steps. One possibility, said Sandrock, is a

bargaining team serving multiple districts.

It could be a single team handling all contracts. It could be a single team serving several units. Or it could be a group which would form the nucleus of local and be supplemented by a few local members.

The problem is how to deal with a multiplicity of employers, Sandrock said.

SO FAR, three school districts have some form of agreement, all for two-year periods so that the contracts will expire in 1981.

In Bloomfield Hills with 467 members, a tentative agreement was initiated late last week. The current contract expires Aug. 28.

Hazel Park and Rochester have approved two-year settlements.

South Lyon last year wrote a three-year agreement that will expire in 1981.

Other districts are in various stages of negotiations.

Birmingham, with 634 members, is starting two weeks of intensive negotiations. Its contract expires June 30.

West Bloomfield, with 290 members, has not started serious negotiations. Teachers there worked the 1976-77 school year without a contract and struck for four days at the beginning of the 1977-78 school year. The situation is less than friendly. Deadline is Aug. 31.

Bargaining in Troy was held up until the outcome of June 11 millage requests. Voters finally approved a three-mill levy and rejected a one-year levy. The current contract expires Aug. 14.

Farmington started bargaining June 6 for 770 members. Its contract expires Aug. 25.

## Parks promoter

Janet Pung has been appointed director of public information by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission. She will coordinate all communication programs for the park system. Ms. Pung has taught mass communications at Central Michigan University, where she was news bureau coordinator with CMU's Information Services. She has a master's degree in journalism from CMU.



## Productivity down as work time cut

Americans today spend less time at work than they did a decade ago, according to the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research (ISR).

ISR researchers Frank Stafford and Fred Duncan figure that this decline in work may explain about one-third of the decrease in growth of American productivity.

The researchers compared ISR surveys of 1965 and 1976, involving both the use of time diaries in which respondents were asked to keep track of their time use over a specific 24-hour period, and respondents' own reports of time use.

Most other studies of work and pro-

ductivity, including those used by the government's Bureau of Labor Statistics, rely on surveys that ask respondents only to recall how much time they worked in some previous period, the researchers claim.

"Respondents who must recollect their past time use are likely to overestimate. Time diaries avoid this problem."

Stafford and Duncan report that between 1965 and 1976, the ISR time diary estimates show a decline in actual hours worked for all groups in the labor force except unmarried women.

The decline was 4.7 percent for married men, 23.3 percent for unmarried men, and 20.1 percent for married women. Unmarried women showed a 2 percent increase in hours worked.

The researchers say the changes they recorded are generally larger than those reported to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, "and since productivity statistics are calculated as the output of the economy relative to hours worked, this larger decline in work hours explains part of the decrease in productivity."

Unmarried women who work, they note, have time uses which have become more comparable to men's between 1965 and 1976. Specifically, they reduced their housework time by about 3.7 hours per week and increased their television viewing time by about 3.3 hours.

Stafford and Duncan believe that the time diary approach has provided them with a more comprehensive view of time use and a setting for understanding recent trends in labor market time.

"If our interpretation is correct," they conclude, "a good share of the slower productivity growth could be explained by a tendency for non-diary estimates to underestimate the decline in the work week."



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