

April 28 email from Regent Gartner to all Regents:

Hi Dave -

As I mentioned to you the other day, I read in a recent Register article that the University of Iowa is implementing a new policy to give new parents one semester off from teaching duties, at full pay. That was the first I had heard about it.

Apart from the merits of this policy - be they good or bad - I would like to raise the issue of process: Should a far-reaching policy such as this first be approved - or at least discussed - by the Board of Regents? The Iowa Code - Sections 262.9 (2) and 262.9 (3) - mandates that the Board of Regents "make rules for admission to and for the government of said institutions, not inconsistent with law," which would seem to say the Board should at least pass on such a "governing" policy.

The Code further says the Board should "elect a president of each of the institutions of higher learning; a superintendent of each of the other institutions; a treasurer and a secretarial officer for each institution annually; professors, instructors, officers, and employees; and fix their compensation." This new policy is clearly a part of "compensation."

Further, the policy could have an impact far beyond its intended reach. If the University of Iowa puts in such a policy, what are the implications for the faculties at Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa? In addition, with AFSCME seeking a law (now on the Governor's desk) to allow for bargaining on issues other than wages, what are the implications of this policy on future labor negotiations? In other words, what is the potential financial and personnel impact on the system as a whole?

As I said, I am not taking a stand on the merits of this policy - be they good or bad - but rather I am raising an issue about the process under which the policy came about and any impact it might have beyond its intended impact. Let me add that this seems to me to be more important than, say, parking rates.

I realize the agenda for Thursday is full, but I would like to see this discussed at the following meeting, if you agree.

Michael