

Random Notes

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UNION ASKS HAUGH TO RESIGN

The AEA Board of Trustees voted unanimously last week to ask Loretta Haugh to resign her board of education seat. Mrs. Haugh was advised of the vote in a letter sent to her home this past weekend.

For years, Mrs. Haugh was a classroom teacher in Akron. She was a member and strong supporter of AEA, and was first elected to the board in 1999, beginning her first term in January, 2000. She was re-elected in November, 2003. On both occasions she was endorsed by AEA and the Association was active in her campaigns.

Mrs. Haugh's announcement to go to work for Summit Academy, an Akron-based charter school, outraged school employees and board members. The move is totally inconsistent with public comments she has previously made in opposition to charter schools.

In addition to AEA's request that she leave the board, Mrs. Haugh has been asked formally to resign by her fellow board members and by the Akron Association of Classified Personnel, the union representing the district's secretarial employees. To date, Mrs. Haugh has refused to resign. A major fear among school personnel is that her continuing presence on the board may cost levy votes in November. While there have been some calls to the administration along these lines, we do not know how widespread the sentiment is. Clearly, though, this is one distraction the levy campaign can do without.

AEA Joins "Hands Off Our Health Care" Coalition

AEA has joined with the Ohio Federation of Teachers, the Ohio Association of Public School Employees/AFSME, SEIU 1199, AFSCME Council 8 and the Columbus Education Association in opposition to a plan to implement statewide health care coverage for Ohio public school employees.

The state health care plan is part of the budget bill passed last summer. The Ohio House passed the plan. A conference committee compromise requires a final confirmation vote later this year.

A state-mandated plan will likely result in fewer benefits at greater cost to most school employees around the state, including Akron.

It would take health care coverage out of the realm of collective bargaining; in fact, it would prohibit local unions from bargaining health care coverage.

Watch for information soon about what you can do to help save your health care.

Trustees Select 4 For Board Seats

Acting on the recommendation of the Legislative Committee, AEA Trustees endorsed four candidates for election to the Akron Board of Education. Committee Chair **Anne Griffith** and members **Tom Saal**, **Kathy Lowrey**, **Sue Ott** and **Jim Perge** interviewed each candidate who expressed interest in securing AEA's endorsement.

Because more than half the seats on the board are up for election, the committee's deliberations were guided by the need to balance experience with new talent. Following are the candidates recommended by the committee and endorsed by Trustees:

✕ **Paul Allison.** Allison is an incumbent and currently serves as president of the board. He is an attorney with First Energy. Allison has maintained open communications with AEA. He would like to improve communicating APS success stories to the public, and wants to further investigate the reason for the flight of APS students to charter schools.

✕ **James Hardy.** It would be a mistake to dismiss Hardy's candidacy because of his youth. He comes from a family of Akron educators, he is extremely articulate and he is passionate about education. A political science/criminal justice major, Hardy stresses the need to work with state lawmakers to create a level playing field between public and for-profit schools. He envisions a marketing strategy to sell the district's quality services to students and parents. Hardy worked closely with AEA on Brian Williams' successful campaign for an Ohio house seat last fall.

✕ **Allan Markey.** Markey is a CPA. He has the professional skills to understand budgets of large organizations. He is opposed to charter schools and as a board member would focus on adequate school funding. He envisions more business concerns partnering with APS. Markey is active in many community organizations and has served in the past as chairman of an APS levy campaign.

✕ **Linda Omobien.** Like Allison, Omobien is an incumbent. She is a social worker. She has served as board president and has been nominated for the same position on the state board. Like all AEA-endorsed candidates, Omobien opposes charter schools and she has an interest in marketing our schools to help stem

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the flow of students out of the district.

Although not recommended for endorsement by the Legislative Committee, candidate **Kirt Conrad**, Grants Manager for METRO, would be a capable member of the board if elected. Conrad's interests include an efficient use of school community learning centers, including a mentoring/tutoring program at the centers. He would also like to see improved communications between parents and the school board.

LPDC Searching for Teacher Members

The Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) is seeking two AEA members to serve on the Committee. Any member who has taught at least five years in Akron is eligible to serve. Interested members should contact Jim Perge at Crosby Alternative or email him at jperge@akron.k12.oh.us.

Odds & Ends....

Teachers in the Kenmore and Garfield clusters came through in a big way making phone calls for the levy campaign. Nearly one hundred teachers showed up on each cluster's night for calling. Next week, East and Ellet take over the phones...

Some great prizes will be raffled off at Sunday's Making Strides Walk, including a 20 inch color television, a \$50 gasoline gift card, two pieces of fine jewelry and a gift bag full of all kinds of neat things. See your building captain for details. Hope to see you Sunday...

Printing the new Agreement is taking a little longer than we anticipated. We hope to have the entire text posted on the AEA website by the end of the month...

Petitions are due October 31 from members wishing to fill current vacancies on the AEA Board of Trustees. The vacancies are Buchtel Elementary, Central Secondary, Firestone Secondary and Kenmore Secondary. Petitions require the signatures of five current AEA members assigned to the district.