

Reporter

November, 2008

Executive Board

Sidney Kardon
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Marcia Rauschendorfer
Executive Vice-President

Steve Chisnell
Program Vice-President

Cherilyn Ross-Blair
Secretary

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Jennifer Browne
High School Director

Tracy Crawley
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Todd Noonan
MEA Delegate

Barbara Pollis
Middle School Director

Betty Ong
NEA Delegate

Betty Ann Garlak
PAC Chairperson

Uniserv Director

Laurie Moore

SCHOOL POLITICS

There is a huge philosophical gulf between presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain. Obama believes that the function of government is to enhance the welfare of citizens by supporting vital public functions and services such as education and Social Security. McCain's belief is that government programs don't work very well. Therefore, functions such as education and services such as Social Security should be taken over by the for profit private sector. Not coincidentally, this greatly enhances the ability of corporations to make money.

The implementation of their beliefs is seen in the details of their respective platforms. Hence, Obama supports an infusion of money into public education - particularly in the area of early childhood education. Obama has publicly said that he supports funds for teacher recruitment and education and higher salaries. McCain, commensurate with his beliefs, supports vouchers which are a transfer of tax dollars to the private corporate sector.

Similarly, Obama supports Social Security continuing to be run by the United States government as it currently is. McCain supports the privatization of Social Security believing that the same banks and investment companies that have created the current financial crisis through unethical practices should have control of our lifelong Social Security savings.

As far as the NEA and MEA are concerned, this is an easy decision. Obama's interest in enhancing the welfare of students and teachers far outweighs McCain's reliance on the discredited theory of "trickle down" economics which only serves the interest of corporations and the rich. Not much has trickled down, but the financial security of middle class America has certainly tumbled down.

On November 4th, please vote for students, schools, and families by casting your ballot for Barack Obama.

Royal Oak Education Association

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CONTRACT FEATURE

UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE

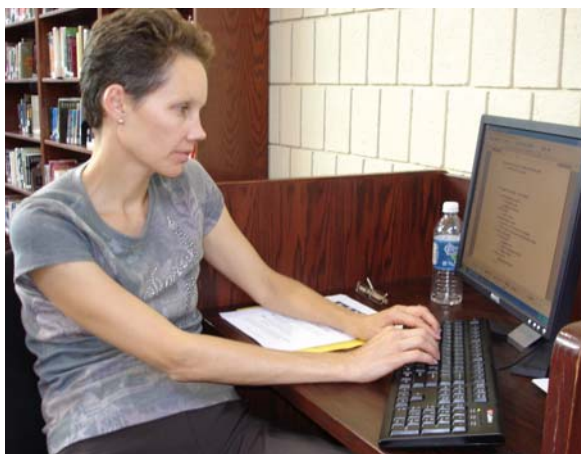
In May, 2007, the Royal Oak Education Association filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against the District due to the change in elementary starting times. The Administration changed the elementary starting time to 9:00 a.m. without bargaining with the union. The reason that we filed the ULP is our belief that as a change in working conditions, starting time is a mandatory subject of bargaining. The Administration's claim is that they have the managerial right to change starting times without an obligation to bargain with the union.

While our initial ULP was pending with the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC), the District made another unilateral change in starting time; the starting time at Addams Elementary was changed to 8:30. The ULP was amended to add the Addams time change.

Both sides presented their case at MERC on October 1, 2008, before Administrative Law Judge Julia K. Stern.

Laurie Moore and I testified that school schedules have historically been a part of collective bargaining. Ryan Knapp, our Association Representative at Addams, was prepared to testify about the time change at Addams and its impact upon the staff and contractual conditions. Some of the staff meetings and professional development meetings, for example, have been changed from before school to after school. However, Ryan never got the opportunity to testify as our attorney, Michael Lee, decided that the history of collective bargaining in Royal Oak was more germane to our case. It will take several months to get MERC's decision. If we win the case, starting times will have to be bargained with the union. That means that our collective voice will be heard.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Cherilyn Ross-Blair

Cherilyn Ross-Blair is our newly elected Secretary. She has become a union activist because of her love of students and the teaching profession. Her mission as an Executive Board member is to help teachers continue to earn a professional salary with good health care and a secure pension. Cherilyn is well on her way to accomplishing that with her recent participation in a rally to support the Troy Educational Association.



Steve Chisnell

Steve Chisnell is our new Program Vice President. Steve teaches English at ROHS, but his teaching competencies range from math and science to English and social studies via his sponsorship of the Model United Nations program. Steve also writes and has published articles in professional journals. He has worked as an editor.

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Candidate Screening and Recommendation

By- Betty Ann Garlak, PAC Chairperson

In early October, a committee met to interview the two candidates that are running for one seat on the Royal Oak School Board and the two candidates that are running for the Oakland County Commission. The committee consisted of members from ROEA, ROESA, and ROESPA. They included Nancy Hollyer, Dave Stafford, Karen Christian, Sid Kardon, Leisa Jones, Alice Calvin, Ruth Parmentier, and me. We first interviewed School Board candidates Marty Cardamone and Frank Houston. After questions and discussion, we concluded that Frank Houston would receive our recommendation for endorsement. He has a strong background in the political arena, has experience as a teacher, and is active in the community. We then met with Dave Woodward and Jean Chamberlain. Our next recommendation was to endorse Dave Woodward for the Oakland County Commission. He is the incumbent and has proven in the past that he is supportive of educators and is knowledgeable of countywide issues. When we submitted our recommendations to the MEA, they stated that both candidates are clearly "solid choices." Some of our PAC contributions will go toward the campaigns of Frank Houston and Dave Woodward. **When you go to the polls on Election Day, please give Frank Houston and Dave Woodward your vote.**



Betty Ann Garlak

Frank was at our October 28th ROEA meeting. He is interested in being accessible to teachers and wanted to hear our concerns.

Another candidate to remember is Gary Peters. He is running against Joe Knollenberg for the 9th U. S. Congressional District (northern Oakland County). This is a targeted race, and one that is very important to Michigan. Gary Peters supports the revision of No Child Left Behind and recognizes that it has been largely under-funded.

As this historic election approaches, it is not too late to get involved. If you don't have time to work at a phone bank or drop literature, you can still do your part. **Contribute to PAC.** Get out your checkbook or credit card and make your donation to legislators that are endorsed by the MEA and support public education. This year we are not able to use payroll deduction. Your building AR has PAC forms. When you contribute to PAC you will be part of our ROEA Contribution Raffle to be held mid-year.

Cherilyn...

Because of Michigan's job climate, Cherilyn's husband Brad is working in South Carolina and is missed by 4 year old Emma (and Cherilyn, too!).

Steve....

Steve's goal as an Executive Board member is to develop ROEA community programs that would enable parents and other community members to become knowledgeable about issues in public education and to enhance our role as public education advocates. While meeting the Dalai Lama (as Steve has done) may not directly impact these goals, it certainly can't hurt.

**** IMPORTANT MESSA NOTICE ****

The District will be conducting an audit of everyone's health insurance. The purpose of the audit is to determine whether family members who are covered by your MESSA plan are properly eligible for benefits. If there is anyone on your plan who should not be covered (a child who no longer meets dependent eligibility requirements, for example) you should have them removed. If you are not sure who is covered on your plan, contact Marge Martin in the benefits office at 248/435-8400, extension 214. If you have any questions regarding who is properly covered by your MESSA policy, contact Executive Director, Laurie Moore.

Money \$aving Tips

We're all trying to find ways to save money during this recession. Let's share tips with each other. To get us started, here's a tip from Sid: **Vote for Obama. He won't tax your health benefits.**

Email your tips to the Reporter at CadineN@aol.com.

Another idea.... **Free Cycle for Royal Oak teachers**

In this plan people give and get stuff for free. Let us know what you would like to offer at no cost to a fellow school district employee. Tell us what you would like to get from your ROEA Reporter Free Cycle. Email the Reporter at cadinen@aol.com and we'll include your offer or request.

Do you have a bike that you're no longer using? Do you have books that you could pass on to others? Maybe you need some slightly used baby clothes? How about a snow blower?

Classified Ads

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G&L painting LLC offers interior painting with discounted prices on labor and paint. I use either Benjamin Moore, or Sherman-Williams paints for a quality finish with guaranteed results. Please call 248-797-9596 Gary Friedman

We need to refresh our classified ads. If you would like to place an ad in our new listing, email cadinen@aol.com with the information for the ad.