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Advocates for Education not only knows what it wants, it knows how to get it done. In a world and at a time when it can seem difficult to effect change, the group is proving that it's still possible to make a difference.

*Whitefish Bay Herald,
Editorial, March 18, 1999*



Advocates for EDUCATION of Whitefish Bay, Inc.

October 2000

District Administrative Team Cherishes the Old, Relishes the New

This year's Whitefish Bay School District administrative team is composed of one new face, two familiar faces with new jobs, and a seven-year veteran. Together they guide the course of Whitefish Bay schools and share our dream of providing a fulfilling future for our children.



James Rickabaugh
District Administrator
New to Whitefish Bay
School District

Superintendent Jim Rickabaugh said that on the first few days of the new school year, he visited the various buildings just to observe. He was watching for high schoolers in line at the guidance office wanting to change courses, and elementary-age students in line at the clinic wanting to go home. Seeing neither he figured the year was off to a good start.

"Being out there is energizing," he said. "It gives me a sense of the flow of the operation. People talk in

passing - things don't escalate."

Rickabaugh will be easy to find if you want to talk to him. Besides his office in the district wing of the high school, he'll be at school board meetings, committee meetings, student concerts and activities, and visiting the various schools. If you miss him on the school grounds, look for him around town. He and his wife, Lynn, recently bought a house in the Bay. Rickabaugh sees the future of Whitefish Bay schools as a combination of holding tightly to the old but looking forward to the new.

"The challenge is to decide which things to hold onto and which things might be holding us back," he said.

For him, the large issues facing the district are:

- seeing the need to grow and improve while being mindful of the district's rich traditions, he would like to look for ways to do things better; and
- developing a vision for the future - asking what we want our school district to be.

He sees a real strength in the fact that district personnel are willing to talk passionately about making things better and sharing what they know. He looks forward to seeing the staff sharing their

"The challenge is to decide which things to hold onto and which things might be holding us back"

- James Rickabaugh,
District Administrator

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MISSION Statement

Advocates for Education is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that works to promote high quality public education in Whitefish Bay by:

- informing residents about education issues and encouraging public participation in matters affecting the schools;
- fostering a social and political climate favorable to public education;
- advocating for public policies that promote high quality public education in Whitefish Bay.

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From the President

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome back to another school year in Whitefish Bay! If this is your first year in the district, we look forward to meeting you, seeing you at school functions, school board meetings and, of course, Advocates for Education forums.

I believe that high quality education is a core value in our community and that the participation of parents in the village contributes significantly to that level of quality. In fact, my family and I moved to Whitefish Bay five years ago because of the school district's reputation. We haven't been disappointed. Our three girls are now at Cumberland Elementary, the middle school and the high school and I can say that we have been genuinely pleased with each school.

However, we need to ensure that our schools continue to perform at this high level and, importantly, that they continue to improve.

Advocates for Education provides an opportunity for all of us to make a greater impact in our schools. Here's how AFE supports your advocacy for our schools:

- We sponsor forums that provide deeper insights into education-related issues and an opportunity to meet and speak with education leaders.
- These forums include candidates' forums that clarify the positions of our state senate and assembly candidates on education issues. Watch for one this fall.
- Over the past couple of years, we have also sponsored forums on broader educational issues including homework, learning styles, school safety and foreign language instruction.
- Our members have participated in education issues that affect our schools at the state level.
- We successfully led a statewide effort to change Wisconsin's high school graduation test from the only factor, to one factor, in the graduation decision.
- We are currently studying the impact of changes in school funding and alternative enrollment programs such as 220 and open enrollment on our schools.
- We publish four newsletters throughout the school year informing our members of key school issues.
- Newsletter articles include an analysis of local issues, such as all-day kindergarten, and state issues, such as school funding developments.

Advocates for Education is sending this newsletter to each family in the school district to introduce the organization. Please join us in our effort to support Whitefish Bay schools by becoming a member or renewing your membership. Please contact me, or any AFE board member, for more information about Advocates for Education.

John Hainze,
(414) 961-7079

PROFILE

John and Carrie Hainze

moved to Whitefish Bay in the fall of 1995. Their three daughters attend the high school, the middle school and Cumberland Elementary. John works at SC Johnson in Racine as a manager in Research and Development. He holds a Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Wisconsin.

John put his science background to good use when he served as a community representative on Whitefish Bay School District's Science Curriculum Committee. The committee's work is being implemented in the schools this year. John enjoyed the curriculum work, and was impressed by the enthusiasm of the teachers on the committee and their dedication to high-quality science instruction.

The Hainze family lived in England between 1991 and 1994, where the girls attended both British and American schools.

John joined the AFE board last year. During his free time he enjoys playing the saxophone and running. He's currently training for his first marathon.



John, Carrie, Emily, Anna and Jane Hainze



Tony Frontier
Director of Instruction
Years in district: 3

Tony Frontier says he likes the challenges of his new job - the challenge of designing a program that gets at understanding and critical thinking; and a program that takes the past successes and tradition of Whitefish Bay schools and makes them even better.

"Everyday I'm dealing with the issues of teaching and learning," he said. "It's one thing to lay out a sequence of courses. It's another thing to lay out an education that develops the mind."

Frontier said there's been a fundamental shift in recent years from a curriculum that stressed "what teachers will teach" to a standards-based process emphasizing instead "what students will learn." That shift presents yet another challenge for the district of creating a program that is ambitious, yet responds to a variety of learners.

Parents who volunteer their time on curriculum committees will get to know Frontier. He is active in all aspects of curriculum evaluation and implementation. For curriculum problems, he suggests that parents first talk to their child's teacher and/or principal, but stressed that he is always available to answer questions or address any concerns.

Frontier grew up in Racine, attending St. Catherine High School, where he met his wife, Jenny. They have a one-year-old daughter, Hannah. He follows in the career footsteps of his father, a past principal in the Racine Unified School District.

He started his college years set on a career in journalism, but by the end of his four years, had changed his mind. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with an undergraduate degrees in Print Mass Communications and Sociology, he

took teacher education courses at Marquette University and later received a master's degree from Cardinal Stritch University in curriculum instruction and administrative leadership. He taught History and Journalism at Roosevelt Middle School of the Arts in Milwaukee before becoming associate principal at Whitefish Bay High School in 1998.

When he isn't working on curriculum, he and his wife like to bike, run and spend time with their daughter.

The development of a new technology plan for the district will be a focus for him, he said. With the ever-changing advances in technology, Frontier said the new plan will have a three-year focus rather than five years, as in the past. He added that the district's curriculum will drive the technology, so that students can learn the computer skills they need to succeed in their studies.



Shawn Yde
Director of Business Services
Years in District: 7

While most people think of school as a place of learning, many forget that it is also a business. In fact, it's a \$28 million business with about 400 employees, according to the district's business manager, Shawn Yde.

Yde started working for Whitefish Bay schools in 1994, the same year as the revenue caps were instituted. He faces the difficult task of projecting a budget when increases in revenues are capped at 2.3 percent per year. Yde said that utility costs alone have risen 20 percent this year. Other variables like insurance, special education services and staff salaries, which drive more than 80 percent of the budget, make balancing the budget even more difficult.

Yde said the Whitefish Bay Education Foundation has been a blessing to the district in providing items that the dis-

trict would not have been able to afford.

Forecasting student enrollment is another challenge for Yde, which he compares to a business forecasting earnings. School district revenue is directly tied to enrollment. Losing one student means a loss of \$9,000 in revenue for Whitefish Bay, he said, so careful enrollment projections are critical to accurate budget planning.

His job also includes reporting pupil, tax, and budget information to the state, labor negotiations, and the investment of funds. In addition to the numbers, Yde said he really likes the people contact the job offers. Although he is probably the least visible of the school district leaders, he does see parents and community leaders at school board meetings and technology committee meetings.

He also fields business matter inquiries from throughout the community and has worked to build trust throughout the district.

Yde comes from a family of educators -- his father is a principal and his two brothers are teachers-- which helped to lead him in the direction of school finance.

He has an undergraduate business degree from University of Wisconsin - Parkside and a master's degree in school business and finance from the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater. He lives in his hometown of Hartland with his wife, Dawn, and their six sons, who range in age from two to 12.

When Yde isn't balancing the budget, he coaches youth wrestling and goes skiing with his older boys.

"It's one thing to lay out a sequence of courses. It's another thing to lay out an education that develops the mind."

REVENUE CAPS

AND THEIR IMPACT ON WHITEFISH BAY SCHOOLS

“There’s no such thing as a free lunch,” the old saying goes, and it is certainly true in public education. The cost of a “free” public education is paid primarily by a combination of state funding and local property taxes. The money available to school districts is limited by “revenue caps,” a concept relatively new in Wisconsin school finance.

What are revenue caps? Why do revenue caps have such an impact on school districts? How will revenue caps affect your child’s education? This article is an introduction to schools and money, and what parents and other partners in public education need to know about Wisconsin school finance.

A Bit of History

Before revenue caps were created, local school boards had the authority to set budgets and local property tax rates. Communities controlled school district spending by electing school board members who reflected the community’s willingness to tax themselves.

By the early 1990s, some people in Wisconsin believed that school district costs (and the resulting property taxes) were too high and rising too quickly. Also, school districts with low property values were struggling to raise sufficient revenues through property taxes.

In the early and mid-1990s, Governor Thompson and the

Wisconsin Legislature enacted a series of laws that dramatically changed the school finance system. The new laws were intended to:

- 1) provide property tax relief;
- 2) limit increases in school district spending; and
- 3) increase the equity of school funding across districts with dramatically different property values.

Included in the new system were the following

- The state increased its commitment to fund K-12 public education (through sales and income taxes) from one-third of the overall cost on a statewide average to two-thirds.
- The state’s funding is distributed among all school districts through a complicated formula designed to provide more equal funding despite differences in local property tax bases. Districts with lower property values may receive more than two-thirds funding from the state. Districts with higher property values receive less. Relative spending levels are also a factor in the formula. Whitefish Bay receives less than half of its costs (as defined under the formula) from the state.
- The Legislature intended that the additional state funding would provide property tax relief, not more money to schools. It also was unwilling to commit to two-thirds funding if school districts continued to increase their budgets. Therefore, the new law limited or “capped” the total revenue school districts can receive.
- School revenues were frozen at their 1993 levels, with small increases per year, not tied to inflation.
- Teacher salary and benefit cost increases were effectively capped at an amount equal to 3.8 percent per year, because school districts can

now avoid salary arbitration by a “qualified economic offer,” or QEO, of this amount.

- Lawmakers allowed one way for school districts to exceed the revenue caps. School districts have the authority to hold a referendum asking voters to permit property tax revenue increases beyond the capped amount. However, for many districts, including Whitefish Bay, the school funding formula makes this option difficult to pursue, as explained below.

The Effects

The funding system created by these laws has had dramatically different effects on different school districts, depending on changes in their enrollments, property wealth per pupil relative to the state average, the age distribution of their teaching staff, the age of their buildings and how they funded capital and repair costs historically, and idiosyncrasies in school budget decisions made in the year prior to the imposition of the caps.

Whitefish Bay has been able to minimize the impact of the revenue caps in the short-run through prudent management, careful planning, and a thorough understanding of the dynamics of the funding formula. Nonetheless, revenue limits impact all planning in the school district. Limiting revenue through this formula forces the district to make difficult choices among competing needs.

Living With The Reality

The new system has had the desired effect of reducing property taxes. However, there are also problems that school districts face as a result of the system. Examples, and how these

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Curriculum Report

Curriculum, what our children will learn - is the heart of education.

Whitefish Bay School District engages in a continuous cycle of curriculum review, with each subject area receiving a complete review by a curriculum committee every seven years. Curriculum committees include teachers, administrators and community representatives. Their work is reviewed by a Curriculum Evaluation Council, which also includes community representatives. The work is ultimately reviewed, and must be approved, by the Whitefish Bay School Board.

Curriculum committees are currently working on music, foreign language and human growth and development. Community representatives are Jeanne Christiansen and Toni Wolff (foreign language) and Jackie Turkal (human growth and development.) Timelines for final reports from these committees are not yet scheduled, although the foreign language curriculum is expected to reach the school board in February.

New curriculum committees will form this fall for art, computer literacy, and K-8 language arts and kindergarten. Interested in serving on any of these curriculum committees? Contact Paula Severson in the district office at 963-3927 today for an application. Meetings will start in late December or early January, and are usually held monthly from 3:45 - 5:30 p.m.

Mark your calendars!

October 12, 2000, 7-9 p.m. Candidates' Forum at the North Shore Library, 6800 North Port Washington Road. Candidates for Senate District 8 and Assembly Districts 19, 22 and 23 have been invited to participate. Advocates for Education is a co-sponsor of this event. Come and learn what you need to know to vote on November 7.

November 1, 2000, 7 p.m. Advocates for Education forum featuring dynamic

speaker and well respected educator Pat Magestro. "Each Child, Every Child: Teaching So All Kids Can Learn." Whitefish Bay High School Cafeteria (enter Door 3 on Marlborough just north of Fairmount). Designed for parents of children at all age levels. An evening with Pat Magestro will make you a better advocate for your child!

November 7, 2000 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Election Day... vote early!

All forums are free and open to the public. Bring a friend!



UPCOMING ARTICLES

Look for future AFE articles on:

- Real Life and the High School Graduation Test
- Class Rank - pros and cons
- Legislative Issues-What's Next from Madison?

Join AFE today to receive future newsletters!

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ideas with colleagues inside and outside of the district, perhaps even making state presentations or writing journal articles.

He added that such action not only helps teachers and students but it promotes the reputation of the district as an organization that's committed to the continuation of learning.

"Someone tries something, perfects it and shares it," he said. "We stand on each other's shoulders."

Rickabaugh sees one of the district's primary goals as preparing students for the future. He said that preparation includes giving them:

- a sense of hope;
- an ability to dream;
- a sense of efficacy - feeling that they can make a difference;
- a sense of connectedness - feeling they are part of who we are; and
- a sense of respect for oneself and others - developing healthy relationships and seeing others as a resource.

To him, this preparation is energy generating rather than overwhelming.

Rickabaugh has a B.A. in Spanish and History from Milton College, an M.S. in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, and a Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He comes to Whitefish Bay from the private sector where he was Midwest region manager for Voyager Expanded Learning, a school software corporation. His school management experience includes seven years as school superintendent in Burnsville, Minnesota, where he was named Minnesota Superintendent of the Year in 1996. He also served as the superintendent of schools for the Oconomowoc, Wisconsin District for four years, and as an administrator in the Janesville, Wisconsin School District from 1979 to 1986.

He and his wife, Lynn, have two children - a son, Jay, who is in graduate school in Oregon and a daughter, Christine, who is a student at the University of Wisconsin-Stout.



Pamela Ryder

Director of Personnel and Pupil Services

Years in District: 17

Pam Ryder has been called the "anchor" of the central office because of her length of service. She's worked for the district for 17 years in a number of capacities most recently as the director of instruction and now as the director of personnel and pupil services. She sees herself as more of a historian - someone who brings the perspective of what has come before. Ryder is not one to get stuck in the past though.

"We're about preparing our students for the future," she said. "We always have to have an eye to the future."

She sees her greatest task as maintaining and extending the challenge of excellence in the district. She said that despite Whitefish Bay's high record of achievement, it's important to examine all aspects of the education system, making sure that the district is making its best efforts with the resources available.

"We need to turn over every rock of what we're doing," she said.

Her immediate goals will focus on the areas of special education and staff professional growth.

In the special education arena, she wants to stress diverse student needs, as well as helping parents to feel a part of the education team. Sophisticated therapies, assistive technology, and meeting diverse student needs have presented significant issues in the field, she said.

Saying that the act of teaching has become infinitely complex, Ryder plans to play an integral part in the hiring, supervision and evaluation of teachers, along with staff development.

"Recruiting a pool of high quality teachers is critical, especially with the teacher shortage," she said. Ryder

added that the shortage of teachers also affects the substitute teacher pool making quality substitutes even harder to find.

As an example of ideal professional training, Ryder offered the staff development time invested in last year's new math curriculum. Each teacher received 20 hours of training in the new system, and lead teachers received even more training so they could act as mentors.

She also cited the five new technology courses offered at the high school last year as evidence of the district's commitment to diverse student needs. For the first time in many years, students could choose from new course offerings like graphic imaging, digital music, environmental science, athletic training and desktop publishing.

Despite her new role, Ryder plans to continue her participation in the curriculum study of elementary foreign language, as well as the study of the kindergarten program.

Ryder has an undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She brings the unique perspective of having taught in four different states, along with the experience of having worked with children ranging in age from three to 21. Ryder said she likes to read and belongs to a book club. She also enjoys walking alone or with her walking partner. She and her husband, Randy, have a 21-year old son attending the University of Minnesota.

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Did You Know?

• Advocates for Education has a new look. Thanks to board member Tom

Gommel and Kris Hunt at Gomoll Research & Design at <http://www.gomolldesign.com> for our wonderful new logo. We love it!

- Gomoll Research & Design is also generously donating their expertise to design and build a web site for Advocates for Education. Come visit us later this fall at www.advocatesforeducation.org. The web site will be a tremendous help to AFE's mission to promote high quality public education. Also, many thanks to the AFE members who completed the planning survey this spring. Your

insight was valuable.

- You can be on a mailing list to receive agendas for upcoming Whitefish Bay School Board meetings. Call the district office at 963-3921. Background materials are usually available in the district office a few days before each meeting. Meetings are usually held at 7:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of each month, in Room 47 of the high school. The public is always welcome at school board meetings, and attending is a great way to learn more about the Whitefish Bay School District.
- Election Day is Tuesday, November 7. The polls are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Absentee ballots are available starting about three weeks before Election Day. Call Village Hall at 962-6690 for details on voting absentee. Don't forget to vote

and please consider education issues in your personal decision-making process.

- The Bay Ball is back for the sixth annual evening of dinner, dancing and raising money for the Whitefish Bay Schools. This year's event will be held at the Midwest Express Center on November 11, 2000. Invitations will be mailed in October. For further information contact co-chairs Catherine La Fleur and Mark Goff at 962-5636 or Susan and Bill Meier at 332-4777. Hope to see you there!
- The Whitefish Bay school board seats held by incumbents Dan Kaminski and Tom Scrivner will be up for election in the spring. Deadlines for incumbents and challengers to file papers were not available as this newsletter went to press, but are usually in December.

CHAPTER 220

Open Enrollment Study Group Forming

Advocates for Education would like to start a study group to examine the Chapter 220 and Open Enrollment programs. The group's purpose will be to understand how these programs are implemented in our district and their impact. We will also examine possible changes that may be proposed in the legislature.

AFE has identified potential changes to Chapter 220 and Open Enrollment programs as emerging issues that may have a significant impact on our school district. A study group will provide a forum for developing our understanding of these issues so we are prepared to respond to proposed changes.

We are eager to include interested community members in the study group and we invite your participation. For more information, contact Barbara Beckert at 964-1034 or bpbeckert@aol.com.

Public Forums on Revenue Caps

In response to the growing problems created by the revenue caps, a group of 17 education-related groups from around Wisconsin, with support from Advocates for Education, have organized a series of public forums to gather data on the impact that revenue caps have had on schools. Parents, teachers, administrators, school board members and other interested citizens who wish to express their opinion on this issue will have an opportunity to do so. The forum for southeastern Wisconsin will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 17 from 7 to

9 p.m. at the F. L. Wright Middle School Library, 9501 W. Cleveland, West Allis. The data gathered through these forums (others will be held in Janesville on Oct. 5, Appleton on Oct. 10, Rhinelander on Oct. 11, and Superior on Oct. 12) will be summarized in a report that will be presented to the legislature and the governor in January 2001. For more information on the forum, contact Karen Grochowski at (414) 384-9094.

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issues impact Whitefish Bay, are:

- *Declining enrollment.* The revenue caps completely control the primary sources of revenue per pupil. The only way to increase revenue without going to referendum to exceed the cap is to increase the number of students in the district. However, many districts face substantial enrollment declines, as do demo-

The state's increased funding of K-12 education has also given it the will to exercise a greater degree of control over public schools. Since the increase in state funding there has been an increase in centralization of authority at the state level in terms of spending, academic content, testing and promotion and graduation decisions. Some fear this will lead to a "one size fits all" state-run school system.

graphic projections for the State as a whole. There are provisions in the law that allow districts to use a three-year rolling average to calculate the number of students (so the impact isn't fully felt for three years) and an allowance to continue to count 75 percent of enrollment loss for one year. Nonetheless, schools with large enroll-

ment declines can still lose significantly more revenue than costs that they can cut through reductions in teaching staff or other overhead. For example, if a district loses 25 students, it may not be able to simply eliminate one class section to reduce costs, because those 25 students may be spread over the entire K-12 population. Until now, Whitefish Bay's enrollment has remained relatively steady. However, Whitefish Bay's enrollment is projected to decline by 150 - 200 students over the next five years.

- *Inadequate annual increase in the revenue caps.* Since 1993-94, school districts have been allowed to increase their maximum allowable

per pupil revenue by a statutorily determined amount each year, which, in many cases, is not keeping pace with many costs and is less than salary increases that result from the QEO law. Since wages and benefits constitute over 80 percent of school budgets, the mismatch between the allowable per pupil revenue increase and the QEO has created serious difficulties for districts with few teacher retirements. Higher paid senior teacher retirements in Whitefish Bay have eased this problem so far. However, attracting and retaining top quality educators, in an increasingly tight labor market, is a growing problem.

- *"Tax penalty."* When the new funding laws were enacted, some legislators and politicians claimed that a community's ability to vote to exceed the revenue caps through a referendum vote was the "ultimate local control." As a result of an extremely complex three-tier funding formula that seeks to promote greater equity in school funding across districts of varying property wealth, "middle income" districts like Whitefish Bay face a substantial barrier to the exercise of our referendum right. Currently, Whitefish Bay residents would have to raise local property taxes by \$1.47 for each additional dollar of revenues that would go to our schools.
- *Building maintenance and repair.* Whitefish Bay school buildings are quite old, charming, and require continuous maintenance and repair (e.g., roof, window, floor, and door replacement.) Historically, Whitefish Bay did not include long-range maintenance spending in its operating budget. Prior to 1993, school districts could issue debt of up to \$1 million without going to referendum, and pay it back over several years by adjusting the tax levy. This option is still available, but only within the revenue caps, which would then require a reduction in other spending (e.g., teaching staff, academic programs.) Capital costs now must compete directly with textbooks and curricular materials, staff development,

efforts to lower class size, programs for at-risk or gifted students, and potential new programs such as foreign languages in the elementary grades.

- *Money and control.* The state's increased funding of K-12 education has also given it the will to exercise a greater degree of control over public schools. Since the increase in state funding there has been an increase in centralization of authority at the state level in terms of spending, academic content, testing and promotion and graduation decisions. Some fear this will lead to a "one size fits all" state-run school system.

What You Can Do

Although Whitefish Bay has been unusually fortunate in being able to avoid the more serious impacts of the revenue caps, the longer the caps are in place, the harder will be the choices faced by our district in allocating tightly controlled resources among competing needs. The state's two-thirds funding commitment has created a strong incentive for the state to place a tight reign on education costs, and to weigh the needs of our children's education against those of the many other worthy programs funded by the state. Our locally elected school board's only duty is to responsibly ensure the quality of our children's education, and it is most familiar with our community's problems and educational values. Yet current state law directly limits their latitude.

Advocates for Education supports identifying and advocating for the Wisconsin Legislature to implement exceptions to the revenue caps which would permit the Whitefish Bay School District to achieve its program, technology and long-range facility maintenance goals. We invite you to follow this issue with us. This article is intended to be only an introduction to these complex issues. If you would like to know more, visit our web site, www.advocatesforeducation.org, later this fall for more detailed articles from prior AFE newsletters.

September Song

September...it's a wild and crazy month, full of opportunities to make your community be what you want it to be. Anywhere you look in the Whitefish Bay School District, you will see good or excellent education getting even better. This September, look around your school district.

- You will see the WFB Middle School, recently named a national Blue Ribbon School, now in its fifth year since expansion and renovation.
- You will see ninth graders, mindful but not spastic about the high school graduation test they will take in a few years, knowing the test will be one indicator of their progress instead of an absolute requirement for graduation.
- You will see parent surveys which were sent to you before school opened, and will be sent again in February, asking for your thoughts about your child's school experience.
- If you go to a school board meeting, you will see a professional, congenial atmosphere where administrators, board members, teachers and community members engage in constructive dialogue about our schools and our children.

Advocates for Education, now in its sixth year, has been integrally involved in all of these accomplish-

ments. As a grass roots, non-partisan organization, AFE has spoken effectively for the children of Whitefish Bay at both the local and state levels. Sometimes, the organization has spoken with one voice. More often, it has helped individuals speak on issues they really care about.

With information and encouragement from Advocates for Education, parents have spoken with informed, persuasive, and constructive voices. AFE members have politely and intelligently participated in Whitefish Bay committees, task forces and forums. They have written effective letters, strengthened by the information and resources offered to them by AFE. In short, the parents of Whitefish Bay are genuinely effective advocates for high quality public education, and Advocates for Education has been a significant part of that effectiveness.

Even if you think you would never write to a legislator or speak in front of a crowded room, there is a place for you in Advocates for Education.

Even if the school funding formula puts you to sleep (you are in good company) or you hate controversy and you already have too much to do and think about, there is a place for you in AFE.

Advocates for Education can speak most effectively for your child and all the children of our school district if you are a member. Just by being

Advocates for Education can speak most effectively for your child and all the children of our school district if you are a member.



informed, you are contributing to a better education for the children of Whitefish Bay. Just by understanding the issues and their complexity, you will think and speak in a more effective way. You may vote with more informed consideration of educational issues.

By supporting Advocates for Education with your name, your fifteen dollars and your interest, you will send the message that you

believe in speaking up for high quality public education. Your children and all the children of our school district will benefit from your involvement.

Alert

As this newsletter went to press, State Superintendent John Benson released his budget priorities for the next biennium. His proposal includes eliminating parents' option to excuse their children from the high school graduation test.

During the last budget process, Advocates for Education led a successful statewide campaign to preserve the parent option. Join Advocates for Education today and stay informed on this important issue.