



Advocates for EDUCATION

Winter 2010

of Whitefish Bay, Inc.

www.advocatesforeducation.org

Rickabaugh RETIRES

District Administrator, Dr. James Rickabaugh will retire at the end of this school year. Reaction to this announcement has been uniform throughout the school community: Whitefish Bay owes Jim Rickabaugh a huge thank-you for his ten years of leadership, and his shoes will be very, very hard to fill.

Colleagues and community members all cite Dr. Rickabaugh's educational vision, leadership, and concern for all students as his greatest strengths. He is known as a leader who brings out the best in every member of a team, and who mentors others to achieve beyond what they thought they could achieve. Says District Director of Business Services, Shawn Yde, "I think his greatest strength is his ability to work with others to form a shared vision. He has always been very insightful and inclusive when discussing different courses of action for our organization, and that makes everyone feel they are a valued member of the team."

High School Principal, Bill Henkle, has worked with Jim the longest of any of Bay's four school

principals. Says Bill, "One of the things I appreciate most about Jim's leadership over the past ten years has been preserving the quality of the educational programming we offer, and in many instances improving on it, especially in the face of more restrictive budgetary circumstances with each passing year. Jim has led us to see alternatives such as maintaining or enhancing revenue streams rather than simply cutting expenses. The fact

"People here know what good education is, and they want it not only for today and for today's students, but for the future. It has been a privilege to be a part of this time-honored tradition."

that our current class sizes are no higher than they were when I arrived in 1999-2000 is truly remarkable and greatly appreciated."

In looking at his ten years in Whitefish Bay, Dr. Rickabaugh cites an overall major accomplishment as the "ability to steadily inch-up in excellence by

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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*

Advocates for Education of Whitefish Bay

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YES, YES... Now What?

On Nov. 3, 2009, the voters of Whitefish Bay approved two bond referendum questions that authorized the school district to borrow up to \$22.6 million for maintenance and improvement work at Richards and Cumberland Elementary schools, the middle school, the high school, and the Lydell property. With groundbreaking scheduled for June, 2010, and an estimated project completion date of September, 2011, there is much work to be done!

At its December meetings, the Whitefish Bay School Board approved the awarding of several key contracts to move forward on the projects. C.D. Smith Construction Services, of Fond du Lac, was selected from among seven large companies that sought the construction management contract. Its low bid of \$675,000 represents a cost of 3.8% of the total construction covered by the contract. According to Shawn Yde, the district's business manager, contractors typically seek 6% to 8% of the cost of a project for expenses.

The School Board also approved a contract with the architectural firm of Bray Associates for final design plans. Bray has been consulting with the district since 2007 to develop preliminary plans based on the recommendations of the District's Facilities Study Committee. The firm was paid a \$9,000 consulting fee with the understanding that it would be hired as the architect on any approved work.

Once final design plans are available, the construction bidding process can begin. The district expects favorable construction bids and far lower interest rates on borrowed money than earlier projected. In addition to these cost-savings, it is taking other money saving measures to help control costs. Among them:

- The district, rather than the contractors, will purchase the materials to be used in construction and repair since the schools are exempt from sales taxes.
- Repair work that will be contracted for by district personnel was removed from the construction management proposal bid, in order to save the district fees on the larger amount. Thus the bidding was on \$16.1 million in construction work and \$745,680 in project contingencies and soft costs, rather than the full \$22.6 million plan authorized.
- The construction management contract is written to address many specific contingencies so that "extras" and overruns cannot be billed to the district unless they are due to a change order requested by the district.

Finally, the district has selected the investment banking firm of Hutchinson, Shockey, Erley & Co.,

a specialist in public finance, as its independent adviser on structuring debt to finance the construction projects. HSE & Co. was the low bidder among three firms that sought the consulting work. It will be paid \$12,000 for its limited services.

Bond issuance may be done in stages, and the School Board recently approved applications for a 20-year, 5.5% State Trust Fund Loan of \$1 million and for Build America Bond program support of the loan that will reduce the interest rate the school district pays to 3.535%. This money is needed prior to the start of construction to pay design fees, survey costs and other pre-engineering and planning obligations to the architectural firm and the construction management company working on the project. "This will get us to June, when we will need the second issuance (of \$21.6 million)," according to Shawn Yde. HSE & Co. looked at a number of different options, he said, and settled on this as the best course.

The district hopes to be able to borrow a significant amount of the remaining construction costs in federally subsidized construction financing, known as Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCB), whose interest rates are as low as zero percent. The exact timetable and procedures for applying for these funds in 2010 are still being finalized.

Source: YesYes Progress Committee blog, Doug Armstrong.

Rickabaugh *continued from Page 1*

all objective standards, when the district already started at the top.” Likewise, he sees the biggest challenge of the next ten years as “trying to do some things differently and even better, when the status quo is already so excellent.” In terms of specific events and accomplishments, Dr. Rickabaugh sees the new high school stadium as a huge success, particularly for its example of a public-private partnership which has benefited the community in countless ways. He is grateful for the recent passage of the facilities referendum, and believes the work that will be done will assure the buildings safety and function for a number of years.

“Whitefish Bay is a stable, steady community which has supported public education in many ways for the entire history of the village. People here know what good education is, and they want it not only for today and for today’s students, but for the future. It has been a privilege to be a part of this time-honored tradition,” says Jim Rickabaugh.

We, in turn, would say with one voice that the last ten years of public education in Whitefish Bay have been a great ride, and we are very grateful to the man who has been in the driver’s seat. *Thank you, Jim Rickabaugh, from your friends, neighbors, colleagues and, mostly, from the approximately three thousand students who have journeyed through the schools under your leadership.*

Superintendent search to include public input

The School Board has hired a professional search firm to assist in the selection of a new Whitefish Bay Public School superintendent. A variety of opportunities for public participation and input will be provided throughout the course of the search. AFE will email its members and information will be posted on the AFE website and the district website when the dates become available. Stay tuned!



Open or Closed Lunch Period?

The high school Open Lunch policy was shared publicly via a Power Point presentation in October with a parent forum, student advisory board, high school faculty, District Administrative Council and the School Board. At that time four options were presented:

Option 1:

Remain with the status quo

Option 2:

Make the lunch option a parent choice

Option 3:

Partial closing (factors for this would need to be determined, i.e. freshman only)

Option 4:

Completely closed

The students were surveyed before Winter Break about what their lunch habits were, and Principal Bill Henkle is in the process of compiling that data. The results of the student survey should be completed within the next two weeks.

The next step in the process will be to deliver a survey to staff, students and parents to ask which option they would like to see implemented. This survey is scheduled to go out by the end of the third quarter.

Once the survey is complete, a final decision will be made by the high school administrative team, in consultation with Whitefish Bay Superintendent Dr. James Rickabaugh. The new policy, if any, would then be in place for the school year beginning September 2010.

SPRING SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

Whitefish Bay will have the opportunity to vote for two School Board seats on April 6, 2010. Cheryl Maranto, incumbent, is running for a third three-year term. Michael Mosner is running for the open seat vacated by Pam Woodard, long time School Board member who is stepping down after 15 years.

Polls are open from 7am-8pm. If you need to register or do not know your voting location, you can get assistance on the Village website (www.wfbvillage.org) under election information, or call the Clerk-Treasurer at (414)962-6690. Please note: Both school board seats are unopposed, and election day falls during Spring Break. If you want your voice to be heard and plan to be out of town, you may vote by absentee ballot beginning March 15 at Village Hall.

CANDIDATES

Cheryl L. Maranto

4860 N. Newhall Street • (414)963-1583

Age: 57

Bachelors Degree in Public Policy, Michigan State
Masters and Ph.D. in Labor Relations, Michigan State

Associate Professor and Chair,
Department of Management,
College of Business Administration,
Marquette University

Cheryl Maranto has lived in Whitefish Bay for the past twenty years and has served two terms on the School Board. She has held the positions of President, Vice President and Clerk.

Maranto is committed to public education and feels that WFB is one of the best districts in the country. She believes it can still improve with different ways to teach and assess to create a deeper learning in each student. "We need to continue to offer effective public education with decreasing funds, which is a challenge" states Maranto. Wisconsin's current school funding needs to be analyzed, "there is a structural deficit that needs to be addressed."

Selecting a new school superintendent, supporting ongoing faculty development, and addressing what will surely be an increasingly difficult funding challenge are important areas of focus for her.

Michael L. Mosner

4849 N. Ardmore Avenue • (414)967-1047

Age: 37

Bachelors Degree in Business
Administration/Marketing,
Augustana College

Fifteen plus years in Sales and Marketing
Vice President Sales and Marketing, Western
Industries, Inc.

Michael Mosner has lived in Whitefish Bay for over four years with his wife, Tricia, and their three children. Since their move to Whitefish Bay, Mosner and his family have been active with the Civic Foundation, Northshore Newcomers, and Fox Point Lutheran Church.

When asked to summarize his interest in the Whitefish Bay School Board, Mosner stated, "I would consider it a humbling honor to be elected to the WFB School Board and take an active role in ensuring the continuation and constant improvement of the quality education the WFB school district is known for and which attracted my family and I to become residents."

Mosner is interested in ensuring the responsible use of funds, creating a safe advanced learning environment, and preparing students for a changing marketplace.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Join other AFE members for a casual discussion with School Board candidates, **Cheryl Maranto** and **Michael Mosner**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17,
7:00 - 8:30 pm

Desien residence - 4686 Lake Drive, Whitefish Bay

AFE Thanks Long-Standing School Board Member

Advocates for Education would like to thank retiring Whitefish Bay School Board Member Pam Woodard for 15 years of dedicated service. We join the community in thanking her for her commitment and service to our students and our schools.

"I have been privileged to work with all of my fellow board members to set policy and direction for the WFB schools to keep them strong and vital for now and into the future. Student success – in the many forms that it takes – has been integral in my decision making," states Woodard.

Welcome New HR Hire

The WFB School District recently announced that Mark Kapocius will become the Director of Human Resources and Special Services, effective February 1, 2010. He will replace John Hedstrom, who will retire after four years in this position.

Mr. Kapocius comes to the position with a background in Human Resources in educational institutions. He currently serves as Director of Human Resources in the Germantown School District and previously was the Human Resources Manager and Staff Counsel for the School District of Elmbrook. In addition to his experience in Human Resources, Mr. Kapocius is a graduate of the Marquette University Law School and holds a Master of Education in Counseling from Marquette University. Mr. Kapocius also served as Guidance Counselor and Testing Coordinator at Wauwatosa East High School and, almost twenty years ago, as a guidance counselor at Whitefish Bay Middle School.

***Welcome, Mark Kapocius...
we are glad to have you back in Whitefish Bay!***

DID YOU FORGET?

RENEW

TODAY!

Advocates for Education of Whitefish Bay, Inc.

Continue to be part of the team of voices speaking on behalf of children.

- Active Member(s) (WFB resident or parent/guardian of WFB School District student) @ \$20 per household
- Supporting Member(s) @ \$20 per household
- Enclosed is an additional donation to support AFE. Due to the lobbying mission of AFE, donations are not tax-deductible.

\$_____ donation enclosed.

Total enclosed: \$_____

- I am interested in volunteering for AFE. Please call me.

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Name(s) _____

Address _____

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- Check here to receive our Newsletter online.

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Send this form today to:

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PO Box 170123
Milwaukee, WI 53217**



PO Box 170123
Milwaukee, WI 53217

UPCOMING FORUM:

**The Challenges
Teens Face as Digital
Communications
Become an Integral
Part of Their Lives**

APRIL, 2010
(Exact Date TBD)

7-8:30 p.m.
Whitefish Bay Public Library

**THIS FORUM IS FREE AND
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

Questions?

Email info@advocatesforeducation.org

VOTE ON APRIL 6 TO ELECT OUR NEW SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

IMPORTANT: Election day is during Spring Break.

If you will be out of town, you can vote by absentee ballot beginning three weeks before the election date (March 15). Absentee ballots are available at WFB Village Hall from 8-4:30 Monday - Friday.

2010 Scheduled School Board Meeting Dates:

FEBRUARY 3
MARCH 10
APRIL 14

MAY 12
JUNE 9
JULY 14

*All meetings are held at 7 pm in Room 47
at the Whitefish Bay High School.*