

## Freedom of Information

# School district denies charges

The Walled Lake School District has denied that it has violated the state Freedom of Information Act by refusing to release a copy of Superintendent Don Sheldon's contract.

The denial came in the form of an answer filed in Oakland County Circuit Court to charges filed by Arthur Stokus, a performing arts teacher at Walled Lake Western High School.

Stokus filed the complaint in Circuit Court in January after previous attempts to obtain a copy of the superintendent's contract under the Freedom of Information Act had been unsuccessful.

The complaint seeks a writ of mandamus which would compel the school district to release a copy of the contract or be found in contempt of court.

In a document filed with the court last week, attorneys for the school district denied the three major allegations in the complaint.

Specifically, the attorneys for the school district denied that:

The documentation sought by Stokus is not exempt from disclosure as a public record under the Freedom of Information Act.

The board has arbitrarily and capriciously violated the Freedom of Information Act by refusing to disclose or provide a copy of the public document as requested by Stokus.

The Freedom of Information Act mandates the district to provide Stokus with a copy of the employment contract between the district and its superintendent.

JOSEPH GOLDEN, the attorney representing Stokus in the court proceedings, reported that he will file a show-cause motion in Circuit Court. The show-cause motion will require representatives of the school district to appear in court and show why the writ of mandamus should not be issued.

Stokus originally requested a copy of the contract from the administration, but was denied access to the information on the basis that disclosure of the contract would constitute a "clearly unwarranted invasion of an individual's privacy."

The administrative decision was supported by the Walled Lake Board of Education at its Dec. 11 meeting when its members voted unanimously not to release the contract.

In addition to the writ of mandamus,

the legal action filed by Stokus also seeks actual and compensatory damages in the form of reasonable attorney fees, costs and disbursements as well as punitive damages in the amount of \$500.

Stokus stated that he filed the complaint as a matter of principle.

## WSU workshop offers directing, acting study

Wayne State University's Workshop in Directing and Acting for Film will present several new film shorts at the General Lectures Auditorium (on Warren and Third) on Tuesday, Feb. 20, at 8 p.m. No admission will be charged.

The workshop, conceived by N. Joseph Calarco (theater) and John Mason (film), involves the collaboration of advanced film production students and advanced actors from the Hilberry company. It was formed to give film students a chance to work with professionally trained actors and to give acting students the opportunity to learn through actual practice the techniques of performing before a camera.

The results of the collaboration—presented as work in progress—are 16mm sound films based on original screenplays and adaptations of theatrical works.

The film shorts to be presented feature such familiar Hilberry actors as Mark Robbins, Jim Birdsall, Richard Gustin, Diane Winslow, Mary Ottmann, Joyce Ramsay, John L. Beem and Gerald B. Roe. Directors include Tim Philo, Larry Cox, Lorne Dekun and Debra Burns.

The workshop's experiment in training for film production and acting through repertory is unique nationally and will be featured at the Purdue University fourth annual Conference in Film in March. Funds are being sought to continue the workshop, which reflects, on a university level, Detroit's growth as a center of film production.

For additional information, call N. Joseph Calarco 57783508 or John Mason 577-4173.

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