

Clarenceville trustees ponder superintendent choice

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Michael Shihler, 37, assistant superintendent for curriculum in the Brighton Area Schools, supports in-service professional staff development. He added the district could save money by bringing development experts into the district rather than sending employees to outside seminars.

Shihler, a Brighton resident, also favors taking the subject of teachers teaching out of their expertise to the bargaining table.

On student discipline, he said students will follow consistently applied rules. "Set high standards and people will more than likely rise to the occasion."

If state aid payments were reduced locally, he suggested cuts be made in areas of "least impact on students and programs." In Brighton, he said, steps taken included increasing staff sizes, eliminating some fringes and laying off teachers.

As for teachers teaching outside of their areas of expertise, he said he would attempt to change the practice through the teachers association or at the bargaining table. "State law says K-8 teachers can teach any subject, which I think is ridiculous. It's really a problem at the middle school level."

On state assessment testing, he called it "one measure" of a student's strengths and weaknesses. As a "minimal" test of a student's abilities, he also said students should be achieving higher scores on the test.

As for "1984," he disagreed that people have lost control over their own lives. "I know I have more control over my own fate."

Jack Kirksey, 55, has served as Republican state representative for the 35th District including Livonia for the past six years. A Livonia resident, he is not seeking re-election. Before being elected to the state house, Kirksey worked for the Livonia Public Schools as an elementary school principal for 17 years. Before that, he was a teacher at all three building levels for Livonia and Detroit public schools.

On dealing with an aging teaching population, Kirksey said Clarenceville had more problems with it than other districts because of its high average teaching age, estimated at 46.5 years. He cited reassignment, staff development within the district, stress and classroom management techniques and early retirement incentives as possible solutions.

On reduced state aid payments, Kirksey noted that Clarenceville may receive some \$277,000 more in state aid than last year, according to a pro-

posed appropriations proposal in the house. If it failed, then, he said, cut-backs would have to be considered.

HE CALLED teachers teaching outside of their areas of expertise "an absolute travesty." He also cited assignment changes and in-service training as ways to combat it. He noted a bill he introduced as well as several others on the topic that would provide a "legislative solution."

On discipline problems, he said a "strong administrator" sets the tone for a building along with a strong board of education. On staff discipline, he said he would first attempt to counsel the person.

On the state assessment test, he said "it serves a purpose. But it's a mistake to teach to the test." He added the tests can easily be analyzed to determine problem areas.

AS FOR Orwell's predictions in "1984," he said he agrees "a case can be made for all the regulations in our lives" but people still determine their own destinies.

He also responded to questions about his vote against the last year's tax hike, generally viewed as supported by educational interests. "I have always voted for appropriations for education but I viewed this vote as not a support of educational funding."

Norbal Bovee, 53, an administrative consultant to the Grand Ledge Public Schools, is a former school superintendent at Grand Ledge, Paw Paw Schools and Coleman Schools. Bovee suggested several ways to

motivate an aging staff, including providing in-service training, merit pay, and positive incentives such as praise and recognition for good work.

On student discipline, Bovee said he does not believe in corporal punishment and does believe that errant students should be offered alternatives to

expulsion. He said that in the past 23 years he has not expelled a student.

On staff discipline, he said board policy should be clear.

Money, he said, is the solution to teachers teaching outside of their area of expertise. He said staff levels should be expanded to ensure that the right

teacher fits the right slot. Teachers also should be encouraged to re-train.

BOVEE ALSO said students should not be required to take the state assessment test "cold." He said teachers also should be encouraged to "use" the test results. He said he also favors a high

school competency exam and strong remedial programs.

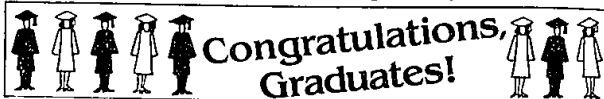
As for the year and book "1984," Bovee said, "I've poed, poed it, very frankly."

Bovee pointed to political turmoil as his reason for leaving his last superintendent's post.



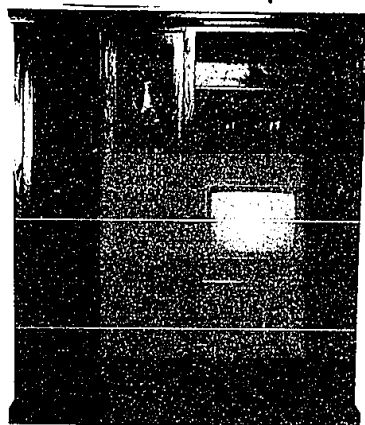
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