

# School hearings are set as adult ed is 'reformed'

BY TIM RICHARD  
STAFF WRITER

Local school districts will be able to compete for \$20 million in state grants for teaching adults under new rules approved by the state Board of Education.

Local schools will be told to develop consortia with other districts, county intermediate districts, community colleges, work force development boards and private industry.

"Basic purpose," said Arthur Ellis, superintendent of public instruction, "is to enable eligible adults to enroll in a program to obtain basic skills, learn English as a second language, prepare for the general educational development (GED) test, acquire job or employment-related skills, or complete requirements for a high school diploma."

The board voted 7-0 June 19 to approve rules under the new state act signed the same day by Gov. John Engler.

But board member Dorothy Beardmore, R-Rochester, saw a flaw in requiring the development of group proposals in such a short time. "To require that other agencies be players adds to the complexity. You have to wonder: Is this deliberately planned to fail?"

Districts have until July 1 to make their applications. The Department of Education must notify successful applicants by Aug. 1. Top officials doubt every will meet the deadlines.

The deadlines are "legislative time frames. The administration will do everything to help the school districts," said Dr. Ron Gillum, a deputy in charge of adult ed, hinting the department will wink at the dates.

At Engler's urging, the Republican Legislature, on almost party-line votes, cut adult edu-

cation from \$185 million to a total of \$102 million, providing that \$20 million must be awarded by competitive bids rather than mailed directly to K-12 districts.

Local school officials and lawmakers in both parties have criticized the cuts bitterly. Democrats withheld their votes because of the adult ed cuts.

"I've attended adult ed graduations," said board member Kathleen Straus, D-Detroit. "They are very impressive. Such a cross-section of people - young, old, native-born, immigrant. I just hate to see it cut so dramatically."

Added board member Barbara Roberts Mason, D-Lansing: "I'm concerned about the cuts. Many (districts) didn't fund their programs. I'd like to know how many will no longer offer adult ed, cut staff, cut curriculum offerings? We also can find the impact on the economy."

Even board vice president Marilyn Lundy, R-Detroit, who usually lines up solidly with Engler and Durant, recalled, "In Detroit, this was one of the hot issues." She referred to a June 17 hearing by the department to get public input on the state of the schools.

Another hearing is set for 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 24, in the Oakland Intermediate School District kiva on Telegraph Road in Pontiac. Others will be held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, June 27, in the Independence Building, Freedom Hill, Sterling Heights.

Karen Katz, executive director of the Michigan Association of Community and Adult Educators, also criticized the July 1 deadline. "We suddenly must make a formal grant proposal in one week, no matter what we've been doing in the past."

# Founder urges 'fair' board; recount begins

BY SANDRA ARMBRUSTER  
OAKLAND COUNTY EDITOR

As the Oakland County College trustee election recount begins today in the Madison Heights school district, where there was a tie vote and another request for a recount, the founder of OCC called for sitting board members to be "tolerant of each others' views."

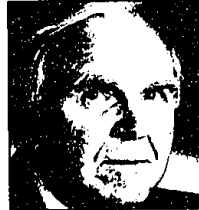
George Mosher, who was among the college's first trustees and was re-elected for 14 years of service - six of them as board chairman - said the atmosphere on the board must be "more fair and friendly. It was a disgrace that board members in the minority were not allowed to say anything" during meetings when former chancellor Pat Calkins was terminated.

It was that ouster that finally severed two factions on the board and prompted Mosher and others to become instrumental in encouraging the request for a recount of all 284 voting precincts, including 24 absentee ballot counting boards and two precincts in the Warren Consolidated School District.

"I didn't have any choice," Mosher said. "I could have opted for a partial recount, but I have to bring this to closure. I have to roll the dice and let come what may. Personally, I'll feel better losing on an accurate vote count than an inaccurate count."

Ritter said she had talked with the county elections division and was told that with modern technology, a reversal was not expected. Wanger said he had talked with trustees and had expressed his willingness to work with all of them. When Ritter apparently had lost, said Wanger, it appeared both sides had lost something. Now, with

"With regard to July 1, I



George Mosher



John Wanger

think we need to look ahead," Ritter said Friday. "What I heard from the candidates was that everyone was focused on doing the right thing. I'm an optimist. We'll come together."

So Ritter is expected to be sworn in when the board holds its organizational meeting on July 1, despite Wanger's request for a recount of all 284 voting precincts, including 24 absentee ballot counting boards and two precincts in the Warren Consolidated School District.

"I don't really favor that. It's not a good procedure," Mosher said, adding that he does support the recount. "The public and the candidate deserve to know and then whoever wins wins." He said that if there was one error, there could have been others. "What is needed is to make sure the (vote) is accurate," he said.

It's expected to take well into July before the recount is over. Mary Jo Hammond, Oakland County director of elections, said OCC's last recount in 1988 was for 70 precincts and it took eight days. Differences in equipment or voting may make a difference, she added. By law, the recount must be completed within 30 days.

Hammond said Ritter would be allowed to be seated on the

Ritter on the board, it "soured the whole situation," he added. Trustee Anne Scott, who jumped up and down in the board meeting room when it was thought Wanger won, is checking with an attorney to see whether Ritter can be blocked from taking her seat until the recount is completed.

It's a move that Mosher objects to.

Wanger said he would be talking with attorneys over the weekend to have someone able to provide training for "challengers" who will observe the recount. He paid out-of-pocket through his campaign fund for his share of the recount cost, and he is asking for donations to cover it. Donations may be mailed to Committee - John Wanger, 29600 Bristol Lane, Bingham Farms 48025.

board.

It is costing Wanger \$2,810 for the recount, \$10 for each precinct. That doesn't, however, cover the entire cost for the four-member board of canvassers and a minimum of four additional workers to be hired to help out, according to Hammond. Per-diem costs of \$117.34 for each canvasser, plus expenses and mileage, will be billed to OCC. A college spokesperson said the money will come out of the general fund as part of election expenses and that money was available to cover the cost.

On Tuesday the canvassers, who are appointed by the county Board of Commissioners - two Republicans and two Democrats, will move on to the Huron Valley School District for a recount.

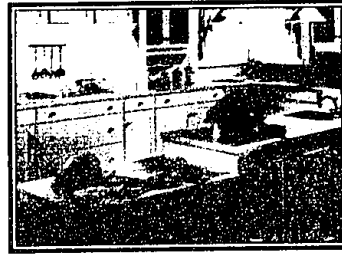
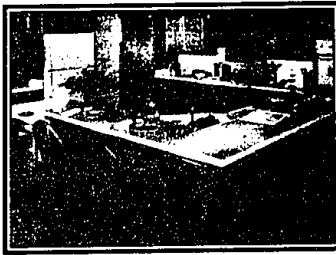
The recount may give the OCC board more chance for discussion within itself. Said trustee Scott: "If Sandra Ritter is a trustee, I believe the rest of us have to get along better and communicate better for the good of the college."

Ritter appeared to be in agreement. "When we take a vote, it's not the end of the discussion. It's the best time to communicate. There is a lot of experience and a lot of ideas on the board. We have to listen to the chancellor and not help but trust each trustee."

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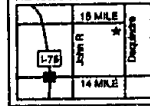


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