

State Board of Ed nears compromise on controversial education policy

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

State Board of Education members may have found a way out of their ideological deadlock over a "character education" policy.

Dorothy Beardmore, R-Rochester, proposed that the board "empower and encourage public schools to provide character education" based on "separation of church and state."

Beardmore, a moderate Republican often at odds with hard-right board president Clark Durant, eliminated Durant's proposal that school districts organize committees of "parents, educators, business, religious and other community representatives" to draw up lists of "common values." Critics saw Durant's committee plan as allowing religious groups to pack the committees.

She unveiled her draft near the end of a day-long board meeting Sept. 12. The board asked Superintendent of Public Instruction Art Ellis and his staff to work over her draft, incorporate members' comments and bring it back Oct. 10.

Durant, R-Grosse Pointe, who is fond of injecting biblical references into public education discussions, seemed pleased. "What's important is that we have more than a 5-3 vote," he said. The board has six Republicans and two Democrats, with Beardmore sometimes voting against the majority.

"We'd like to build it along the lines of Dorothy's memo," Durant told Ellis. "We'd like to find out what's being done already (in local districts) and applaud what's being done."

"Clark and I had breakfast a week ago Monday," Beardmore said. "I was frustrated with the (Durant) one-on-one approach (of talking to board members). It's time we had a discussion."

Board member Kathleen Straus, D-Detroit, also objected to Durant's "one-on-one" talks with board members. "People feel there's an underlying agenda," she said.

Board vice president Marilyn Lundy, R-Detroit, disliked Beardmore's use of the phrase "separation of church and state," pointing out that the U.S. Constitution only forbids Congress from designating an established church.

Otherwise, there were few

sparks.

Beardmore proposed a values list that included "respect, responsibility, caring, trustworthiness, justice and fairness and civic virtue and citizenship." That list came originally from Ellis, who said they are "frequently mentioned in the literature" on character education.

The newest board member, Louis Legg, R-Battle Creek, said the state should discourage "incivility" but otherwise he preferred to make any resolution "as innocuous as possible."

Tim Kelly, Gov. John Engler's representative on the State Board of Education, then made his only comment of the day:

"We've spent an inordinate amount of time on this."

The State Board of Education will meet at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, in the Hannah Building, 608 W. Allegan, two block west of the State Capitol in Lansing.

Hogan wants gun permit factors changed

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

Should a history of domestic abuse be a factor in getting a concealed weapon permit?

Sheriff's candidate Matt Hogan said factors such as domestic abuse and alcohol abuse should be among the factors evaluated by the Oakland County Concealed Weapons Licensing Board, which issued 2,736 gun permits last year.

But he does not believe a candidate for an unrestricted concealed weapons permit, called a CCW permit, should have to demonstrate he or she has a "heightened need" because his or her life or property are endangered.

Incumbent Sheriff John F. Nichols — who is running against Hogan in the Nov. 5 election — believes the unrestricted gun permit should not be issued unless the applicant can demonstrate a specific threat to life or property, according to Maj. Thomas E. Quisenberry, who spoke on the sheriff's behalf.

Hogan and Nichols were among the candidates to address the Multi-Lakes Conservation Club in Commerce Township Wednesday. Hogan appeared in person. Nichols sent Quisenberry as a surrogate.

The conservation club promotes responsible gun ownership and, among other things, offers extensive gun safety

courses, according to president David Fisher. Members wanted to hear candidate views on a number of topics, he said.

Hogan, 45, a White Lake resident and commander of the state police post in Brighton, said he believes people seeking CCW

permits should be carefully screened.

But he said they should not have to prove they or their property are in danger.

He would insist applicants

See GUNS, A15

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New elected officers take helm at DAR

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution — Three Plains Chapter elected their new officers including seven local residents.

Elected to the highest office, Regent, was Lynn C. Benner of Berkley. Other winners were: Miss Dorothy Harrington, vice regent, of Royal Oak; and Mrs. George Nordenholt, of Beverly Hills.

Also, Mrs. Edward Christopher, of Farmington Hills, both Chaplains; Mrs. Edward Zumbunnen, of Northville, recording secretary; and Mrs. Robert Eakola, of Royal Oak.

Also, corresponding secretary, Mr. Claude Turner, of Troy, treasurer; Mrs. Thomas Nancarrow, of Royal Oak, registrar; Mrs. Gilbert Nordenholt, of Troy, historian; and Mrs. Morley Foster, of Novi, librarian. Directors are: Mrs. Levy Tindal of Lathrup Village, Mrs. Chester Platter of Rochester Hills and Mrs. Robert Kirsten of Farmington Hills.

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