

## Enberg, Sharp They merit voters' support

Two incumbents, Linda Enberg and Gary Sharp, deserve re-election to the Farmington Board of Education.

Both are years apart in experience and tenure on the board. Enberg is seeking re-election to a second four-year term. Sharp is seeking election to a one-year term, the remaining time in a term left open when Joe Svoke resigned in August 1998.

We must give credit to Enberg who though running unopposed has made the campaign an opportunity to get out and talk with voters.

The addition of Melody Jaske, who is running against Sharp, has created a perfect opportunity for both candidates to discuss issues — such as vouchers and tax credits, parental choice, state funding of public education — that confront the school board and voters.

Based on responses to questions from the Observer staff, as well as responses and performances at two candidate forums, we believe Sharp — with the help of other board members — can steer the district in the healthiest direction.

Sharp is still in the middle of the learning curve, having served now less than a year on the board. We have at this point no reason not to endorse him for the upcoming year. However, we urge him to be independent in his reactions, thoughts and leadership. He has a fine mind and is articulate. And he clearly does his homework.

Jaske's spunk, spirit and forthrightness is to be admired. However, we prefer Enberg and Sharp's opposition to vouchers and tax credits and agree that they will serve only to financially cripple public education in Michigan.

We agree with Sharp's comment about tax credits/vouchers during a candidate forum: "It's touted as parental choice. It's not. It's private school choice."

Both Sharp and Enberg also rightly support the high school MEAP proficiency test as well as MEAP in the lower grades.

Both want more high school students to take the proficiency test. And we agree. It should be used as a means of telling students how they lack academically.

Enberg also is on target with her belief that the profi-

ciency test should be given earlier in the school year and results should be kept off transcripts.

We are nonetheless concerned with Sharp's less than admirable record of voting in school elections. Despite a busy professional schedule, Sharp should make use of absentee ballots.

To both incumbents, we suggest that they serve as the leaders in making the school board less bureaucratic and more face-to-face with the public.

Indeed, the board should make available at meetings reports — given to board members — that the public may read and comment on. Seeking public opinion is always the best way to go. The snafu with block scheduling at Harrison High School is the best example. Yes, public involvement is inefficient, but in the long run, that's what Democracy is all about.

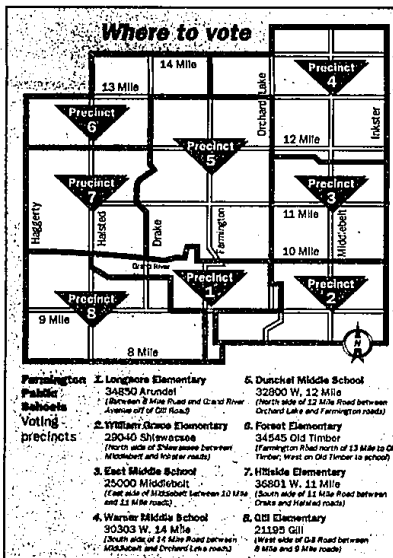
Be sure to get out to the polls and vote June 14. It's important. The school board affects not only your child's education, but decides where your tax dollars will be spent. And when you get to the polls, be sure and cast a vote for Gary Sharp and Linda Enberg.



Linda Enberg



Gary Sharp



### LETTERS

#### What it takes

Melody Jaske is an active citizen-parent who is ready and able to assume leadership on the Farmington School Board. As a fellow OM coach, I've seen first hand her ability and enthusiasm in cultivating young children's creative talents. She is well known and liked in community based groups. She is experienced in working constructively with parents, teachers and administrators. As PTA Council vice president, she has the skills needed to manage the people's trust.

Melody is the only candidate that has been listening to our local parent's concerns for years. Not surprisingly she is also the only candidate supporting real alternatives and choices for parents. Melody alone has had the courage to stand up to the so-called state experts who push the MEAP's testing myth on an uninformed public. These tests reduce our schools' curriculum to a common statewide level, in a misguided effort to accommodate all children within one narrow learning range.

Melody has been a voice for more music and arts education, striving to fill the cultural void left in our children's lives by a violent, out-of-control entertainment media.

Melody Jaske has what it takes to transform our present school system into a world class institution. Only then will Farmington students have an equal opportunity to compete in the globalized job markets of the 21st century. I urge your vote of confidence for Melody Jaske on June 14.

Eric Borregard  
Farmington

#### A voice

I have known Melody Jaske for quite a few years and she has always been involved with her own daughter's education by volunteering her time in the school. She has also offered her time at countless PTA functions. Someone with her energy, her commitment and her care and concern for children would be a great asset to the Farmington Public School District. I believe Melody Jaske would truly represent the voice of all parents and the best interests of our children when elected to the board on Monday, June 14. Please join me in supporting Melody Jaske.

Zenona Raackowski  
Farmington Hills

our very own excellent Farmington public schools.

I can't for the life of me understand how Melody Jaske can support "Universal Tuition Tax Credits" and present herself to our electorate as a proponent of public education. At last Thursday's candidates night, she seemed unsure of what terminology to use in light of the recent absorption of Mackinac Center UTTC by the Western Michigan DeVos' voucher pushers.

Gary Sharp, incumbent candidate for our School Board, is forthright and vehement in his condemnation of both proposals — vouchers and tuition tax credits. Educating all of our public school kids comes first.

Our school tax dollars must never be diverted from our goal of providing them the quality education for which our Farmington district is recognized. Let's keep it that way.

Marysae E. Long  
Farmington Hills

#### Cast vote for Enberg

Please join me in showing support for our Farmington Board by voting on June 14. Our school board has the job of directing the district into the next century and deserves support and input from its voters, including those without children in the system.

Recent forums have given voters the opportunity to meet and learn about the three candidates. Yes, this is a busy season for many, but choosing the best leadership for the Farmington Public Schools is important enough to be at the top of anyone's "to do" list.

In addition, I will be casting a vote for Linda Enberg as a show of gratitude and encouragement for past and future years of service, dedication and intelligent contributions to the community and the Farmington Public Schools.

Voters: stay involved and informed in your community. There has never been a more appropriate time to create an excellent learning environment for each student.

Cynthia Helisek  
Farmington

Opinions are to be shared: We welcome your ideas, as do your neighbors. That's why we offer this space on a weekly basis for opinions in your own words. We will help by editing for clarity. To assure authenticity, we ask that you sign your letter and provide a contact telephone number.

Letters should be mailed to: Editor, The Farmington Observer, 33411 Grand River, Farmington Michigan 48335. Or they can be faxed to 248-477-9722.

## Siegler, Peterman deserve vote

Voters in the Walled Lake Consolidated School District will choose two board members from a slate of three candidates on Monday.

Marc Siegler and Amy Peterman deserve their votes.

Siegler is currently the board's secretary. He's been on the panel since 1994, when he was appointed to fill an open seat. The 45-year-old Farmington Hills resident has lived in the district for 13 years. His son is a Walled Lake Schools graduate, and his daughter attends Western High School.

Siegler is director of quality assurance for a food distribution company in Detroit. His straightforward approach to educational issues and genuine concern for students is a valuable asset.

Peterman is a lawyer specializing in juvenile



Marc Siegler

law and child advocacy. She's also a mother of two elementary school students and an avid volunteer. She is chairwoman of an educational advisory committee set up by state Rep. Marc Shulman (R-West Bloomfield). She's worked with the American Cancer Society, and as a volunteer attorney for the Walled Lake Women's Survival Crisis Center.

Peterman attends board meetings often and makes a point to follow state and local educational issues. She would be a valuable addition to the board.

That being said, the Walled Lake Schools community will be losing the leadership of Samantha Ruetenik, who is retiring this year after 12 years of service. Early on in her school board career, Ruetenik helped recruit and hire Supt. James Geisler. She is a retired teacher whose perspective will be missed.



Amy Peterman

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— Philip Power