



Friday the 13th
myths and phobias
PAGE 5



Monroe and
McKinley merge
cause stir
PAGE 3

Little Shop of Horrors
preview
PAGE 3



YouTube
favorites
PAGE 6



March 2009

THE WY-NEWS

Roosevelt High School

<http://rhs.wyandotte.org/wynews>

Wyandotte, Michigan

Michigan college graduates leaving state, Teacher Retirement Stimulus Plan hopes for change

BY MOLLY GUCKIAN
On January 28, the Michigan Education Association (MEA) announced a Teacher Retirement Stimulus Plan that could potentially save schools statewide approximately \$411 million dollars next year and 1.7 billion over the next ten.

The plan is directed to teachers and employees statewide who are already able to retire and qualified for full pensions.

Roughly 330,000 current public school employees are a part of the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System.

Out of those, 90,000, usually with 30 years or more of experience, are eligible for retirement.

The MEA predicts that about 10% of the 90,000 would be able to retire with full pensions and also an upgrade to their monthly benefits, which would be, on average, \$500 more per month.

Through this plan, schools would save greatly needed money, offer jobs to new younger teachers and employees, and also attract interested teachers who have school-aged children who will boost student enrollment in Michigan.

As a recent graduate from Central Michigan University, building substitute teacher Stan Grezbyk believes that the Teacher Retirement Stimulus Plan is a step in the right direction, considering the deep financial ruin Michigan has been in.

"All those people who went to school for teaching and just graduated and don't have jobs can get jobs," Grezbyk said. "They're able to have houses and have money, which will help the economy."

With the alarming number of young teachers moving out of state, one of the main pillars of the plan is to keep the teachers-to-be in Michigan. Grezbyk has considered moving out of state.



Assistant Vice Principal Jason Krajewski believes that Michigan college graduates are moving to other states because there are teaching jobs there.

"Outside of Michigan there seems to be a lot of jobs," Krajewski said. "If you limit where you want to work it's going to be hard [to find a job]."

Even though Krajewski believes it has the potential to 'hurt', overall he believes the plan could be positive.

"There will be a big salary difference with the teachers coming in, so the school district is actually saving money," Krajewski said. "But that doesn't mean we would force anyone to retire. It's just a cycle, like how all businesses work."

But, Krajewski does not believe the Teacher Retirement Stimulus Plan will pass, and worries about the teachers who might be left somewhat unsatisfied.

"It may create false hopes for people who want to retire, but hold back thinking this Retirement Stimulus Plan will pass," Krajewski said. "But regardless, I don't think it's a bad thing at all."



Students just like Travis Rodery across the state are the focus of the MEA's proposal to encourage teacher retirement. The proposal would free up money for districts in these hard economics time. Photo: Molly Guckian



Two RHS English teachers, Warren Baker and Robert Keast were a part of the Reconsideration Committee. Photo: Devin Cade

The Bookseller of Kabul debate, take two

BY MOLLY GUCKIAN

The Reconsideration Committee meeting for Asne Seierstad's international bestseller *The Bookseller of Kabul* on Wednesday, February 25 resulted in a reinstatement of the book, with some stipulations.

The Committee was deciding whether the book should or should not be permitted in both the English 11 curriculum and/or the RHS library.

The Committee's first vote on whether or not *The Bookseller of Kabul* should remain in the library resulted in a unanimous 'yes', however *The Bookseller of Kabul* must have a sticker located on the inside back cover requiring students under the age of 18 to get parent's permission in order to check out the book. Before the librarian can check out the book to the student, the parent would be contacted by the librarian and informed that their student wishes to check out *The Bookseller of Kabul*.

The Committee then voted to keep *The Bookseller of Kabul* in the curriculum, but there will be increased parental notification.

"I'm happy [about] the recommendation we're making. I rarely am excited about putting more limitations on things," English teacher and Committee member Robert Keast said. "But, in the light of the parent's concerns, it seemed like a good accommodation."

A rating system will be provided with all the books chosen for students to read, a synopsis of the book, usually written by the publisher, and professional reviews from credited sources. This information will be provided for parents early on, so both parents and students have time to consider and look over the novel. If a student or parent should find a required book objectionable, the student will have the option of studying an alternative novel. Five committee members voted to keep the book in the curriculum with increased parent notification for future novels, and one voted against the reinstatement.

"I thought during and after the meeting the committee was respectful on both sides. We did our best to listen to the people we disagreed with," Keast said. "Mr. Lesko and Mrs. Hall both seem to listen to what we had to say with a lot of respect."

The committee consisted of six members, English teachers Warren Baker and Robert Keast, RHS Principal Mary McFarlane, RHS head librarian Annette Haley, and community members Libbie Hall and Rob Lesko.

The debate over this book began when Hall addressed her concern for whether the book was appropriate for high school students at the November 18, 2008 Board of Education meeting.

The two passages which were considered unsuitable contain sexually explicit material, dealing with bestiality.

At the December 16, 2008 meeting, the School Board ordered a removal of the book until the committee was formed to further discuss the book's appropriateness.

McFarlane Administrator of Year runner-up

BY SHAWN LYNCH

On February 4, Superintendent Dr. Patricia Cole informed RHS on the P.A. that Science Teacher Tim Graham and she had nominated Principal Mary McFarlane for the Michigan Science Teachers Association Administrator award and that McFarlane was a finalist.

"I nominated Mrs. McFarlane because I thought that she was very deserving for the award," Graham said.

Graham then said that McFarlane is very supportive for the science program. She promotes the science program throughout the district, region, and also throughout the state.

"I think that it is wonderful for Mrs. McFarlane to be nominated and I think that she definitely deserves to win," Cole said.

The nomination process was as follows: two essay type writings, one was from a science teacher in the district that had to explain how the administrator helped out in the science department, and the next had to be from the administrator's boss explaining why they thought that he or she deserved to win the award.

"When I wrote the essay, I had to explain how she supports the science program and the involvement she contributes," Graham said.

Graham also said that he nominated McFarlane last year without success so he nominated her again this year.

"To be nominated by a department in the building is just a wonderful honor," McFarlane said.

This will be the first time that she has been nominated for a department based award in the history of her career at RHS.

"I believe that the requirement for this award is that you have to be an administrator for at least five

years," McFarlane said.

McFarlane has been principal at RHS for 15 years and before that she was an assistant principal. McFarlane has taught in many places such as New Hampshire, Nevada, and Walled Lake.

"I have been given an award for the American Association of University Woman of the year," McFarlane said.

This award, however, is special because of where it came from and McFarlane appreciates the staff in this building.



In her fifteenth year as principal, McFarlane has been nominated for the Michigan Science Association Administrator of the Year. Photo: Shawn Lynch