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Thursday, June 5, 2014

USA TODAY | US SENATE RACES LEAN TOWARD GOP TAKEOVER | PAGE B1

EDUCATIONAL MARKETPLACE

More Fox Cities teachers and administrators shift districts since Act 10

By Jen Zettel
Post-Crescent Media

Wisconsin's schools have become a new marketplace since Act 10, where educators look to other districts for better pay and benefits, and districts make performance a greater factor in what teachers get. The controversial law removed most collective bargaining powers for nearly all public employees and required them to pay more for health insurance and retirement.

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BY THE NUMBERS		
Teachers and administrators who resigned or retired from Fox Cities schools*		
Year	Retirements	Resignations
2008-09	86	63
2009-10	68	62
2010-11	200	79
2011-12	86	104
2012-13	69	145

*Appleton, Hortonville, Kaukauna, Kimberly, Little Chute, Menasha, Neenah and New London districts
Source: School districts

Outagamie election will get new vote

District 13 results had too many ballot errors, judge rules

By Jim Collar
Post-Crescent Media

APPLETON — An Outagamie County judge on Wednesday tossed the results of an April 1 election for a county board seat after polling place mistakes put incorrect ballots in the hands of 84 voters.

Judge Mitch Metropulos ordered a special election for the District 13 supervisory seat on the Outagamie County Board.

Incumbent Leroy Van Asten defeated challenger Jason Fischer by a 48-vote margin. Fischer challenged the results following a mix-up in Kaukauna's lone polling place that resulted in 84 district voters receiving ballots for neighboring District 10. That represented about one-fifth of all District 13 voters who came to the polls on April 1.

"There has been a substantial deprivation of voting rights," Metropulos said.

Several hours passed on election day before the ballot-crossing problem came to light. Fischer discovered the mix-up and alerted election officials after he was handed a ballot that didn't list his name.

The county board seat has remained vacant as result of the legal challenge. Election laws require county officials to move swiftly if they are to fill the position before late fall.

County Clerk Lori O'Bright said she hopes to include the race on District 13 ballots during the Aug. 12 partisan primary election, but doing so would require the candidates to waive their right to appeal. State law prohibits the county from holding a special election

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BUSINESS | Fox Cities Chamber recognizes dairy processor, other firms / C10

'Diapers' campaign nears halfway point to goal

Less than two weeks left to reach \$30,000 target

Post-Crescent Media

Thanks to a surge of support in the past week, Post-Crescent Media's "Dollars for Diapers" campaign is closing in on 50 percent of its \$30,000 goal.

Including matching funds,

the fundraiser in support of the Fox Cities Diaper Bank has collected \$14,900, 49.7 percent of the target. Half of that amount — \$7,450 — has been donated through 146 individual contributions from readers, businesses and civic groups.

"Our partners at the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region have collected almost \$2,100 in the first half of this week, and almost \$3,000 in the last full week," said Dan Flannery, Post-Crescent Media's executive editor.

"That's the kind of boost we need to get to our goal. But

we're running pretty short of time and we need a lot more help to hit the mark by Father's Day. Let's challenge each other to make this happen."

The Fox Cities Diaper Bank serves as a supplementary source of disposable dia-

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Illegible signatures haven't disqualified candidates this year

By Matthew DeFour
Wisconsin State Journal

MADISON — No candidates for this fall's statewide elections have been disqualified from the ballot because they submitted too many illegible names, the Government Accountability Board said in a statement Wednesday.

The state elections agency faced criticism Tuesday for striking an unusual number of names from nomination papers under a new state law requiring signatures to be accompanied by a legibly

printed name.

GAB officials said Tuesday they were striking printed names written in cursive because they aren't "printed," even though an agency memo from April said they would accept any names where most letters are legible.

Rep. Kathleen Bernier, R-Chippewa Falls, chairwoman of the Assembly Campaigns and Elections Committee, said Tuesday she was "disappointed" the agency would "go that far" and would bring up the issue at the GAB's Tuesday meeting where

candidates for the Aug. 12 primary will be certified.

Wednesday's statement from GAB elections division administrator Michael Haas didn't offer any new response to Bernier's comments or explanation for why the agency was using such a strict standard.

"One challenge our staff faced this year is implementing a new state law on the legibility of names on petitions," Haas said. "While our staff has struck names that are not legibly printed, that has not resulted in any candidates falling below the

minimum number of signatures required to get on the ballot. We contacted candidates with petition legibility issues who filed before the deadline and let them know there could be an issue so they had time to collect and file additional signatures."

According to the GAB, there were seven candidates who submitted signatures, but ultimately failed to collect enough valid signatures to qualify for their race.

They included Marcia Mercedes Perkins, a Milwaukee Democrat running for governor, and

Craig Krueger, an independent running for Assembly, who both used an old form that didn't have space for printed names. Krueger said he planned to challenge the decision because he printed out the form in March, and was not aware of the new form posted in April.

Barry Nelson, a Republican running for Senate, was 31 names short after the review, but only 24 were for legibility issues.

Signers whose names were tossed could sign an affidavit by Friday to have their names counted.

Election

Continued from Page A1

between the primary and the Nov. 4 general election.

Van Asten declined comment on the ruling.

Fischer said he wouldn't have felt comfortable with the results, even had he won, given the percentage of voters who were affected.

"Everyone who votes takes time out of their day to do that," he said. "That means something."

The errors also had an impact on the District 10 race, but incumbent Josh Karl conceded the seat to challenger Kevin Behnke after a recount.

Metropulos said it's feasible the District 13 election could've come out in Fischer's favor had ballots been distributed without error.

Fischer and Outagamie County attorney Joe Guidote each addressed the court before Metropulos' decision.

Guidote said he came to court without a position on how the judge should rule.

"I think it was a fair outcome," he said after the hearing.

— Jim Collar: 920-993-1000, ext. 216, or jcollar@postcrescent.com; on Twitter @JimCollar

Schools

Continued from Page A1

In the three years since the change, Fox Cities educators are resigning from their jobs at higher rates than in the years leading up to the law.

A Post-Crescent Media analysis found that 145 teachers and administrators resigned from Fox Cities schools in 2012-13, an increase of 41 (or 39 percent) from the previous year. That number has nearly doubled since the 2010-11 school year, just before the law took effect.

Some educators are leaving their jobs for reasons unrelated to Act 10, but the numbers point to significant movement among Fox Cities teachers.

David Sebor retired as a counselor from Neenah High School in 2011 and said the benefits in that district before Act 10 motivated people to stay there.

"We always called them 'the golden handcuffs': Well, you can't leave because at age 55 you get this great package and you're going to stay here," he said. "But that's not true anymore."

Menasha District Administrator Chris VanderHeyden said some Menasha teachers have contacted his office to negotiate for higher salaries after they've interviewed elsewhere.

"They're coming back to us saying the district down the road can offer them this much more, and they ask if we can give them more," he said.

Adjusting to change

It will take time for administrators and teachers to adjust to a non-unionized environment. Many districts have yet to establish new compensation policies.

Under the old way, teachers knew what to expect in automatic pay raises based on years of experience and continu-

AT A GLANCE

UW-Oshkosh education majors

2008: 1,802
2009: 1,849
2010: 1,861
2011: 1,670
2012: 1,523
2013: 1,459
2014: 1,338

UW-Green Bay elementary education majors

2008: 173
2009: 148
2010: 191
2011: 157
2012: 141
2013: 133
2014: 140

Sources: UW-Oshkosh, UW-Green Bay

is opened up the marketplace ... Without union contracts, some districts can open up the checkbook and outbid people for services."

Teacher departures also make it more difficult for school administrators to implement new educational practices, said Frederick Yeo, dean of the College of Education and Human Services at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh,

"Principals aren't sure what their teacher corps is going to look like," Yeo said. "If I'm a superintendent or a curriculum director and I'm trying to adapt ... science standards, how do I know if the science teacher I'm counting on is even going to be here?"

Uncertain future

Teachers also must adapt to new ways districts are measuring their effectiveness, Yeo said. This is especially true of veteran employees. He said the new methods favor teachers who want to excel and hone their craft.

"I think it will be more positive than not for good teachers who are energetic about knowing more

about their content and their ability to teach, who are more interested in increasing their professional development, not just to move up a salary schedule," he said.

Yeo said more teachers are taking advantage of the university's add-on licensure program than ever before. Enrollment jumped from 25 to more than 100 after Act 10.

The program allows full-time teachers to work toward an additional teaching license without leaving their jobs. For example, a physical education teacher could go back to school to get an adaptive physical education license. That would allow the teacher to work with special-education students.

Being able to work

with a wider range of children makes teachers more valuable to their schools — and others. As an incentive, some districts pay college tuition for teachers.

Yeo predicts that all the changes ultimately will make better teachers.

"Districts are being forced to change because they can't get teachers they want, and if I'm a teacher, I've got some skin in the game now."

VanderHeyden hopes administrators, working with teachers, get it right.

"We have to keep working with our staff to come up with what we feel are good solutions that will benefit our kids as well."

— Jen Zettel: 920-993-1000, ext. 539, or jzettel@postcrescent.com; on Twitter @jenzettel

ing education, VanderHeyden said, but the uncertainty now makes people hesitant to stay put.

Sebor and his wife have a child in the Neenah Joint School District, and he worries how increased staff turnover will affect students, and schools in general.

"I've seen faces come and go ... and some of the best educators have chosen to leave," he said. "I think what Act 10 has done







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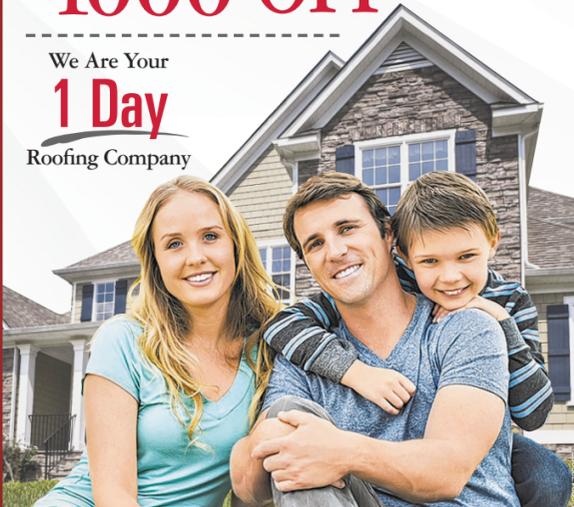
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