

THE TIME IS NOW! – WE NEED YOU!

Gloria Hoelle, Retired Educator

The start of the new school year is rapidly approaching, and all educators need to be aware of the direction our Ohio Education Association (OEA) and the National Education Association (NEA) have been heading. Please take a few minutes to think about the following information and get involved.

Have your education and moral viewpoints been represented at the fall and spring OEA Representative Assemblies in Columbus? Over the past 15 years that I have attended state assemblies, I have learned that our state association does not reflect my moral beliefs and ideologies. Consequently, the Resolutions of our association, as well as those of the NEA, are often contrary to my values.

When I first got involved as a state delegate in the early 1990's, I thought I would be learning more about provisions for our students in public education and about protection of teachers' rights. Because we live in a democracy, I felt I would retain the right to vote for the best candidates to represent me at the state level with the hope their decisions would be made in the best interests for all. However, I soon became aware that liberal special interest groups had taken control and resisted attempts for change. I was, and continue to be, outnumbered in getting my voice heard. The politicizing of both education and teachers' rights, now accompanied by a social agenda, has become the "name of the game."

Why does our association have to be involved, for example, in the area of abortion/reproductive freedom? In fact, why should my dues money be used toward political ends I oppose? Why can't both our state and national association be silent on sensitive issues like abortion? It appears that over the years, those of us who oppose the union's liberal positions have not been involved in sufficient numbers to vote these

measures down. Interestingly, the attendance at this year's OEA was down, and OEA President Gary Allen encouraged all to get involved. Could the number of delegates attending be down because many members are discouraged about the political involvements of our association? Perhaps conservatives should be encouraged. There is opportunity for their voice to be heard if they only take the time to get involved.

Please check with your local association president before the October 15th deadline to see which local colleagues are on the ballot. Then talk to those individuals and find out if they represent your views. If there are vacancies on your local ballot, YOU can step up and become a candidate. Expenses are usually covered. Check with your association. Your voice and vote at the RA counts. We need you!

Editor's Note: After 25 years in education, Gloria Hoelle retired in 2005 from the Edgewood City School District having served as a Guidance Counselor during her last 15 years in education. For more information about getting involved as a delegate from their local, please contact Gloria at gloriahoelle@fuse.net.

TEACHERS SAVING CHILDREN[®]
OHIO AFFILIATE BROCHURE

Please find a copy of our publicity brochure with this newsletter. The success of this organization depends largely on educators who are willing to be a voice for life in education. Help us spread the word about Teachers Saving Children[®] by sharing this brochure with a colleague and encouraging them to join. Recruit others to join us in being one voice for the children of this world.

Spread the word about Teachers Saving Children[®]!
Multiple copies of the brochure available upon request!
Call 330-821-2747 TODAY!

+++++

GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

Ken Blackwell

Recently, Ohio Secretary of State Ken Blackwell, candidate for governor, opened the door to discussion with four public school educators, all of whom are members of Teachers Saving Children[®]. Here is a brief summary of information shared and the dialogue that occurred that day.

Blackwell views himself as a leader in advancing the culture of life. He stated that the first function of government is the protection of human life. Taking innocent human life is civilly, as well as morally, wrong. He said that today's advanced medical technology is available to save both the life of the mother and the child.

Responding to the question about his vision for public education in Ohio, Blackwell said he envisions a "three-legged stool" for public education in Ohio: 1) Limited choice programs; 2) More money directed to the classroom; 3) More money to K-12 from the general fund.

Referring to his first point, he stated that the quality of education is enhanced when parents have a wide range of choices available to them (i.e. – open enrollment, alternative

schools, community/charter schools, private schools). He is opposed to a universal voucher system; however he sees a restricted voucher system as a child's way out of a chronically dysfunctional school.

In reference to his second point, instead of the current 56 cents out of every dollar [that schools received] going directly to the classroom, Blackwell would like to see 65 cents [an increase of 9 cents]. Student achievement, he added, is greatly impacted by resources in the classroom.

"We have a Constitutional responsibility to K-12," stated Blackwell. "Our present funding system is broken." He went on to say that currently, state funding to public schools amounts to 43% of the general budget. He said that, since a covenant was made with the taxpayers 36 years ago when the state income tax was instituted to fund public education, his goal is to increase state funding to 55% without a tax increase.

Editor's Note: Check our website for more information about our dialogue with Ken Blackwell. In addition, there will be more information shared in the October newsletter.