

DETROIT NATIVE SUN

Enlightening the Community

Telford Telescope: DPSCD needs QWK2LRN!

By Dr. John Telford
SUN COLUMNIST



Unfortunately, the 16,000 votes I got weren't enough for this writer to win. Meanwhile, I continued to serve as the Poet-in-Residence for the school district. In 2012, in cooperation with a good DPS school board led by former State Rep. LaMar Lem-

mons that had appointed me Superintendent in 2012, I endeavored to institute the Detroit-based QWK2LRN / 2

Sigma program--that research-based, field-proven, pay-only-for-success reading-and-math-advancement enterprise.

QWK2LRN ('Quick to Learn') would have QUICKLY raised Detroit's public-school students' test scores from their being America's worst to becoming among Michigan's best, but the DPS Emergency Financial Manager ill-advisedly blocked us and then fired me when the Republicans' Public Act 436 kicked in--restoring the recently-defeated Emergency Manager Law (PA 4) and empowering him to become a full-fledged Emergency Manager, so the DPSCD scores remain abysmal. Unless those scores rise significantly, next year, Lansing's Republican-dominated and DeVos-family-financed legislature will force DPSCD 3rd-graders to repeat the third grade, thus obliging thousands of parents to pull their children out of DPSCD and enroll them in even-worse-scoring charter schools.

However, this disaster doesn't have to happen: QWK2LRN--which has begun working with Biden's new Education Secretary to fix students' scores in America's

When I was Superintendent,
I wasn't independent--
So I ran to be a member
Of the school board last November.

inner cities--is still willing out of love for its hometown Detroit to make DPSCD the premier academic example of American K - 12 educative excellence. DPSCD board president Angelique Peterson-Mayberry must contact QWK2LRN immediately to set up a webinar for board members to learn how QWK2LRN will achieve this; the board must then direct Superintendent Nikolai Vitti to adopt the program with all deliberate speed. Concomitantly, DPSCD needs to a) establish an Honors STEM (Science, Technology, English, & Math) Program for students scoring 1200 or above on the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), b) establish an alliance with the HBCU (Historical Black Colleges & Universities) so DPSCD students with SAT scores

of 1000-plus can graduate from college with no debt. c) set up East-Side and West-Side "Tech 'n' Trades" (TNT)

building-trades centers, and d) put together a re-entry program for illiterate dropouts between ages 16 and 29. (There are nearly 100,000 of them in Detroit: this dropout-rescue program will save lives.)

When test scores skyrocket via QWK2LRN and these four other programs are established, Detroit's flagging property values will rise dramatically, and many suburbanites will actually scramble to enroll their children in DPSCD. Detroit's public schools will then again have become what they once were--America's model--and through this seemingly near-miraculous turnaround, our board and superintendent will deservedly bask in the limelight of national celebrity.

Dr. John Telford is a longtime Detroit human-rights activist who was a world-ranked sprinter at Wayne State University on the 1950s. Hear him on WCHB AM1340 Saturday mornings at 9:30 and Monday evenings at 6:30. Contact him at (313) 460-8272, at DrJohnTelfordEdd@aol.com, or at 8900 E. Jefferson Detroit 48214. His website is www.AlifeontheRUN.com.

Ypsilanti man pleads guilty to embezzling elderly victim

LANSING - An Ypsilanti man has pleaded guilty to embezzling more than \$100,000 from a vulnerable adult, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel announced today.

Calium Turnage, 59, appeared Monday in Washtenaw County Circuit Court before Judge Patrick Conlin, where he pleaded guilty to one count of embezzlement from a vulnerable adult over \$100,000, a 20-year felony. As part of the plea deal, Turnage will pay \$140,000 in restitution and additional charges were dropped.

"The evidence clearly demonstrates that the defendant personally benefited from the victim's vulnerable position, and in doing so violated Michigan law," Nessel said. "Our elder populations are particularly susceptible to financial exploitations and we in law enforcement must remain vigilant and prepared to hold bad actors accountable for such transgressions."

Between July 2016 and December 2017, monthly checks of between \$3,000 and \$4,000 were written to Turnage from the checking account of a 91-year-old Ypsilanti man, who was an associate of Turnage's. Turnage had been driving the elderly man to various destinations and doing odd jobs for him. About \$30,000 in checks were paid to Turnage in that time span. During the same period, 288 ATM withdrawals

totaling \$142,000 were made from the victim's accounts by Turnage.

The elderly man was eventually found to be incompetent, and two weeks before he died, Turnage became entitled to the majority of the man's \$600,000 estate after he submitted a request, allegedly on behalf of the victim, to remove the victim's longtime girlfriend and name himself as primary beneficiary of the estate. That matter was disputed and settled in a civil lawsuit.

Charges were initially filed against Turnage in December 2020. After the plea deal, the following charges were dropped: one count of embezzlement by an agent or trustee between \$20,000 and \$50,000, a 10-year felony; and two counts of failure to file taxes, a five-year felony.

Turnage is scheduled for sentencing at 1:30 p.m. April 12.

This case was handled by the Attorney General's Elder Abuse Unit. Nessel has made addressing elder abuse a top initiative during her term as Attorney General and helped establish the Michigan Elder Abuse Task Force in 2019.

To view more about the task force, the Attorney General's initiative and how to report suspected elder abuse, visit the Department of Attorney General's website.

Audit finds workers counted ballots accurately, state legislature needs to allow more time for pre-processing canvas

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson announced that all of the state's more than 250 election audits are complete, and every one of them confirmed the integrity and accuracy of the 2020 general election. The audit process drew tremendous support and complete transparency from county, city and township clerks. In all, more than 1,300 Republican, Democrat and nonpartisan clerks, as well as the state Bureau of Elections, participated in at least one audit.

"Over the last several months, the state Bureau of Elections has worked with local clerks to conduct more audits than ever before in our state's history, and each has reaffirmed the accuracy, security and integrity of the November 2020 election," said Benson. "We've responded to every question and claim and the evidence is clear. It is time for leaders across the political spectrum to tell their constituents the truth, that our election was the most secure in history, and the results accurately reflect the will of Michigan's voters."

In addition to the hundreds of audits of local election precincts - the majority of which were conducted by county clerks of both parties - officials also audited every ballot cast for president in Antrim County and found that the Dominion machines used there accurately counted ballots throughout the county. Officials also conducted a statewide audit exercise, by hand-counting votes cast for president on more than 18,000 ballots randomly selected across the state, which affirmed the outcome of the presidential election as previously determined by tabulation machines.

An audit of Detroit's absentee ballot counting board, which has been attacked repeatedly with lies, baseless conspiracy theories and the misleading claims of people lacking knowledge of election procedure, found that while clerical errors had occurred, election workers supervised by the clerk's office properly counted 174,000 valid ballots that corresponded to signed envelopes that were submitted by registered voters and reviewed by the clerk's office.

Further, auditors found that 83 percent of the counting boards were balanced or explained, up from 27 percent at the close of the county canvass. This means that in each of those boards the number of ballots matched the number of names in the poll

book, or that the imbalance could be explained in such a way that the counting board would be recountable. Auditors also found that the net number of ballots out of balance for the entire board was just 17 out of the 174,000 absentee ballots counted in Detroit.

Auditors made similar findings in audits of other cities' absentee ballot counting boards, including:

- In Grand Rapids, 87 percent were balanced or explained, compared to 62 percent at the end of the canvass. The final net number of ballots out of balance was eight.
- In Livonia, 77 percent were balanced or explained, compared to 34 percent at the end of the canvass. The final net number of ballots out of balance was one.
- In Sterling Heights, 71 percent were balanced or explained, compared to 58 percent at the end of the canvass. The final net number of ballots out of balance was four.

Further, the Sterling Heights audit was the first absentee ballot counting board ever audited in the state. Valuable lessons were learned throughout the counting board audit process, and it is expected that auditors would have balanced or explained more boards at Sterling Heights if that audit was conducted later in the process. The Bureau of Elections is drafting a final report on audit findings, which will be made available publicly.

Out-of-balance precincts are common across the state and nation, and essentially represent clerical errors where an election official failed to note that a voter at the polls checked in and then left with their ballot in hand, or a couple mailed their two absentee ballots in one envelope. Such errors are often corrected or explained in the county canvass, but time constraints make that more difficult, especially in high-population jurisdictions.

"If state lawmakers truly want to affirm faith in our elections, they will provide more time to election officials to process absentee ballots before Election Day, and canvass them afterwards, just as I've proposed in my legislative agenda to advance the vote and protect democracy," said Benson. "Had they done this prior to November, after clerks and I asked them to for more than a year, they could have pre-emptively debunked many of the lies that have since attacked our democracy."

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