

NEWS

Students must be competent in English, state school board candidate says

Kaye Ferry is only local running for state-level office

By Randy Wyrick
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It's unconscionable that some Colorado students cannot communicate clearly in English, says a local candidate for the state school board.

English is the language of international commerce, and Kaye Ferry said students across the state should be able to communicate competently.

"To turn them out without that competence is to do them a grave disservice," she told a luncheon gathering of Eagle County Republican women.

Ferry, a Republican, is the only Eagle County resident running for a state-level office. She has managed campaigns and been politically active

for years, but this is her first run at a state-level office.

Her Democratic opponent, Angelika Schroeder, was appointed to her seat and this is also her first campaign. The seat is contested along party lines.

"It's more a political job than an educational job," Ferry said. "Whether or not it should be is another matter."

Not politics as usual

The seat represents the 10 counties in Colorado's heavily Democratic 2nd Congressional District, anchored by Boulder. Eagle County is on the district's furthest western fringe.

"Of the 250,000 or so votes cast for this seat in the last election, 143,000

came from Boulder and they're all raging liberals," Ferry said. "It's an uphill haul."

The district encompassed Adams, Broomfield, Boulder, Clear Creek, Eagle, Gilpin, Grand, Jefferson, Summit and Weld counties.

Ferry stepped up to run when it looked like Schroeder would run unopposed.

State and local GOP leaders did not want any seat to go unopposed, so they put a full-court press on Ferry. The next thing she knew she was giving a fiery acceptance speech at the Republican state convention.

"I should be here with my arm in a sling after the amount of arm twist- [See FERRY, page 23]



Kaye Ferry is running for Colorado's state school board. She's the only local running for state-level office. Randy Wyrick photo.

FERRY, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING ENGLISH

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ing," Ferry joked.

She has been attending the state Board of Education meetings in Denver, getting up to speed on the issues. Most of the issues revolve around money, and how its shrinking supply.

"The board manages a lot of money, but has little interaction with local school boards," Ferry said.

Measuring teacher performance

The state school board will have to help deal with Colorado's new teacher tenure law, House Bill 191.

The bill attempts to measure performance by students, teachers, principals and schools. It's one of the hoops the state has to jump through to compete for some of the \$4.3 billion in the Obama administration's Race to the Top, a national education program.

House Bill 191 has drawn fire from some school districts and teachers unions, although local school officials say they've already surpassed anything the bill might require.

"If they don't measure their performance, they can't even put their name in the hat," Ferry said. "It has helped blast some unions and districts off dead center."