

# See (More) Educators Run

Two years ago, five MEA members won seats in the state Legislature and brought educator expertise to the Capitol. Four of them are running for reelection to House seats in November—**Sheryl Kennedy** (HD 48), **Matt Koleszar** (HD 20), **Nate Shannon** (HD 25), and **Lori Stone** (HD 28). Below are five more MEA-recommended member-candidates hoping to join the club and make public education a priority.

## Denise Forrest (HD 44)



*retired Huron Valley teacher  
former HVEA president  
Huron Valley School Board trustee*

“As a lifelong educator and MEA member and leader, I have seen the damage done to public education under the leadership of Governor Snyder and I look forward to supporting Michigan’s educators and families in rebuilding our public education system. Michigan is dead last in growth in public education spending, last in infrastructure spending and last in governmental transparency. It is time to rebuild Michigan and create a state that works for its constituents.”

## Dan VandenHeede (HD 78)



*retired Dowagiac teacher and coach  
Niles City Council member*

“I have seen the troubles caused by bureaucrats with no experience in education creating unfunded mandates and expecting more with less. Also, the fact that my opponent is a DeVos funded ultra conservative is motivating! Everyone can see our roads need fixing. I have the experience in public education and local government to know what needs fixing in those areas as well. I pledge to listen to a variety of voices to make the best decisions to move Michigan forward.”

## Nancy Smith (HD 65)



*retired Hanover Horton teacher*

“My top priorities would be to fully fund our schools, preschool through college. In addition, I will fight for issues that my rural and small-town neighbors care about, such as clean air and water, policies to help small businesses and family farmers, affordable healthcare and prescription drugs, fair and transparent government, good-paying jobs, and rural broadband. I’m a teacher. That means I’m a leader and a problem-solver. Michigan faces multiple serious problems today, and we need serious leadership.”

## Karen Garvey (HD 70)



*Montabella teacher  
Home Township Library Board member  
Montabella EA president*

“The 70th is a rural community with long-standing challenges. Our district used to provide jobs that families and communities could prosper on. When large employers such as Hitachi, Electrolux and Total Refinery closed, that left a deep economic impact that the district has yet to recover from. We need to start small and local. Support our existing employers, work to bring new jobs to the area. Build a strong local economy, schools, health care, and infrastructure, everything necessary for growth.”

## Michelle Woodman (HD 24)



*Chippewa Valley teacher*

“As an educator, I’ve seen students who don’t get enough to eat, families who cannot afford to take their children to the doctor, and parents who can’t stay home from work when they are sick. All of these issues are made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic. We need more educators in Lansing who will prioritize the needs of students, families, the public school system, and its employees. Investing in a robust, supportive, and equitable system will remove barriers for students and give them a strong start in society.”