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The Detroit News

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Funders of gov's trips reaped incentives

2020 vote challenger has edge in Southfield

Two write-ins face lone clerk hopeful on ballot, a Republican

BY MAX BRYAN
The Detroit News

Southfield — A Republican is the only city clerk candidate on the ballot in Democratic-dominated Southfield, a prospect that worries Democrats and has GOP leaders arguing that the Democrats are in disarray.

Republican Gavriel “Gabi” Grossbard is running for the Southfield clerk’s seat after losing his 2023 bid to current city Clerk Janet Jackson, a Democrat who was disqualified from running for reelection. Democrats are hoping either City Council member Coretta Hogue or city clerk’s office worker Wynett Guy can prevail as write-in candidates, but political experts said write-in campaigns are often uphill battles.

The clerk oversees local elections and public records in the predominantly Black city of more than 75,000 residents. This would include overseeing the local results of the 2026 midterm election, when Republicans are seeking to win an open U.S. Senate seat as well as take back the governor’s office and state Senate.

The Michigan Democratic Party has highlighted this race in part due to a November 2020 federal lawsuit that Grossbard filed with three other voters that sought to decertify the presidential ballot counts in the Democratic strongholds of Wayne, Washtenaw and Ingham counties. Grossbard and his co-plaintiffs accused election offi-

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Grossbard



Guy



Hogue

TARGETING LITERACY RATES



Clarence Tabb Jr. / The Detroit News

David Pelc, creator of a support network for teachers on science of reading methods, works with pupils Myiah Banks, left, Charlie Tobin, Aliea Dupree and Wesley Loftis at Barth Elementary in Romulus.

State laws push science of reading curriculum

BY JENNIFER PIGNOLET
The Detroit News

Troy — After a few easy prompts to get them started, Michele Maleszyk warns her daughter: This next one’s going to be tough.

“ANG,” says Maleszyk, emphasizing the three sounds in the one blended sound found in words like “pang” or “angry.”

Sitting atop a barstool at their kitchen countertop, 8-year-old Grace Zinczuk sticks her left index finger into a tray of sand in front of her and traces out the letters that make the sound. “A-N-G,” she writes.

Having properly matched the letters to the sound, Grace gives the tray a shake, and the black and green grains of sand fall flat again, ready for her next set of letters.

Grace, a third grader, practices these lessons with her mother most days after school in addition to her usual homework in a bid to fill a hole in Grace’s foundational literacy skills. Grace has dyslexia, a learning disability



David Guralnick / The Detroit News

Michelle Maleszyk said her daughter struggled with the Troy school district’s reading curriculum, so she spent \$10,000 to address Grace’s dyslexia through tutoring and other methods.

that makes reading and writing difficult, especially without explicit, direct instruction on the mechanics of reading. The hole in Grace’s literary skills exists, Maleszyk said, because of the reading curriculum used by Troy Public Schools, where Grace at-

tended kindergarten through second grade.

Troy’s curriculum has received years of criticism, locally, across the state and the country, for its gaps in how it teaches stu-

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Firms that ante up for foundation got access to state economic leaders

BY CRAIG MAUGER
AND BETH LEBLANC
The Detroit News

Lansing — Some of Michigan’s largest businesses have quietly helped finance Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s foreign trade missions while reaping billions of dollars in incentives and other financial benefits from her administration.

Whitmer, who took office in 2019, and past Michigan governors have used a nonprofit organization called the Michigan Economic Development Foundation to gather money from companies to pay for costs tied to official overseas trips.

However, a Detroit News investigation, based on a bevy of tax filings and internal documents, raised questions about whether the foundation and state leaders have been transparent about their relationship and about whether the arrangement has provided a secretive path for influence by those with financial matters before the state government.

Companies that contributed \$25,000 or more to the Michigan Economic Development Foundation got seats on the organization’s board, according to the group’s website. Board members also got access to Whitmer and Quentin Messer Jr., a member of Whitmer’s cabinet and CEO of the state’s economic development agency, at private functions and biannual policy events. For example, Messer’s personal calendar listed an “MEDF donor reception” that took place at Whitmer’s Lansing residence on June 29, 2022.

Many of the contributing companies were either utilities, with rate increases or project requests regularly decided by Whitmer appointees to the Michigan Public Service Commission, or businesses that had won or sought large sub-

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Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's office

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer went on a trip to Spain and another one to Taiwan and South Korea, above, in 2024.

China, U.S. officials tentatively agree to avert 100% tariffs

BY CAT ZAKRZEWSKI
AND KATRINA NORTROP
Washington Post

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia — Negotiators have reached a framework of a trade deal to avert additional 100% tariffs that President Donald Trump had threatened to impose on imports from China, setting the stage for the U.S. president’s highly anticipated meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Thursday.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in interviews Sunday that constructive meetings with his Chinese counterparts led to the deal, with the delegation from

Trump vows to raise tariffs another 10% on Canada over ad, 3A

Beijing agreeing to defer restrictions on rare earth minerals that were poised to harm the U.S. economy. The announcement marked a significant de-escalation of a whiplashing trade war between the world’s two largest economies, which heated up when Trump threatened to ratchet up tariffs earlier this month in response to China’s restrictions on the minerals, which are essential components in most electronics.

“President Trump gave me a great deal of negotiating leverage

with the threat of the 100 percent tariffs, and I believe we’ve reached a very substantial framework that will avoid that and allow us to discuss many other things with the Chinese,” Bessent said on NBC’s “Meet the Press.”

Bessent suggested in an interview with ABC News that China would defer the restrictions for about a year, although Chinese readouts included no details about a deferral of rare-earth restrictions.

He also said the countries had made progress on a deal to bring relief to U.S. farmers who have struggled under China’s boycott of

U.S.-grown soybeans.

Additionally, Bessent said, the countries have reached a “final deal” on TikTok, which Trump had promised to restructure to avert a ban of the popular social media app in the United States. Congress enacted the ban, and President Joe Biden signed it, to address national security concerns related to the app’s Chinese parent company ByteDance. Trump last month signed a deal that would spin off the app to a group of mostly American investors, including some of his top political allies.

The countries will also work together to address the fentanyl epi-

demic, which Trump has called an emergency and used as a pretense to implement tariffs against China.

The developments appear to have lowered the temperature ahead of Trump’s and Xi’s face-to-face meeting, their first of the U.S. president’s second term and the highlight of his five-day swing through Asia. The summit in South Korea will mark a critical inflection point in an economic conflict that has raged amid the president’s escalating trade barriers against China and Xi’s tit-for-tat responses.

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