

## **Board recall petition circulation to continue – Chris Jackett – C and G**

B20/20 has until Dec. 26, Jan.10 to submit petition sets to county director of elections

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP — As the 90-day mark came and went, grass-roots group Bloomfield 20/20 was still collecting signatures to recall all seven members of the Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of [Education](#).

“The recall campaign has momentum, and more signatures and [completed](#) petitions are coming in on a daily basis,” parent and group co-founder Chris Fellin said via email. “We are going to continue to collect signatures for the next several weeks. Recall supporters have asked us to keep up the effort and continue to keep pressure on the board to act in accordance with the November 2010 vote.” Last November, voters rejected a \$73 million bond proposal for a \$97.5 million new high school at the current Andover site.

The group could be collecting signatures for anywhere from one to three months longer.

“You have 180 days to collect the signatures, but you only have 90 days to do it,” Bloomfield Township Supervisor Leo Savoie said of a sliding 90-day window. “If they’re still doing it, they probably didn’t have the signatures.”

B20/20 has until Dec. 26 to submit the petitions for President Ingrid Day, Vice President Ed Ford, Secretary Kate Pettersen and Treasurer Cynthia von Oeyen to the Oakland County director of elections. The group has until Jan. 10, 2012, to submit petitions for trustees Robert Herner, Jacqueline El-Sayed and Mark Bank, according to Township Clerk Jan Roncelli.

However, Roncelli said the recall petitions must be received no later than Nov. 25 if they are to be certified for the Feb. 28, 2012, election.

B20/20 cites a slow start as the reason behind the 90-day window shift. Any signatures collected on day 91 invalidate those collected on day one, while those collected on day 92 invalidate those from day two, and so on.

The citizen group needs to collect 5,266 signatures on each of the seven petitions for the seven board members from district residents in Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Hills, West Bloomfield Township, Troy and Orchard Lake.

“We will continue to gather signatures as long as our supporters wish to do so,” Fellin said via email. “To me, new is not necessary. This district can afford to maintain, renovate and improve Andover and Lahser as small, comprehensive high schools.”

The high school consolidation, now being referred to by the district as a “unification,” has been a hot-button issue in the district for several years and is the basis of the recall attempt.

The recalls state the board members “did not act in the best interest of the students nor the district taxpayers when (they) voted yes” to a variety of items. Included among those issues was the authorization for Fielding Nair International to “proceed with development of a plan to combine Bloomfield Hills Lahser and Andover onto the Andover site,” as well as contracts made with SHW Group architects, Barton Malow and FNI for “facilitation, planning and design consulting for combining the high schools.” The FNI contract will cost the district \$863,000, and the board cannot break ground on construction for the hybrid school without voter approval in 2012.

District resident George Derderian, who said he helped found B20/20 in 2002, spoke out against his former group during the Oct. 18 special board meeting where FNI presented the 85 percent schematic design plan for a unified high school.

“Nine years ago my hair was black. Nine years ago a bunch of parents and I created Bloomfield 20/20,” Derderian said. “Times have changed since then. Now my hair is gray, and we have a superintendent that I 110 percent support. All of us have got to stop the bickering, stop the recalls.”

For more information on B20/20 and the accusations behind the petitions, visit [www.b2020.org](http://www.b2020.org). For information from contrasting grassroots group One Bloomfield United, visit [www.onebloomfieldunited.com](http://www.onebloomfieldunited.com). See [www.blomfield.org](http://www.blomfield.org) for information from the BHS district.

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