

Sotelo is choice for CG-B seat

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
Wednesday, 03 August 2011 16:42

Appointment of Belgium resident will run until April 2012 election

The Cedar Grove-Belgium School Board on Tuesday appointed Gina Sotelo of Belgium to fill the Ozaukee County seat vacated by Laura Schieffer.

Sotelo is a volunteer assistant high school cross-country coach, active PTO member and part-time administrative assistant for the Thiensville Chamber of Commerce.

The appointment is until the April 2012 election. She will be sworn in at the Aug. 10 board meeting.

Joseph Koeppen, a special-education teacher in Milwaukee Public Schools who made an unsuccessful bid for the School Board in the April election, also applied for the vacancy.

After interviewing both candidates, the board chose Sotelo because of her involvement and passion for the school district, Board President Jim Lautenschlaeger said.

"She sees the big picture and I think her experience working with our school and PTO is a definite asset," he said.

Board member Dan Bruhn added, "I think they're both passionate about education and would be good board members."

Sotelo, who graduated from Pius XI High School in Milwaukee and attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, has three children in the school district.

"I'm excited to be on the board," she said Wednesday. "Education is very important to our family. I think it's a good time in my life to do this. We received a lot from the school district and I feel it's important to give back to the district."

The family moved from Milwaukee to Belgium before their children were in school so they would be in a small school district and not get lost in the crowd, Sotelo told the board.

"I'm passionate when it comes to kids, but I'm adept at being able to see the big picture," Sotelo told the board. "If I'm in the minority, I know the majority rules. I try to see the other viewpoint. If people complain to me about something, I can explain what is happening. I realize we don't have the money at this time for some things, but we must be fair to all students, balancing all the needs as much as possible."

The only thing the district lacks, Sotelo said, is technology. Her son has had a computer since he was 2 and can make power-point presentations as a kindergartner.