

Jenkins Continues As Independent

By CRAIG McGUIRE

Despite removing herself from the Democratic primary for the 29th Assembly District amidst allegations of election fraud, Assemblywoman Cynthia Jenkins plans to resurrect her campaign and run as an independent.

Jenkins withdrew her name from the ballot on August 12 during a civil court case brought by the Queens County Democratic Organization alleging that Jenkins supporters violated election laws while gathering petition signatures.

"The strong arm of the Queens Democratic Organization and the black legislators in southeast Queens have gotten together to have me removed from office because I'm not the type who falls in line," said Jenkins.

Jenkins has clashed with organization hierarchy in the past for backing the opposition to unseat incumbent lawmakers in southeast Queens.

At the court hearings, one man testified that he signed a Jenkins petition and then signed again for four relatives.

"The petitions were permeated with fraud, which called into question the validity of all of the signatures," said Michael Reich, executive secretary of the organization. "She (Jenkins) had copies of our instruction forms on how to properly collect the signatures, but she chose not to follow them."

Jenkins claimed that she did not play an active role in the collection of signatures and suggested witnesses were not telling the truth.

"The judge asked her whether or not she would withdraw her petitions before he turned the case over to the district attorney," explained Reich. "She knew she was in trouble and resigned."

However, Jenkins said she withdrew to avoid a long and drawn out court battle.

"These charges are just not true," insisted Jenkins. "By the time this case is over, I could already have had enough signatures to be placed on (the ballot) as an independent. I'm not rich, and continuing this case would just be throwing good money after bad. I don't have the unlimited resources that the Queens County Democratic Organization has."

"I've already begun circulating petitions to have myself placed on the ballot as an independent," she said. "After all, I'm independent anyway."

However, time is running out for the 12-year incumbent.

In order to secure a spot on the ballot, Jenkins must file 1,500 signatures with the city Board of Elections by August 23.

Although the deadline was just days away, Jenkins said, "By the time the signatures are due, I plan to have well over the number of signatures required."



Cynthia Jenkins

Cortines Wrests Control

By CRAIG McGUIRE

A drawn out power struggle among Community School Board 30 members over the appointments of two principals and one assistant principal has prompted Schools Chancellor Ramon Cortines to step in.

On Aug. 12, Cortines notified District 30 President Donald Stewart that he named three trustees to appoint principals to Intermediate School 126 in Long Island City and Public School 127 in East Elmhurst, and an assistant principal at P.S. 151 in Woodside.

The positions of principal at IS 126 and assistant principal at PS 151 had been vacant over two years, and the principal position at P.S. 127 empty for approximately one year.

As the controversy draws closer to resolution, District 30 board

The removal of Jenkins from the Democratic primary narrows the field in the 29th A.D. to two: Community Board 12 District Manager William Scarborough, who is backed by the Queens County Democratic Organization and James Blake, president of the Laurelton-Springfield Gardens Chamber of Commerce.

However, should Jenkins be able to get on the ballot, the Queens Democratic Organization is poised to launch another strike against her teetering campaign.

"We feel Cynthia Jenkins has forfeited her rights to run in this election," said Reich, "and we plan to oppose her candidacy not only in the November elections but with legal action."

Jenkins said she is prepared for the fight ahead.

"They're going to keep coming after me," said Jenkins. "But the people need to have a choice."

"I think Cynthia Jenkins should resign and leave politics," said Reich.

Jenkins also dropped out a candidate for female district leader. Her running mate for that post Herbert Huntley.

members remain divided.

Seeking to get the appointments secured before the Sept. 1 start of school, in a letter announcing his action Cortines wrote, "may be difficult (if not impossible) for your board to have a quorum for a meeting, given individual members' vacation schedules at this point in time."

While the board vice-president Reverend Marvin Bentley agreed that it would have been difficult to achieve a quorum for a vote by the eight member board, he said, "My contention is that this is something that was carefully orchestrated by (superintendent D Angelo Gimondo) and other board members."

At the center of the controversy is the principal position P.S. 126, vacant for three years.

"There was one qualified ca