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Twenty-Five Cents

Budget rises for schools

By PATRICIA LACROIX

More money will be spent on each child in the Farmington schools this year, but the extra money spent will be absorbed by higher costs.

The Farmington Board of Education put the final stamp of approval on the 1978-79 budget at last week's meeting. The budget calls for total revenues of \$28,276,079 and expenditures of \$28,465,761.

The district will dip into the \$434,290 left over from last year to make up the difference, said William Frisk, assistant superintendent for finance and services.

Last year, revenues reached \$27,077,375, with expenditures of \$26,838,595.

Before the board voted to approve the budget, board member Michael Spiece suggested \$200,000 be set aside as if it were already budgeted and spent. Spiece said this would be a good idea in light of the tax limiting proposals on the November ballot.

"I don't want to sound like an ogre, but there is little debate that next year we may be facing some really serious budgetary problems," Spiece said. "We have to act responsibly and have a long range plan to protect ourselves for the bad year ahead."

His motion was rejected by the board.

One of the problems facing the district is the declining amount of money available from the state. Because of dropping enrollments, the state is kicking in fewer dollars to the district. There are about 650 fewer students in the Farmington schools this year, with an estimated total enrollment reaching 13,287.

Local property tax payers are picking up a greater portion of the education bill, Frisk said.

THE DISTRICT is also spending \$2 million this year acquired through a bond sale. The money is not included in the budget.

The last bonding project for the school district was in 1970, and the money was used for the construction of a new school.

Supt. Lewis Schulman told the board that this money would go to "long needed improvements in the schools."

The board was quick to spend some of the bonding money at the same meeting, as they approved several projects.

One of the projects is roof repairs at Farmington High School and Dunkel Junior High. The cost of the project is set at \$48,068.

Typewriters will cost the district \$71,549, also to be purchased through the sale of the bonds. Finally, \$42,124 will be spent on grounds maintenance equipment.

Other projects will be approved by the board later.



Faulty wiring ignites clubhouse blaze

Flames raced through the attic of an Oakland University clubhouse last week, causing an estimated \$125,000 damage to the 62-year-old structure. Bloomfield Hills residents Marvin Katke and Harold Cousins had donated \$50,000 to the clubhouse renovation and \$50,000 to construct an adjacent golf course. Formerly a lodge and retreat for deceased

auto pioneer John F. Dodge, the clubhouse was about to be renovated and opened in the spring. Fire fighters traced cause of the blaze to defective wiring in two light fixtures. See page 4A for the complete story. (Photo by Janet Oliver and Jeff Krauth).

Sister cities popular for executives

Like passing through a revolving door, families move themselves into and out of Farmington and especially Farmington Hills with startling regularity.

Job transfers account for most of the moves, real estate agents said.

So far, he has surveyed the area school districts and he found that most of the surrounding schools either own their own computer or rent time from a centrally-located system.

From there, he wrote and circulated a letter to the Farmington High School math classes and other students, asking for an indication of interest.

Of 100 letters, about 18 positive responses have been returned. The letters were circulated a week ago.

Short approached the board of education last week, but they said only that they would consider the possibility.

A "real good" system for the Farmington schools could be purchased for about \$1,700, Short said. With accessories to increase the capabilities, the cost would rise.

But he said it is really a case of spending as much as is wanted on the project, all the time advancing to more complicated machines.

IT IS BASICALLY a question of priorities, said William Frisk, assistant superintendent of finance and services. While 30 or 40 students may be interested in purchasing a computer, Frisk said money directed toward the

11 years, and said that during that time he has seen a lot of changes in the city.

While Farmington accounts for one-third of all home sales in the community, Farmington Hills picks up the remaining two-thirds.

Farmington houses older families, people who are less likely to move, he explained.

Kangas said Farmington Hills, on the other hand, is probably one of the most attractive Detroit suburbs to

transferees. The school system, while stressing academics, he said, is not into the "pole class scene" that Birmingham and the Bloomfields are.

"The people settled in Bloomfield Hills have arrived, and they have all the trappings of being there. There is a certain stufled shirtness connected with living there," he said.

The income range typical to Farmington and Farmington Hills also fits for most newly arrived executives, with an average yearly figure of

\$55,000. Bloomfield Hills wage earners pull in about \$72,000 per year, while Livonia averages about \$28,000 per year.

"It's just a nice, little average community," Kangas said. "Most people are looking for that, they like the small town atmosphere available here."

And move they do.

Eight hundred families moved last year from New York to the Detroit area in connection with their jobs at General Motors auto company.

The J.C. Penney company moved all of its top management to this area a few years ago.

During the next 240 days, 400 families will move to town with their jobs with a leading Farmington industrial firm.

Most realtors agree, though, that Ford Motor Co. is the biggest mover of families in this area. No statistics were available, either from the company or real estate agents, since keeping such files would be "an invasion of privacy."

"Besides, we really don't have any need for those kinds of files," said Bob Morrow, part of the Workforce Analysis section at Ford Motor Co.

Richard Calmes, vice president of personnel at American Motors Corp. agreed.

Just from personal observation, however, most realtors have a pretty good idea of who moves who.

"Without a question, Ford is the biggest mover in this area," Kangas said, thinking of his 11 years on the job. "GM is somewhat slower, and AMC has almost no mobility at all. I've been trying to figure this out for 11 years."

The Big Three are not alone, though, as Bendix, Burroughs, the Farmington Industrial Park, Botsford Hospital and even the Farmington Board of Education were also cited by realtors as "big movers."

"There is an awful lot of movement," said Bill Mathers, a local realtor. "All you have to do read the newspapers: You are always reading that this guy just came up from Atlanta, and that this guy is heading to Chicago."

"I've seen people here for one month, and then they are gone again. Some of them don't even have time to unpack their boxes." Dave Jensen said, from another large real estate firm.

All this moving may or may not have an adverse effect on the family unit. Recently, there has been concern that this was not good for the families, and especially not good for the children.

But Kangas said he has heard both sides of the issue, including the argument that frequent moving brings families closer together.

Ed Lichten, from GM's new relations staff, said there is a recent phenomenon of people within the organization simply refusing to move anymore. When they do this, of course, he said, they are turning down further promotions.

A big factor in these decisions, he said, seems to be that more and more frequently the wife is also working, and they choose to stay where they both can work.

But moving into a new community may not be such a trauma as it used to be.

Several big companies have created their own departments to act as a buffer zone between the company itself and the real estate agencies. These are commonly called "third party buy-out" systems, said Conrad Jakubowski, of a local real estate agency.

The company for which Jakubowski works is part of a national chain of real estate companies that works from coast to coast to make moving easier for the family.

There may be as many as 50 such chains, but Jakubowski said there are only about 12 "really effective" ones.

Usually, the real estate company in the town to which the family is moving will compile a package of information, which is sent directly to the family. School system information and housing guides are included in these packages.

Also in the package is a Wednesday grocery store advertisement, Jakubowski said, since "the ladies want to know what kind of prices to expect once they get here."

In return, the real estate agency in the old town will gather information on the number of children and their ages, along with yearly income figures, which is sent to the real estate agency at the new destination.

Most of the people know very little about the Detroit area, and Jakubowski said they are eager to learn. Sometimes, special sessions are held with the families when large groups of one company are transferred.

Computer battle launched by student

Computers may be the newest thing, but it looks like Farmington students are going to be stuck with reading, writing and arithmetic for a little while longer.

David Shortt, a junior at Farmington High School, is president of the school's Math Club, and he is trying to convince the board of education—the body that holds the purse strings—that the school district really needs a computer system.

But faced with limited funding and the threat of tax limitation, the board

is at best hesitant to spend the kind of money that a worthwhile system would cost.

Nevertheless, Shortt is continuing in his efforts.

"All of this really began when I was talking to one of my friends in Southfield. He said he was planning on taking a computer course this year, and I said 'Wait a minute.' I decided that I would find out why Farmington didn't have a system, and perhaps start a movement to get one," Shortt said.

So far, he has surveyed the area school districts and he found that most of the surrounding schools either own their own computer or rent time from a centrally-located system.

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band, for example, helps about 150 people in their interests.

"I think knowledge of computers in today's world is essential. They are used in every business imaginable," Shortt said.

In addition, practice on computers helps people to organize their thoughts in a logical manner, and many colleges are demanding that freshmen have some computer knowledge before they enter, he added.

Southfield and Bloomfield Hills currently have computer systems.

Livonia schools are hooked into a computer system via telephone lines operated by the Wayne County Intermediate School District.

THE BLOOMFIELD HILLS system is by far the most expensive in the area. It includes a centrally located computer with 16 terminals located throughout the district—in high schools, junior highs and even an elementary school.

At \$82,000 for the main computer and about \$12,000 for each terminal, the district has spent a considerable amount for the system.

But Elbert Pack, director of research and evaluation for the district, said the money is well spent.

"Young people are growing up in a world where computers are a way of life, and we wanted to see that our graduates had some computer literacy," he said.

Almost 250 people use the Bloomfield Hills system on a regular basis, including teachers, students and parents.

Livonia currently has 13 terminals in use in the district, three in each of the four high schools and one in a junior high school.

Both business and mathematics classes use the terminals.

John Andrews, a computer math teacher at Bentley High School, said the current system was arranged about three years ago.

"There has been such a big push for computer knowledge in the world, and we wanted to keep up with other districts and the world," Andrews said.

"There was a real need in the district, and besides, the students wanted it."

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Invisible friends

Just about everybody has had an invisible or imaginary friend at one time or another during their lifetime. The Crack-erbarrel Debate takes on that subject this week as editor Steve Barnaby talks about some of his favorite imaginary friends.