

# High Schools Fit 'Comprehensive' Tag



END OF SCHOOL DAY brings students pouring out of the high school door in to the spring sunshine.

By ELIZABETH WISSMAN  
Staff Writer

Farmington's two high schools are what is known as "comprehensive high schools."

What is a comprehensive high school? Dr. James B. Conant, nationally known educator, defines it as "a peculiarly American phenomenon in his second handbook on the comprehensive high school."

He notes: "It is called comprehensive because it offers under one administration and one roof (or series of roofs) secondary education for almost all the high school age children of one town or neighborhood."

"It is responsible for the education of the bright and the not-so-bright child with different vocational and professional ambitions with various motivations."

American people believe this best serves the principles they cherish.

IN HIS REPORT, Conant outlines five criteria which he believes today's comprehensive high schools should meet as a minimum:

- Provide instruction in calculus.
- Provide instruction in a modern foreign language for four years.
- Arrange the schedule so that a student may study in any one year English, mathematics, science, a foreign language, social studies, physical education, art or music.
- Provide one or more advanced placement courses.
- Have enough English teachers so that the average pupil load is 120 or less.

To see how Farmington high schools measure up to these standards we talked to Harold Humble, principal at North Farmington High, and James Geiger, principal at Farmington High.

Taken point by point, here is what they said:

**FORMAL COURSES** in calculus are not taught at either high school.

Both schools, however, offer advanced math for students who have completed 11th grade trigonometry. The course is above the normal high school sequence of math. Twenty students are enrolled in it at North Farmington and six at Farmington.

College placement in math classes might be determined by the grade a student gets in advanced math, depending on his ability.

Both schools offer French and Spanish as a modern foreign language for four years if enough students show interest. A German course has been introduced and will be offered next year for two years.

Geiger and Humble disagree with Conant's suggestion that a student be permitted to study in one year English, mathematics, science, a foreign language, social studies, physical education, art or music.

Such a program would require modification of the six-period-a-day schedule. Both Farmington schools are geared to this.

Only in a school that was part of a "selective" system could any such requirements for a high school diploma be enforced.

The essence of a comprehensive high school lies in the principle of "electives."

To initiate such a schedule, total re-organization of the school day would be required. There would be need for approaches such as: the ungraded school, modular or block scheduling and increased opportunities for independent study.

Modular scheduling might be set up with 15 minute class periods for one class an hour and a half for another.

Livonia Franklin High School is trying modular scheduling on an experimental basis. Both local principals say it would take two years to prepare for a program such as Conant suggests. It would mean more teacher training, need more staff and be more expensive... and financing is the bugbear of any local school system.

Farmington high schools do not offer advanced placement courses per se. There are advanced courses in English and biology.

Geiger disputes the value of advanced placement courses.

He says, "There is a difference between the college point of view and the high school point of view on grading a student in high school for college placement."

Farmington advanced classes, however, could easily be used to provide students with college credit.

At North Farmington, about 30 students are taking advanced English. There are two classes of 18 each taking advanced biology at Farmington High.

CONANT'S recommendation for the English teacher pupil load to be 120 or less is termed "unrealistic" by both principals. Geiger said, "I don't know of any school that can do this."

The English teacher ratio at North Farmington is about 150 to 1, varying between 140 to 155 to 1. At Farmington High it is about 125 to 1.

The limit set by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, under which both schools operate, is 170 to 1.

Both local schools require three years of English to graduate — English IV is elective.

Conant is also a strong advocate of the teaching of more composition, with students required to write at least one theme a week to be graded by the regular teacher.

If a theme-a-week program could be set up here, both principals think teacher-aides should correct the themes.

More time is spent on literature in Farmington schools than on composition, although English V classes do quite a bit of writing.

English teachers at North Farmington have proposed that a senior course in composition be set up for one semester next year.

Conant also recommends that a senior course be set up for one semester next year.

★ Please Turn To Page Two

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## Future Study Committee Asks 'What's Next To Come?'

The Future Farmington Study Committee has scheduled a closed door meeting for Tuesday night to decide what should be done about the plans calling for an independent study of the growth and development of the community.

Farmington's City Council is expected to take action on the committee's request to help finance the MSU study at Monday night's council session.

The Village Councils of both Wood Creek Farms and Quakerstown have voted to pay its proportionate share of the \$3,500 total cost.

Farmington Township's Board tabled the request Monday night until after the Oct. 23 incorporation election on the basis that the report would "cloud" the issue.

Members of the committee, formed by the Board of Commerce, the Jaycees and the League of Women Voters, had hoped to obtain financial backing from all four of the governmental units.

The proposed study would outline the various avenues open to the four governmental units in future growth and development and would not have drawn any conclusions. Nor has the committee taken a stand on any of the alternatives.

A staff member of Michigan State University's Institute for Community Development would have completed the study by mid-August.

The Township's action has

left the committee members with a feeling of "where do we go from here." That's what Tuesday's meeting will seek to decide.

At last week's meeting of the Farmington Jaycees that group decided to take no stand on the question until the study committee had an opportunity to meet and make some sort of recommendation.

Thursday morning the Directors of the Farmington Board of Commerce took the same stand.

Board of Commerce President Fred Scott said that the Directors had expressed a vote of confidence in the study committee at the session.

"A survey was conducted on this study when it started," Scott added, "and that showed

there is an interest along with an actual need for the information. The information provided through the study would be of considerable help to the voters and citizens throughout the area in making a decision.

"The Board of Commerce is in the position of wanting to see this study made and completed," Scott asserted.

"In the final analysis, however, it is the committee's business as to what should be done," Scott noted.

The Third group participating in the committee—the local chapter of the League of Women Voters—has also asserted that it is in favor of seeing the study completed and making the information available to the public.

## Budget's Public Hearing Lacks Any Audience

While American politicians may be characterized by their tendency to employ various techniques of long-winded verbosity, the City Council in Farmington Wednesday night proved to be a noteworthy exception.

Meeting for a special public hearing on City Manager John D. Dinan's proposed budget for the upcoming year, the Council—missing Mayor William V. Brotherton and Councilman John Allen—proceeded to conduct a full meeting in a total elapsed time of five minutes and 28 seconds.

Mayor Tom Howard W. Thayer presided.

None of the public bothered to come and be heard.

Nevertheless, with or without citizen advice, budgets must be drawn, discussed and approved. All this is scheduled to take place at 8 p.m. tomorrow, at the Council's regular meeting.

This year's budget is noteworthy for its one dollar per thousand dollars added and valuation tax reduction (even though this translates to a slight increase per taxpayer, due to a corresponding increase in valuation equalization rates).

In addition, the budget calls for a marked increase in salaries for several city departments, particularly the Department of Public Safety.

Additionally, provision for extension of services into the recently annexed industrial area explains another sizable figure in the budget that did not exist for the current fiscal year.

Predicting the property tax decrease on the increase in Farmington's assessed valuation, and attributing the salary increases to an "effort to maintain an enlightened pay scale and attempt to stay abreast of salaries of comparable community size in the metropolitan area, Dinan's budget generally holds to the line of last year's receipts and expenditures. The total increase is measured at less than one per cent.

The current budget under which the city is operating balances at \$604,230.42, and the proposed budget amounts to \$609,481.48. The biggest scheduled receipt is from property taxes, the largest expenditure for public safety.

Other salary increases outside of public safety divisions are in the departments of the city manager, the municipal court, the city treasurer and the public safety department.

## Library Needs Support To Ease Inadequacies

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a two-part series discussing the Farmington District Library and the upcoming library millage vote May 22.)

By SUE SHAGHNESSY  
Editor

"Peter Rabbit" is an excellent book. But Biology II needs a book about rabbit anatomy. And English IV needs a book about major English poets. And Mrs. Jones wants "The Source." And the Farmington Public Library is ridiculously inadequate in its ability to serve any one of these needs.

That's how a story on the Farmington District Library began in the May 4 issue of Farmington High's "Blue & White."

The student reporter noted that "Admittedly, most of the elements (including the elements)

of Farmington in the Township.

To build the structure and purchase 100,000 books for its shelves will cost an estimated \$814,000.

In addition to this new facility, the existing library facility in the city will be expanded. An additional 10,000 feet will be constructed and 50,000 books purchased.

Estimated cost of this is \$293,000.

First priority in the expansion program is the South Library on 12 Mile Rd. The wording of the ballot proposition provides that the first mill first be spent to build and equip the north end site for the Township residents—and the Township Board has stated that if this is not done it will refuse to levy the millage.

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## Cool Gal Pulls Off Two Jobs

A seemingly nerveless team of thieves managed to pull off a bizarre double larceny Saturday, May 6, apprehended by store officials at both spots and maneuvering out of the grasp of the law both times.

Sometime between 8:50 and 10:30 Saturday morning, a tall, well dressed Negro woman in her late twenties entered a storage room in the Sears store at Livonia Mall Shopping Center and proceeded to rifle through employees' purses.

Around 10 a.m., a store employee apprehended the milk-clad burglar going through the former's purses, grabbed her and began to usher her to authority.

Suddenly, the intrepid burglar broke away from her captor and raced out of the building, leaving her own purse behind (without identification in it). A security officer estimated employee losses at \$48 and numerous personal papers.

Approximately one hour later, seemingly unperturbed by her close brush in Livonia, our friend strolled up in front of Sam's Cut Hair, Inc., the Farmington Plaza.

After casually leaving the store, the ace burglar strolled into a nearby drug store, where the Sam's sales clerk caught her and demanded her to empty her pockets. The thief simply said no, graciously walked away and hopped into her nearby Mustang—with \$252 cash neatly deposited in her hands.

## Project Seeks High School Travelers

The International People-to-People Project is looking for high school students in the Farmington area who might be interested in traveling to Europe this summer as "Teen Age Ambassadors."

The "Ambassador" program, aimed at establishing international understanding between teenagers here and abroad, will be sending approximately 20 Michigan students to Europe, where their 10 nation, six week voyage will center around personal contact with European families. Included in the \$1,316 fee is all transportation, food, lodging and spending money.

A meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m. in room 139 at Warren High School, 6460 Arden, Warren. Anyone not able to attend, or who might have questions to ask, is invited to call Bruce Fillmore, a Royal Oak teacher who will serve as a guide for the tour, at 547-2720 or at 543-7997. Fillmore says he will be glad to make individual visits to the homes of students wishing to take part in the program.



WORKING OUT every morning in Farmington's City Park are Jack Cotton and Bill Conroy. The two are up at 6 a.m. to do their laps around the park before beginning the workday. Cotton is director of athletics for the schools and Conroy heads the Farmington Insurance Agency.

## Auction Bicycles

The Farmington Township Police Dept. will be conducting a bicycle auction Saturday, June 17, at the Township Administration Bldg., on 11 Mile Rd. west of Orchard Lake Rd.

The auction, to be held at 10 a.m., will consist of the sale of 44 bicycles and other miscellaneous items impounded or collected by the police.