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Twenty Five Cents

Elementary buildings eyed

Task force weighs school closing options

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Parents of elementary students in one of four Farmington schools could find their children transferred to another building if the board adopts a Task Force on Declining Enrollment recommendation to close a facility. The four elementary schools under consideration are Alameda, Lakeshore, Ten Mile and Middle Belt.

Ten Mile received the most attention at the group's Oct. 11 meeting.

The location of the school, the number of students displaced by the move, past and present enrollment as well as the safety of children who might have to cross busy streets will be considered in making the recommendation.

The four schools, all with declining enrollments, are located within a one-half mile radius. The closing of one wouldn't result in students being bused across the district, according to Stanley Hecker, Michigan State University education professor who is working with the task force.

"We're not here to close a school. We're here only to make recommendations," Hecker said.

The Board of Education will make the final decision.

In 1973-74, Alameda school had 271 students. In 1977-78, the total dropped to 268.

Hecker projects the school will have a student population of 218 during the 1977-78 school year and 203 students the next year. Lakeshore Elementary School had 432 students last year. This year there are 424 students. Hecker predicts a population of 411 students in 1977-78 and 397 children by 1978-79.

MIDDLE BELT's population has decreased from 474 in 1973-74 to 449 in 1978-79.

By 1977-78, the population could decrease to 391, according to Hecker.

He predicts that Middle Belt will have a student population of 364 by 1978-79.

Ten Mile Elementary School, which has been considered for closing by other citizens groups, had a student population of 348 in 1973-74. In 1977-78, the school houses 329 students. Hecker predicts that the enrollment will drop to 327 next year and to 305 by 1978-79.

A Citizens Committee recommended the closing of Ten Mile on a previous occasion, according to Lawrence Friedman, assistant superintendent.

"They said if a school were to be closed it should be Ten Mile because it was the building in the worst physical shape," he said.

Leon Egnin, a Fairview parent, and member of the task force, took issue with the Ten Mile suggestion.

"The worst it had was a leaky pipe," he said. "I felt we were being pushed to close Ten Mile in that committee."

THE REPORT also included recommendations on painting and plumbing repairs for the Ten Mile School. The repairs have been completed, according to Friedman.

Parents will say, "Don't close Ten Mile. You closed Farmington Junior High School. Why are you picking on this area?" Farmington High School Principal Gerald Potter said.

The choice of which school may be closed will be based in part on its location, according to Hecker.

Fairview was saved from closing last year, because it is in the middle of a subdivision, according to Mrs. Lyla Young, a

task force member who worked in Ten Mile School.

The location of the school is important if the group is to consider the cost of busing the children to another location, according to Egnin.

"We should plan for the least possible busing and the least possible busing," he said.

There is a suburban-urban problem which occurs here," said Hecker. "Parents don't want their children crossing major roads. Even if the children could walk, if they had to cross a busy street, you might have to bus them."

If the child lives more than one and one-half miles to school by the nearest traveled road, the state will reimburse the cost.

THE APPROVED COST which the state will reimburse and the actual cost of the transportation won't be the same, Hecker cautioned.

Ten Mile School's alternate uses will also be considered.

"I see alternate utilization as being such things as curriculum centers," Hecker said.

But that's not the whole reason for closing the schools," he added.

Is that going to save the district money?" Egnin said. "That's why we're closing the school — for lack of money."

But then you're putting more money into these buildings. What's the point of closing the school?"

To save administrative salaries," Hecker answered.



Werewolves and goblins will get a welcome greeting from Farmington and Farmington Hills residents during this year's Halloween celebration. (Photo by Jim Hug)

Esch stumps Farmington area and vows more local control

U.S. Senate candidate U.S. Rep. Marvin Esch (R-Ann Arbor), promised to return more control to local government, bused education and continued stumping at his opponent U.S. Rep. Don Riegle (D-Flint) during a recent handshaking tour of the Farmington-Nursing Home.

Esch, who is running for the U.S. Senate, said he was not here to close a school. We're here only to make recommendations, Hecker said.

Each repeated his theme of bringing government back to the people during his walk through the nursing home.

"I BELIEVE strongly in local control. The major difference between my opponent and myself is that I think there is too much government, too much red tape. One of the faults of big government is that the middle-income taxpayer is overlooked," he said.

The middle-income taxpayers aren't getting their money's worth," he said.

Each wants government to give this group a federal income tax deduction for taxes paid to support local schools. He would also like to see persons who can't pay medical expenses and don't qualify for insurance receive some help from the government.

Each views his proposal to allow federal tax deductions for payment of local school

taxes as one way to combine federal support and local control.

"Within the next 10 years the federal government will have to become a stronger supporter of education," he said.

Presently, the federal government pays about 7.8 per cent of the school costs. Under Esch's plan, the government would chip in from 20 to 30 per cent of the cost.

This will mean more money from property taxes," he said. "But I want to give federal income tax credit for money paid on school taxes."

Another realm of government intervention in the schools, busing, is looked upon with disfavor by Esch.

"For the last two decades, the busing discussion has taken our time away from the neighborhood schools. We should provide an education system that gives equal results for each child," he said.

His backing of local control of schools in-

cludes support of neighborhood schools.

The real strength of the school system is the neighborhood schools," he said.

His anti-big government stance extends to his opposition to national medical programs for all.

"I don't think federally subsidized health programs are effective. There's already too much government," he said.

ESCH SUPPORTS a bill which would allow the government to aid those persons who are unable to pay their medical bills because they don't qualify for private insurance.

It would pay the full cost of drugs and would cover the cost of catastrophic illnesses," he said.

He considers that his proposal and the existing Medicaid program don't contain a method of holding down rising medical costs.

It's a major problem," he said.

Esch reiterated his support of training programs for the handicapped.

"There should be job education for the handicapped. They should be trained to their fullest potential," he told a roomful of elderly and wheelchair-bound patients.

He supported government programs which would help unemployed youths gain jobs.

One out of six persons between 14 and 22 years old is unemployed. The government should help find year-around employment for them. I'd like to see kids between 14 and 22 who are unemployed placed in work-study programs, like the youth conservation corps," he said.



Discussing the state of the federal budget are (from left) Farmington Mayor John Richardson, Farmington Hills Mayor Keith Descon, U.S. Rep. Marvin Esch (R-Ann Arbor) and

Farmington Councilman Ralph Yoder. Esch was in town stumping for a U.S. Senate seat. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Lichtman is unimpressed by ticket-writing marathon

Although the Farmington Hills Police Department recently boasted of 84 ticket-writing marathons at the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College (OCC), Councilman Fred Lichtman said that unimpressed.

Lichtman, at this week's council session, said that police had more important things to do than concentrate on writing 800 parking violations in a one-half square mile section of Farmington Hills.

The police went on the ticket-writing marathon last week because campus security guards lost the power after a dispute with the Oakland County Sheriff's Department.

"I think it is ludicrous to send a couple

of cops out to write 800 tickets when we are unable to control traffic in the subdivisions and the rest of the community," said Lichtman.

POLICE CHIEF Ronald Holke has been pressing for the city to take on the OCC security force as part of the city's auxiliary force so campus police would have the authority to write tickets.

Lichtman supported the move, although he disagrees with Holke, who wants the campus guard outfitted with weapons.

"The least we could do is to incorporate the campus force for the sole purpose of traffic control and for issuing tickets. But, they don't have to be armed," he said.

The campus parking situation has be-

come "desperate," according to one city official, after students and faculty found out campus police weren't allowed to issue parking violations last May.

THE FIRE department said fire lines were parked by illegally parked vehicles. The campus newspaper issued a warning that a crackdown was coming before actual ticket writing began last week.

The city garnered more than \$3,200 from the 72-hour ticket-writing session.

City Manager George Majors said that now that the crackdown has occurred, students and faculty members will be alerted to the no parking signs.

Beggers to get friendly greeting

Farmington residents seem perfectly willing to surrender money for fruit and candy to roving bands of bizarrely dressed youths who are expected to invade the area Oct. 31.

After all, Halloween comes but only once a year.

"It's what the little goblins want," summed up Jane Mitchell of Farmington. "Last year we had quite a few of them."

"I enjoy it," she said. "I'll give candy to whoever comes to the door."

Chris Heraty of Farmington Hills was in the process of moving into her house last Halloween and didn't hand out goodies to the neighborhood goblins.

She'll make up for it this year, she says.

"When we lived out in the country, there weren't any children near us. I missed giving out candy to them," she said.

Last year, we were moving in, so I have no idea how many kids are in the neighborhood. I expect to pay \$5.00 for candy," she said.

This year, she'll be handing out wrapped candy to the children. "I feel better giving wrapped candy. Most parents are careful about the type of candy their children eat."

"There's a chance that apples could have pins in them. I give out tightly wrapped candy so the parents will know it's all right. Most of my friends give out pennies and nickels."

"I give out candy because the kids enjoy it. I know I did," she said.

"I just love seeing the children," agreed Carol Davis of Farmington.

Although he doesn't have any children of his own who will become little beggars on Halloween, Carson Honeyman, of Farmington Hills, will have give out candy

BOOOO

Beggars to get friendly greeting

We'll probably spend between \$5 and \$10 on candy," he said.

The one thing that Fred Hanman of Farmington Hills doesn't like about Halloween is that there aren't enough children in the apartment complex.

I like children," he said. "In fact, I think it's lovely that some kids live in apartment complexes. That means children who come around on Halloween."

I won't give them candy. Too much candy isn't good for children," said Han-

man who has three grandchildren. "I've saved change from the laundry and things like that. I'd rather give them that than candy."

I didn't give out candy last year and I won't this year," said Judith Henry of Farmington Hills. "I will give out some thing but I doubt if it'll be candy."

We'll probably give out fruit.

Our children aren't allowed to have candy. We're interested in the safe side."

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