

# Schools consider boundary shifts

By CARL STODDARD

Closing schools and shifting boundaries—already a fact of life in the Southfield School District—seems certain to continue.

By 1980, school officials say, enrollments are expected to decline 40 percent from the 1970 high of 16,500 students.

As the district moves closer to the projected enrollment of 10,000 in 1980, more schools may be closed and local school boundary lines will be shifted again.

A fight already is brewing over which additional schools may be closed. An even bigger fight seems about to erupt over proposals to change boundaries for elementary, intermediate and high schools.

Last week, about 75 residents turned up at a Southfield Board of Education meeting to protest suggested boundary changes. Focal point of their attack was a report prepared earlier by a nine-member panel of school administrators.

Meeting at the request of the school board, the panel prepared a list of options and proposals calling for changes in boundaries and the closing of several elementary schools.

Both panel chairman Associate Supt. Philip Schoo and board president Kenneth Larsen stressed that the suggestions from the panel were nothing more than that.

There is no definite proposal, Larsen said.

A TOTAL OF 14 options for the district were prepared by the administrators. Of all the options, the committee said, they were prepared to recommend the most complex.

The recommendation calls for closing Magnolia Elementary School and sending students from the school to Kennedy and Grace elementary schools.

John Grace would also be closed under this option and students would be assigned to MacArthur Elementary School.

Simms Elementary School would be closed and students would attend either McIntyre, Schenck or Vandenberg elementary schools.

Southfield No. 10 Elementary School would also be closed if this option is considered. Students from the school would be sent to either Stevenson or Eisenhower elementary schools.

As for the middle schools, Thompson and Levey junior high schools would convert to middle schools housing grades six, seven and eight. If this resulted in splitting students in a family between high schools, the report said, individual transfers could be considered.

The administrators' committee also included in the option a breakdown of proposed school boundary lines. The new boundaries are based on the theory that students leaving Levey and Levey would attend Southfield High School. Students from Thompson and Birney would go on to Southfield-Lathrup High School.

Other boundary suggestions included:

• Birney's attendance area would start at Southfield and Thirteen Mile, go south to Twelve Mile, east to the boundary of Lathrup Village, south to Eleven Mile, west to Southfield Road, south to Ten and One-Half, west to Lahser, and north to the end of the school district.

• Thompson's attendance area would begin at Southfield and Thirteen Mile roads, go south to Twelve Mile, east to Lathrup Village, south to Eleven Mile, west to Southfield Road, south to Eight Mile, east to Greenfield and north to Thirteen Mile.

• Southfield-Lathrup attendance area would begin at Southfield and Eight Mile roads, then go north to Ten and One-Half, west to Lahser and then north to the end of the school district.

• Levey's attendance area would start at Eight Mile and Southfield roads, head north to Ten and One-Half, west to Lahser, and south to Eight Mile again.

• Southfield High's attendance area would start at Southfield and Eight Mile, head north to Ten and One-Half, west to Lahser, and south to the school district.

• Stevenson students would go on to Levey Middle School.

• Students living in the area bound by Lahser, Twelve Mile and Evergreen roads would attend Northbrook Elementary School.

• Students living in the area bound by Lahser, Twelve Mile, Evergreen, and Eleven Mile roads would attend Leeward Elementary.

SOME SUGGESTED BOUNDARY changes are intended to straighten tangled lines and reduce the number of major roads students must cross to get to school, Schoo said. Racial balance was also taken into consideration in making the recommendations, he added.

Most of the questions raised by residents about the report centered on the need for shifting boundaries. Residents pointed out that a number of boundaries were changed last spring with the closing of four elementary schools. Further changes, they said, would require the children to adjust again to a new school and new friends.

Board members attempted to assure residents that no changes would be made without more input from the community. As a first step, board members proposed establishing a residents' committee to look at the declining enrollment and recommend changes that would be acceptable to the community.

## Tryouts for 'The Crucible' announced

Open auditions for Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" have been set by the Southfield Civic Theatre for Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at Mary Thompson Junior High School on Lincoln between Greenfield and Southfield roads.

Guest director for the production will be Laureen Carroll-Hopper, general manager and producer of the Act One Company, who most recently performed in the Civic Theatre production of "Cabaret."

Miss Hopper was also recently seen in the leading role of Kezia in the December world premiere of "The Small Blue Hoping Stone" by the Southfield Repertory Theatre.

Rehearsals for the production are scheduled to begin Sunday. The show will open March 10 for a run of two weekends. The Southfield Civic Theatre is sponsored by the Southfield Department of Parks and Recreation.

For information call parks and recreation at 354-9803.

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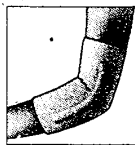
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