

# Deficit budget faces Walled Lake

By PHIL JEROME

The Walled Lake School District is facing its second consecutive deficit budget in the 1978-79 school year. Asst. Supt. for Business Harry Carlson told the Walled Lake school board at a special budget hearing recently that projected expenditures of \$19.7 million will exceed projected revenues of \$19.2 million by almost \$450,000. More than 5,000 West Bloomfield Township and Farmington Hills students attend Walled Lake Schools.

ALTHOUGH FIGURES aren't yet final, the district is expecting a deficit of \$118,500 for the current school year which officially ends Friday.

School districts are required by state law to have balanced budgets. The Walled Lake schools technically aren't operating "in the red" because of a fund equity of approximately \$1.1 million left over from the 1976-77 school year.

Nevertheless, Carlson cautioned the board that serious consideration must be given to the future of school financing.

"The fund equity will cover our defi-

cits in 1977-78 and 1978-79, but we'll be down to only about \$500,000 in fund equity after the 1978-79 school year," he said.

"I think we're going to have to start asking some very serious questions as to what we're going to do in 1979-80," Carlson added.

Should the district cut programs or ask residents to approve a tax increase, he asked board members. He added, "What impact will the tax limitation proposal that appears headed for the November ballot have on our finances?"

LOCAL REVENUE sources, primarily property taxes, are expected to generate some \$15.9 million with state and county monies making up the rest of the budget. Instructional costs represent more than 50 per cent of the tentative \$19.7 financial package, while support services including plant operation and maintenance were pegged at \$3.5 million.

Carlson and Supt. Donald Sheldon said the administration has attempted to "hold the line" on spending in the 1978-79 fiscal year.

Carlson noted that staffing remains

virtually unchanged with the addition of only 8½ new personnel including three learning disabilities teachers, three custodians to care for the addition to Walled Lake Central High School, expected to open in September.

Sheldon said the budget is "woefully short" in the area of equipment

replacement and that building maintenance and capital outlay are "under-budgeted."

UNLESS THE BOARD decides to make some major revisions, the tentative budget it received Monday will be the final spending plan for the upcoming school year.

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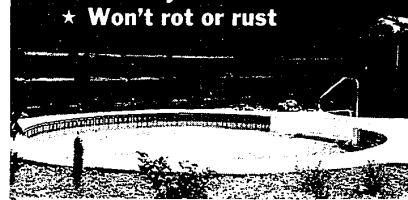
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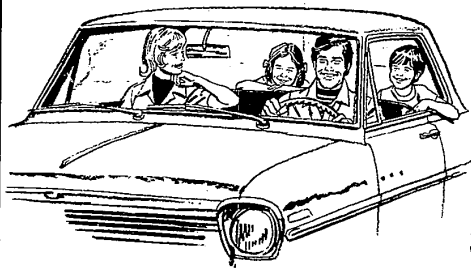
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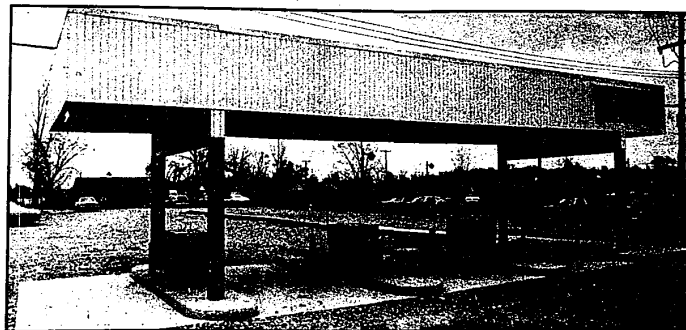
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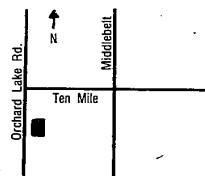


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