

Private schools face fees for workshops

Private schools in Oakland County may have to help foot the bill for some programs if Oakland Intermediate School District decides it's necessary. At present, teachers from both private schools and the 28 public school districts may attend in-service teacher workshops offered by the intermediate district, according to Intermediate Superintendent William Keane. Oakland intermediate staff members often offer workshops in the local schools.

"WE MAY have to set the policy that private school teachers will be accepted into in-service programs on a space availability basis," said Keane. "But we seem to be getting more calls from private schools to go out to the schools to give programs. And unless they'll get public school participation, we may have to charge a fee." "This is still in the discussion stages. But we've found we don't have a policy manual dealing with our responsibilities and an administration," Keane said.

Oakland spends about \$11.7 million on in-service training for the 28 local districts, Keane said. That is a major portion of its budget.

IN ADDITION to considering changes to its in-service training policy, by law Oakland is required to change its acceptance of students for diagnostic testing.

Prior to July 1, any person who lived or worked in Oakland County could refer a student to the school to be tested for special reading, hearing or speech classes.

However, due to a ruling by Attorney General Frank Kelley, that is no longer allowed.

"Now only handicapped students can participate in diagnostic testing, and private schools must make referrals through a local school district, rather than themselves," Keane explained.

Court deadline passes

Jail still 130 over capacity

By Suzie Rollins Singer
staff writer

The Oakland County jail is still over capacity, said Sheriff Johannes Spreen, despite the court order that the number of prisoners be reduced by Aug. 22.

Spreen blames County Executive Daniel T. Murphy and the Board of Commissioners for failing to consider his jail expansion proposals. But William Spinelli, Murphy's deputy, said Spreen has failed to try cheaper methods, such as allowing arrested persons to post bail bonds by credit cards.

As of Sunday's deadline, Spreen said, the jail was 130 persons over the limit set by U.S. District Judge Patricia Boyle. In a case filed by inmates, Boyle ordered the county to reduce its jail population to 450 inmates.

SPREEN SAID that although the jail staff has done everything within its power to comply with the court order, the only solutions are to expand the facility or find additional buildings to house inmates.

"People have been hired. Modifications we can make are completed. Contact visits will start," he said during a press conference.

"There are some delays because of training requirements. We should expand. That's the real solution. The old jail (in Pontiac) could be used as a medium security division.

It needs new electrical and plumbing work, but it could be done for around \$1 million."

But Spreen is having a hard time selling either the bricks-and-mortar or refurbishing ideas. He said it's because the county executive hoards money for his departments and county commissioners fail to listen.

BUT DEPUTY Executive Spinelli said the expansion idea doesn't win approval because Spreen can't prove it's needed.

"If we could ever see that he (Spreen) is making an honest attempt to alleviate overcrowding by implementing alternatives to incarceration, then we would consider expansion," Spinelli said.

"But he still doesn't use credit card bonding or transfer inmates to Jackson (State Prison) within 48 hours."

Both Spinelli and Spreen sit on a 19-member subcommittee that has met twice a month for more than a year to discuss the overcrowding problems in the jail. Subcommittee members include representatives from the County Board of Commissioners and an array of county and law enforcement officials.

SPREEN REPLIED that the subcommittee's alternatives for minor offenders — such as no bail (release on recognizance), low bail, appearance tickets and credit cards for bonding — could turn the facility into a "revolving

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door jail, and not solve the real problems."

"All of that is fine for the less serious offender, but you still need a little room in the jail for the vicious murderers, the rapists, the robber, the confirmed thief and the vandal who cares nothing for another's property," Spreen said.

Spinelli argues that the jail population could easily be reduced through credit card bonding.

"Often times, people are picked up on drunk driving or failure to pay child support payments and are put in jail. Sometimes they have to stay the entire weekend after the banks close because

they don't have the cash to bond out. If they could use credit cards, they'd be out," he said.

"These are not criminals but otherwise reputable people," Spinelli said.

THE JAIL STUDY subcommittee will continue investigating alternatives to incarceration and methods to reduce the jail population.

The original class action lawsuit was brought against the county in March 1978 by a group of inmates.

Spinelli, a non-practicing attorney, said it would be up to the plaintiffs' attorneys to initiate action against the sheriff and the county if they were dissatisfied with the jail population reduction.

Herbal cures park talk topic

American herbal remedies and their history will be discussed Friday, Aug. 27, at Independence Oaks County Park, Sashabaw Road 2 1/4 miles north of I-74, Clarkston.

A campfire discussion about mullein, chickory, yarrow and other herbal remedies brought to this country from Europe will take place.

"Some Europeans don't go to doctors, they visit herbalists," said Kathleen Dougherty, Oakland County Parks naturalist.

The meeting place is the Twin Chimneys Shelter. To preregister, phone 625-0377.



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