

oral quarrel

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Teachers spend enough time with the children during the day. To do a good job, they need to spend that prime time with the students. But after-school activities should be handled by someone outside that is capable of handling children.

I think it is unreasonable for school districts to expect teachers to spend up until 11 o'clock at night at school directing school plays all year round for just a few hundred dollars compensation. No one works for those kind of hours for that kind of pay and, if your article, makes it sound like the teachers are being uncooperative. The truth of the matter is that they have other kinds of work to do. It is extremely unreasonable not to pay them and expect them to stay after-school hours.

I think it's great that students can work on their own and put on a good project, such as this. The teachers shouldn't have to be expected to do this for nothing more than firemen or policemen put in extra time. When police and fire do, they always get extra pay. Teachers always seems to be expected to do it for nothing.

I am a former teacher from the Farmington area. I often helped my students in their extracurricular activities, with cheerleading, art projects, with the school plays at the junior high level. Now I am a mother at home, and I would really enjoy doing that kind of thing again, but I don't have the time. I feel it is the teacher's place to help the students outside the classroom as well as in the classroom. Parents and other volunteers should help students out with their things after school. There are many gifted and talented people in our Farmington area that have much to give our students, and our students can gain very much from all the people from the community, not just from the teachers.

I think it is very sad that the Farmington schools, which have so much money, have no extracurricular activities, when the Wallied Lake schools offer so many. They may have to pay for some of their after-school activities, but I'm sure there are many parents who wouldn't mind. It seems our teachers don't care very much about the children, only about their paychecks.

Your Thursday headline and story

tried to make the teachers look like the bad guys by not helping out. Sponsoring a school play is one half of a job. The salary schedule and the time. A solution needs to be found. But expecting teachers to be involved in an after-hours activity without much overtime pay is unfair. They have families as well as others, and they deserve their own personal time.

My daughter was in the last play that was put on at Farmington where Craig Hane was the play director. If everybody else from the outside can do just as good a job, I think they should go outside to get the help. He did an excellent job with "The Matchmaker."

I was in "The Matchmaker" last semester. I think Craig is an excellent director, and I'm grateful to him because, without him, the plays at Farmington High this year wouldn't have existed, and I would like to see him direct more plays in the future.

I think the teachers should get involved because it's the teachers' school just as much as the students.

Farmington High had an excellent drama director for several years who put on excellent productions, one of them being "Music Man" several years ago. But four or five years ago, the drama director was laid off, and now there is no drama director for Farmington High. It's just like saying if a music teacher was laid off, you would expect the music program to continue. These programs should go on, but you should have the teachers qualified to do them.

You should remember when you went to Detroit High Schools, those teachers who were assigned to extracurricular activities like drama and speech were paid for those positions, and their schedule was either two or three hours out of their period day was to teach drama and put on the school play. They didn't do it after school. Farmington teachers are expected to do it completely outside of their normal teaching experience.

The problem is most of the teachers in the district are at the top of the salary schedule and are getting paid enough money to make a decent living. They don't have to do extra activities

to survive, which they had to in the past. What we need is an influx of new teachers who are at the bottom of the salary schedule and are hungry and need the extra money.

Most teachers at Farmington High rejected the directorship position because of the lack of facilities. Our auditorium is one of the poorest equipped in the district — very inadequate sound system where you have to borrow all the equipment either from Harrison High or North Farmington in order to put on a play. Most teachers are just outright frustrated at not having the support from the community or from the school district itself in being able to put on an adequate production.

Students wouldn't have to be on their own if the teachers who would like to help them out received administrative support. I defy you to find any letter of commendation for a choir director or a band director or a forensic director or a drama director at Farmington High School for the last five years, thanking them for the job they've done in all their extra help and work. It just doesn't occur. Teachers are just protesting a lack of support from their administration.

The school encourages extracurricular activities, and if they don't make an effort to help, it's not doing the students any good. I think they should put forth more effort.

Well, if Craig Hane and the students and their last production of "The Matchmaker" is any indication of what students can do on their own, then more power to them, and let them keep on going. Their last production was fantastic, and I think it's a tribute to these young people.

They won't have to look for a football coach at Harrison High next year. It seems like athletics has no problem at all supplying itself with coaches. If the district put one-tenth of the time into drama, music and other activities that they put into the athletics, I think we'd have no problem finding drama directors.

Since sports coaches are paid extra,

why not newspaper advisers, drama coaches and language advisers also compensated? Ben Cobb has spent countless hours at North Farmington so my children could participate in drama projects, and I'm certainly grateful for his generosity.

The problem is just going to continue with declining enrollments. Because of declining enrollment, we've had more and more staff members being laid off and consequently you don't have the staff to handle the special activities. We can't give the coverage that we used to when we had larger student populations.

Today's paper really does a disservice to the many, many teachers in the district who work their heads off for their students. They dedicate their lives to their students. And they're not mentioned.

Why don't all the teachers begin doing the things you feel they're not doing now and stop doing all the things they are doing now? Would you like that?

I'm interested in where the articles were on Bill Flann and other people who worked so hard on dramatic productions in the past three years. I was under the impression that they had really done some fine work. It seemed like your article was a bit one-sided.

Where were you when the creative writing teacher at Farmington High School put out single-handedly little brochures and booklets of the students' writing? Did you ever come once and see that? Did you ever pay any attention to that? I don't believe so. And I've had intimate acquaintance with the person who put it out. As a matter of fact, I am she.

I think if you check the high schools, you'll find that teachers don't leave the students on their own to put on extracurricular activities. Our students at North Farmington are very well supervised by our staff, and they don't get anything for it in return.

Perhaps you've blown this out of pro-

portion. I think you've taken one isolated incident and tried to sell newspapers. Why don't you see if all the extra things the teachers do do and write that up and give us some positive reinforcement instead of always giving us negative reinforcement?

How many articles have you written on the good things that teachers do and how many times have you sat in a classroom or stayed after school to see how many teachers work very late into the night and come early and work in the classroom? Why don't you come to our school and watch us work for a while?

I think teachers, like other people, have responsibilities during their teaching hours, and they take a lot of home work with them. I think it would be impossible for them to continue helping students after class time and after school time and continue a normal family life. I think it should be handled during the day or pay for extra additional help at night by professionals or teachers who are professional in that area.

If the public wants extracurricular activities, they're going to have to make sure there are enough personnel to handle them.

The lack of teachers to supervise students is due to a sheer frustration on the part of the teachers due to the lack of school system support. Did you know that last year's "Oklahoma" presentation had to be bankrolled by the choir because the school district and administrators refused to help support it?

This problem can only become worse because there is no influx of young teacher into the Farmington Schools anymore. It's the young teachers who aren't burnt out yet and who still have enthusiasm that are willing to get involved in student activities. It is unfortunate that tenure is responsible for the declining standards in some of our schools.

Some educators cannot support activities as in the past because society has forced educators to handle sex edu-

cation, hot lunches, unruly children, teaching morals, all with little support from home. Besides, they have to deal with abusive language, drug and drinking problems, parents and children challenging every minor decision and, in general, a lack of respect by articles such as the Observers.

I would like the school system to pay someone to take care of these activities. Either a teacher who works for the school or another interested person with proper training. I do not think it is fair to expect classroom teachers whose expertise is not available to do this kind of activity.

Not only is it appalling that most of the teachers refuse to participate in extracurricular activities on a volunteer basis, when they are among the highest paid in the state. If you check on the declining results of Farmington School system SAT tests over the last five years you will realize they are not even doing the job they are being overpaid to do.

Let's not forget the many educators who are spending countless hours supporting activities with little recognition for jobs well done. If parents were more supportive of and involved there would be no problem with educator involvement.

If teachers consider their jobs as a real profession, they must know that professionals at times are required to voluntarily work after specified hours. In other words, yes, they should feel assisting students in extracurricular activities is part of being a dedicated teacher.

If the teacher does not have the time or the skills necessary to contribute to an event like this, then the school board has funds to hire outside people. Big automobile companies hire outside consultants when they don't have staff to fill the needs they have. So what's so wrong with the school district doing it?

This is an attitude of teacher laziness. Teachers should be promoting at least as much as sports. They should also fully support creative activity of students. It takes me to see my tax money go to teachers who are first in line for higher salaries and yet don't even show up.

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