

Best thing about education has to be the kids

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side of the educational world.

IT GIVES ME AN opportunity to get the best of two worlds," Cowan said. "Becoming a high school principal has been one of Cowan's goals since he moved to the secondary level after 13 years as an elementary principal.

"I had some successes as an elementary principal, and I loved it. And you get restless after 13 years. I always had a secondary and elementary background. And I did coaching in the secondary level. So when an opportunity (to move into the high schools) arose, I figured it was time to make a change," Cowan said. "I've never regretted it. I have welcomed the change be-

cause I like working with older young people because of the guidance and discipline they require. I really enjoy the camaraderie and the rapport you can establish with an older student."

When Cowan switched to the secondary level, he soon found that the rewards of working with high school students are more immediate than with the elementary school students.

"You get a faster reward of the impact and changes you make," said Cowan, who was 28 years old when first appointed as an elementary principal. "You think you have done something (to move into the high schools) arose, I figured it was time to make a change," Cowan said. "I've never regretted it. I have welcomed the change be-

five years, Cowan's top responsibility has been, discipline. The position, though, is not as ominous as it sounds, he added.

Through his work, Cowan has worked with students who have had problems - family, attendance and behavioral - and needed help and guidance.

"I spend a lot of time with those who aren't as successful. But I get a great gratification because hopefully I have helped institute some changes," he said.

BECOMING A principal, however, is a change of responsibility Cowan is looking forward to next year.

"It's an ideal opportunity to get some new experiences," he said.

As the "educational leader of the

building" Cowan will be working more with curriculum and staff evaluations as well as motivating his new team. He'll also be involved with the selection, assignment and scheduling of the faculty.

"My contact with students will be in a little different light," Cowan said. "You wear the white hat more than the black hat."

One of his goals as a high school principal is to offer the "best educational facility and programs we can provide with the faculty and staff we have," said Cowan.

"Our district offers a lot of autonomy," he continued. "Principals can be a motivating force in generating changes in curriculum."

But Cowan is thoughtful when asked his feelings about the strong nationwide push, through studies and reports such as "A Nation at Risk," for stronger academics in public schools.

"I have mixed emotions," he said. "It's great that it's put a real emphasis on education . . ."

But Cowan also has concerns about the trend toward increased emphasis on academics.

"Knowing how we Americans function - the pendulum swings all the way right and all the way left rather than reaching a heavy middle ground," Cowan said.

Industrial arts classes in which enrollment has dropped, Cowan said the emphasis on academics has had an impact on vocational-type courses.

"I certainly hope we don't lose sight of the importance of these and other comprehensive classes," he said. "Even college-bound students that need to be academically strong need exposure to other things."

Today's machine shop classes in which computers are used, Cowan said, are useful for the college-bound student who is interested in majoring in engineering.

"It's an opportunity they (college-bound students) shouldn't be missing. Cowan lives with his wife and two children in Milford.

USING AS an example the district's

Ground broken for women in district

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post because of her qualifications and experience as a teacher and counselor, he said. Being a woman had nothing to do with it, he said.

"HER RELATIONS with peers, students and parents is outstanding," he said. "She has earned it because she is a person with great personal qualities."

While touting the qualifications that led to O'Malley's appointment, Schulman said the "district would be better served if we had more women in administration."

Few women are high district administrators because there has been little turnover in these jobs, Schulman said.

O'Malley is looking forward to continuing as assistant principal next year. But she's never been the type who sat and planned out her career and promotions, she said.

"I'VE BEEN very happy with the Farmington schools," O'Malley came to Farmington for her first fulltime teaching job after graduating from Michigan State University. "I have been very happy with each position I have held."

"As things evolved and happened, opportunities came along, and people encouraged me."

"If asked five years ago if I thought I would be doing this, I would have said, 'definitely not.' But it's a matter of

growing, meeting people and being given the opportunity."

That's why she took the one-year contract for assistant principal, she said.

"I HAD to try it. With a one-year contract, I always had an open door to leave."

"Each new job I have taken with a certain measure of uncertainty because I liked the job I had. Each job I have taken has given me new perspectives."

Regardless of the job she has held, O'Malley's favorite aspect has been "working with kids."

"I consider myself a very fortunate person because I am doing what I en-

joy. I'm where I belong."

O'Malley apparently never doubted that education would be her niche. O'Malley was sure she wanted to be a teacher in eighth grade.

WHEN SHE recalls her own days in school, O'Malley warmly remembers "the good teachers, the standout teachers" who probably led her to a career in education.

"I think they influenced how and what I am today and how I go about doing things."

While teaching, O'Malley earned a master's degree in guidance and counseling. Although she never thought she would get a counselor's job so quickly, a position opened up shortly after she received her degree.



A mix of administrative work and helping students cope with the pressures of high school make Pam O'Malley's job enjoyable.

Scobie likes administration

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said. "And I can also say this about everything I've done in the past."

PRIOR to serving as assistant principal at Farmington High, Scobie was an administrative assistant for eight years in a number of the district's junior high schools.

When Scobie first came to the Farmington district he worked as a counselor at then Power Junior High after leaving a junior high teaching job in Detroit.

"My return to middle school was because a position was available. It came at a time when I thought the move was good for me professionally so I took advantage of it," Scobie said.

Although acknowledging certain differences between the high school and middle school levels, Scobie believes the only major difference is the age of the students.

"Basically it's all dealing with people," he said.

While many may believe that junior high/middle school age students are the most difficult, Scobie says it's untrue.

Many of the problems and concerns confronted in high schools, don't apply in middle schools, he said. Because middle school students don't drive to school, for example, attendance problems are few, if any.

Without a doubt, though, the kids are the best part of Scobie's job.

"They teach me something every day. It's the nice thing about the job," he said. "The new things (in society) that come along are reflected in our youth. They keep you current."

Play for adults

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- Composition - Look before you shoot. Get close enough to the child to fill the frame. Then, determine whether a horizontal or vertical format will be best to fill the frame. Plan the background to eliminate distractions and photograph the child from his own eye level. Place the child off center and don't be afraid to experiment.



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