



Alive!

Latin's not dead in local schools

*Ex uno disce omnes — From one thing, learn everything.
In omnia paratus — Prepared for everything.
Mini cura futuri — The future, my concern.*

By Lisa Simon
staff writer

THERE'S AN evolving global culture of electronics and high technology. And while steps in a learning process can be eliminated and the end product still acceptable, the short-cut might not be academically sound.

Farmington-area educators argue that the study of Latin is desirable to a student's academic portfolio, to future success on a university campus, and to a basic understanding of English, both written and spoken.

Opponents of Latin instruction argue the no-longer-spoken language is now useless, that Latin is impractical and inapplicable in today's world, and that a student's valuable time shouldn't be wasted on such archaic frivolities.

"The interest is not there on the part of the students," said Lynn Nutter, Farmington Public Schools assistant superintendent. "Administratively, we've done everything we could (to promote Latin instruction) without requiring it."

A HIGH percentage of senior high students take at least one year of a foreign language. But students and parents select courses according to perceived importance. And many have decided Latin is unimportant, Nutter said.

"Latin is not a dead language," said Raya Czekaski, an instructor of four languages, including Latin, at Mercy High School in Farmington Hills. "You speak Latin 60 percent of the day. It (Latin) is not dead and it's never going to be dead."

"They (students) love it. They enjoy it. It's not boring like it used to be." Unlike the traditional grammar-oriented instruction of Latin, Czekaski said she emphasizes Roman culture, government and history.

Unfortunately, only two levels of Latin are taught at Mercy, Czekaski said. She hopes the curriculum will expand to include a third and fourth level.

GOOD SPELLING is just one benefit of Latin education, Czekaski said. She speaks seven languages and accredits her lingual prowess to a solid Latin foundation.

At Farmington High School, four levels of Latin are taught. Interested students are bused from both Farmington Harrison and North Farmington high schools to classrooms at Farmington High School for Latin instruction.

"Mythology and a little bit of everything" are included in Latin classes, according to Farmington High Instructor Patricia Thompkins.

An improvement in Latin class enrollment has been seen in the past few years. "There's a real need for teachers (Latin) again," she said.

Thompkins, like Czekaski, said knowledge of Latin helps improve both English skills and general academic skills.

Lutheran High School Northwest in



AT LEFT: Patricia Thompkins teaches Latin at Farmington High School. Students from all three Farmington senior highs study Latin at FHS. "Mythology and a little bit of everything" are included in Latin classes, Thompkins said.

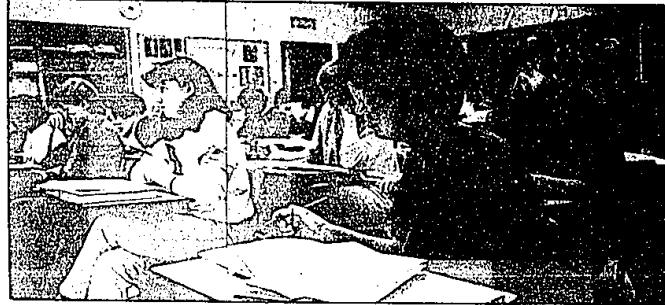
Staff photos
by
Randy Borst

Farmington Hills offers two levels of German and no Latin. Although Lutheran High School East in Harper Woods, however, offers Latin. The Farmington Hills school staff hopes to expand its German curriculum and add a second language, according to guidance counselor Keith Wingfield.

FARMINGTON SCHOOLS Superintendent Lewis Schulman says he's "a strong supporter of Latin as a foreign language. I'm a strong believer in the classics."

"Latin has lost its efficacy," Schulman continued. While principal at Harrison, both Latin and classical Greek were taught. "There hasn't been the interest among students (today)," he added.

Schulman hopes the already well-developed language curriculum in the Farmington Schools will expand to include language instruction at the middle school, including Latin.



Farmington High seniors Botay Brown (left), Carolyn Moran (foreground) and Rob Moian (right) are among Farmington Public Schools' Latin students.

inkwell

Inkwell provides news and information about Farmington-area primary and secondary schools. The column appears monthly throughout the school year as part of the Observer's "School Page." Send news items to: The School Page, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. Include a telephone number where a contact person can be reached during the day.

● GIFT DONATED

The Farmington Board of Education has accepted a gift of \$2,100 for the Farmington Training Center from the Knights of Columbus, St. Francis Council No. 4401, Farmington Hills.

● UPDATING PLANNED

The machine tool program at Farmington Harrison High School will be updated through the purchase of a new \$12,815 computerized numerical control milling machine trainer.

The Farmington Board of Education allocated money from the district's capital needs account for the purchase of the trainer.

School officials bought a similar piece of equipment last February for North Farmington High School.

● READING GAINS

The latest National Assessment of Educational Progress offers "ample justification for continued public confidence in public education," the National Education Association said.

But, added NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, schools need to do more to upgrade the reading skills of all students.

The new findings, from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), disclose that 9-, 13- and 17-year-old school children were reading better in 1984 than in 1971.

"NEA is heartened by this news that millions of the nation's youngsters, including black and Hispanic students, are reading better," Futrell said. "And we agree with National Assessment's conclusion that, while the gains for minority children cannot be disputed, there is no basis for relaxing efforts to make equal educational opportunity a reality for all children."

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results, despite gains by minority children, the average reading proficiency of black and Hispanic 17-year-olds is only slightly higher than the proficiency of white 13-year-olds.

"Parental involvement is crucial if we're to continue this progress," Futrell said. "We need to stress the importance of having good books at home for children. We need to emphasize better use of library facilities and less time watching television."

The typical elementary-age child, Futrell said, spends 25 to 30 hours a week watching TV, according to a recent Temple University survey.

Other highlights from the new NAEP report:

● For the first time since the assessment began, 17-year-olds showed improvement.

● Students who do comparatively better at age 9 seem to maintain that advantage at ages 13 and 17.

● Students born in the mid- to late 1960s have

significantly higher reading proficiency than students born earlier in the 1950s and 1960s.

● Overall, there are fewer 9-year-olds today who are educationally at risk because they lack rudimentary reading skills. But four times as many black 9-year-olds as white 9-year-olds are reading below rudimentary levels.

The NAEP report found increases in the amount of homework assigned, but decreases in the amount of reading material available in students' homes.

● AGREEMENT SET

The Farmington Board of Education approved a one-year consortium with Clarenceville Public Schools Nov. 5. The agreement will allow cooperative submission of grant money for both district gifted programs.

Money obtained under Section 47 of the State Education Act will be used for program planning and staff development.

Local districts are eligible to receive \$53 per student for up to 5 percent of a district's student population.

● NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Farmington Public Schools' writing program received national attention Oct. 7 in an Education USA article.

District writing coordinator John Barrett was applauded for use of his unconventional strategies.

Basis for the program is "not to correct every error in a student's paper," but to maintain an annual student folder, keeping a full year's writing assignments.

The management system allows teachers to focus on one writing skill at a time, going back to address others as needed.

The program was borrowed from John Collins, a Massachusetts researcher.

● SUPERVISOR APPOINTED

Janice Richards was appointed special education supervisor for Farmington High School.

Her appointment is effective Dec. 1. A screening committee selected Richards from a list of 20 applicants. She holds a master's degree in her area and has extensive experience teaching emotionally impaired children.

Also in new positions are: Gary Gaffner, adaptive physical education teacher at East Middle and Flanders Elementary schools; Myrna Ellsworth, science teacher aide; Debbie Ernst, teacher/office aide at Beechview Elementary; Bonnie McLaren, accounting clerk for food services and accounts payable; Triah Nain, bilingual aide at East Middle School; Nadene Pollak, teacher aide for the gifted program at Beechview and Flanders elementary; and Marie Thompson, reading specialist aide at East Middle School.

● BID AWARDED

Sheridan Construction of Garden City was awarded low bid of \$173,178 for the renovation/addition to Farmington Public Schools' transportation facility.

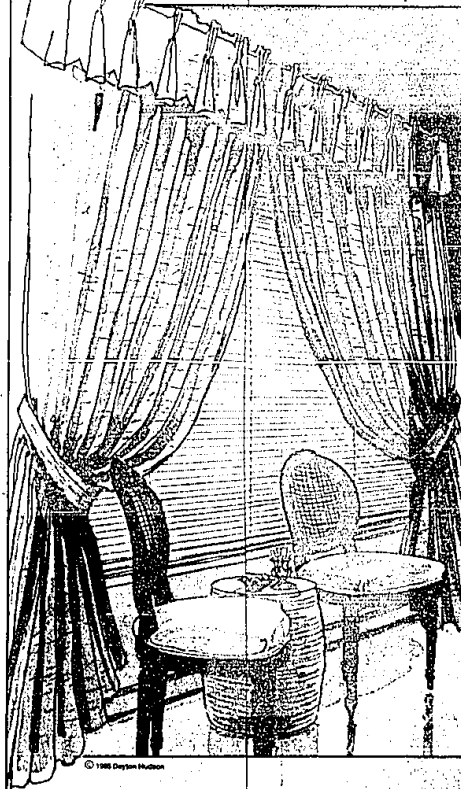
Money will be taken from the capital improvement account.

Save 30% to 40%

ON CUSTOM

WINDOW

FASHIONS



Save 40% Occasional's entire collection of made to measure window, bed and table linens. Over 400 decorative special order fabrics can be made into the treatment of your choice. Occasional's makes them to your specifications. Choose from pleated draperies, rod pocket and ruffled curtains, seamless sheers, pleated valances, decorative top treatments, ruffled table linens, linens and quilted throw bed spreads. Shown is \$724, unique satin lined draperies in 3 widths, 100" finished width by 90" finished height. Reg \$248, sale \$168.00. "Monter" top treatment, reg. \$106, sale \$63.60. "Sculptured" draped valance, reg. \$102, sale \$61.20.

Save on blinds, shades and hardware.

30% off Hunter Douglas Sunflex® 1" custom horizontal aluminum mini blinds. 30% off Hunter's own custom 2" and 3" vertical blinds. 40% off Hunter custom Venetian® polymer pleated shades. 40% off Hunter custom woven wood shades and draperies. 40% off Hunter custom shades and fabric top treatments.

Bring your roll or window measurements in to Custom Window Fashions at all major department stores, plus Area Area Five and Laido. Or call 800-456-7890 for a free estimate. Shop At Home measuring and consultation services by calling 727-3555, day or night, 7 days a week. No charge or obligation. Custom window services are also available for your convenience for all your decorating needs. We'll call our home Design Studio for assistance in customizing designs. Call today November 17.

hudson's

USE YOUR HUDSON'S SHOPPING CARD! THAT'S RIGHT! It's The American Express® Card.