

Schools design plans for teaching ethnicity

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to focus on them and make the changes harmonious and positive.
A committee of community leaders is in place to devise a cultural awareness campaign.
At Farmington schools, information is being gathered so educators can better serve a variety of people, develop an understanding of different cultures and involve the community.
"Our goal this year is to gather all kinds of research on multicultural issues" although "at this point, no formal plan has been put together," said Mary Lou Ankele, assistant superintendent for special services. Her department oversees the district's bilingual education program.

Employees will spend this school year gathering data from a variety of federal reports and educational sources before making curriculum recommendations to other administrators and the school board in 1988, she said.
EDUCATION in some specific cultures, including Chaldean, Arabic and a growing Japanese population in the Farmington area, is already being eyed as an area of need, Ankele added.
Although concerned specifically with the bilingual program, Ankele is looking at a "larger picture," in which the community would become an important ingredient in cultural education.

"You can't operate without the assistance of those . . . surrounding you," she said.
As community leaders strive for harmony and understanding among ethnic groups, at least one educator wants to be sure the variety of cultures is maintained. Harounie Alameddine said he does not feel ethnic groups should assimilate totally to the American way of life.
"We want them to keep their culture, to have the best of both cultures," said Alameddine, administrative assistant for bilingual education for Farmington.
Alameddine's staff works with more than 350 families of various ethnic backgrounds. Staffers speak and read in 18 different languages.

ACCORDING to information Alameddine gathered during his eight years in the bilingual program, there are more than 63 languages spoken in the Farmington area. This need for adapting to these cultures is showing itself in the community.
"It's a Small World After All," a six-week after-school class for 5-7-year-olds is scheduled through Farmington's Community Education Department. The class is held at Highmeadow School and is designed to expand knowledge about other countries and cultures.
Such elementary-level programs are consistent with recommendations made recently by a panel of prominent educators and civic leaders. The leaders are calling on American schools to teach more about other cultures and world issues, especially in the elementary grades.

The 16-member Study Commission on Global Education, chaired by former University of California professor Clark Kerr, urges that standard courses "in American schools, from history and geography to biology and physics, be 'infused with a global perspective.'"
U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz praised the idea of reaching people on global issues when they are young. He said the world economy "is radically different from what it was 20 or 30 years ago. People are just beginning to wake up to that fact."
SCHOOLS MUST prepare children to participate in informed debate on issues crossing national boundaries, the commission said. In addition, our American communities are becoming more cultural "melting pots," which require more understanding and knowledge in order to co-exist.
"We . . . are potentially defenseless on this earth unless global, as well as domestic, problems are handled in a way that fuses aspirations for peace and security, with the

inevitability of change," said the report, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Exxon Education Foundation.
In the past, most of the emphasis on global issues was in the study of foreign languages, world history or ecological issues. That information must expand, especially at the lower grade levels, according to the report.
"We believe . . . that more emphasis should be placed at the elementary school level. It is among young children that curiosity is greatest," it said.
At the elementary level, children should examine "a variety of cultures, present and past, at home and abroad," the report said. In secondary school, they should study, in-depth, "at least two other cultures, including a non-European culture, in addition to that of the United States."
THE REPORT recommends schools give more attention to how the world's physical, biological, economic, political and informational systems are interrelated; to the development of world civilizations; to the diversity of cultures; and to analyze domestic and international policy issues.
Learning cultural awareness for economic reasons is key, according to David Edwards, a Washington, D.C.-based lobbyist and head of the Joint National Committee for Language.
"Competitiveness in the 21st century will depend on the . . . global awareness, global understanding," Edwards said.
He said where educators used the Soviet launching of Sputnik as their rallying point years ago, they must change gears and move ahead with a technologically advancing society.
"The issue is not Sputnik, but Toyota," he added.
Edwards also calls on teachers to obtain better knowledge of cultural issues. "We need some teachers who are globally aware as well as skilled," he said.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Cultural diversity zeroed in on

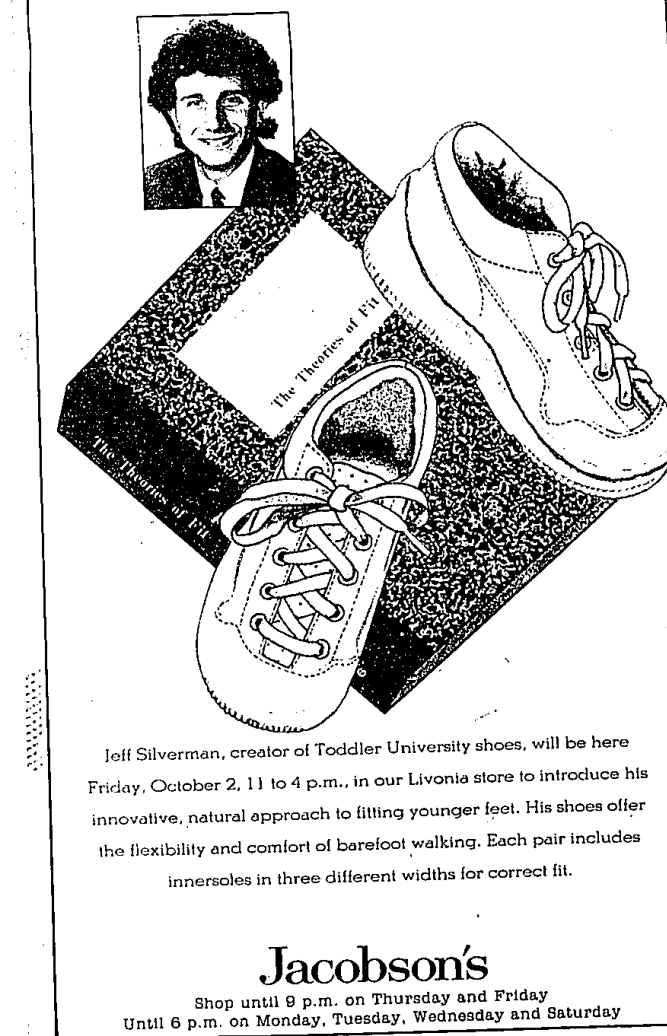
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ton and Farmington Hills is changing.
To find hard-fast data on how the community has changed is difficult. The latest group of statistics available that can provide a view on the multicultural makeup of the community is the 1980 census, now considered outdated for such information.
"There's very little that's done in terms of tracking the characteristics of people moving in and out of the area," said David Hay, Oakland County Planning Division. "There's a shortage of data."
According to Farmington Public Schools officials, however, 18 languages are spoken and written by the bilingual staff. In a survey conducted about eight years ago, Harounie Alameddine, administrative assistant for the district's bilingual education program, found that 63 languages are spoken in the community.
YET NEVER has the community's changing face drawn greater attention than earlier this year when television cameras and reporters descended on the Farmington area because of problems with teenagers on Orchard Lake Road.
Despite charges leveled by teens of various ethnic backgrounds, cultural and religious differences were not the sole source of the teen rowdiness — resulting in numerous arrests — along the commercial strip, said Farmington Hills Police Sgt. Charles Nebus, a former juvenile officer in-

volved in the Orchard Lake Road crackdown.
The teen activities "were more than ethnic," he said. "We had some of that. The majority of it was not."
For all the notoriety, a positive turn of events took place — awareness.
"I made a lot of people aware that this is a large, multicultural community. A lot of people didn't know that," Nebus said.
As the community scurried to bring the teen problems under control, there remained an acknowledgment that children — in the schools and in the community — and adults are faced with each other's differences.
That awareness spawned a committee of representatives from the schools, cities, police agencies, youth assistance groups, chamber of commerce, YMCA and cable television.
THE FORMER Farmington Ethnic Forum spent much of its time searching for ways to tout, rather than hide, the community's changing multicultural makeup — presentations from representatives of the Anti-Defamation League, the Federation of Islamic Association and the American Arab and Jewish Friends were part of the monthly agendas.
But forum members finally agreed that a committee with government affiliations was not needed. "A government organization is not what this community needs. It needs a people organization," said Farmington Hills councilwoman Joan

Dudley, a driving force behind the first ethnic forum.
Collectively, the forum adopted a mission statement. Then disbanded. The 50-word statement, intended to "raise the community's consciousness about the variety of cultures and traditions in our neighborhoods," now is providing a springboard for a new committee.
The still nameless new group, with 11 members so far, is devoted to fostering cultural, racial and ethnic understanding as the Farmington area continues to grow.
Though some of its members are representatives of the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, it is not government affiliated. To ensure that the driving force remain in residents' hands, members elected Farmington Hills resident Doris Banks as interim chairwoman at the organizational meeting in September.
COMMITTEE MEMBERS, who maintained they had not been victims of prejudice or discrimination, believe the need for the committee is primarily education and as a means to prevent problems as the community increases its cultural mix.
"This group can reinforce that people are people," said member Anni Ghosh.
And as Lt. Richard Murphy of the Farmington Hills Police Department said: "The key is education — to educate people now so we don't face those prejudice and discrimination problems later."

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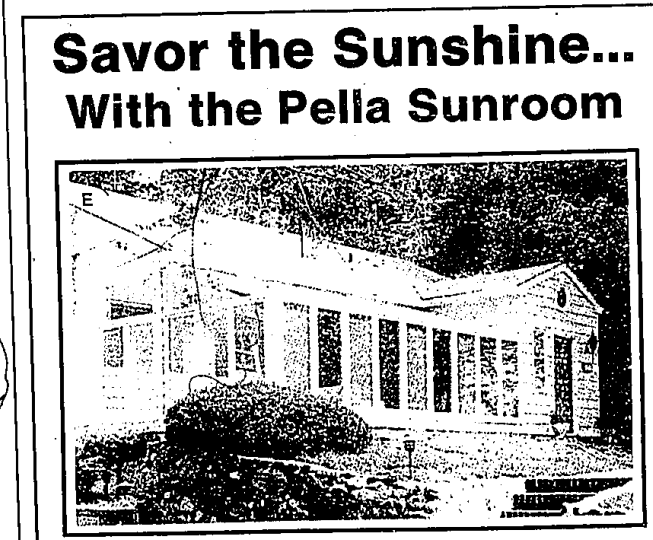
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