

# Kindergarten numbers increasing

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an increase of 77 students over last year, placing total student enrollment at 10,777, this total is the sum of an expected high school decrease and the elementary increase.

The unofficial Fourth Friday

count taken Oct. 2 shows an increase of 226 students in grades from kindergarten through fifth — not including 126 developmental kindergartners. High school numbers decreased by 284 — an expected decline. The number of middle school students increased by 36, a

"nice balance" according to Nutter. This year's increase did not take Farmington school officials by surprise, as it did last year when 169 unexpected students arrived on school doorsteps causing bus re-routing and emergency teacher hiring. Last year's increase was primarily

at the middle schools.

The Fourth Friday pupil count is a rite of fall for school districts throughout the state, who reported their numbers to the state yesterday. The state will verify the numbers within 10 days, making them official.

REQUIRED by the state Department of Education, the count is important for different reasons in Farmington and Clarenceville — two districts that serve the Farmington and Farmington Hills areas. Clarenceville receives state school aid based on the Fourth Friday enrollment figures; Farmington is out-of-formula, so relies on the figures mainly to project transportation, staff and facility needs, Nutter said. The count also determines categorical aid — money for special education programs sponsored in Farmington.

IT APPEARS the losing trend in school enrollment is slowing down in the Clarenceville school district,

where pupil enrollment showed a decrease of 14 from last year's student count of 1,964. Clarenceville losses continue to come at the senior high level, while slight gains were made in elementary grades and junior high school enrollment held steady.

Clarenceville was "lucky" in its enrollment calculations, Superintendent Michael Shabler said. Officials projected a K-12 enrollment of 1,950 students and the bottom line

"in rough numbers" came in at that mark, Shabler added. At the elementary level, Botsford had 529 students, while Grandview had 551 students. Clarenceville Junior High had 295 students, with the high school tally at 575 students. Clarenceville receives 20 percent of its revenue in state school aid and is uncertain what effect a loss will have in that category. However, it stands to lose \$3,200 per student in local tax support, Shabler said.

## New committee

### Citizens appointed for school study

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on redefining or other options by March.

Mid-March is when the district plans its hiring for the following school year, Lewis said.

Lewis and his administration waited until this week to organize the group, because they wanted to review Fourth Friday student counts taken Oct. 2.

"We spent a lot of time last year, administratively," reviewing student numbers, said Lynn Nutter, assistant superintendent and administrative liaison for the citizens group. "We waited until now, until we had the hard, cold facts."

Increased enrollments at several elementary schools and decreases at Harrison High School have reached crisis proportions, Nutter said, adding that something must be done soon.

"WE KNOW full well we are at capacity at Longacre, William Grace, Flanders, Larkshire and ready to be at capacity at Gill," he explained.

Fourth Friday figures at North Farmington High and Farmington High have increased to 1,319 and 1,190 respectively. At Harrison, unofficial enrollments are only 920. "There is no new area for growth there," he added.

In discussing details for the citizens committee, trustee Susan Renels said she wanted many parents to have a say in the decision-making process, possibly through a town meeting format. She also suggested the January deadline date to give the board several weeks to study the group's proposal.

Trustee Jack Inch called for more specific information about what the citizens committee would do. "I think the charge to the committee has to be a little more specific than we've heard tonight," he said.

Other trustees requested administrative guidance for the citizens, in

helping gather information for their decision-making.

JAMES ABERNETHY, a trustee who asked many questions about the committee, said he thought current information was available, so the recommendation could be made quickly.

"I really believe you have the data you need," he said. "I'm not

aware of (any) new data."

Lewis said the district wanted to involve citizens, to avoid having the decision made totally by administrators. "We could probably draw the (boundary) lines in-house," he said. "But we have to look everywhere and cover all the bases. What we have to guarantee is trust."

"This is in the best interest of our school system," he added.

## Road maintenance agreement made

The city of Farmington will nearly match the amount of Oakland County money received to maintain Farmington Road this year.

As in past years, the city will be responsible for daily maintenance including patching, joint sealing, sweeping, shoulder maintenance, drainage, cleaning and snow and ice removal, according to a city report.

Although the city has budgeted \$23,000 for the maintenance, the county will only reimburse the city \$12,700 for the 1.7 miles of roadway, which runs from Grand River to Eight Mile.

The city council approved a new

maintenance agreement with the county Sept. 21. The agreement will run from Oct. 1, 1987 through Sept. 30, 1988.

"The maintenance of Farmington Road, at a level acceptable to the city, is vital to the well-being of our citizens," said city manager Robert Deadman. "With this in mind, council has previously . . . accepted the additional financial burden for those . . . costs."

Because of the past mild winter, the city spent only \$14,314 to maintain the road last year, according to Deadman. The city typically spends about \$21,000.

## OM meetings scheduled

Odyssey of the Mind, a creative problem-solving activity, will again be offered through Farmington Public Schools gifted department. All students from kindergarten through grade 12 are eligible to participate in the team activity.

An information session on Odyssey of the Mind will be held for new parents and students at Dunkel Middle School, on 12 Mile between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads, on

Thursday, Oct. 15, at 7:30 p.m.

A meeting of students and parents who have previously participated is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 20, at 7:30 p.m., also at Dunkel.

Odyssey of the Mind was formerly called Olympics of the Mind, or OM Competition. The name was changed due to a 1987 court decision barring use of the word "olympics."

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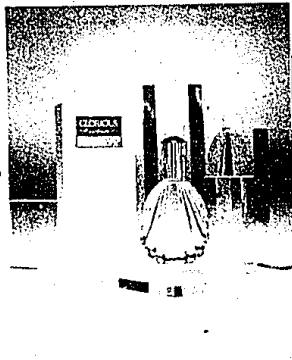
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