



Six-year-old La'Sundra Escott-Hall of Farmington Hills made friends with Dolly, one of Sea World's bottlenose dolphins. La'Sundra was chosen to meet Dolly with the assistance of animal trainer Beth Regelmayer during a presentation of "Shamu: Wet, Wild and

Wonderful." This performance spotlights killer whale star Shamu and welcomes new friends, Pacific black whales, a species never seen before in mid-America. Sea World is in Aurora, Ohio.

C'ville to start alternative ed program; diploma is the goal

By Kevin Brown
staff writer

To help students who have recently dropped out or plan on leaving school, an alternative education program will start up this fall at Clarenceville High School.

The program, to be administered through adult education, is designed to help students having problems with school to earn high school diplomas.

On July 11 the Clarenceville Board of Education approved the program. The board will review it after one year, then decide whether to make changes or continue the program.

In a report to the board, Patricia Vickery, administrative assistant for instruction, said several area school districts have similar programs.

This will be the first time an alternative high school program will be offered in the Clarenceville School District.

The Clarenceville High dropout rate of 4 percent, not high compared to many districts, isn't the main reason for starting the program, Vickery said.

A decrease in the number of students at Clarenceville High — which follows a nationwide demographic trend — has made space available to house an alternative education program.

"We think that we can bring students back into the program, that would be the underlying motivation," Vickery said.

A main feature of the alternative education program is a more relaxed atmosphere, in which a student meets the requirements stated in a contract drawn up between the student and teacher.

STUDENTS who qualify would generally fall under the state's definition of "at risk" students — those having trouble coping with regular high school for various reasons, including emotional or economic problems.

Vickery said high school counselors will determine which students, age 16-19, would qualify for placement.

To offset costs to hire two teachers for the program, at least 10 students would need to be enrolled, Vickery said.

IN THIS first year, the alternative education program could handle a maximum 30 students.

"Early in the school year, the Clarenceville Curriculum Council identified the unmotivated student or at-risk child as the most important concern held by the Clarenceville teachers," Vickery wrote.

"At least for this year, offerings would be limited to the four main academics," Vickery said, math, English, science and social studies.

Toward graduation, "Sixty hours of attendance will be required for each half credit," she added.

Under the program, alternative education students would attend school between 9 a.m. and noon. "This schedule would be such that the in-school youth (traditional students) and the community education youth will be in the hallways at different times so that little program overlap would occur . . . students would have a separate parking area, their own entrance and would be in a somewhat sequestered part of the building," Vickery wrote.

Students would be under the authority of the community education director, not the school principal, she said.

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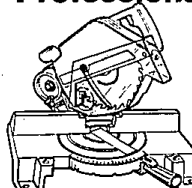
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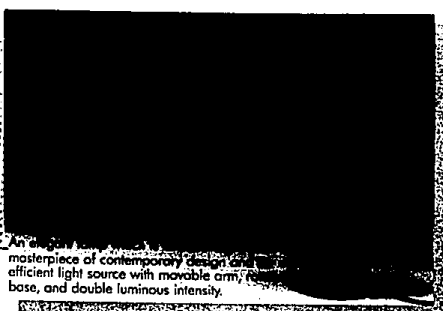
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