

District launches AIDS education program

By Noroon Flack
staff writer

The Clarenceville School District is preparing for combat in the battle against AIDS with a new program designed for kindergarten through seventh grade students.

"Our sixth and seventh grade teachers have been feeling somewhat off balance because they could not address the AIDS topic before," Pat Vickery, the district's administrative assistant for instruction and personnel, said in presenting the program last Thursday to the Clarenceville School Board.

Trustees unanimously approved the addition of the federally financed AIDS education program, which is

Clarenceville

The district includes parts of Livonia, Redford and Farmington Hills.

part of the Growing Healthy program sponsored by the National Center for Health Education.

The elementary AIDS awareness program is designed to tell youngsters how AIDS is spread, primarily through intravenous drug use and sexual intercourse.

The program is designed to encourage youngsters to abstain from these two practices.

"THIS is a very important piece of our science curriculum," Vickery said. "We felt the program offers information that kids had to know for their own health and well-being."

Prior to Feb. 27, the district will send a letter to parents, requesting their permission to allow their child to attend the AIDS awareness classes.

Parents will be asked to notify the

school if they don't want their child to participate.

If a parent doesn't respond to the letter, school administrators will assume the parents support their child's attendance in the program, Vickery said.

THE GROWING Healthy program, taught in the district's elementary schools for seven years, now integrates AIDS information with topics such as personal beliefs, body appreciation, health, friendship, the integrity and value of family, refusal skills, self-esteem and abstention from substance abuse.

Program administrators assure participating schools that the content of the "sensitive" material is

presented "in a way that is locally determined and consistent with parental values."

Instructors must attend four days of training in the Growing Healthy program in order to be certified to teach the AIDS curriculum.

Each grade level addresses the AIDS issue in different formats. Some intricate details are eliminated for the younger grades.

TEACHERS ARE trained to be "straightforward" with students when covering the material, Vickery said.

Teachers are instructed to inform all students of the two specific ways AIDS is contracted: intravenous drug abuse and sexual contact with an

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) carrier.

Some board members were concerned that students in the younger grades may ask awkward questions regarding sexual intercourse that instructors may not be prepared to answer.

If a student appears to be overly curious regarding sexual intercourse topics, teachers are instructed to speak to the child privately, Vickery said.

Clarenceville teachers are not required to teach the curriculum.

However, most teachers have expressed an interest in teaching the program due to students' growing concerns about the AIDS epidemic, Vickery said.

City against supplements to district judges' salaries

By Casey Hans
staff writer

The Farmington City Council has taken a stand opposing the mandatory supplement they must pay for district court judges' salaries.

The council voted unanimously Feb. 19 to join the cities of Madison Heights and Oak Park in opposition to the stipend.

Farmington Hills has taken no further action.

Local cities are required to supplement money received by the state for the judges.

IN THIS area, Farmington and Farmington Hills pay part of the salaries for Judge Margaret Schaeffer and Judge Fred Harris in the 47th District Court. Farmington currently pays about \$18,400, while Farmington Hills pays \$32,200 for the two judges, which total \$187,634.

A standard payment of \$36,940 for Judge is sent to the local units

annually, according to city clerk Patsy Cantrell of Farmington, where bookkeeping for the court is handled.

Pay increases approved at the state level are automatically passed along to the local municipalities.

THE CITIES argue that since the state constitution provides for a state-financed court system, the state has failed to comply and placed an "undue burden on local government." They ask the state to abolish the mandatory amounts that municipalities contribute to the annual judges' salaries.

In addition to their portion of the salaries, Farmington and Farmington Hills share in the operating costs of the court and pay capital improvements and debt service owed to the Farmington Building Authority, which built the court facility.

Costs for the court — including the local stipend for judges salaries — are shared based on population

and previous year's court cases originating in each community and are re-figured each year as budgets are formulated. Farmington currently pays 16.2 percent while Farmington Hills pays 83.8 percent of all court costs.

For 1989-90 budget year, the 47th District Court is operating with a \$1 million budget, which includes \$539,000 for salaries, \$169,000 for fringe benefits, \$204,000 for supplies and services and \$23,000 for capital equipment purchases.

A STUDY commissioned by court and city officials is under way to make the best use of space at the 10 Mile Road facility, where caseloads are growing an estimated 6 percent each year.

Farmington, Madison Heights and Oak Park have sent their concerns about judge salaries to their respective state senators and representatives.

Residents to be liaisons to parks board

Representatives from neighborhoods abutting the three Farmington Hills parks will be asked to serve as liaisons to the nine-member parks and recreation commission.

"We have had very poor luck in getting answers from them," said Normandy Hills subdivision president Elizabeth Berger, who supports neighborhood representation on the parks and recreation commission.

Liaisons will be able to represent the concerns of areas near Heritage, Pioneer and Waldron parks. The idea came from Mayor Jean Fox's recent unsuccessful attempt to replace two commissioners with a Normandy Hills resident and a representative of the Farmington Community Center, which is south of Heritage Park. Normandy Hills is north of Heritage Park.

Though Fox's attempt to have the representatives appointed to the parks and recreation commission failed, councilwoman Nancy Bates retrieved the idea, with representatives serving only as liaisons with no voting power.

Liaisons will be chosen by homeowner associations, not the city council.

Farmington review board to meet

City of Farmington residents can appeal their property tax assessments at a two-day board of review scheduled in March.

The annual appeals board will meet from 9 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m. Monday, March 12, and from 2-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, March 14. Additional days and times will be scheduled, if necessary.

Appointments for a hearing be-

fore the board can be made after March 1 by calling the assessor's office at 474-5500. Walk-ins will be heard after the board has heard any scheduled appointments.

City assessor John Sailer encourages taxpayers to contact his office to discuss appeals before making an appointment with the board. "Many times, an understanding of how the property tax system works can save the time

of both the taxpayer and the board," he said.

The average assessment in Farmington increased by 11 percent citywide, according to a report Sailer gave to the city council Feb. 19. Commercial properties increased an average 14 percent, apartments eight percent, industrial properties 15 percent, utilities 26 percent residential 11 percent and condominium properties 13 percent.

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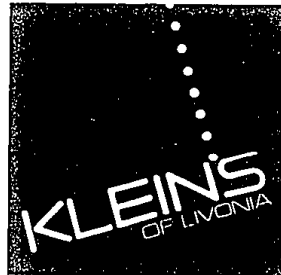
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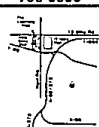
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