

Farmington Observer

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Local grads give district report card

By Casey Hane
staff writer

Recent alumni from the Farmington schools have given public school educators here tips about what they believe is important for college preparatory work.

Thirty-five graduates from Farmington, North Farmington and Harrison high schools who now attend Michigan State University in East Lansing met with a counselor and three English teachers from the Farmington Public Schools recently to be surveyed and interviewed about their experiences with Farmington Public Schools.

The study was not a scientifically conducted survey. Graduates of the three high schools were sent notices of the interviews by Michigan State, and those who wished to participate did so. Student majors were varied and ranged from liberal arts to engineering.

"In general, Farmington students felt themselves to be as well prepared as their fellow students at college," said John Barrett, the language arts coordinator for the district who conducted the interviews at Michigan State with one English teacher from each of the three schools and a counselor from North Farmington.

"There was nothing shocking," he added. "Just something to help us refine our program and to show teachers what will be useful."

SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

- Students felt literature like "The Great Gatsby" and "Of Mice and Men" were important in preparing them for college courses. Several students said they "wish we had read more of the classics."
- About one-third of the students said essay writing and Advanced Placement English in high school were the courses that benefited them the most in their college careers.
- Students believed written essays and oral presentations in high

school were helpful in all college subjects, and that they could have used more help in research methods.

• Nearly all the students said they believed learning word processing is an "essential" skill for high school students. Several said it should be taught on well-known computer software.

• Twenty-three students said speech should be a required class and 24 said writing should be required after the 10th grade. Twenty said high school graduation requirements in English should be increased from three to four years. Many students noted the importance of listening skills, because of the interaction required in college courses.

When asked to comment about strengthening the district's secondary English program, five said more group projects would be helpful, while others suggested reading broader-based literature that focuses on women and minorities.

ONE STUDENT said entering col-

lege was a shock. "Students depend too much on teachers in high school, and get shocked when they enter college," the student said, suggesting educators find "a way to put more responsibility on kids in high school."

Barrett said the student interviews tie into what was proposed in a recently released district study on changing secondary education. He said he believes the information can be used in the classroom, despite the likely increase in class size with recent staff cuts.

"I'm both encouraged and discouraged," he said. "I'm discouraged because the class sizes will increase at a time when teachers are overbur-

dened. I'm encouraged because this will give us a chance to revise the curriculum."

A compilation of answers and comments to 15 questions will be made available to high school counselors, language arts staffers and high school administrators so they can make use of the information, Barrett said. Comments relating to other school areas will also be given to the appropriate departments.

Barrett said the district is attempting to do a similar project at the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College. An attempt to do the project at the University of Michigan failed.

UNITED ARTISTS West River
OPEN 11:30 A.M. DAILY 9:30 A.M. SAT.
GRAND RIVER WEST OF WOODBURY IN THE WEST RIVER SHOPPING CENTER NEXT TO TARGET 476-8831

MORAL THOUGHTS (R)
10:00, 12:15, 2:45, 4:15, 7:15, 9:30, (11:30)
10:00, 12:15, 2:45, 4:15, 7:15, 9:30, (11:30)

THE LONG WALK HOME (PG)
10:00, 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:00, (11:00)

TEENAGE MUTANT TURTLES: THE SECRET OF THE OOZE (PG)
10:00, 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE (R)
10:00, 2:40, 7:30, (11:00)

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3081 HAGGERTY ROAD, WALLED LAKE

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER
BREAKFAST SHOW



Saturday, May 4, 9:45 a.m.
The Restaurant, Livonia

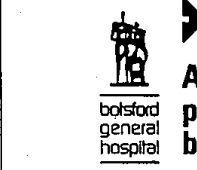
It's fun to do things together, just Mom and Me. While you both relax and enjoy continental breakfast, we'll show you the freshest looks for spring, fun stuff and pretty stuff for moms and daughters of all ages! Handworking play clothes alive with citrus color. Feminine charm in bouquet bright florals, or set sail for summer in nautical style. To make your reservation, please call 591-7696, ext. 263

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Choice of Sessions
May 6th, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.
or May 8th, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Program participants who are 40 years of age or older will receive a voucher for a free physical screening exam and screening lab work at Botsford General Hospital. Appointments will be taken at the time of registration.

This program will be conducted by a Botsford General Hospital Board Certified Urologic Surgeon. A Question and Answer Session will be held.

Advance Registration is Required

To register or for more information, call **Health Development Network of Botsford General Hospital 477-6100**.

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Botsford General Hospital 2800 Grand River Ave., Farmington Hills, MI 48336