

# Walled Lake district adopts back-up plan

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

What could be called "The \$20 Million Contingency Plan" was adopted Thursday night by the Walled Lake school board.

Whether it swings into action relies on whether district voters approve or reject a millage renewal on Saturday, Nov. 18. The Walled Lake district includes a southwest portion of Farmington Hills.

Approximately 23 percent of the 1990-97 operating budget would be lost if the 10-year millage is defeated.

Board members, during a Nov. 2 regular meeting, unanimously supported the contingency—a list of potential budgetary cuts assembled by Walled Lake

Schools Superintendent James Geisler.

"It's very sobering, the whole list of things that would have to be cut," Geisler said Friday, adding that the small audience at the Educational Services Center seemed at least appreciative to learn first hand which budget items would be jeopardized by a millage defeat.

The OK of Geisler's plan, said board member Marc Siegler, should clearly inform the public about how serious the ramifications to education in Walled Lake would be if the millage renewal were defeated. On Nov. 18, voters will decide whether to renew 18 mills on business and industrial property and up to 4.3 mills on residential property.

Meanwhile, in the past two years, voters have rejected three separate bond issue proposals, each for more than \$100 million. "We have no fall back," Siegler said. "If (defeat of the renewal) would be a major setback that would take years to come out of."

Siegler said more than 300 district employees would lose their jobs. And residents would also stand to lose a great deal. "What about the resale value of homes? Who would want to move into a district that was struggling for educational funds?"

The trustees added that residents should not think of the contingency plan as a threat, or a bluff, to get them to vote for the renewal.

"People have always asked us and told us that we don't give them enough information," Siegler said. "Well, we're giving them all the information they can handle. It's probably not what they want to hear, though. We're laying it on the table. . . This is not a threat, it's reality."

According to the list, all general education transportation and all middle- and high-school athletic programs would be eliminated in that scenario.

Also on the operating budget

chopping block would be the following: 25 non-classroom positions—such as counselors and librarians; 70 elementary school positions; 20 middle school positions; 30 high school positions; teaching supplies; 19.5 custodial persons; three groundskeeping/maintenance positions; three other maintenance/warehouse positions; four administrative positions in the areas of information services, vocational education, athletics and outdoor education; district-wide video services; dis-

trict-wide audio-visual/computer repair positions; four secondary school positions; 7.6 central office/district-wide positions; an Outdoor Education Center position; annual allocation for building renovation projects.

Because the district employs part-time employees, Geisler stressed that the number of individuals who would be affected by the cuts would actually be larger than the number of positions listed.

## GOP bill provides freedom for new charter academies

BY TIM RICHARD  
STAFF WRITER

Private schools would have more freedom to become state-funded "charter academies" under a major revision of state law passed by Senate Republicans.

"We're allowing private schools to convert to state charter schools and drain the school aid fund," said Sen. Gary Peters, D-Bloomfield Township. Later he added, "All the charter schools in Oakland County were previously private schools."

"This (Senate Bill 679) removes the caps on the governor's favorite charity, charter schools," said Sen. Henry Stallings, D-Detroit.

The Senate approved revisions of the 1976 school code on a 21-16 party line vote — Republicans for, Democrats against. Sen. David Henderson, R-West Bloomfield, was absent.

The bill goes to the House, which has a bare 56-54 GOP majority and where some modifications are possible.

The Republican theme was parents' right to choose schools, parents' rights to review curriculum and textbooks. One section gives parents the right to record and videotape classroom instruction — which teachers see as an open invitation to intimidate them.

"It's a shift to parents, teachers and administration, not politicians in Lansing," said Sen. Michael Bouchard, R-Birmingham, as he objected to a Democratic attempt to restore a mandatory core curriculum.

"It isn't accountability to the state but accountability to parents," said Senate majority leader Dick Posthumus, R-Alto.

But Sen. Alma Smith, D-Salem, warned Republicans they could run afoul of the state constitutional, which provides for state leadership in education and prohibits state aid to private as well as denominational schools.

And Sen. Dianne Byrum, D-Onondaga, taunted Republicans by reminding them that the Michigan Manufacturers Association favored student portfolios, a mandatory core curriculum, mandatory testing and state-endorsed diplomas.

Republicans passed the bill in 10 minutes after Democrats spent two days offering amendments that were mostly rejected. Key topics Wednesday:

■ Core curriculum — Republicans beat down a Democratic attempt to restore a mandatory core curriculum, a major feature of the 1993 school reform package. It lost, 17-18, with Republican Jon Cisky of Saginaw joined all 16 Democrats in favoring it.

Said sponsor Ken DeBeauvoir, D-Macomb County: "Across Michigan there has been growing optimism in the business community that each child would have the same assurance of quality. This bill takes a step back." Sponsor Leon Stille, R-Spring Lake, said the majority opted for a "model" core curriculum.

The undiscussed issue was the state model curriculum's emphasis on evolution in science and problem-solving in math and literature. Fundamentalists groups want equal status for religious "creationism," a parental veto over curriculum, and parental or clergy answers to problem-solving.

■ Charter schools — The 1993 reform laws capped charter schools (public school academies, or PSAs) at 75 statewide. The new bill removes the cap entirely. PSAs are specialized schools operating with a grant of authority from a university or communi-

ty college, having their own boards and collecting \$5,300 per child in tax money, the same as other public schools.

"We don't know if they'll provide any quality," said Peters, who offered an amendment to raise the cap to 100 — "a more rational approach." But his amendment was shot down on a 15-21 party-line vote after Stille argued, "We've had a year or two of experience. An open market should be an open market."

■ Alternative certification — The bill allows persons with an appropriate college degree and five years of work in the field to get "alternative certification" to teach grades 9-12 under rules which, in part, would be set by public schools and charter academies. Democrats lost a 16-20 party-line vote to remove this section.

"There's a big difference between high school (where certification is required) and college (where it isn't)," said Sen. Jim Berryman, D-Adrian. "In college, they're paying it; it's the cream of the (academic) crop; college students are more mature. In high school, they have to be their until they're 16; they need to be motivated. Just because you've been in business 25 years, it doesn't qualify you to be a teacher — that's bunk."

In a rare display of high emotion, Chris Dingell, D-Trenton, denounced college math and physics teachers because "most of them couldn't understand why we were having trouble. This (teaching isn't) something you learn with technical expertise," he said.

■ Golden parachute — Dingell won 26-11 approval of his amendment to prevent the State Board of Education from firing a superintendent of public instruction in mid-contract and giving him more than six months pay. The amendment called for contract settlements to be reached "in the light of day."

## 4 Question Test

1. What school draws young men, grades 7-12, from your area, over 60 other suburbs and even the 517 telephone area code?



2. What school sends 98-100% of its graduating class to college for each of the last 25 years, and 22% of its senior class are National Merit Students?

3. Since 1993, what school won four National Championships in speaking contests and a State Championship in athletics?

4. What school should you consider for your son?

## U of D Jesuit High School & Academy

Become a part of a 118-year tradition of excellence — academically, spiritually, and athletically.

### Open House

This Sunday  
November 12  
Noon-3:30 p.m.



All 6th-8th grade boys will receive a free T-shirt. The U. of D. Jesuit hockey team debuts this year.

For more information contact Director of Admissions Jeff Cameron at (313) 862-5400 ext. 6.

U of D Jesuit is located on Seven Mile Road between Livernois and Wyoming. We are west of I-75 and Woodward; east of the Lodge and Southfield Freeways.

## Floral program peddled

Hill and Dale Garden Club presents three programs beginning with a floral program by Nancy Passafium beginning at noon, Wednesday, Dec. 6.

The second program, Tasty Treats from the Garden, is by Deanna House, an author and humorist, at 1 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 14. And the third program is at 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 17. Wild Life in Your Backyard will be presented by Tim Nowicki, a naturalist who is on radio station WJR.

Tickets for are \$8 per program or \$20 for all three programs. Hill and Dale Garden Club profits will be used for the garden therapy program for the limited capability students of the Farmington School system.

For information or tickets call Amy at 661-2997, Lu at 960-1184 or Flo at 476-8123.

Formerly of Hinkle Oak Furniture & Accents, Livonia  
**"Country Nook"**

SOLID OAK TABLES AND CHAIRS  
PICTURES, LAMPS,  
DOILIES, WREATHS  
GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS  
PHILADELPHIA PLAZA  
PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19104  
Just West of Haggerty & I-76  
(484) 475-2190

The sheer joy of driving has been heightened.

As well as lengthened.



Introducing the longer, roomier, quieter 1996 Vanden Plas.

There is but one way to improve unsurpassed luxury: give you more of it. So, in the 1996 Jaguar Vanden Plas, you'll find added legroom and expanded headroom, providing more space to enjoy the Connolly leather seats, rear-seat fold-down picnic trays and hurl walnut trim. Visit your local showroom to test drive the new Jaguar Vanden Plas.



JAGUAR OF TROY 1815 Maplelawn Drive, Troy, MI (810) 613-6900