

School district surveys parents

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Fill it out and send it back, Farmington Public Schools officials ask.

The district has mailed some 8,000 12-page questionnaires to Farmington school parents, asking their views on a variety of educational topics.

The survey is a result of the district's Mission 2007 goals. People without children will be surveyed over the telephone after the holidays, said Sue Zuvalec, assistant superintendent for Staff and Community Service.

Parents are asked their opinions on possibly expanding magnet school concept and starting an academy of basic education.

Questions are frank.

Respondents are asked to give letter grades, A to F, on the district's performance in teaching skills, curriculum, standards and safety. Answers are confidential.

They are also asked, point-blank, if tax dollars paid for Farmington schools are a good buy.

"We really sought to gauge the community to the degree they are satisfied with us in certain areas," Zuvalec said. "It's like a customer satisfaction survey."

Officials want people to return surveys as soon as possible.

Superintendent Bob Maxwell sent a letter to parents asking them to respond. Also, for non-English speaking parents, the Bilingual Department is offering assistance.

The questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes to fill out, Zuvalec said.

"We'd like them to return them as soon as possible," she said. "We haven't set a deadline, but within the next couple of weeks."

Results will be made public after the first of the year.

Lansing-based Public Sector Consultants is coordinating the survey. Cost for the process is \$6,000, Zuvalec said.

Feedback will provide the district some guidance on large financial issues.

One is facilities, which are an average of 35 years old.

Puppy from page 1A

ghan named Chloe, to an affable Golden Retriever named Bill, to several Labs, both yellow and black, down to a feisty little Beagle, who enjoyed playing with the big guys.

The dogs are crated during their down time, but each one belongs to a play group. There are morning and afternoon play sessions, which can get quite lively, and walks and chow time for the puppies still on three times a day feeding schedules. The other dogs get treats.

"Our combinations are interesting in the play groups," said Bocci. "We mix some smaller dogs with larger ones. It's whatever combination works well together."

On Friday, the play group was monitored by a couple of workers who were as keen on showing the dogs individual attention and affection as a well run day care facility for children ought to be.

"It's amazing how well they get along," said Bocci, who was pet advice on the old Good Afternoon Detroit television show on WXYZ-TV channel 7.

"If there's an altercation, we'll let them work it out."

An animal will be removed, however, if it's a threat to the well being of the other dogs.

"It's like kids," said a volunteer worker monitoring the play group. "Some play better together than others."

Forty percent of American homes include a pet dog, said Bocci.



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Bath time: Professional dog groomer Kim Palonen bathes Niho.

"Most of them don't get the proper exercise," she said. "They

need the turning and the twisting that they get from play."

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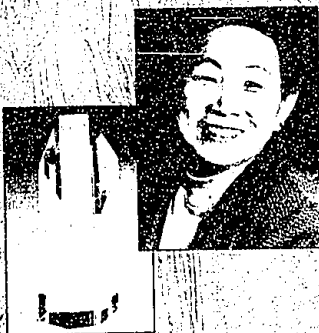
CAREER QUIZ #2

INDICATE "YES" IF YOU AGREE,
"NO" IF YOU DISAGREE.

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 For as long as I can remember, I've always had some kind of job or another. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 I'm often the first one to arrive at work and the last one to leave. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 I know I'll succeed—given an opportunity to prove myself. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 I put myself through college. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 I think some adversity is good. It gives you something to overcome. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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