

Sting from page A1

an attempt to buy cigarettes Feb. 19. They were successful in nearly one-third of the cases.

Chief Bill Dwyer agrees a meeting is needed on the cigarette issue. He sent letters to those ticketed to explain the enforcement effort, which was prompted by concerns about the increase in the number of minors who smoke and the related health hazards.

Those ticketed are scheduled to appear 9 a.m. Monday, March 2, in 47th District Court.

"We're not trying to entrap them," Dwyer said. "This is a major issue with the city and the department."

One merchant ticketed felt methods employed by police were a bit unfair, though.

The female teen deputy sent into Andy's Market was "at least 6-foot-1 or 6-2. There was no way she looked under 18; she looked old enough to be in her 20s," said Andy Jappaya.

That's irrelevant, Dwyer said. She was under 18, which makes it illegal to sell her cigarettes.

The market operator understands the need to curb cigarette sales to minors, but the problem goes deeper, Jappaya said. Adults — sometimes even parents — will buy cigarettes for those under 18.

The employee who sold the cigarettes is not full time and is not familiar with the store's procedures, which includes asking for identification on cigarette sales, Jappaya said.

"We were busy at the time, but don't want to use that excuse," Jappaya said. "We always ask for I.D."

Of the 20 retailers ticketed, eight were service stations. Those operators, in particular, will benefit from a meeting with police and city officials, Dwyer said.

"We're going to bring the businesses together in order to make them more diligent in training and monitoring their employees when it comes to selling cigarettes to minors," Dwyer said.

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Ruling from page A1

In a 2-1 decision Feb. 13, Judges Henry William Saad and Peter D. O'Connell agreed with MERC's original ruling. The lone dissenter was Judge Michael J. Matuzak.

In upholding MERC's decision, Saad and O'Connell wrote that the record also highlighted other differences between the Alternative Academy and regular K-12 teachers. The Alternative Academy teachers were not full-time teachers... Candidates were interviewed and hired by the Adult Education program.

Matuzak argued that MERC erred in classifying Alternative Academy teachers as adult ed teachers, largely because they "share professional responsibilities and skills and perform virtually identical work" as full-time high school teachers in the district.

The Alternative Academy, which began in 1994-95, takes students from Farmington, Harrison and North high schools who for whatever reason were unable to succeed in the traditional setting.

Unions of the academy would enable the seven academy teachers (including program coordinator Dianne Duthie) to earn a full-time salary starting at \$32,000 — up from the current \$25,000 they now can earn on an hourly wages basis as members of the district's adult education program.

Once in the union, they would also receive health benefits for spouses and children, something

they currently do not.

The district's position is that such gains ought to be agreed upon at the bargaining table, said Zurvalce, adding that "There are other regulations and rules (in the FEA K-12 contract) that are contrary to the way we operate our Alternative Academy."

Attorney Bill Albertson, who represented the school district in the case, said the appellate court decision reinforces the notion that "it's just a matter of what is the proper procedure to add these members to its ranks. The Appeals Court and MERC ruled that this was not."

An attorney for the FEA, Michael Lee, could not be reached for comment last week.

Chrzanowski added that those teachers could still sign cards and seek election to the union.

Albertson agreed. "If the union wants to include that group of teachers... they (academy teachers) will have to ask for an election."

Another possibility is for the academy teachers to be included as part of the upcoming contract negotiations with Farmington Public Schools.

According to Albertson, the FEA also "has the opportunity to ask the Michigan Supreme Court to hear its case. I don't know if they will (seek such a hearing) or not."

For that to happen, however, the request must be made within 21 days of the appellate court decision, or as of Friday, March 6.

Lights from page A1

probably delve into crucial areas such as how to supervise bigger, rowdier crowds; parking capacity; and the impact on surrounding neighborhoods pertaining to extra noise and light glare.

The report could touch on possible effects of lighted fields, such as: giving bands and track teams a place for prime-time action; family unity; and giving teenagers another option for Friday nights.

Heading up the committee are Athletic Director Ron Holland, FHS Principal Jim Myers, Harrison parent Lance Pesci and North parent Mary Barnes. Also on the panel are other district staff members, residents and police.

Funding key to alternative history

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

When the Farmington Alternative Academy program opened up in 1994-95, it was part of a consortium with the Huron Valley School District and had to be part of adult education in order to receive state funding.

Three years later, the academy is not part of the consortium and each pupil receives the state foundation grant of \$9,029. But it remains under the adult ed umbrella.

Faculty members also continue as part-time adult ed instructors who work to help at-risk high school students succeed in the classroom — something they struggled to do, for whatever reason, in a traditional high school.

Another thing remains the same. The teachers are not part of the Farmington Education Association, which represents faculty members in grades K-12.

It was recently ruled by the Michigan Court of Appeals that the 1996 decision by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission was the right one: Alternative Academy teachers are adult ed teachers.

"That's what I expected the ruling to be," said Terry Klenczar, who oversees the adult ed program. "It didn't surprise me." The Alternative Academy is coordinated by Dianne Duthie.

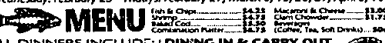
According to Klenczar, "flexibility" of scheduling, along with small class sizes, are two key reasons why the program is best suited for adult education.

She didn't sense any negative backlash from teachers about the appellate court decision.

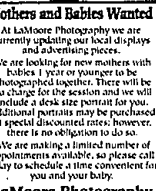
"They knew when they were hired that they were going to be part-time adult ed teachers working with at-risk students," Klenczar said.

The Alternative Academy goes from 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, with classes at the Farmington Training Center. But instructors do not work the full days in most cases. Klenczar said some students spend part of the week receiving vocational training at the Oakland Technical Center — Southwest Campus in Walled Lake.

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