

Expelled? Students shouldn't seek admission in Livonia Public Schools

By MARIE CHESTNEY
STAFF WRITER
mchestney@oea.home.comcast.net

■ The new policy language spotlights a new phenomenon. More and more students and their parents are school shopping because more and more districts expel students for misbehavior.

Livonia Public Schools has a message for students expelled from another school district: If you committed an offense that would also get you kicked out of Livonia, then don't seek admission to Livonia schools.

The door most likely will be closed here, too.

"This gives us the option not to take a kid expelled by another district," said Superintendent Ken Watson in explaining why the new expulsion rules must be inserted into the district's student discipline policy, now currently being updated.

"If we review the facts and find that the behavior would have led to expulsion in our district, then we have grounds for going through the expulsion process again."

The new policy language spotlights a new phenomenon. More and more students and their parents are school shopping because more and more districts expel students for misbehavior.

"There's a whole group out there district shopping because we have more expulsions than in the past," Watson said.

In fact, said special education director Robert Dietler in just the sheer number of expelled students could provide a business opportunity for some entrepreneur, sort of an "academy for expelled kids."

The phenomenon took root in

1995, when Michigan's new tough law on students who bring weapons to school first took effect.

Under the law, students, even kindergartners, must be expelled for bringing any of the following to school: daggers, stiletto knives with a blade over three inches in length, pocket knives that open by a mechanical device, iron bars, brass knuckles, starter guns, firearms, bombs, grenades, rockets with a propellant of more than four ounces, and mines.

The new law set different expulsion times for younger and older students.

Students in grades K-5 get expelled for at least 90 days and can appeal their expulsion after 60 days.

Students in grades 6-12 get expelled for at least 180 days, or the entire school year, and can appeal their expulsion after 150 days.

Mandatory expulsion gives administrators very little discretion in considering extenuating circumstances.

For example, on Sept. 23, a ninth grader from Clarenceville High School became one of the latest area students kicked out of school for a year. He brought a knife to school.

Year-long expulsions like this leave parents with a monumental problem.

"Because of the weapons violation, he is expelled from all Michigan public schools unless he is in a special ed program," said Superintendent Tom Tattan.

The law is clear for weapons violations. But students who get expelled for other types of misconduct can try to get admitted to another school district, rather than miss months of school.

This is where Livonia's new "misconduct prior to enrollment" policy kicks in. It covers two areas:

■ Misconduct committed outside school hours and/or off school property when the student was enrolled elsewhere.

■ Misconduct committed while the student was enrolled in another district.

SCHOOL NEWS

If Livonia schools suspend or expels its own students because of this type of misconduct, then this same penalty would apply to any student seeking admission to Livonia schools, the new policy states.

This student, if admitted, would go through the same expulsion process as a Livonia student. That includes a hearing and ruling by the Livonia Board of Education.

The policy gets around one tactic used by parents of suspended students. They move to a new district and enroll their child.

An expulsion question appears on the student registration card.

"If they check yes, we'll know," Watson said. "If they check no and give false information, then that's reason to deny registration."

The new wording is Livonia's attempt "to fix a hole" in its policy, said John Kuensel, director of secondary instruction.

"We won't have to take these kids in, even if they change their address."

The new policy would not apply to special education students, Watson said. "We have a legal obligation to provide education to special education kids."

North Oaks Pediatrics Opens in Novi



(248) 380-9900

Cheryl Klebba Gannon M.D., F.A.A.P.

&

Susan J. Laurent, M.D., F.A.A.P.

are pleased to announce the opening of their new pediatric practice

North Oaks Pediatrics

located at

42450 Twelve Mile Road, Suite 105
Novi, Michigan 48377

Medical Staff Members at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak

Library's helps The Farmington Community Library will announce its offerings in this space monthly. The main library is at 32727 12 Mile in Farmington Hills, 583-0300; the Farmington branch is at 23600 Liberty, Farmington, 474-7770.

■ The public is invited to attend the rededication ceremony for the Farmington branch library at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 7. Library staff will offer tours of the newly remodeled building. For more information call the Farmington branch at 474-7770.

■ Attention boys and girls! The new mascot of the Children's Room at the Farmington Branch is an owl who needs a name. So the Children's Department is having a contest. If the name you submit is chosen, you will win a prize and the owl will have a new name. Entry forms are available at the Farmington branch. One entry per person, per day. The deadline for entries is Wednesday, Nov. 24.

■ Celebrate the diverse cultural heritage in our community by learning a dance or craft from another country and tasting foods from around the world in our "Carousel of Cultures" program at the Farmington branch 7-8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 15. The program is sponsored by the Farmington Friends of the Library.

■ Fourth and fifth graders can join "Let's Talk Books" at the main library at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 20, for a discussion of Elvira Woodruff's "The Magnificent Mummy Maker." Parents are invited to attend with their children.

■ "Super Saturday Storylines" continue at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 20 at the Farmington branch with "Thanksgiving Fun." Come hear stories and enjoy making a craft to celebrate the holiday.

■ Sixth through 12th graders who want to assist the Young Adult Department with the library collection, programming and newsletter on young adult happenings are welcome to join the Young Adult Advisory Board meeting at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9 at the Farmington branch and at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 16 at the main library in Farmington Hills. For more information call Mary Beth Tacy at 583-0300 (main library) or Stacy Charabatsis at 474-7770 (Farmington branch).

■ Beginning Nov. 1 and running through Jan. 7, teens may submit prose in the Library's Second Annual Creative Writing Competition. Categories include prose (fiction and non-fiction) and poetry in two age divisions: 11-14 and 15-19. There will be prizes for each category and age division. For competition guidelines, entry forms or more information call either of the library branches.

■ Popular and great book discussions scheduled in November include P.D. James' "A Certain Justice" at 10 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 4, and Wallace Stegner's "The Wayward Bus" at 10 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 18.

■ "On Evil, Guilt and Power," by Friedrich Schlegel is the title scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18 at the main library. Everyone is welcome to attend; literary expertise is not required.

■ Learn to negotiate cyberspace before the new millennium by attending a free Internet class available at both branches of the library. Registration is required for all Internet classes.

■ "The CyberSeniors Program" is geared for older adults (with little or no experience using computers) who would like to use the Internet and to explore the resources of the World Wide Web. This is an outreach program conducted by the Farmington Community Library every Monday at the Cosmic Activities Center at 28600 11 Mile Road, three blocks east of Middlebelt. Each Monday from 1:15-2 p.m. library staff and volunteers will welcome newcomers to the program. Program topics are presented from 1:15-2 p.m. There are also opportunities to sign up for brief hands-on instructional sessions. When classes are not in session, the computer is available for use by older adults on their own, or with a friend.

■ The CyberSenior Schedule for November includes: Nov. 1 - Using the library's home page; Nov. 8 - Super searching the web; Video presentation and discussion; Nov. 15 - Searching: Tips for finding what you want on the web; A look at two search engines; Nov. 22 - Favorite web sites; and Nov. 29 - All about e-mail.

■ "World Wide Web Basics" and "World Wide Web Basics 2" hands-on classes are offered every week on Wednesday and Saturday mornings at the Farmington branch and every Thursday and Saturday morning at the main library.

■ Volunteer instructor Michael Lewis conducts "Beyond Point & Click," a series of computer sessions on topics including e-mail, print and security, virus and PC invasions, and more at 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. every Wednesday at the main library only.

■ Learn "How to Find Stuff on the Web" in our search engines class at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 15 at the Farmington branch.

■ "Reading and Printing Magazine Articles" by using the Info Trac Search Bank will be demonstrated at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 16 at the Farmington branch, and 9:15 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 18 at the main library.

■ "Using the Library Catalog" will teach users how to locate materials, place holds and renew books at 9:15 a.m. Friday, Nov. 12 at the Farmington branch.

■ To register or for more information call the main library 583-0300, or 474-7770 (main library's Children's Department) or the Farmington branch at 474-7770. Library programs and events may also be found on the library's home page at www.farmil.org.

**WE'RE
HERE!**



**DOWNTOWN FARMINGTON
CENTER**

23336 Farmington Road

248-476-4204

"Your neighborhood bread store."

**OPENING
SATURDAY
NOV. 6**

COME SEE US!

Bring in this ad
and get a loaf of

**FREE
HONEY WHOLE
WHEAT**

with any other
bread purchase.

(One coupon per visit per customer. Thanks!)

Expires 1/30/00

FRM O&E