

# The Farmington Observer

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# The Farmington Observer

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## School board appeals to Hollywood

By The Staff  
Staff Writer  
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While a Farmington High School parent battles district administrators to formulate a teacher code of conduct to clearly define what is or isn't acceptable in terms of classroom language and materials, the school board adopted a resolution urging Hollywood to clean up its act.

For the kids' sake. The resolution, titled "An Appeal to Hollywood," was unanimously approved by the Farmington Board of Education during Tuesday's meeting. The resolution encourages the Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils and district PTA to join forces.

"An Appeal to Hollywood" was co-authored in 1999 by the Institute for Communicarian Policy Studies at George Washington University and the Entertainment Fellowship.

Several school board members said they were solidly behind the resolution.

"I think there's a lot of correlating data that shows the kind

of images our children are seeing on television translate into behavior problems in many cases," said school board Vice President Frank Reid, who initiated the resolution.

School board President Priscilla Brouillette and Trustee Linda Enberg also said the resolution was an important step to take.

### Gone too far

"We have to take a position on this because no one else is looking at it," Brouillette said. "Our sexual harassment curriculum, everything we're responding to... it's all because of the pressure the images from Hollywood portray."

Subjects such as anorexia are dealt with in the health curriculum, for example. Television programs, movies and advertising clearly stress the message that women need to be rail thin to be considered attractive. School officials agreed that message is unhealthy, dangerous and wrong.

"It's just gotten completely out of hand," Reid said. "My son flipped on the TV before going to

church, and there it was, a real steamy scene — on a Sunday morning. We have to raise the level of entertainment and make it more wholesome and more aligned with family values."

During the meeting, Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield called it a "powerful" document that clearly states "it is time the entertainment industry stepped up to its responsibility and recognized the incredible impact... on young people."

Reid brought the resolution to the attention of the full board after it was discussed by the Oakland County School Board Association's leadership committee, of which Reid is co-chair.

### Clean it up

Besides the PTA and city councils, the resolution encourages the Oakland County Intermediate School District and parent groups and associations in the district to join the appeal.

Following are some of the issues the appeal hopes to address:

■ Committing to "windows" of family programming;

■ Pledging the industry to "significantly expand creative efforts to develop good family-oriented entertainment";

■ Establishing certain standards of good taste which producers would be expected to maintain;

■ Banning making adult-oriented entertainment available to youth.

According to the school board members, teenagers are growing up with a vocabulary that includes so-called swear words as part of the lexicon, in large part due to the influence of Hollywood.

They also agreed that there probably is a connection between "the roughening of the language" in society and those issues recently raised by FHS parent Mark Mergener, pertaining to inappropriate classroom language, among other issues (see related story).

Farmington schools' resolution to join the appeal will be forwarded to the Oakland County Intermediate School District, Reid said.

## Commission to salute businesses that support family balance

The Farmington Hills/Farmington Commission on Children, Youth and Families has extended the deadline for its program to recognize businesses whose workplace policies encourage and support family life.

The commission has sponsored a volunteer recognition ceremony for several years, and last year, it was expanded to include local businesses. This year's program showcases firms with policies designed to promote a balance

between work and family, such as flexible work hours, job sharing or on-site day care.

Nominees will be honored at the "Salute to those who Support the Family" held May 17 at the William Costick Center in Farmington Hills. Guest speaker will be Virgil Carr, President and CEO of the United Way.

For additional information or to obtain a nomination form, contact Bev Papal, Farmington library, 553-0303.

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