'Ratings Game'

Skit challenges first impressions of schools

STATE WAITES

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First impressions of the quality of school districts can be superficial and aren't always useful or accurate, something Farmington Public Schools officials wanted to illustrate during the recent 'Ratings Game' skit.

During the skit, 'contestant' Janet Holm of the Farmington Area PTA Council honed heresonal impressions of three school districts simply on supersonal impressions of three school districts simply on supersonal impressions of the capacity of the present of tailored information.

Meanwhile, sitting on stage, opposite a partition from Holm, were three fictitious 'school districts,' represented by Heather Trapchak, Jerry Fouchey and Denise Gundle White of Farmington Public Schools.

All three attempted to answer Holm's questions in such a way sto I and her allegiance as a prespective customer.

as to land her allegiance as a prospective customer.

Emcee for the evening's festivities at Farmington Training Center was Richard Strausz, in the Mod-attired role of hip host 'Chad Stylus.'

In best 20-Questions fashion, contestant Holm fired off a stream of questions about overything from the quality of curriculum, arts programs and food service offerings to the level of parent volunteerism. ent volunteerism

Following are a few Q & A examples from "The Ratings Game":

■ What percentage of parents attends PTA meetings? One district answered 73.5 percent, while a second said "at the meeting we served pizza, 81

One district answered 1,222.

One district answered pizza, 81 percent.

What role does fine arts education play in your district?

We have an award-winning kazoe department, responded one of the district reps.

A second mentioned how the district won state awards for band and orchestra competitions. The third noted how its students had a special exhibit at the Detroit institute of Arts.

If how many computers do you have in your district?

"One, but it's used all theme, was one response.

We're worried using computers before adulthood takes away from time learning long division," was another.

The third district rep noted that every student has access to a computer.

After the skit, which was videotaped for airing on the districts TV-10, community members and district staffers broke off into groups to delvo into discussions about what are considered more-meaningful indicared for suringful indicared for the staffers broke off into groups to delvo into discussions about what are considered more-meaningful indicared.

Ameng the participants was Harrison High School teacher Laura Sparrow.

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"I led a breakout group of senior high parents," Sparrow said. "One parent from North said we need to (focus on) the

Read Dan O'Meara's sports coverage on Thursday and Sunday





importance of people skills because, ... stress

skills because, ... stress is overywhere."
Other suggestions included requiring all high school students; complete community service as a graduation requirement are mandatory only at North Farmington, Sparrow said); undertake an all-oncompassing sonior encompassing senior

encompassing surveyer project.

"You don't graduate unless you do a performance on a subject you choose, to display your knowledge," said Sparrow, recalling the sugmestion.

row, recalling the sug-gestion.

The ideas will be looked at in the coming weeks by the dis-trict's assessment department, led by director Barbara Cherem. Superintendent Bob Maxfield



Rate a district: From left, Heather Trapchak, Jerry Fouchey, Denise Gundle White and host Richard "Chad Stylus" Strausz of Farmington Public Schools participate in the "Ratings Game." The skit, a take-off of the 1960s game show "Dating Game," was designed to show how easily someone's opinion of a school district can be skewed by tailoring their responses.

said the program is part of a continuing effort to gauge what parsents and other community members consider to be important in judging a district's performance. "You can pull all kinds of stuff" to influence an opinion, Maxfield important."

State of the Cities fete is in February

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Calsonic North America and LOC Federal Craft it Union, is pleased to announce that the 2000 State of the Cities Breakfast will be held from 7:30-9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 27 at Vladimir's in Farmington Hills. This annual event will feature Farmington City Menager Frank Lauhoff, Farmington Hills City Manager Steve Brock and Superintendent of Farmington Public Schools Dr. Robert Maxfield.

These key community leaders will be on hand to share information about new developments that contribute to the overall growth and stability of our region.

Also participating in the program will be Farmington Mayor Nancy Bates and School Board President Linda Enberg.

This is an excellent opportunity for the community to gain first-hand knowledge from our key community leaders about

projects and events that affect the way we live and do business in our communities," says Car-leigh Flaharty, chamber presi-dent. "As an advocate for eco-

dent. "As an advocate for economic and community development, the chamber views this event to be one of the most critical educational venues offered to ur business community."

A buffet breakfast will be served prior to the presentation from 7:30-8 a.m. Cost to attend the breakfast is \$20 for those who register by Thursday, Feb. 15, or \$25 thereafter. Deadline for reservations is Friday, Feb. 23.

23.

In an effort to encourage attendance from the general public, the chamber will offer seating for guests who wish to attend the presentation only Guests attending only the presentation will be seated at 8 am, Advance notice of attendance for those attending only the presentation is appreciated and may be made by calling the chamber office at 474-3440.

Game participants rank community concerns

The items from Farmington schools community "stakeholder" groups at the "Ratings Gamemeting are listed here in order of strength or priority of responses.

Participants each had five votes for the 22 tems.

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The number of votes each item received follows the item in bold.

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"Are schools creating responsible citizens?" was the number one concern. The list below was provided by the school district.

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In order of preference

1. Responsible citizen (percent of kids involved in
community service): attitudinal measurement (how
has it affected them; recognizing an obligation to
the larger community) (17)

2. Arts and humanities – participation and exposure (Percentage of kids involved): use of the arts
as a carrier for other learning (13)

3. Stating and perent and survey (cognidio school recolines (14)

4. Number of kindergarten students who had a
quality early childhood educational experience (e.g.,
number of children enrolled) (12)

5. Percentage of parent involvement in schools
(e.g., participation in student-involved conferences,
participate in child's geniesting) (11)

6. Identify student interventions and report out

thow is it progressing on disure.

(5)

15. Reading levels – reading recovery from leveled

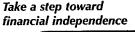
15. Reading levels – reading recovery from leveled 16. Simple on-the-spot evaluations (indicators for eachers) (4) 17. People skills (recognizing others' gifts; valuing hose gifts; valuing those gifts; using them, especially in teamwork) (4) 18. Percentage of teachers teaching in their major and minor fields (4) 19. Technology – is it worth it? (What skills do we want; are they demonstrated; are they used in klds' ives?) (3) 20. Participation in extra curricular academic culvilles (3)

activities (3)
21. Opportunities to explore interests in careers and personal skills (3)
22. Surveys desegregated by role of grads (academic or not), (3)











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