

## Committee: Keep studying issues

Committee from page A1

Here's a summary of the High School Late Start Committee's preliminary recommendations to the Farmington School Board May 7:

■ Continue to gather information about the subject to stay current on a still-developing issue. Use district school publications to inform the public and get feedback. Consider implementation of a parent education series coordinated with the PTA Council and Secondary School and Community Forum.

■ Re-evaluate the district's ability to support projected transportation costs as the district's financial climate approves.

■ Monitor other school districts' changes to late starts.

■ Continue to monitor conversation to the new athletic league and study the impact late starts would have on student participation in interscholastic athletics.

■ Study the possibility of expanding some of the later starts already in place, on a weekly or more frequent basis, as suggested by the students at Students Operating Schools Day. About 45 students who shadowed educators and administrators March 8 voted in favor of a start time about 15-20 minutes later but not an hour later.

■ Continue to look for creative ways to schedule classes to best address the needs of all students. This could include

scheduling academics throughout the day and suggesting that students who have more difficulty with morning classes arrange their schedules accordingly.

■ Continue to investigate best practices regarding physical activity mentioned as "energizers in the classroom" to help offset the negative effects of early start times on student learning.

■ Investigate the possibility of reorganizing the existing time so academic classes might start 20-30 minutes later. This might include a fresh look at SET/SMART/Seminar. This could be on a trial or limited basis, for one school or all schools.

"It's unfortunate our decisions are tempered by money instead of what's right and best for kids," said Tom Chrzanowski, president of the Farmington Education Association, the teachers' union.

LaVonda Ramey, felt the issue was rushed. "We rushed doing the survey, we rushed doing the town hall meeting. It was a case of 'Here's the research now go look it up yourself,'" she said.

Phil Neuman was disappointed with the outcome. "I'd like to see the report to the board have more optimism for the future," he said. "We need to continue the dialogue."

Zan Alley, the Uniserv director

for the Farmington-based Michigan Education Association, said she is constantly reminded of how important it is to include everyone who will be affected by a decision.

"When we started out, I thought the original committee was a pretty representative group," she said. "Then I would hear from employees who felt a decision had already been made and 'nobody has talked to us about it.' You realize what a tremendous task it is to try to involve all voices. I realize how easy it is to not include everybody and have that backfire on us."

Alley added, "The community felt that it didn't have enough information so they had to fight us

rather than help us. The community felt we didn't get to them fast enough with enough information so they had to fight us. I get the feeling that they are cheering in the streets now."

In response to the growing discussion among educators, Maxfield encouraged other school superintendents to attend a regional meeting held at Walled Lake Central High School in November. The initial discussion involved Northville, Novi, West Bloomfield, Livonia, among others.

"Each district decided to pursue the issue on its own," Maxfield said.

Farmington has the most comprehensive committee structure with subcommittees: teaching and learning, co-curricular, transportation and community outreach.

Beyond simply changing start times, the committee was also influenced by the National Sleep Foundation and University of Minnesota studies, which addressed both sleep deprivation and teen "over-programming," Maxfield said.

"Surely as a learning community, we should be able to get to the frequently heard opinion that the proposal to change school start times is simply an affluent community's effort to further pamper its teens," he said.

## Pet-A-Pet meeting features 9-11 K-9s

BY SUE BUCK  
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The tragedy of 9-11 and its subsequent rescue efforts increased awareness of how valuable K-9 friends can be in emergencies.

A special annual meeting of Pet-A-Pet will feature Terry Schoenbach, of the K-9 Academy in Romulus, which helps train handlers and their dogs for law enforcement agencies.

The program will be held 7:30-9:30 p.m. May 9 at the Costick Activities Center, 28800 11 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

All Pet-A-Pet volunteers, guests and the public are invited to attend the program. Refreshments will be served.

The Pet-A-Pet program is a group of volunteers who regularly visit hospitals, schools and other facilities with their pet dogs or cats.

"Pet-A-Pet has always been dedicated to helping the elderly, the mentally ill, children, rehab patients and all sorts of others in need," said president Ruth Curry.

"Our volunteers know just how rewarding it is to see the patients smile as they stroke the soft fur of a dog or cat."

The subject for this year's program is timely said Milton Riggs, a Pet-A-Pet board member. "9-11 precipitated the topic."

Schoenbach, accompanied by handlers and their dogs, will demonstrate techniques employed in search and rescue, as well as tracking.

"I'm bringing an explosive detection dog from Van Buren Township," Schoenbach said.

Husband and wife handlers Lynn and Mike Eggleton will also bring their dogs. Lynn, an ambulance worker, works with a search and rescue dog.

She is a member of the Michigan Urban Search and Rescue Association. Mike will bring a narcotics detection dog from Van Buren Township, Schoenbach said.

The program will take place outdoors, immediately adjacent to Entrance A where the registration table will be located.

For more information, call (313) 635-0410.

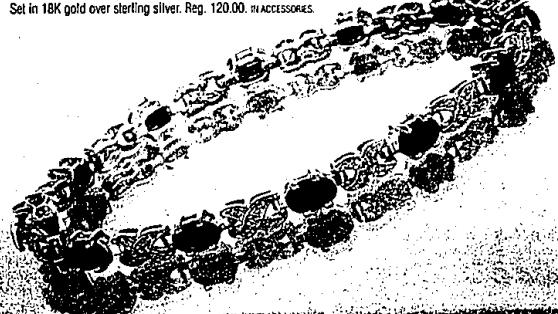
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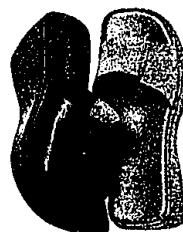
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