

Board approves Maxfield's salary, with incentives to stay

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Farmington Public School Board members unanimously approved increases in a salary and benefit package to better compensate Farmington Public Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield.

"At our meeting May 28, we discussed a comparative review of superintendent salaries in southeast Michigan and we were surprised with what we found," said board vice-president Linda Enberg. She is chairwoman of the Superintendent's Evaluation Committee.

"According to a Plante and Moran survey and our own research, we found that salaries have increased dramatically for superintendents over the last two years," Enberg said. "The increase comes in response to a short supply of superintendents on one hand and a great demand for superintendents on the other hand."

In recent months, a number of area districts including West Bloomfield, Waterford and Clarendonville, have lost superintendents. This week, Plymouth-

Canton Superintendent Kathleen Booher announced her resignation.

The committee reviewed compensation packages for districts in this area which are comparable in size.

"We determined that we are below market and have some catching up to do in terms of salary," Enberg said. "Even though economic times are tight, the superintendent shortage is putting pressure on districts to be competitive."

The board unanimously approved an "equity adjustment package." The contract will be three years, covering a period of July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2005.

The package

Maxfield's income will be \$169,596. The total package is about \$195,000, Enberg said. The 2001-2002 package was \$162,916.

Maxfield will receive an equity increase of 6 percent to base pay, which was raised to \$150,085.

His 2001-2002 base pay was \$141,590; in 2000-2001, it was \$138,137. Maxfield was hired in at \$118,000 in 1994.

The continuation of an incen-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL ENDLER

Superintendent's awards: Board president Cathy Webb and Superintendent Bob Maxfield applaud honoree Theodore Hicks from East Middle School during this year's Superintendent's Awards. Maxfield is noted for his presence at schools and events, literally from dawn until dusk.

tive bonus, raised to 13 percent of base salary, is awarded at the board's discretion for successful completion of goals (\$19,511). Retirement contributions are

\$25,516. This includes a continuation of the board contribution to a tax sheltered annuity, raised this year from 4 percent to 10 percent because new laws

allowed greater contributions (\$10,000).

The incentive to stay is 7 percent of base salary given annually to be vested only after completion of the third year of the contract (\$10,608).

The board is anxious to keep Maxfield, 60, an "strongly approved" incentive to stay portion.

In answer to a question from Board Member Jack Inch, Enberg said Maxfield wouldn't receive the incentive if all three years aren't completed. Inch was concerned about "Acts of God beyond his power," like illness.

Face of the district

This is a contractual provision that doesn't take anything else into account except completion of that term of contract, said board member Gary Sharp.

He supported the increase, calling Maxfield "the face for this district."

"It's important for us as a premiere school district to remain premiere in all facets of what we do," Sharp said.

Board President Cathy Webb is delighted with the longevity portion of the contract. Max-

field's decision to continue working was made despite the fact that his wife, Sara, took an early retirement this year, she said.

Board Member Priscilla Brouillette expressed appreciation of the committee's work and told Maxfield she was a bit embarrassed to find out his salary was behind other districts.

"We have such appreciation of your work," Brouillette said. "You work basically 24 hours a day."

Even in an environment of financial stress, Maxfield has kept a balanced budget, moved forward and bring in new initiatives.

"We have a real jewel," Brouillette said.

Board Member Frank Reid said there's a number of challenges on all fronts. "We need to be well-positioned," Reid said.

It's kind of embarrassing to talk about Maxfield's salary in front of him and others, Enberg said.

Maxfield joked that it seemed like an out-of-body experience listening to it.

"Goodness gracious, this has been a mutual love affair for 8 years," he said.

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