

TAKE TEST

FROM PAGE A1

will offer the sample test during parent-teacher conferences, several times during the day and broadcast information on the cable network.

Neighboring Walled Lake Consolidated Schools has both day and evening sessions planned Nov. 11 and 12. (See related story for additional information about other districts.)

Maxfield said Nov. 1 that he doesn't consider the testing a high enough priority to schedule it in the evening, when working parents can attend.

"It was my call," Maxfield said. "We wrestled with a couple factors. We have a million priorities and this wasn't a high one. I wasn't going to draw our people out at night. We've been down this road so many times."

After discussions with both Kris Gekiere, who's an administrator in the school improvement and accreditation department, and Diane Bauman, director of

school and community relations, he decided against holding it during parent-teacher conferences because that's a time when parents may not be as interested after they've stood in long lines.

Maxfield also based his decision on the number of evening events that don't draw audience. It's hard to predict or explain the number of people who'll attend. Eight people showed up at a recent "When Enabling Hurts" program sponsored by the Call to Action group, which focused on chemical use, dependency and its effect upon the family.

But more than 100 people showed up at motivational speaker Chad Foster's "Formula for Success" workshop based on the national best seller, "Teenagers Preparing for the Real World."

Maxfield said he's sure Gekiere would be willing to suggest ways parents and others might take the test on other than the Nov. 12 date. Her number is (248) 489-3402.

Also, an offer was made at the PTA-Area Council meeting

Monday night that the test could be brought to any Farmington group/building interested. No other times or dates were scheduled as of Friday.

Invitations will also be extended to key communicators and be inserted in Friday folders, Bauman said.

The district also wants to attract Farmington-area business people to take the test, Gekiere said.

PRIORITIES

What's high on Maxfield's priority list? He'd like more parents to volunteer in their PTA at the elementary level and parent advisory groups at the secondary level. There are evening workshops, band and booster organization opportunities, too.

"I'd love to see people involved," Maxfield said.

The school district devoted an entire board retreat Oct. 15 to studying the "No Child Left Behind" federal initiative, Education Year and the NCA Performance Accreditation.

MEAP tests are a snapshot of student progress, Maxfield said. "The depth and complexity of skills tested in math, science, reading, writing and social studies often surprise people once they see the test," he said.

In a press release announcing the testing date, the district included a quote by state school Superintendent Tom Watkins:

"The MEAP is one measure of success, but only one and we all know that kids are more than a single test on a single day. But because the MEAP is important, all Michigan citizens need to understand and appreciate the rigorous state standards we have set for our students and schools. I invite our statewide community to see why this is not a basic skills test."

To find out more information or to take a test online, visit www.kentids.org/takethestest or call Ron Koehler, of the Kent Schools, who is coordinating the "Take the Test Week" in Michigan.

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RAMADAN

FROM PAGE A1

gion. The center recently held its second open house.

"It's a way to strengthen our community," he said. "It was a joy for our colleagues and community members to come and treat us as partners."

Because Ramadan is a lunar month, it begins about 11 days earlier each year.

The end of the month of Ramadan will be marked by communal prayers called "Eid ul-Fitr" or Feast of the Fast Breaking.

Americans traditionally break their fast together at their Islamic Centers where they also attend to their prayers and the mosques.

All Muslims who have reached the age of puberty are obligated to fast.

Exceptions are made for anyone who is sick or traveling, or women who are pregnant or those too weak to withstand the rigors of being without food and water.

The ultimate goal is developing one's character of Taqwa, a constant state of awareness of God and what is right and wrong according to what God has ordained, said Kahn.

From this awareness, a person gains discipline, self-restraint and the ability to do good and give freely.

Because Ramadan is a time of spiritual striving, it is also a time of great joy and happiness as Muslims visit one another to break fast together, he said.

At the center, a congregational prayer called *Thaweech* will be performed after the daily nighttime prayer, Kahn said. He said Muslims are encouraged to eat a modest morning meal before dawn and to break the fast immediately at sunset. After sunset prayers, a complete meal is consumed, often in the company of guests or friends.

Visit the *Tawheed Center* at 29707 W. 10 Mile in Farmington Hills.

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Neighboring districts offer MEAP 'Take the Test Day'

BY SUCK STAFF WRITER

Anyone who wishes to take the sample Michigan Educational Assessment Test isn't limited to the confines of their home school district.

School districts in the Observer-Eccentric coverage area differ in when and how they will offer the sample test, giving parents a variety of opportunities to explore the state's standard exam.

In the Birmingham School District, the test is being sent via e-mail to some people.

"We've been wanting to try our e-mail distribution list," said Carol Marsh, community information specialist. "We haven't thought about being representative. These are key communicators, people whose opinions are valued."

In the Bloomfield Hills School District, a building administrator, the PTO group and parents can request a chance to take the test.

"They have the choice to participate," said Jennifer Wollung, community relations spokesperson.

Any test times are expected to be scheduled during the day. As for making it accessible to working parents, Wollung said active parents also come in during the day.

The Plymouth Canton School district is inviting certain community members to take

the test at 11:30 a.m. Nov. 14 at the E. J. McClendon school administration office. A light lunch will be served.

Other sites include:

■ South Redford: Sample test during parent-teacher conferences, several times during the day and broadcast information on the cable network. For more information, call (313) 535-4000.

■ Walled Lake: Sessions planned at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 11 and 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 12, both at the Educational Services Center, 850 Ladd Road, Building D. For more information, call (248) 956-2017.

■ Waterford: 5:30 p.m. Nov. 7 at the Administration Building 5020 Pontiac Lake Road. Call Rhonda Lessel at (248) 666-4000.

■ Oakland Schools 10-11:30 a.m., 2100 Pontiac Lake Road in Waterford. The test will be given in the kiva. There's room for 200 people and only 50 people signed up as of Wednesday. Call Kim Espejo at (248) 209-2145.

■ Southfield: 6-8 p.m. Nov. 11 Southfield High School. Refreshments at 5:30 p.m. Child care will be provided. Call Ken Silver at (248) 372-2568.

■ Lake Orion: 7 p.m. Nov. 12 at Lake Orion High School. Call Linda Glowatz at (248) 693-5323.

■ Westland: 6-7 p.m. Nov. 12 at the William

D. Ford Career-Tech Center on Marquette for business people, community leaders, parents, grandparents and taxpayers. Call (734) 419-2709.

■ Clarenceville: Open door policy for Take the Test Day from 3-7 p.m. Nov. 13 at Clarenceville Middle School. Community members are invited. Call Sarah Swert at (248) 473-8933.

■ Rochester: 9:30 a.m. Nov. 13 at the Rochester Community Schools Administration Center, 501 W. University in Rochester. This is part of Rochester's November District Dialogue to which parents and the public are invited. Call Donn Tignaneli at (248) 772-3127.

■ Avondale: 9-10 a.m., 2-3 p.m. or 6-7 p.m. in the Avondale Administration Building, 260 S. Squirrel Road in Auburn Hills at the corner of Squirrel Road and Waukegan Road. Call Sue DesJardins at (248) 293-8400, extension 236.

■ Clarkston: The District is hosting an event for senior citizens only on Nov. 19. They are combining American Education Week with Take the Test Day. Call Anita Banach at (248) 623-5420.

■ Oxford: 7-8 p.m. Nov. 20 at Oxford Middle School. Call Edie Paradowski at (248) 369-5018.

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TRASH CANS

FROM PAGE A1

uses Waste Management as its trash hauler.

Not surprisingly, people who've bought 50- to 60-gallon containers tend to be upset with the news, said Pines.

She suggests they use the cans as a storage container or as a way to carry trash bags to the curb.

Normally, the city gets the word out every spring about the 32-gallon limit, said Pines. The increase in complaints prompted a second notice this year, she said.

The container size limit allows trash workers to lift the containers into trucks safely.

An overview of the trash container rules are:

■ Metal or plastic garbage containers must not be more than 32 gallons in capacity.

■ The total weight of each container must not exceed 60 pounds.

■ Plastic garbage bags must be more than 30 gallons in capacity.

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Travel

Ritz Carlton - Dearborn 1 night stay
Residence Inn Hotel - West 1 night stay
Ryatt - Dearborn 1 night stay
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Embassy West Hotel - Okemos, MI 2 night stay
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Ocean Palms Suites - Key Largo, FL 2 night stay

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