

RESIDENTS

FROM PAGE A1

clear his decision to attack even if the United Nations fails to support the effort.

Sara Hedow, who works in the coffee shop at the library, grew up in Iraq. The 17-year-old senior at West Bloomfield High School is Chaldean. She said she and her family still have relatives in their native homeland. "We are worried about them," she said.

Sara said while she thinks Hussein may deserve to be attacked, most Iraqi citizens do not. "He deserves what he is getting, but the people don't," she said.

She said most of her classmates and teachers are against



Ryan

Kaiser

the war.

Farmington Hills resident Joann Ryan was with friend Len Baranski, who grew up in the area and was visiting from Texas. Ryan said she opposes going to war.

"Why didn't we get him a long time ago?" she said of Hussein. Baranski worries about his daughter and two grand

nephews, who are stationed in the Mideast. He said the threat

of war is making him feel like decisions must constantly be put on hold.

"I feel like we're living week to week, and you can't make any travel plans," he said.

Chris Kaiser of Pontiac said the U.S. should go to war.

"I think (Hussein) is playing games," he said, adding it would be best if the United Nations supported the effort.

Royal Oak resident Andrew Reed said the stability of Democratic countries is in jeopardy with terrorist threats.

He said it's important that biological and nuclear threats be checked and eliminated.

"I support (going to war) 80 percent," he said.

space@hometownlife.com (248) 477-5450

ENROLLMENT

FROM PAGE A1

issue," Russell said. "Senior citizens are not informed on this issue. I'm scared to death about what could come here because I already know what we have. I want to hear the downside of this issue. We need to prove to this community that there is equity and excellence."

She can't understand why the district is targeting the smallest schools, one disadvantaged, when others have more room.

Debi Wilyard, a Southfield parent, would like to see Farmington schools open up.

"I'm very sorry that I moved on the wrong side of the street," Wilyard said. "When I moved to Southfield, I didn't know about the schools. I'm not happy where I'm at."

"Move!" was the response Wilyard heard from many in the audience.

"I can't afford to," she responded, tearing up.

COMMITTEE STUDY

Though the district considers this issue annually, officials appointed a committee last fall to research it in-depth.

The plan would allow students from other districts in Oakland County or the Oakland County Intermediate School District to apply for a limited number of slots in Farmington Public Schools.

Enrollments have declined because the Farmington area is experiencing little growth; school officials say parents who have college-age children are remaining in the district.

A total not to exceed 20 slots at the elementary level are proposed at William Grace and Flanders Elementary schools during the 2003-04 school year. Each student enrolled will bring part of his or her per-pupil state funding.

Farmington's foundation grant is \$10,067. The district will receive a maximum of \$8,000 per out-of-district pupil.

Seventeen of 28 districts in the Oakland Schools interme-

diate district have an out-of-district schools of choice program. Farmington lost 84 students last year to other programs.

While in-district Schools of Choice does not offer a preference for students from one family, the out-of-district program would, after a Schools of Choice child has attended at least one semester.

The board will consider the issue of in-district sibling priority in an untelevised committee meeting April 1.

Superintendent Bob Maxfield acknowledged the contradiction.

"If you are going to go to this proposal, then you will have to go back to sibling preference for in-district," said parent Donna Drew.

Parent and PTA Council President Kim Heath said she has confidence in the committee.

"However we still have not had a districtwide informational meeting," Heath said. "Our taxpayers have not had a chance to look at this issue and deal with it."

OTHER OPTIONS

Heath suggested developing a more informative Web site like that done by West Bloomfield schools and looking at all other options. She wanted more information about using the district's "rainy day" fund.

"I feel very uncomfortable granting you my permission to give away my hard-earned tax dollars to somebody else who doesn't pay to the Farmington school district," said parent Annalee Morrison.

Janice Hall took her children out of Our Lady of Sorrows and sent them to the public schools. She's concerned about crowding at Farmington High, where there are two fewer seats than needed for an advanced English class and students have to sit on the floor.

Hall drew some applause with one suggestion as to how to save money and avoid opening the district.

"Maybe you can be like (Gov. Jennifer) Granholm and every-

one can take a 10 percent pay cut across the board," she said.

Officials said some comments about the relationship between the board and committees were highly offensive and insulting.

"Every committee which reports to the board represents no conflict of interest because they have absolutely no power to approve or disapprove a motion," said board member Cathy Webb.

Webb didn't see the need for a separate community forum and noted the issue has received more publicity in Farmington than other school districts.

Board member Pam Christian pointed out the broadcast board meeting is a public hearing. Committees bring comprehensive reports, and if there are things missing, board members ask questions, she said.

"I was quite offended that the assumption would be made that we as board members wouldn't have the thought process to even ask the committee any additional questions. We take our community's input seriously," Christian said.

VARIED BACKGROUNDS

Mary Joyce Reader, principal of Flanders Elementary, and Mark Morawski, principal of William Grace, are co-chairs of a committee that includes Donna Reuter, a student information technician in the central office and a Farmington High School parent; Kelly Zuby, a Flanders parent; Ann Marie Kurzywiec, a Flanders media specialist; Kate Harris, a William Grace paraprofessional; and Cheryl Cannon, assistant superintendent for business and finance.

Students who enter the program in elementary school can remain in the district through their senior year, Morawski said. No transportation would be provided.

For more information, to make comments, or to ask questions, contact Morawski at (248) 489-3747 or Reader at (248) 489-3673.

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