

Cowley's open for business

The long-awaited opening of Cowley's in downtown Farmington happened without great fanfare this week, but the pub was still packed for lunch Thursday. Guests marveled at the difference between the classically decorated two-story building and its predecessor, a 30-year-old building that was torn down last year. More formal dining is available on the first floor, which is a no smoking area; the second floor features more pub style dining. Cowley's plans to be open at 7 on Monday in honor of St. Patrick's Day - that's 7 a.m. - and will stay open until 2 a.m. WRUF will be broadcasting live from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by Blackthorn and The Lash, and a menu of sandwiches will be available.



Pictured, waitress Erin Woodrow and Katie Baler head upstairs for a quick break and a bowl of potato soup. Patrons Stephanie Walsh and Bridgid Fox enjoy a beverage.



John Cowley and Bill Richardson hold court on the end of the upstairs bar.

Meeting to provide information on state, federal education initiatives

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

The community, especially parents, are invited to a town hall meeting on No Child Left Behind and Education YES! - A Yurstick for Excellent Schools - at 7 p.m. Monday, March 24 in Room 1 at the Farmington Training Center.

The assessment programs, which have generated controversy in the state and the nation, represent educational reform. Officials believe they are not well-understood.

"We are concerned," said Sue Zurvale, assistant superintendent for staff and community services. "We thought it would be a good idea to host an informational meeting about the two. We're just beginning to sift through the major components."

She distributed information on both programs at the March 16 FTA Council Forum.

President George Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 on Jan. 8, 2002. The new law represents his education reform plan and contains the most sweeping changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act since 1965, according to

school officials.

The NCLB changes the federal government's role in education by asking America's schools to describe their success in terms of what each student accomplishes.

Education YES!, Michigan's state accreditation system, is aligned to meet the requirements of NCLB. The comprehensive state accreditation system will assign grades to all Michigan schools. State officials have not yet released the formulas they are going to use to calculate the grades.

For more information about Education YES!, visit the Michigan Department of Education web site at www.michigan.gov/mde

Both NCLB and Education YES! use the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests as a common

NCLB also includes the concept of Adequate Yearly Progress, a performance goal for each state. All students must reach 100 percent proficiency on the state's academic assessments within the next 12 years.

Because Michigan uses the MEAP to determine annual

progress, district officials say it's imperative that all students take part in the state testing or other approved assessment.

A program information form states: "Under federal law, students who do not take the MEAP will receive a zero score which will be averaged into each building's scores, which will then lower the grade given to the school."

"On the federal level, we're hearing strong support for this. It's, 'Do it or else,'" said Farmington School Board Member Cathy Webb.

For information about NCLB, e-mail Samir Haddad, director of bilingual/state and federal programs, at samir.haddad@farmington.k12.mi.us

For information on Farmington Public Schools and Education YES!, e-mail Kris Gekiere, administrator for school improvement, testing and accreditation, at kristin.gekiere@farmington.k12.mi.us

The FTC is located at 33000 Thomas Street north of Grand River in Farmington.

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