# District clears the air about state, federal programs

New federal and state education assessment programs will
probably prove more troublesome for urban schools than any
of Farmington's public schools.
Superintendent Boh Maxfield
said he's more concerned about
the impact of No Child Left
Behind and Education YES! —
A Yardstick for Excellent
Schools requirements on Detroit
schools than with what some
consider lower achieving local
schools, like William Grace
Elementary.

"A number of schools in
Detroit have so far to go,"
Maxfield said at a March 24
community forum at the
Farmington Training Center.
Parents from William Grace
Elementary in Farmington Hills
wade us the bargest graving who

Elementary in Farmington Hills made up the largest group who attended a town hall meeting on

attended a fown half meeting or both programs Monday. William Grace is a Title I school, which qualifies for addi-tional assistance based on a higher percentage of low-income families, to help ensure all chil-

dren meet academic achieve-ment standards. But relatively speaking, it is not a lower achieving school, said Samir Haddad, director of bilingual

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Haddad, director of bringuat education.
Based on his own experience in another school district and what he's observed, Haddad said, Farmington is far ahead of other districts.
East Middle School parent Mike Leads wondered whether federal programs would affect local standards. For instance, Advanced to the control of the con-trol of of

local standards. For instance, Arkausas' standards are lower than Michigan's. "What's to prevent Michigan from lowering that har so our standards aren't See, Spot run' in the 12th grade?" he asked. That won't happen, Haddad exid

Ark on the large state and the state state and the second transfer and transfer and transfer and transfer and accreditation. "They are putting and accreditation." They are putting heat on these states and they are already starting in Arkansas," Gekiere said.

Accountability is a good issue for parents, said Kim Heath,

president of the Farmington PTA Council. You will be able to look at things. Everyone can be on the same playing field. Beth Cooke, president of the William Grace PTA, asked about the emphasis on parental involvement. The PTA has standards for

parental involvement and they are excellent to look at," said Jan Colliton, assistant superintend-

Colliton, assistant superintendent of instruction.

Involvement doesn't have to mean within the school, Haddad said. Follow up with your child. Haddad said. Be a teacher to your child.

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

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

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 with NCLB. The comprehensive state accreditation system will assign grades to all Michigan schools. State officials have not yet released the formulas they'll use to calculate those grades.

Some parents at the town hui meeting wondered whether programs that seek to level the playing field will help, for example, with admission to the University of Michigan. They noted the U

with admission to the University of Michigan. They noted the U of M's criteria assigns more points to North Farmington High School than to Harrison or Farmington High Schools.

The U of M system is their and the state of explaining high.

own system of evaluating high schools across the state, said Sue Zurvalee, assistant superin-tendent for staff and community services. "Part of it is the diversity component and part is geo-graphical. There are many dif-ferent factors, Only certain high

did, which is unusual for school districts, which is a point of pride." Colliton said advanced placement offerings, a component of the rating system, are comparable at all three schools. "The difference at North Farmington is that more students take advanced placement but the offerings are similar. All of our schools are sending kids to U of M and Harvard, what people consider great schools. Michigan State is also a great school."

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

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 YESI, e-mail Sami Kris Gekiere, administrator for school improvement, testing and accreditation, at granting and accreditation, at general information about Education YESI, visit the Michigan Department of Education Web site at www.michigan.gov/inde Program tests as a common measure.

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

Decause Michigan uses the MEAP to determine annual progress, district officials say its imperative all students take part

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#### Leadership seminar date corrected

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills will host the Maximum Impact Simulcast 'Leadership — Becoming a Champion of Change' from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, March 28. The program features Dr.

John C. Maxwell, Ken Blanchard and Joe Gibbs. Cost is \$29 per person. Prince of Peace is at 28000 New Market Road, at 12 Mile and Farmington roads behind Farmer Jack. Call (248) 533-3380 for tickets. Seminar host Maxwell is the author of

"The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" and "The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork. Blanchard is the author of "The One Minute Manager". Gibbs, a former NFL coach, is the 2002 Winston Cup Champion.

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