

Parents seek support for education for gifted

By JACKIE KLEIN

"An academically talented child suffers the same pain as the mentally handicapped in the wrong environment."

Gail and Charles Brooks of Southfield, speak from experience. One of their children was diagnosed as "gifted" and the other two have IQs exceeding 130.

The couple is anxious to start a Southfield branch of the Michigan Association for the Academically Talented.

"Chapters are springing up all over the state," said Mrs. Brooks, a substitute teacher and a senior in the East-

ern Michigan University school of education.

"The purpose of these groups is to encourage legislation for the benefit of the gifted child and to expand and develop specialized programs."

THE BROOKS' 10 year old, who was tested as gifted by a clinical psychologist, attended a private school for a year.

"Southfield lacks programs for academically talented youngsters," said Mrs. Brooks. "There are some open concept, ungraded and accelerated classes but no system-wide policy."

"We were reluctant to take our child to a private school away from the neighborhood."

"But public schools aren't equipped to handle gifted children who are of-

ten socially immature and become behavior problems because they're bored. These youngsters need to be in a structured class room."

The Brooks believe gifted or talented children should be recognized as candidates for special education the same as handicapped youngsters.

"The wording of the Mandatory Education Act could include the academically talented so special programs may be legislated for them," Brooks contended.

STATE REP. William Keith of Garden City has introduced legislation to establish a state advisory commission with a full-time administrator. The commission would develop a comprehensive K-12 state-wide program of identification and implementation

for the academically talented.

The commission also would be charged with developing a realistic budget to run the program.

Efforts are being made to include legislation for the gifted in the state aid to education budget. Gov. William Milliken has proposed a \$150,000 appropriation to establish pilot programs in six school districts. Southfield is not included.

Mr. and Mrs. Brooks and parents of other gifted children have been writing to Milliken and legislators urging the increase of funding specifically designated for the academically talented.

"THERE ARE programs that would take more effort than money," Mrs. Brooks maintained.

"Schools could provide enrichment classes for all grades so talented youngsters might pursue their areas of interest."

"On a system-wide basis: gifted children could meet in one school and be integrated into regular classes part of the day."

"A gifted child is one who learns to walk, talk and read at an earlier age than the average," Brooks explained. "He learns rapidly, expresses himself maturely and may have outstanding ability in a given area. These are just a few of the criteria."

Unfortunately, said Brooks, some of these children are misdiagnosed as retarded because they show no interest in an average class setting.

stead of juvenile novels.

"One of the kids tottered with Roger's Thesaurus," Brooks recalled.

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Road changes

The "S" has been dropped from "Power" Rd. after years of misspelling. Power turned to Powers over the years, and was restored to reflect the name of Farmington's founder by both the Hills and the Farmington city council. Jerry Linhart and Dave Jones put up one of the last signs in the city recently. They were donated by the Livonia DPW sign shop. (Evert photo)

School debt levy is lowered 1 mill

By-DIANE HUBEL

FARMINGTON — The tax levy for debt retirement and interest on the school district bonded debt was reduced from six mills to five mills in a unanimous vote by the Farmington School Board.

In a memo to the board William C. Prisk, business manager, said the district will be able to make the principal and interest payments that will be due during the 1974-75 school year with the five mills levy.

Board Member Rev. Hugh V. Stewart said the reduction in the debt levy will lower the annual increase in mills voters will be paying should they pass the millage which the board is asking for in the June 10 election.

The board is asking for a four mill increase in voted millage.

They have lowered the debt levy by one mill and the allocated tax for the Farmington and Farmington Hills area by 1.4.

Those two reductions mean the ac-

tual increase in the tax rate to Farmington Hills and Farmington residents would be 1.6 mills should the millage pass.

Since the residents of West Bloomfield were paying a lower operational and allocated tax last year their increase will amount to three mills.

Commenting on the board's action, William R. Corliss, a board member said, "This is the second reduction we have made. I think the public should be aware that we are not asking for more money than we need. We are very concerned with keeping the tax just where we need it and not any higher."

School Supt. Marinus VanAmeide, said, "This is the lowest debt balance that I am aware of in the state and the lowest in the history of this district."

According to the Prisk memo, the district's outstanding debt as of June, 1974, will be \$26,799,000.

Wins MSU scholarship

Julia Tully, student at Marygrove College and a Farmington resident, has been named recipient of an Alvin M. Bentley scholarship for the 1974-75 academic year.

Miss Dabanian honored

Lisa Dabanian, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Karim Dabanian of Farmington, was honored on the MSU campus by being tapped for the women's honoraries Tower Guard and Mortar Board on May 1.

In fellowship

Sheldon J. Brenner, 23133 Orchard Lake, Farmington, was elected to fellowship in the American Academy of Pediatrics at a recent meeting of the AAP Executive Board.

"PRIVATE SCHOOLS aren't necessarily the answer for these kids," Brooks maintained.

"First of all, the tuition is between \$2,000 and \$2,500. Then there's the problem of busing youngsters out of their environment. They may find their closest friend lives 10 miles away."

The Brooks children, ages 10, 11 and 14, were reading at the age of two. At five, they read factual material in-

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