

editorial opinion

There's no need for student advisory seat

There is no reason to have a student advisor for the Farmington School Board if—and this is a big if—the school board members do their job.

A committee of the board is studying the possibility of a student advisor. The advisor would have all the privileges of any other board member, but would not be able to vote, or be counted as part of a quorum.

Student voices should speak on all issue before the board. But students now have the same opportunities as other school district residents. It makes as much sense to give women, the teachers union or other special interest groups a seat on the board.

The problem is with students, not the board. Students are just as apathetic as

their parents when school matters are concerned.

Any meaningful special privileges given to a student advisor would create problems for the board. If a student is given access to labor or land negotiation information, or listens to discussion of personnel matters, he could be subject to pressures to divulge what he knows.

Personnel matters, labor contracts

and land purchases are the only subjects the school board should be discussing privately.

All other matters should be discussed in public, where a student should have just as much right as any other resident to speak.

The board, however, must be especially sensitive to students. They are most directly affected by the board's actions.

Tim Richard writes

Hundreds of young persons and many of their fine parents are doomed to disappointment this spring when their parties go away. The pattern is familiar: It's high school graduation time; mom and dad are proud of their offspring and wish to reward them with a party; for some reason the party is raised by the cops; ugly words are exchanged; perhaps there are arrests; the parents get a formal summons; they plan to hire a lawyer and fight but finally decide the best with it and pay a stiff fine. Bitterness.

BEFORE ME is a letter from a man whose handwriting indicates he is elderly. The details must be withheld because the matter is potentially libelous, but his basic reaction is fairly typical: "An open letter of thanks to the officers of the numerous police depart-

ments who responded to a distress call from residents in the area. A riotous party which attracted over a hundred young hoodlums was held at a house at —. They parked cars in private parking areas, in driveways and even on lawns and littered the area with all kinds of trash. "The officers who responded did a fine job of dispersing the mob and restoring peace to the neighborhood. "Other letters have a similar ring: Hundreds of young people, shouting obscenities, urinating behind the bushes, and on and on.

THE OTHER SIDE of the coin was told to me by a father whose party was the object of such a complaint last year. "They, these good kids—not inner city roughnecks. They've worked hard to graduate. "Sure, some of their words are the

four-letter kind, but that's the way people talk today—it's in the movies all the time, and on TV. "That urinating incident—sure, the house was crowded, and both Johns were in use, so one kid went in the yard behind the bushes. It was only one kid. "And the cops—they didn't have to act like they were breaking up a blind pig on 12th Street. The kids were just having fun; they were a little boisterous. "That old biddy who complained—she's had it in for our kids for years. Jeez, you want to know something about her kid. "IT'S EASY to reconstruct what happened, and the truth is probably midway between the two versions you've just read. A couple dozen kids were invited, and a hundred showed up. The neigh-

From our readers

Hire experts

Editor: Now that the school millage has passed and before the school board passes out raises, I would like to see them hire an outside efficiency expert to trim the fat and waste of the school budgets.

At no time during the millage campaign did I see any figures regarding money spent for vandalism and fire. I believe that school boards, townships, counties, cities, all state and federal government departments should operate the same as business companies and corporations and publish a financial statement at least twice a year.

After all, every taxpayer should have the right to see how the tax money is being spent. "Kids Court" that was the motto for the millage. The if "Kids Court" lets get every parent and teacher to start accounting. PARENTS SHOULD teach respect for property and teachers. Teachers should teach, not just frills and fun subjects but good old fashion basics like reading, writing, spelling, math and history, so that when students graduate from high school, they can read, write, spell, add, subtract, multiply and divide without the use of a machine to do it for them.

I am not against using machines but I believe they should be able to use their heads for thinking as not all the time will they have a machine handy. This new millage plus the 11.1 per cent additional tax (SEV) is really going to hurt lots of people to pay. Especially people who are retired and on set incomes with groceries, utilities and taxes all rising so fast. These people's taxes have built the new schools that now the younger people with children are moving out here to enjoy. Also it seems they need more frills to keep the children entertained at school. School should be for learning, not entertaining.

I believe that there should be a state law that after a homeowner reaches the age of 80, he should not have to pay school taxes. THAT WAY when he retires, maybe he could afford to live in the home that he has been paying on for years. Let the younger people whose children are benefiting from the taxes pay. It isn't fair that people who are retired, or have no children, pay the same school taxes as people who have several children going to school. This tax system is obsolete and unfair. When you come right down to it, years ago when we first moved out here, taxes were low and we had many more benefits from them than

we have now. About all we get now is a trash collection once a week and our streets plowed out twice a year. Taxes keep going up and up, services go down and down, but everyone in government wants more benefits, higher wages and less work. Wonder how long private industry would last operating "this way".

MRS. W. McCELLAN Farmington Hills

T-shirt disgrace

Editor: It is most unfortunate that the Detroit Institute of Art is going through an austerity phase where they are forced to close many valuable and interesting galleries to the public in order to cut down on cost. Michigan indignantly state that putting on an exhibition of T-shirts and spending several thousand dollars to promote this decadent show is not doing any service to the people of Detroit. The museum, for many years has been battling to be in first place position with other major museums of the country in putting great exhibitions at tremendous cost, and in many cases they wind up in the red of many thousands of dollars.

They have ignored the local art scene for many years, as if no galleries and artists existed in our city. Perhaps the leadership of the museum should look through the thousands of work of art that are stored in the basement bins of the museum and show these works to the people of Detroit, without committing themselves to extra expenses. They should make a serious effort to recognize and promote local artists and relate to the local art scene, and stop competing with other museums. The T-shirt exhibition is an utter disgrace to this city. I'd rather see the museum use the same space to show local, recognized artists.

ROBERT GARELICK Birmingham

No concrete pipe

Editor: Development in the northeastern section of Southfield can occur without the recommended Pernick Drain. There are ways to manage drainage instead of simply piping it downstream at great public expense. This is especially true in the Southfield "silver triangle" where much of the 1,650 acre area is still vacant. Chapter 20 of the drain code does not specify that large cement pipes must be the method of drainage. Land needed for managing and retention of the drainage could be bought instead.

VERONA MORSE President, Rouge Basin Coalition

A familiar pattern

horns are elderly and have the old folks' instinctive fear of loud young voices, so they call the police. A cop appears at the party; even though his behavior is polite, the young people are grated that anyone would consider their merriment criminal. Don't the cops have anything more important to do than hassle respectable high school graduates having a few beers? THE SOLUTION is for parents to recognize that everything done at a party must be interpreted in the worst possible light—in advance. Can your quiet residential street really accommodate 80 cars? Is there even a remote chance the party will spill outdoors? Does even one of your neighbors get up early next morning to go to work or church? If you still want to give your very fine youngster a graduation party, and a big one, wouldn't it be smart to hire a hall that has plenty of space, plenty of jobs, plenty of parking and a commercially zoned location?

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