

Schools wait for legislature before acting on budget cuts

Officials of the Farmington school district are watching and waiting for a decision by the state legislature before they decide on the cuts to be made in the district's 1975-76 budget.

Priorities concerning budget cuts will be set if legislators approve of a 0.8 per cent cut in state aid to education asked by Governor Milliken after his discovery of a \$300 million deficit in the state treasury.

"It would be premature to discuss what programs would be slashed when the cut has not yet been approved by the legislature," said Sup. Martin Van Ameyde. "We hope the legislators will take a second look at

it and reject the proposal."

"I hope the governor will see fit to revise the cut he is asking for," said William Prisk, the district's business manager. "But if it is approved the school board will have to consider reductions in some areas."

Approval of the cut would deprive Farmington of an amount in excess of \$250,000.

"If the state is insolvent to the extent of \$300 million, we recognize the school district should carry its fair share of budget reductions," continued the superintendent.

"We further feel that if reductions

are necessary, they should be applied by using an equal percentage to all categorical programs."

The categorical programs referred to by the superintendent are special programs, many of which have been made mandatory by the state legislature. They include such programs as compensatory education, alternative education, neighborhood centers, reading support and experimental teaching.

"The governor stated the amounts to be cut from certain categorical programs, but left others untouched," stated Van Ameyde. "I think the cuts should be spread evenly so that each

district could be treated alike. Then each district could make its own cuts based on its own wishes."

Van Ameyde said that these categorical programs are a big problem for those who believe in local control.

"The state might say it would provide \$800,000 for a state co-op program," he said. "The district might then institute a co-op program, which it otherwise would not have agreed to."

"Then they pull the rug out from under us. The aid disappears, sometimes completely, sometimes partially. Then the district must decide whether to continue the program on its own."

"I would like the legislature to reject the governor's proposal in order to allow local districts to make local decisions on how to accommodate the budget cuts needed."

Van Ameyde hopes that Farmington residents will consider the impact of the governor's cuts on their children's education.

"We encourage residents to let their feelings on this be known to their respective legislatures," he said.

Protest letters being sent to ward off revenue losses

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Southwest Oakland County superintendents have adopted a resolution which charges that Gov. Milliken's proposed state budget cut will neither be equitably nor uniformly applied to different school districts.

Farmington school superintendent Martin Van Ameyde read the resolution before the school board during Tuesday's meeting. Van Ameyde asked the board to send a letter of its own, opposing the cut in school aid, to legislators.

Van Ameyde told the board the pro-

posed \$47.5 million reduction in state aid would reduce Farmington's aid for special education courses to 66 per cent of its present amount. Adult education would be reduced to 65 per cent of the current amount.

THE SUPERINTENDENTS sent the resolution to Gov. Milliken and state legislators with the recommendation that the cuts be rejected.

"In essence we say to the governor: 'Are you sure you have a \$300 million deficit?'" explained Van Ameyde.

The superintendents recommended the estimated \$300 million needs to be reduced to keep the state solvent. We recognize that the school districts of the state should carry their fair share of any necessary state budget reductions. Be it resolved that the recommended reductions proposed by the Governor be rejected."

Van Ameyde suggested the state allow each school district to decide what cuts should be made in their district under the proposed budget.

He said each school district should cut its budget on a percentage basis. "Some school districts will benefit, some will not," he added.

The superintendents suggested that local districts be allowed to decide how to cut their budgets to accom-

modate the budget cuts. The districts would be exempt from any legal or financial penalties connected with the cuts they made.

"Residents of this district would be helped to understand that their effective voice is being eroded this school year," Van Ameyde said.

After the school board meeting, Van Ameyde said Milliken's proposal "really did disturb me this time. We're confident that it will be defeated. We haven't talked at all about what is to be cut."

He said the budget proposal would "pull the rug out from under" mandatory state programs in the district.

The board unanimously agreed to send out a letter against the proposed budget cut.

William Prisk, business manager for the board, said the "insufficient revenue situation for next year," left the board with two choices. "We could increase our revenue or effect operations to increase savings."

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