

Sex education implementation a trying process

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Introduction of birth control information into health and sex education classes could provoke anger and resentment and disrupt entire school districts—if officials aren't careful. That was the warning from several speakers at a recent seminar for metropolitan Detroit school administrators sponsored by Oakland Intermediate School District. "It's one of the most difficult times you're going to face," said Richard Hogancamp, superintendent of the Allen Park School District.

UNTIL LAST YEAR the teaching of birth control in Michigan public elementary and secondary schools was prohibited. The state legislature, however, okayed such instruction and Gov. William Milliken signed new legislation to that effect Nov. 30.

"Since that time, the Michigan Department of Education has been drawing up guidelines for birth control teaching.

Now completed, those guidelines provide for no less than 13 steps before a sex education program can be imple-

Politics are critical

mented. A major provision mandates the creation of a special local advisory committee of community leaders and professionals.

"DO EVERYTHING by the book," Hogancamp told the teachers and administrators.

"Make certain you understand your community, and don't assume anything."

Faulty assumptions can ruin more than 18 months of hard work, he said.

"IT'S A MISTAKE to put a dissident on the advisory board hoping that the involvement will educate him," Hogancamp said. "He won't be educated." Hogancamp was instrumental in setting up sex education courses in Allen Park schools.

"We had one real strong dissident. She didn't have any children in school, but she was very, very vocal.

"There are just some times when good old Joe won't work," he cautioned. "You have to have people that the community respects and that the school board, administrators and teachers will feel comfortable with."

THE LOCAL SCHOOL board, Hogancamp said, should not be taken for granted.

"Remember," he said, "you have to

bring them along with you. We can be going along at 60 miles an hour and they can still be in park.

"Go right to them and report," he continued. "They're the ones who are going to vote 'aye' or 'nay.' You can blow 1 1/2 years so easily by not keeping them informed."

In a later interview, John Romas, the State Department of Education's health education specialist said that among the first to move to incorporate birth control instruction in its curriculum.

The school board has established an advisory committee and hopes to start "conception control" study in next fall's classes.

Under a plan described by Mike Labay, director of curriculum for Birmingham, reproductive health, including an introduction to birth control, will be offered in the eighth grade.

High school seniors can receive more advanced information through two classes, "Contemporary Life Styles" and "Human Development," which will be offered as electives.

In the senior courses, Labay said, "we're not just teaching sex education. We're trying to teach about balanced family living."

Family planning, he said, was an important part of that balance.

Senate bill would allow employees to see files

A bill, which would give private and public employees legal access to their personnel files is pending before the state Senate.

Known as the "workers right to know" bill, the legislation, approved by the House last year, was recently sent to the Senate for debate and vote.

The bill "would lift what is too often a veil of secrecy from what management says about workers in its personnel files," said its sponsor, state Rep. Perry Bullard (D-Ann Arbor). An employee would have the right to see personnel record information which could be used in determining employment, promotions, transfers, additional compensation or disciplinary action, and to obtain copies of the records. If the employee feels that the information is unfair or incorrect, he or she would have the right to place a response in the file.

The employer would have to notify the worker when personnel records are sent to a third party, except in

cases of legal action or arbitration. The employer could not send to a third party records of disciplinary action more than four years old, nor keep personnel records on a worker's off-the-job political activities.

Disclosures of Michigan State Police political surveillance files during the past two years have shown several cases of information sharing with private employers.

An employer could keep a separate file on investigation of criminal activity, according to the bill, but would have to notify the employee of the investigation and destroy the file if the investigation does not result in disciplinary action.

"The ban on including off-the-job political activities in personnel files is an important provision of the bill," Bullard said. "Some employers have kept information and circulated it, which led to certain individuals being blacklisted, sometimes without even knowing why."

Lodge paving contract let

Ajax Paving Industries of Madison Heights was the lowest of four bidders for the reconstruction of outside shoulders on 8.5 miles of the John Lodge Freeway (US 10) between Wyoming Avenue and Cobo Hall in Detroit.

Ajax Paving's low bid of \$1,051,944 was taken April 19 in Lansing along with bids on 45 other highway and airport construction and maintenance

projects. Completion is slated for September.

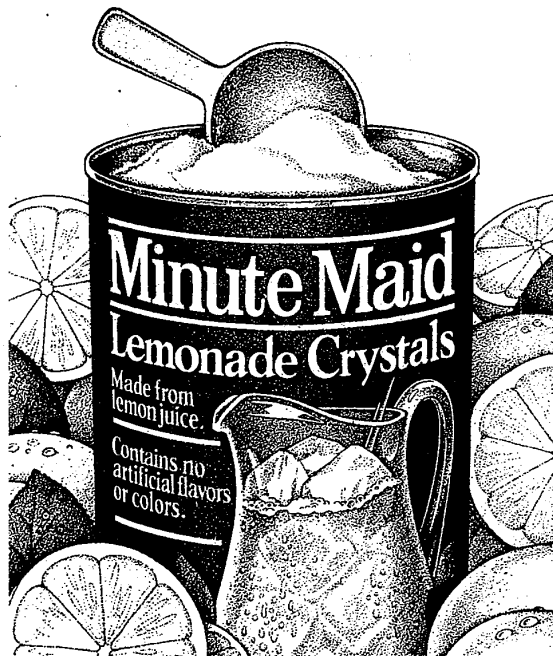
Champagne & Webber, Inc. of Fraser submitted a low bid \$144,508 to install 15 crash cushions at the piers of 15 bridges carrying the Conrail and Grand Trunk Railroads over city streets between Buchanan Street just west of I-95 and Milwaukee Street west of I-75.

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