

Aldrich stresses basic skills

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"I don't feel well versed in that area yet," he said about financing, adding that it's "the most complex of all the subjects we have to deal with. Like many of the candidates, it's going to

take time to understand the operation."

Aldrich is "adamantly" opposed to strikes, including teacher strikes, and he does believe teachers on the school board pose conflict of interest problems, which he declined to specify.

He believes greater accountability is required of teachers concerning their teaching methods. Parental involvement is one way to accomplish that goal, he said.

"I don't want parents to be intimidated. I don't want them to have the ear of the board."

HE ALSO believes a combination of greater emphasis on basic skills and minimal competency testing are ways to achieve better student and parent satisfaction with the schools.

He would like to see tests given in alternate years throughout elementary school and each year in high school. When the students have demonstrated basic competency in math and communication skills, they could opt for more classes, he says.

"Why should the students be forced

to take more classes in those areas?" he asks. "Somewhere we are not keeping the students' interest in the classroom. We have to motivate the students to want to learn."

Like many of the candidates, he believes declining enrollment is the district's most serious problem. One solution is to make better use of empty buildings, he says. With an interest in preservation, he believes the district should hold on to the old Farmington High School, rather than sell it to a development firm which intends to demolish the structure.

"Why not have a class in preservation for high school students and make use of the building and carpentry skills of the students?" Let them restore that building to a useful purpose," he said. The district has excess land and building holdings. "I can't see operating a whole school when the numbers are dwindling that much."

Farmington Co-op Nursery invites all mothers and children who have ever been members of the pre-school to a picnic in City Park, June 15. Current members will visit with former members beginning at 10 a.m. Each is asked to bring his own lunch.

Rolnick wants informed public

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of voters, because it's the only tax they get to vote on. I think the voters are saying they're against taxes, not education, but if we remain dependent on the voters, I'm fearful of what type of education we will be able to maintain."

A future tax system might involve a limited amount of property tax along with state aid, and perhaps locally voted mills for enrichment, she predicts.

"As it is, it's like reverse discrimination. The more the voters approve locally, the less you get from the state."

SHE ALSO believes the laws regarding teacher-board contract disputes, including strikes, should be clarified. "There aren't too many options available to teachers now," she says. "Binding arbitration is now illegal; they can go to fact-finding, but it's not binding. I really understand the plight of the teachers. As a board member,

you have to have legal groundwork, either enforce the laws or strike them."

She also backs teacher licensure, a bill before the Michigan legislature, in which teachers "police their own," she explains.

That might be one answer to the problems raised when teachers are pink-slipped because of enrollment declines, she says. Getting rid of the "worthless" classes mandated by colleges of education might be another step to improving teacher quality, she adds.

Co-op alums will picnic

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