

Computer training termed essential for students to 'keep up' in the future

By Suzie Rolis Singer
Staff writer

It won't be long before some school children will hooop up their homework assignments to their telephones and transmit them to a main computer in their school district.

Other children whose parents continually defeat millages won't advance in the technological age as quickly as their luckier, financially able counterparts and could get lost in the knowledge race.

"Each district's parents and schools will have to look at their resources and there may have to be some reallocations if they want the children to keep up," explained Lucy Ainsley, media specialist in Birmingham.

TEACHER AND STUDENT interest is already high, Ainsley said, pointing to the Birmingham Schools as an example.

"This type of method (computer, video and cable) is a new technology that allows people to interact with it. Teachers and students become producers and grab onto technology. Kids aren't passive sponges, they can be a part of it," she added.

Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills and Troy schools have hired computer consultants to draft programs for the districts so the electronic devices can be used to the fullest extent to teach children, she said.

"Fifty-seven percent of our eighth-graders (in Birmingham) have elected to take a computer class. In Birmingham, every fourth- and sixth-grader must take a

computer literacy course," Ainsley said.

Adding, "Some of the Ivy League schools are requiring computer literacy courses for entrance into the university."

During the 1990s, teachers will have a different role than they do today, she noted. "Their roles will change, they'll be instruction managers and there will be fewer teachers needed," she added.

The Oakland Media Interest Group wants to fill people's minds with questions about the electronic world.

"We have to answer a lot of questions, like how can we reallocate capital finances and who will design programs," she said.

"Today's student has a shorter attention span and an increased need for stimuli. We have to keep up," Ainsley explained.

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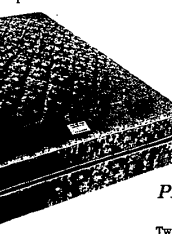
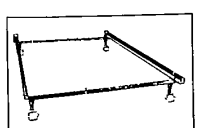
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