

Northville Ponders Year Round School

By R.T. THOMPSON

Is a program of year round use of the schools feasible? Would adoption of such a program result in savings to the school system?

Could industry, business, banking and other employers adjust vacation schedules so that workers could take advantage of year round schools and take vacations in other times of the year than in the summer?

THESE ARE just a few of the questions that will be answered Saturday in a year round school workshop at Northville High School sponsored by the Northville Public Schools.

The session opens at 9 a.m. with registration and coffee followed by a general meeting of all in attendance in the school auditorium from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Scheduled for talks during the session are: Robert Benson, personnel relations; year round school in Northville; Supt. Raymond Spear; year round school curriculum; Florence Panatieri, Northville curriculum coordinator; and year round school finance. Business Manager Earl Busard.

Following lunch, the workshop will continue throughout

the afternoon with a general summary of the day's discussion starting at 4 p.m.

FOR A LONG time it has been felt by taxpayers and businessmen that the long period during the summer when school buildings stand idle or receive only partial use represents inefficient and expensive luxury that would not be tolerated in business. Most school officials agree.

Many schools in Michigan have talked of year round use of buildings, but it has been only with no concrete study of such a program.

In the fall of 1967 the Northville Board of Education inquired: "Where are we and where should we be going?" This was the first of many questions asked of Supt. Spear. A complete evaluation of the school district revealed one basic fact: the Northville system is growing and would continue to grow for the next 10 to 15 years.

Spear compiled figures that showed the district would double its enrollment by 1975 and would have a maximum total of 40,000 pupils.

With that knowledge, the board passed a resolution in December, 1967 to the effect that the board, administration, teaching staff and citizens of the community undertake a

thorough study of the feasibility of adopting the year round school program.

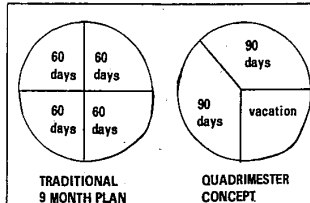
SUPT. SPEAR, who has a firm belief that such a program can be worked out to the benefit of the school district, took over the task of joining all the groups mentioned in the resolution in the study.

Now slightly more than two years later, with the assistance of a grant from the state, Northville has completed such a study and has been presenting it to residents. A vote will be held in the near future at which taxpayers will be asked whether they would or would not prefer a year round school program.

Northville was one of six school districts in Michigan to receive a grant to conduct the year round school study. The others include: Okemos-Lansing, Ann Arbor, Port Huron, Utica and Freeland.

"Each community is getting a final report ready," said Supt. Spear. "I don't know what others have learned in their community, but we feel year round use could be adopted in Northville with many benefits."

"For instance, we believe it would result in substantial savings in the construction of new schools. Enrollment projections indicate the student popula-



lation of Northville will double in the next few years.

"During the same period, total savings on school construction could exceed \$7.5 million. This figure could ultimately expand to over \$30 million."

"The annual cost of operating the schools should remain approximately the same per pupil under this plan as it would under the traditional two semester plan."

SPEAR'S COMMITTEE recommends that the school year be divided into four equal quarters of approximately 60 days each. Students would attend three of the four quarters.

Thus one-fourth of the students would be on vacation each quarter. This plan would expand the capacity of the schools by one third.

The big drawback is that 25% of the students would have to be on vacation in each of the four quarters. And Spear points out it would mean 25% vacationing in the second and third quarters.

The proposed four quarter school year would be divided as follows: first-Aug. 3 to Oct. 25; second-Oct. 28 to Jan. 28; third-Feb. 3 to April 28; fourth-May 3 to July 23.

The second and third quarters would mean vacations during the months of November.

December, January, February, March and April.

OTHER THAN taking vacations at different times of the year and registering for classes three times rather than twice, the plan would not be too different for the students.

All would receive a Christmas and Easter vacation. They also would receive a 10-day vacation along with the teachers between the fourth and first quarters, July 23 to Aug. 2.

The plan proposes four graduations each year, and Supt. Spear checked with the Michigan High School Athletic Association and received assurance that a student on vacation would still be eligible to compete in athletics.

THE YEAR ROUND program on a quadrimester basis would have many advantages to students, including:

Revisions in the curriculum necessary to adjust to the four-quarter plan could result in stronger, better planned, more interesting and more flexible courses.

There would be a greater variety of courses to choose from.

A better opportunity to en-

ter the college of the student's choice would exist.

A better chance for part-time work during vacation is possible.

Greater employment opportunities are available upon graduation.

It would be easier to obtain remedial assistance.

Students could accelerate their education.

THE GROUP making the study discovered some drawbacks. Adoption would require that student vacations be staggered throughout the year. This could require some families to change vacation patterns from a summer at the cottage or beach to an entirely different vacation area.

Skiing, ice skating, tobogganing and participation of the winter sports along with the spring trips to the sunny south are among the possibilities.

It would also require an evaluation of the community's recreation program so that something would be offered vacationing students throughout the year.

"There would be an increase in the cost of teaching," said Spear. "But we feel we can overcome a large part of that. Teachers are paid on a 12-

month basis in most communities and thus they could be asked to teach in any of the four quarters as long as they had one off for vacation.

"Of course, all of the plans are still in the formative stage, but we in Northville believe the proposed vote of residents will give the Board some idea of what the future holds."

"If the vote is affirmative, then we probably will go ahead with a year round program. If not, then we'll have to go back to the study and learn the reasons for the rejection."

MEANWHILE, SCHOOL boards in all sections of the state will be awaiting the workshop where reports of the six communities will be made. The results are of interest to all, whether they are thinking of such a program or not.

"We believe any school district that is of a mind to use schools year round could find a system that would result in savings to that community," said Spear.

"The Northville study is of the Northville system but it would just be a matter of changing a few things here and there to make it workable in large and small school systems."



EMBROIDERY BY FISHER—Open house visitors touring the Fisher Body Livonia plant on Thursday, April 30, will see intricate embroidery being done with the help of unique tape controlled machines. Gladys Szepietz, of 26510 Plymouth Road, oversees the system that stitches complex patterns for set cushions, door panels and arm rests.

Fisher Body Plant's Open House Thursday

A community open house at the Fisher Body Livonia plant on Thursday, April 30, will be announced by F. Harger Green, plant manager.

The plant will be open to the public as well as families and friends of Fisher Body em-

ployees between 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and from 4:30 to 8 p.m.

Located on Plymouth Road between Inkster and Middle Belt, it is the largest of three plants operated by Fisher Body to produce the interior trim and upholstery for GM cars.

Donald R. Bayer of 34510 Spring Valley, Westland, has been promoted to marketing research analyst for Stroh Brewery Co.

Bayer Gets New Stroh Job

A native of Detroit, Bayer joined Stroh 12 years ago and worked in the city sales office and later the accounting department. An Army veteran, he is a member of the National Association of Accountants.

Edgewood To Elect

Edgewood Elementary School's Parent Teacher Organization will elect officers when it meets Wednesday, May 6, at 8 p.m. in the school.

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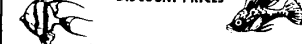
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