

County special ed tax to help local schools

By Tim Richard
Staff writer

Oakland County is almost a victim of its own success in serving young people with physical, mental and emotional impairments.

"Special education in Oakland started in the '50s, long before it was mandated by law," said William G. Keane, superintendent of the Oakland Intermediate School District.

Keane, joined by many local educators, is seeking voter approval Oct. 7 of a proposal to boost the special education property tax 0.75 mills. Current rate is one mill.

The increase amounts to 75 cents per \$1,000 of state equalized valuation. For example, the owner of a house worth \$80,000 on the market and assessed for \$40,000 would pay \$30 more a year.

THE BIG question Keane must answer to the public is: Why are special education costs rising faster than revenues in a county known for its tax base growth? Keane has a set of answers.

On the revenue side, there is the Headlee "cap." A 1978 amendment to the state constitution limits property tax revenue growth to the rate of inflation.

Moreover, some cities are setting up TIFAs (tax increment financing authorities) to "capture" all new property taxes in defined downtown areas. That means the growth can't go to education and the county.

The state cut educational spending four times during the recession years of 1980 and '81.

ON THE COST side, Keane said special ed needs are spurred by:

• Modern medicine — Many impaired children used to die at birth or early childhood. Modern medicine is saving them. They require special education, which has grown from 10 percent of the total education budget in 1976 to 14 percent currently.

• Autism — The most difficult kind of impairment to treat is autism. It's also the most expensive kind of schooling there is — \$20,000 per student, as much as a private Ivy League college. As more is learned about emotional impairments, more and more children are being reclassified as autistic. Keane places the growth at 1½ classrooms a year.

• Deinstitutionalization — As the state reduces the number of youngsters placed in institutions, much of the burden of training them is shifted out of the state budget and onto county-local special education budgets.

• Rights — State law mandates special education for those diagnosed as needing it until the age of 26. If the special education fund is short, then general education funds must be diverted. "Many poorer districts have taken money out of general education for special ed."

• Oakland — Many parents with impaired youngsters move to Oakland because "Oakland has a reputation for quality special ed programs. People come here." Thus the population of those needing special ed grows faster than the general student population.

ONE OF KEANE'S selling points is that general K-12 education will benefit by higher special education millage. Districts which divert general funds to subsidize special ed would no longer have to do so.

Special ed terminology

Here is a glossary of special education jargon and the number of classrooms in each program:

TMI — trainable mentally impaired, 64.

PHH — physical or other handicapped, 27.

Autistic — an emotional handicap; 80 percent also are retarded, 11.

SEI — severe emotional impairment, 2.

SMI — severely mentally impaired, 27.

HI — hearing impaired, 25.

SXI — severely multiply impaired, 14.

Pre-voc — vocational programs, 22.

VI — visually impaired, 4.

Altogether, the 15 Center Programs have 200 special education classrooms.



Howard Baker
Oakland speaker

Howard Baker to speak at fund-raiser

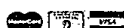
Howard Baker, former Senate majority leader, will be guest speaker at a garden party fund-raiser for the Oakland County Republican Committee.

It will run 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 5, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Basil Marrella, 345 Woodridge, Bloomfield Hills.

The garden party is the largest single fund-raising event of the year for the GOP, said Chairman Joe Knollenberg. Tickets are \$35 a person and \$50 a couple for members of the party's 300 Club. They are \$75 and \$125 for others.

Tickets are available from Republican headquarters at 1877 Orchard Lake Road, Suite 104, Pontiac 48053, or by calling 338-1133.

Now a Washington lawyer, Baker was a senator from Tennessee but didn't seek re-election in 1984. He is considered a likely prospect for the 1988 presidential nomination.



Convenient 30-day layaway
and moneyback refund

Styles featured are representative of the advertised group and occasionally specific styles may not be available in every store.

The comparable prices are in compliance with FTC comparison guidelines, which state "of like grade and quality" or "essentially similar quality and comparable in the area."

Over 200 stores to serve you nationwide

FOR THE MARSHALLS NEAREST YOU, CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-654-6543

30th
Anniversary
1956-1986



young men's
famous maker
SPORT SHIRTS
comparable in
quality at \$34

Marshall's
12⁹⁹

Linen look, woven, slightly oversized shirts in plaids and stripes. Long sleeve with 2 pockets, in 100% cotton or cotton/polyester blend. Sizes S-M-L-XL. First quality.

young men's
famous maker
CASUAL PANTS
comparable in
quality at \$28

Marshall's
12⁹⁹

Great collection featuring pockets and pleats in 100% cotton canvas, twill, French canvas and denim. Assorted colors in sizes 28 to 36. First quality.

In a world where
the best things in life often come
with an equally impressive price tag...
there's Marshall's.
Brand names for less.

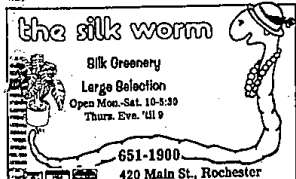
Marshall's



OPEN 7 DAYS hair today

FOR LADIES & GENTS
Rochester • Winchester Mall • 822-8655
Cleveland Center • 238-4450
Livonia • Wonderland Center • 251-4010
Roseville • Eastgate Center • 772-1270
Bloomfield • Kingswood Plaza • 322-3770

SEE VALUABLE YELLOW PAGES COUPON



651-1900
420 Main St., Rochester

CAN'T FIND A DRESS OFF THE RACK?
Have the garment and fabric you
want at AFFORDABLE PRICES. Call

PAGE
CUSTOM DRESSMAKING

WEDDING, FORMAL, REGULAR APPAREL
by appointment 852-3103