

# Payment sought

## Faxon is' suing French government

By Louise Okrutaky  
staff writer

They're down to four teachers and 27 students but the folks at the non-profit Lycee International School in Southfield aren't out yet.

President of the bilingual school, state Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, is suing the French government for breach of contract and interference with a business relationship.

The suit, filed two weeks ago in U.S. District Court in Detroit, charges that the French government failed to pay the school a grant of 200,000 French francs, about \$27,000.

The money was expected during the last school year and had been included in the school budget. Without it, Faxon said, the school is being hounded by creditors.

"We depended upon the additional grant to support the institution," he said.

IN ADDITION, the French government withdrew its official approval of the school for children of French citizens living and working in the United States. The approval assures students that their educational credits would remain valid when they returned to the French school system.

It also makes French students eligible for a form of financial aid to cover some of the tuition costs. The French eventually reapproved of the school for its students, according to Faxon.

"Some French parents were actively discouraged from enrolling their children. I've heard a lot of stories but I don't have any direct knowledge," he said. "Some parents told us they were told not to return."

Instead, the French government and French-based corporations have established a French school for the lower grades in the Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills school systems, according to Faxon. The older students attend public schools.

As a result of the government's actions, the school went from 18 teachers and 140 students last year to three teachers and 27 students this year.

LAST YEAR, the school offered



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— Jack Faxon  
state senator

classes from preschool through 10th grade. This year, it's limited to preschool through second grade, according to Faxon.

"We're still educating students with a French teacher and programs," he said.

"The fact that they chose not to return is not an issue with us. It's like renting an apartment. You have the right not to rent again," Faxon said. "But they didn't pay us for the past year."

Besides wanting to resolve the financial disagreement, Faxon filed suit to discover why the French denied the grant money.

"There's a lot that we don't know. We have nothing in the way of direct communication."

The suit alleges there are "others who attempted to undermine the school. Other actions will be taken when their identities are known," he said.

## Winter band concert set

The Farmington High School Instrumental Music Department is presenting its winter band concert at 7:30 p.m. today (Thursday), in the high school auditorium.

Conducted by Grant Hoemke, the concert will feature the Farmington High Symphony Band, which was awarded first place in national band concerts twice during the past three years.

The program will include music by English composer William Byrd, contemporary American composer Vincent Persichetti, John Philip Sousa, and a new work based on the writings of St. Francis Assisi by Michigan native Jim Curnow.

Admission is \$1.50 for adults and 75 cents for students and senior citizens. The school is at 32000 Shiawassee, west of Orchard Lake Road.

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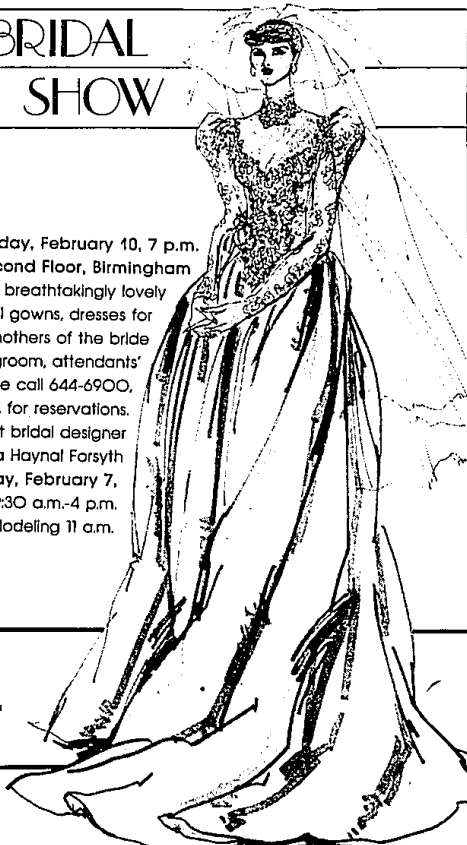


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