

2 hopefuls present school races platforms

James Abernethy
Incumbent



1. How would you characterize the relationship between the school district and the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills?

It's improving! Hopefully, the days of confrontation are over. Close formal and informal liaison between local government and the schools are essential. We recognize that the decisions we make impact each other. Decisions made regarding the allocation of resources (buildings, contracts, roadways, properties) have direct impact on each other. We are all a part of the Farmington community.

As a board, we need to recognize that whatever we can do to help our community grow and prosper will also ultimately be in the best interests of the Farmington schools. The opportunities will be present every year to be a creative team player. Occasional joint meetings might be helpful.

Ongoing developments in Heritage Park and downtown Farmington are visible manifestations of this cooperation. It needs to continue and expand so that the total community benefits from coordinated total planning efforts.

2. What is the school board's responsibility to the community in presenting issues, and having related discussions, in public?

We follow the spirit and letter of the Open Meetings Act. The only closed meetings of the Farmington Board of Education have dealt with attorney-client discussions or negotiations on contracts, or the sale or purchase of property. There are no such things as "executive committee" or private meetings.

Sensitive issues such as the hiring of a new superintendent of schools, the setting of goals and the consideration of boundary changes were all completely open meetings, attended by the press and the public.

The community needs to gain confidence in the board whenever we call a study session. Parents should not ever worry that an advertised study session will change into a meeting where decisions are taken.

3. How do you see the new policy of "open enrollment" being applied in Farmington Public Schools?

I am very cautious about this policy. I do not believe it to be the total solution to the serious present and future population imbalance and inequality of quality educational opportunity at the high school level.

The "open enrollment" policy received inadequate discussion before the decision was made. The pol-

Abernethy, Prutow, Jacob vie for 2 seats

The second part of a Q & A for candidates to the Farmington Board of Education appears in today's Observer.

Newcomer Bruce Jacob, 37, will challenge incumbents Helen Prutow, 47, and James Abernethy, 47, for a four-year term during the regular school election on Monday, June 13. There are two vacant seats. Terms will run from July 1, 1988 to June 30, 1992.

Voters can go to the polls June 13 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at their designated precinct.

● Precinct One — Farmington Training Center, 32000 Thomas, Farmington.

● Precinct Two — O.E. Dunckel Middle School, 32800 12 Mile, Farmington Hills.

● Precinct Three — Warner

festive for elementary, middle school and high school? Why?

Farmington needs a comprehensive health education curriculum (K-12) emphasizing the impact that the loss of control of one's body has on the designated society. We should never try to pretend that the problem doesn't exist in Farmington. It does. We must face this challenge with all of the resources available to us.

The BABES (third grade) program and the present parents' night (fifth grade) need a fourth grade supplement. The Farmington Families in Action role should have continuing support along with other efforts that encourage parental involvement, an absolutely essential ingredient for any successful program.

Our school buildings should be run like a "tight ship," where rules regarding tardiness, dress, behavior, etc., are strongly enforced. Extracurricular activities should continue to be strongly encouraged. The school system should support programs of other community and religious groups as we collectively attack the problem.

6. The district will begin a magnet school pilot program at Highmeadow School this fall, with enrichment and advanced curriculum. What vision do you have for the future of this common campus in the district?

The elementary common campus represents an exciting possibility. Hopefully, it will provide an educational environment that will truly challenge each student to the maximum of their potential. This will require skilled staff blended into a real team in order to thoroughly challenge each other as well as the students.

The common campus could be a model for an elementary buildings in the future. Whether this happens

Middle School, 30303 14 Mile, Farmington Hills.

● Precinct Four — East Middle School, 25000 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills.

Absentee ballots will be available until 2 p.m. Saturday, June 11, at the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, 32500 Shiloh, Farmington Hills.

Herewith are answers from Prutow, a Farmington Hills resident, and Abernethy, a Farmington resident. Hills resident Jacob did not return this questionnaire. See today's Opinion Page for endorsements.

The Farmington school district encompasses all of Farmington, most of Farmington Hills and a small portion of West Bloomfield Township.

depends upon the quality and depth of planning, its teaching and support staff, and the educational leadership and team building skills of the principal.

The experiment needs to be given opportunities to explore learning approaches without undue early criticism. It must be carefully staffed by those who have strength in the teaching of subjects beyond the "3 Rs" and who have demonstrated ability to challenge students to reach their potential. This opportunity must be given every chance for success.

7. What other issues need to be addressed in Farmington Public Schools during the coming four years?

● We need to try to eliminate the long bus drives past one school to reach another. We should increase our commitment to the community school concept.

● We need to reverse the trend of deteriorating morale wherever it exists within our professional and support staff.

● We need to commit this district to a true challenging of every student to the maximum of their ability. A major commitment to increasing research and decision-making skills is necessary.



Helen Prutow
Incumbent

1. How would you characterize the relationship between the school district and the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills?

There seems to be a new spirit of cooperation, and I think that all of the members of the two city councils and the board of education are trying to ensure that we deal in the best way we can with the issues that affect all of us.

2. What is the school board's responsibility to the community in presenting issues, and having related discussions, in public?

It is imperative that we deal with issues openly and encourage public discussion. We have to be open to differences of opinion and constructive criticism and then act thoughtfully in the best interest of the schools and the community. Sometimes these decisions are tough to make and sometimes people believe that we make the wrong decisions. We have been elected to represent the interests of the parents and taxpayers, and I think that all the board members

are conscientious in trying to do that.

3. How do you see the new policy of "open enrollment" being applied in Farmington Public Schools? Parents want more choices in education for their children. This is a way to respond to that.

4. There is a movement to equalize money for school districts throughout the state. Which proposed legislative plan, or variation, do you advocate? What will its impact be on Farmington Public Schools?

The Senate plan appears to be a generally reasonable plan, but it does not seem to have much support in the House. There clearly are important school funding issues that need to be resolved, but a solution that simply penalizes districts like Farmington is not the right answer.

5. The district is revamping curriculum to include more drug awareness education. What drug-related program do you think would be effective for elementary, middle school and high school? Why?

I endorse these programs as a member of the board, but I think that we must allow the experts on our staff to plan and implement detailed programs that are consistent with the needs of our children and the community.

6. The district will begin a magnet school pilot program at Highmeadow School this fall, with enrichment and advanced curriculum. What vision do you have for the future of this common campus in the district?

This is a pilot program that I hope will set a pattern to be used throughout the district at the elementary level.

7. What other issues need to be addressed in Farmington Public Schools during the coming four years?

We need to build a media center and a new elementary school, and I hope that, considering costs, these can be state-of-the-art facilities that will serve as models for upgrading other facilities.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Up and in

Workers Calvin Lyles (with hat) and Van Wade lift a light pole into place on the south side of Grand River last week as part of the Downtown Development Authority's ongoing revitalization project in the central business district. About \$1.4 million in streetscape improvements are planned over the next five years.

Hills seeks road swap with county

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills wants to swap roads with Oakland County.

On administrators' recommendation, the city council has requested that the county take over jurisdiction of city-controlled 14 Mile and in return give Farmington Hills jurisdiction of the county-owned Farmington Road, from 14 to 10 Mile.

The idea to swap roads began when the county road commission asked for information to update its multi-year improvement plan. The road commission denied a city request for a traffic signal between 13 and 14 Mile roads on Farmington Road. Though county officials maintain the signal isn't warranted, city officials say it is because of increasing traffic on the north-south thoroughfare.

"Our purpose is to get Farmington Road under our control because it bisects the city. It also cuts through Farmington. We think there are concerns expressed that the city could address that the county is not addressing," assistant city manager David Call said.

The city of Farmington has jurisdiction over its portion of Farmington Road.

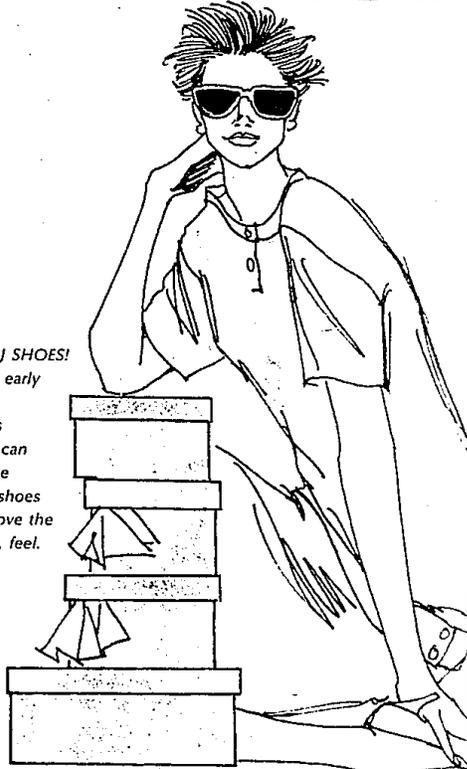
TO FURTHER make a case for taking over Farmington Road, city officials point to community features along the thoroughfare, including Heritage Park, Farmington Community Center, Pioneer Park and Oakland Community College-Oakland Ridge campus.

Fourteen Mile is an east-west borderline road between Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield Township that probably should be under county jurisdiction, Call said. Oakland County already has jurisdiction over 14 Mile east of Inkster and west of Hagerly. All roads in West Bloomfield are under county control.

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