

points of view

Jan. 31 vote

School bond issue supported

To the editor:
The Farmington community will be asked to vote on Jan. 31 for the proposed \$7.3 million bond issue, which will finance the building of a new 600-student elementary school at 11 Mile and Halsted.

It is clear that the need for this school is great. Currently, 27 percent of all elementary school children live west of Drake Road, yet there is no elementary school in that area. Also, enrollment at the elementary level is projected to continue to increase for the next five years.

At present, there are eight portable classrooms in use in the Farmington school system, at the cost of \$50,000 each. Due to overcrowding, we have had to give up classroom space for art, music, science and computers. Many of these classes are being held in halls or available cafeterias.

A yes vote will not increase the current debt millage rate, which is now 1.2 mills. Hopefully, the voters of Farmington who are committed to the changing needs and challenges of our children will vote on Jan. 31.

General fund dollars should be used to enhance and improve our children's education, purchase equipment and make school improvements, not buy portables to accommodate overcrowding.

The sight of several portables sitting in a school parking lot from which students shuffle in and out of several times each day for lunch, recess, P.E., art, and music does nothing for our property values. If this bond issue is not passed, we will be looking at a lot more portables.

Farmington is a great community with a lot of great children. Please give them the education and opportunities they deserve. Please vote on Jan. 31.
Cathleen M. Webb,
Farmington Hills

ington public school system, I would like to see a yes vote on the Jan. 31 bond election for the new school.

This school was already defeated once in September, yet the problem of overcrowded schools is ever-present (Longacre, Flanders, Larkshire are using a total of eight portables). With the continued growth in the west end, this problem will only grow.

Without a new school, overcrowding will make way for more portables that will be at \$50,000 each as expensive or even more so when things other than dollars and cents are considered. Not only will this money (to buy portables) be taken out of the school operating budget (which will affect all schools), but the children will be robbed of many enriching and necessary experiences and this money been used in a more productive way.

Is this the way we want to spend school dollars? If we cannot provide children with basic necessities such as adequate classroom space, then how can we possibly hope to offer them quality education?

Without passage of the bond election, Farmington Public Schools will take a giant step backwards. The choice is clear and simple: There are too many children and not enough classrooms.

Do we vote yes on Jan. 31 and build a new school or do we spread valuable school dollars to buy expensive portables that are worthless and ineffective?

The only logical and responsible choice is a yes vote for the new school. A new school would be a wise investment to guarantee our children the quality education that they deserve.

I will not settle for less than this, not only for my own children, but for all the children in our community.

All children attending Farmington Public Schools are, at the very least, entitled to schools that can comfortably house them without problems of overcrowding.
That is what public education is all about — quality education with

equal access to all.
Sylvia Kambouris,
Farmington Hills

To the editor:
In the next five years, the number of elementary school children in Farmington-Farmington Hills will rise dramatically.

On Jan. 31, the district must decide whether we house these children in a building with permanent facilities and thus maintain the high standards of Farmington schools, or if we house them in substandard temporary portable buildings at \$50,000 per unit, thus creating unequal facilities for some children in the district and relegating Farmington schools to a lower level of standards as compared to neighboring school districts.

In either case, we pay. So we might as well get our money's worth.

Vote for the bond issue to build a permanent elementary school and receive real value for your tax dollar.

If portable units are bought, the money must come from the general operating fund. This means there will be less money for all students in all the schools throughout the district — money for books, supplies, all sorts of items. All the children will lose out.

In order to build a permanent school, we must vote for the \$7.3 million bond issue because this money must go into a building fund separate from operating funds.

(We are lucky in a sense. Walled Lake school district is asking for \$47 million for three schools!)

Let's maintain high standards in our schools. Let's maintain those property values. An excellent school district will not only benefit the children, but will keep real estate values up in case you wish to sell at some future time.

Americans are regarded as a society that does not value its children. Let's show the world that Farmington-Farmington Hills cares about children.
Vote yes on Jan. 31.
Helen Goranowski,
Farmington Hills

Seeking the formula for science schooling

DISSECTING A cat wasn't too appealing to this feline fanatic.

Watching those Biology II students carrying cat carcasses around high school didn't squelch all interest in science but certainly put a damper on biology.

So, after cutting apart worms and frogs and studying a few rocks, my formal science education was over.

What is it about high school science that takes a curious student and turns them off, or allows them to head in another academic direction?

As a youngster, I used to look out the window at night with a small telescope, fascinated with the night sky. During summer vacation, collecting rocks held my interest as I tried to figure out where they came from.

When did the interest wane? Mine apparently went onto the garbage heap with the cats.

BUT FOR many people, the interest may never have been there.

A national science study released by ABC this week showed that more than 90 percent of those surveyed didn't have the basic knowledge of what makes the world go around — literally.

Twenty-five percent of the people thought the sun revolved around the earth. Others believed the earth revolved around the sun, but did it in 24 hours. These people don't understand the difference between what makes a calendar year and what makes night and day.



Casey Hans

More than 90 percent ... didn't have the basic knowledge of what makes the world go around — literally.

Still others thought that milk with radiation contamination could be made drinkable by boiling.

The Observer & Eccentric also looked at science education this week, trying to find out what is being done in our local school districts. What kind of an emphasis is being put on science education, especially at the high school level.

Many of today's science teachers have been in the classroom for 20 years or more. They've seen trends in science education come and go. They see computers and environmental issues playing a big role in the future.

They believe that emphasizing science at lower grade levels has got to help the interest levels at the high

school. They realize teaching science to incoming teachers should be a priority.

WE BLAME science curriculum, and school districts should make every effort to upgrade this. But there could be other, additional reasons.

Maybe the social changes that occur when children move into high school also have an impact on their interest in science and other subjects. If one teacher becomes popular or effective, that may have an impact on how many students take a class. Students who get involved in extracurricular activities may develop different priorities. Science may not be one of them.

Because of this, more than a change in curriculum is needed.

It will take teachers applying new curriculum in an interesting way. It will take schools promoting science to students through all channels, including student counseling. It will take parental encouragement.

More general education through newspapers, magazines and television is needed to inform those not in our education system, and to enhance learning for those who are. Like everything else in successful education, it will require a special emphasis, involving industry, business and community. The emphasis starts in our homes and local schools, and grows.

We need to encourage our students to look to the stars.

keeping up with government

Looking for information about state government? The League of Women Voters has a toll-free telephone service (1-800-292-5823) that may be helpful.

The league's Citizen Information

Center in Lansing offers to help people find out about such things as pending legislation, the state constitution, election laws, voting regulations or tax information.

The telephone is answered from

10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. weekdays.

The telephone service is paid for by the league's education fund. The League of Women Voters is a non-profit organization that works to keep voters interested and informed about governmental issues.

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