

Prutow to head up school board

By Casey Hane
staff writer

Helen Prutow will lead the Farmington school board as president for the next 12 months, expected to be one of the district's busiest years on record.

Prutow lauded outgoing president Jack Cotton, who she said did "an incredible job under some trying circumstances" the past year. She was joined by fellow board members in offering public support to acting superintendent Michael Flanagan, appointed last month after the resignation of Graham Lewis.

"You have to move forward — it has to be aggressive," she told Flanagan, who is expected to carry the district forward for at least one year.

Susan Rennels was elected second

in command as vice president for the 1989-90 school year. Trustees Jack Inch and Janice Rolnick will continue as board treasurer and board secretary, respectively.

THE BOARD wasted no time Monday during its annual organizational meeting planning for the coming year, which will include: looking for a permanent replacement for Lewis, who resigned after spending a new elementary school, evaluating the Highmeadow Common Campus program and negotiating contracts with several school unions.

School officials will also review gifted programs in the district, working to fill eight key administrative positions that will open this year, and complete building and media center renovations at Farmington High School.

The board is considering returning to an 8 p.m. meeting time, with one hour before each meeting reserved for various committee meetings that could rotate in that time slot.

Flanagan also suggested each meeting have an instructional focus; currently, the board has one instructional study session and one business session per month. "Our focus should be instructional anyway," Flanagan said. "We really have to have all of our meetings as instruction-oriented."

Prutow also suggested a staff person be appointed as a resource person for each board committee. All the committees are expected to be more active in the coming year.

BOARD MEMBERS also spoke to other issues of concern for the coming year.

Rennels said a study needs to be started on high school curriculum, and how it dovetails with recent changes in graduation requirements. "There's a lot of work that needs to be done at the high school level," she said. "Frankly, I think the high school needs to come first, then when the gifted study is done we should look at the middle school."

Trustee James Abernethy called for enrichment in the high school curriculum.

Outgoing president Cotton also wants to see the district study the issue of child care, and possibly full-day kindergarten. Cotton asked that the legal limitations be researched and that a recommendation be made as to "what we might do to help some of these people out."

Administratively, Flanagan has vowed to work hard in the coming year until a permanent superintendent can be found, not acting in a caretaker's role but as an active leader. He hopes to return to the deputy superintendent's slot at that time.



Helen Prutow
heads school board

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