

Redistricting to force 563 to change schools

By Derrell Clem
staff writer

Despite what school officials tell him, Bruce Luchman isn't convinced his two children will like being forced to change elementary schools next fall.

"I'm not happy about it," said Luchman, whose kindergarten and third-grader will be moved from Dublin to Commerce. "The kids aren't the only ones that have to get used to this. Dad does too."

Luchman's children are among the 563 Walled Lake School District students from such communities as West Bloomfield and Union Lake who will change schools because of a major redistricting plan that will affect more than 10 percent of the dis-

Walled Lake School District

The Walled Lake district serves students in part of the north-west corner of Farmington Hills.

trict's 5,550 elementary pupils.

Luchman was among about 35 parents and educators who attended a meeting March 13 at Commerce to learn more about the plan, prompted by booming enrollment and the scheduled fall opening of the district's 12th elementary school.

THE MEETING was the first in a series of six planned this month to unveil the redistricting plan to par-

ents whose children will be affected by it.

"I got the impression the meeting was a pep rally," Luchman said. Students from four elementary schools — Dublin, Twin Beach, Keith and Maple — will be moved as a result of the plan outlined last week by Hugh Davies, assistant superintendent for elementary instruction. Davies headed a 35-member committee of educators that drafted the redistricting plan scheduled for school board approval next month.

Debbie Newman, whose kindergarten and third-grader will be moved from Dublin to Commerce, said the proposal reminded her of an earlier plan that caused her ninth-grade daughter, Amanda, to switch schools in second grade.

"We've been through this once already," Newman said. "It worked out, I guess, but it's tough on the children when they have to leave their friends."

Some parents appeared more receptive to the plan, including Lance Pawloski, who said he's just glad his third-grade stepdaughter, Shannon, has an opportunity to attend a good school district like Walled Lake.

"The kids can survive being

moved once or twice better than they can survive the drugs in the school halls in places like Detroit and Garden City," Pawloski said. "Shannon's not happy about having to change schools, but she realizes that change happens."

Parent Ginny Banks criticized school officials for plans to build a new Dublin media center next year that will eliminate three classrooms. "I'm kind of upset. Why don't they just keep the rooms?"

BUT DAVIES said the media centers must be built because they were part of a \$47.8 million bond issue approved last year by school district voters.

Peter Cousino, a member of the Commerce Parent-Teacher Association, told parents of Dublin students

that they would find Commerce to be an "outstanding" school.

"The parent involvement in this school is really quite shocking to me," Cousino said. "I feel very fortunate to have my kids here. . . I picked this community about 14 years ago, and I'm still glad I'm here."

Meanwhile, officials provided a breakdown of the 563 students affected by the redistricting.

The new Pleasant Lake Elementary School will draw 274 students from the overcrowded Maple Elementary and 128 from Twin Beach. Sixty-seven pupils will be moved from Dublin — 37 to Commerce and 30 to Keith. Fifty-six students will be transferred from Keith to Twin Beach, and 38 will be moved from Maple to Decker.

recreation news

Each week, the Farmington Hills Department of Special Services Recreation Division presents a synopsis of upcoming activities. For more information about programs, call the recreation office, 473-8570. For matters regarding city council agenda items, call Newsline at 476-3838.

● Softball sign-up

Registration will be accepted at the recreation office on a first-come, first-served basis for adult softball teams interested in participating in a 14 summer game schedule, 10 games for co-ed league.

Leagues are available for men, women and co-ed teams. Fees are \$390 for open leagues, \$350 for resi-

dent and industrial and \$310 for co-ed leagues. Interested managers can call the recreation office at 473-8579 for further information.

● Swim lessons

Swimming instructions for beginner through advanced is offered at Harrison High School beginning Saturday, April 28. A \$20 fee is required for the six-lesson program. Participants must be 38 inches tall at their chin height.

● Parkey's Easter

Parkey has planned a special day for Saturday, April 7. Children ages 3-5 are scheduled 9:30-11 a.m. and ages 6-8 from 10:30 to noon, to join Parkey for games, arts, crafts and an Easter egg hunt. The party is at

Longacre Elementary School. A pre-registration fee of \$5 per child is required.

● Senior adult bazaar

A Spring Theme Bazaar sponsored by the Senior Adult Division will be held at the Senior Adult Center, 28600 11 Mile Road, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Friday, March 23. The bazaar will feature a craft, bake and white elephant sale. Rental space for senior citizens is available at \$3 per booth. Call 473-1854 for further information.

● Teen meeting

The Recreation Division and the Farmington Youth Assistance will host a meeting at the City Council Chambers, 31555 11 Mile Road, from

5-6 p.m. on Friday, March 23, for members of the Teen Center to review and provide feedback pertaining to recent programs, as well as discuss future programs and involvement in community related programs.

● astronomy

What can we see with the unaided eye or with binoculars in the night sky this season? At least four different constellations as well as time proven techniques for star gazing, viewing meteor showers, eclipses and observing the moon. The class will be held 7-9:30 p.m. Friday, April 6, at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile. Fee is \$3 per person or \$10 per family. Pre-registration is required.

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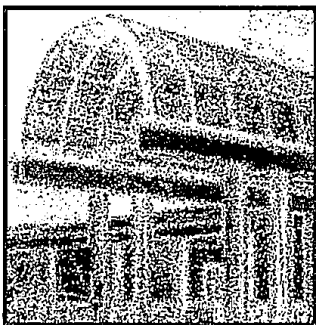
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