'Author' adventure



Marc Brown, author of children's books, talks to Eagle Elemen-ary students about reading, writing and illustrating books.



Eagle Elementary students ask author and illustrator Marc Adventure" series. Brown's visit was paid for by the Brown questions about his books, which include the "Arthur PTA.

Writer teaches students the basics

ATIONALLY KNOWN Illustrator and children's author Marc Brown recently visited Eagle Elementary to teach students how they can nose ahead of the competition.

Author of the "Arthur Adventure" series, featuring Arthur the Aard-vark and other characters, Brown offered his secrets to success at the

all-school assembly Nov. 8. One of those included encouraging students to read.

Massachusetts natives, Brown and missachusers natives, nown and his wife, Laurie, are co-authors of several books. He has written 65 books in all. In the "Arthur Adven-ture" series, he writes about a new baby sister, bringing a puppy into

the house, his amazement at being chosen for the school spelling bee, and how he handles his triend's teasing when he gets glasses.

Ile has also written several books using dinosaurs as Illustrations, including a guide to good health, another helping families deal with divorce and another which offers children safety tips.

In addition to the visit, school principal Sue Johnson and media specialist Carole Kersten arranged to have students buy Brown's books. Each student was also allowed to have one autographed while he visited.

District approves plans for renovation of Gill

Farmington school officials have authorized design plans for building expansion and renovations at Gill El-

plans for building expansion and renovations at Gill Ex-ementary.

But they have not yet decided how the job, which is estimated to cost between \$2.8 million and \$3.2 million.

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trict's financial constraints, Superintendent Michael Flanagan said, "but we're talking about a building that's so substandard."

A two-phase project would give the school board some flexibility in financial planning — something they may prefer due to recent budget constraints — but would cost \$400,000 more than doing the project in a single phase.

School officials promised parents earlier this year they would do something with the 35-year-old Gill building after not moving any students to the new Hillside Elementary this fall. The building remains overcrowded and in need of general renovations, Flanagan said.

He recently invited 58 superintendents to a meeting show which are conserved that the second districts like Farmings which are conserved to the provident of the second superintendents of Bill parent, said the "renovations have been surely needed. It's just failing apart." She said Tussday, she wanted to move ahead on approving the overall plans, though other board members said they preferred to wait until Nov. 20.

PLANS CALL for an addition of six classrooms, which would give the school a \$00-student capacity, which the addition, it would have 20 regular classrooms, two kindergarten rooms, a learning center, a teacher loung and planning room, and a resource room. The project would also add a new gymnasium, move the media center/library into the former gym, and convert the former media center into a cafeteria. The former cafeteria would then become an art room.

Renovation to the building would include new carpet-ing and ceilings, updated lighting and electrical, some cabinetry and updated fire/emergency and sound sys-tems. New windows would also be installed and the building cabled for future high technology growth, said Judy Miller of the architectural firm of Greiner Inc.

Greiner is the same architect that worked on Hillside, the expanded Farmington High School media center, and several million dollars in other projects throughout the district. The company was retained Tuesday to do the design plans for Gill.

Trustee James Abernethy, a professor of architecture at Lawrence Technological University, called the proposal a "good plan" which is closely modeled on the district's new Hillside Elementary. "I can just see it humming," he added.

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Flanagan said the district had earmarked \$2 million for the Gill renovations, but that much hinged on how the school board decided to handle the district's recent loos of \$5.8 million due to state recapture. That will be decided over the next several weeks.

School safety study committee continues transportation review

The head of the Farmington school board safety com-mittee pledged to continue reviewing concerns about the district's bus service but said transportation policies would remain in place unless a majority voted for a

the district's bus service but said transportation policies would remain in place unless a majority voted for a change.

Trustee Jack Cotton's comments came after a number of angry parents from the Green Hill Commons and Independence Commons subdivisions came to a Nov. 6 school board meeting, saying they were frustrated by increased traffle and growth which has created safety hazards in their neighborhood.

"We will continue to study it." Cotton said, adding that he wanted to sit down again with transportation officials and review the matter. "We promise nothing but will give it our best shot."

If told the parents they would likely have an answer around Jan. I. Any change to transportation policies would have to be discussed by the entire board, he added.

THE BOARD received a number of letters this year, with parents complaining about traffic safety issues and requesting additional bus stops, different bus stops and

changes to the board's policy on how far children walk to school and to stops. Parents have attended two previ-ous meetings of the Safety Committee to reiterate their concerns.

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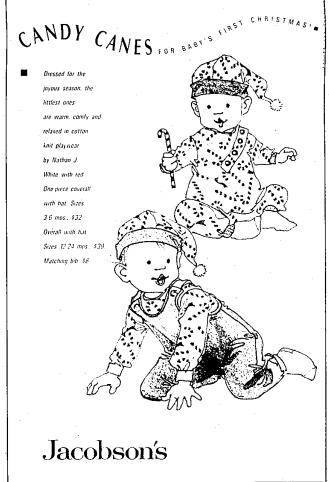
The district currently spends about 14.7 million a year on transportation, and has added 55 buses to its fleet during the past eight years to handle growthind safety issues, board president Stuan Rennels safety.

Despite parent frustration this year and comig into about being treated ruidely by school employees, superintendent Mitchael Flanagan said such Issues are handled each year, normally by the school's transportation department. "We can't speak to every conversation that's gone on," he said. "There probably is a shred of truth when people say they are treated disrespectfully." I want you to know there are thousands of politic responses. This (transportation concerns) has had more attention than I've even seen it given. And that's good."

Rennels agreed the hilly terrain in some subdivistion, lack of sidewalks and increased traffic through the Farmington area have caused problems. But, she told parents, the district is not required by law to provide bus service.

"The whood district is under no obligation to bus any

parents, the district is not required by law to provide bus service.
"The school district is under no obligation to bus any-body," she sald. "Under state law, it is the parents' responsibility to get their children to and from school."



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