

# Parents: Schools' gifted plans going too slow

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The school board directed superintendent Michael Flanagan to study the report, and come back to the board with recommendations in January.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF the gifted proposal include:**

- Identifying all gifted students beginning in kindergarten. The district's current program does not begin identifying gifted students until grade two.
- Recognizing different types of "gifts" including students with gen-

eral intellectual abilities and others with specific abilities in language arts, mathematics, science, social science and visual and performing arts like music and drama.

• A curriculum linking gifted education throughout all 12 years of school, and offer programs which would address individual gifted student needs. The committee is proposing "clustering" gifted students in the general classroom, and having gifted coordinators work with classroom teachers. The district presently uses a pull-out program for gifted in many elementary schools, and ad-

vanced classes and counseling at the secondary level.

• Training and support for all staff and parents for better understanding of a gifted child's needs.

• Evaluating the progress of gifted students.

Changes would begin immediately, and the entire program would be in place by 1994-95. Assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development Judith White supported the idea of a 5-year plan, saying anything done more quickly would burn out the staff.

"If you don't make the time to do it right, when are you going to have

time to do it over?" she said.

THE DISTRICT's current program was revised in 1987 and renamed "DELTA," an acronym for Differentiated, Enrichment, Leadership, Talent and Ability. The current pull-out programs for gifted students continued, but skills commonly used in such programs were integrated into the general classroom.

The intention at that time was to expand the gifted program from a general instructional base, to consider students who are creatively gifted and have abilities in specific areas.

Many parents at the Dec. 4 school board meeting said they supported the idea of either a specialized magnet school for gifted students, or a magnet program within a school. Some said gifted students should have specialized teachers.

Superintendent Flanagan said he originally supported the magnet concept, but said his thinking was "short-sighted."

"I genuinely believe this would be good," he said of the proposal. "Nice quick answers and nice quick solutions have always been the problem."

**'Ordinary classes can destroy a gifted student's spirit. This 5-year plan is four years and six months too long. It's time to stop forming committees.'**

—Kim Dennis, parent

## Volunteer patrol Illegal handicap parkers ticketed

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

"Thank God. We finally got you after all these years."

That's what passersby tell resident George Roberts, a member of the Farmington Hills civilian parking patrol which keeps a daily eye on able-bodied motorists who park in handicapped-designated parking spaces.

"It's helping people become aware of the handicapped and disabled. I can see tangible results from this," Roberts said.

Illegal parking in a handicapped-designated parking space is no joke — as the 152 motorists who have been ticketed since Oct. 1 have come to realize. Those who have already paid the hefty \$50 fine are the pioneers.

Come January, able-bodied motorists found in a parking spot with the familiar handicapped-designated sign will suffer more. The fines, as allowed by state law, will go up to \$100.

"There are still some people who take advantage of it (designated parking spaces). They will be with us forever," Roberts said.

A change in state law allows the Farmington Hills police to use civilian volunteers to issue citations to violators. The program began with 14 volunteers and in November another 14 were trained and are now

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out on the road.

Roberts and his partner, Bill Shortt of Farmington Hills, have encountered only a couple of angry motorists when they turn on their overhead patrol car lights. "Your friendly handicapped specialists are near," Roberts said.

DESPITE A few growling violators, "a lot of people are applauding that we are there," said program coordinator Ed Fitzpatrick of the Farmington Hills Police Department traffic section.

Sgt. Ray Cranston of the traffic section agreed. "By and large the community has accepted it. There's a tremendous amount of support. People stand on the sidewalk and clap as tickets are issued."

With more volunteers, the program has been expanded to three shifts, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. "Some are also double-shifted. We're putting two cars out on a shift instead of one," Cranston said.

With the larger force, volunteers

are now able to cover the entire city and revisit spots they first visited in September when the program began. Volunteers stopped by businesses and stores, dropped off brochures about the program and checked signs designating the special parking spaces.

"Those (business owners) who have come into voluntary compliance, thank you very much," Cranston said.

OTHERS — SOME whose designated spaces are so close to the business entrance, for example, — will be targeted.

City attorney John Donohue is drafting ordinance amendments requiring proper signs and places for handicapped-designated parking spaces. Some businesses have gone so far as to take signs down because they feel they don't have customers who need the spaces, Cranston said.

The civilian patrol has encountered businesses that don't have the required one sign per space, some businesses that have an inadequate number of spaces, other signs that aren't supported properly, and yet others where the signs aren't placed in the proper areas.

Many of these items are violations of the individual businesses state plans. When the rules have been hammered out, the idea is to provide business with 30 days, for example, to comply with the new regulations and fines, Cranston said.

## 2 Detroiters charged in Dunckel teacher's slaying

Two Detroit men are charged with murder in the slaying of an O.E. Dunckel Middle School teacher who was shot and killed in his Detroit home Nov. 25.

Andre Poux, 58, who lived in the North Rosedale Park neighborhood in Detroit, was shot as he confronted an armed intruder in his home shortly before 6 a.m. Poux later died in the emergency room of Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital.

James Lee Johnson, 21, and Eugene Posey, 26, both of Detroit, stood mute at their arraignment Dec. 5 in 38th District Court in Detroit and not-guilty pleas were entered on their behalf.

EACH WAS charged with one

**The suspects face life in prison without parole if convicted. A preliminary examination is set for Dec. 14.**

count of first-degree felony murder, which included the break-in of an occupied dwelling, and with an additional count of using a firearm in the commission of a felony.

They face life in prison without parole if convicted. Both are being held, without bond, in the Wayne County Jail. A preliminary examination is scheduled for Dec. 14.

The two were arrested in connection with an unrelated break-in and rape in another Detroit neighborhood that occurred several days before the Poux incident.

Assistant Wayne County prosecutor Doug Baker said he recommended warrants in the Poux case Wednesday morning.

Police said they linked the two cases because physical evidence taken from the first incident was found at the Poux house crime scene.

POUX HAD taught math in the Farmington Public Schools since 1973, most recently at Dunckel, and was an activist in his neighborhood, where he sat on the association's board of directors.

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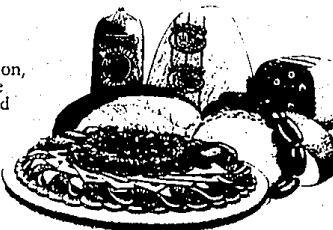
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