Magnet school placed on hold

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Tough times have dealt a blow to plans for a county-wide state-of-the-art math and science center.

Tight purse strings among area companies and money problems on the state level have prompted the Oakland Intermediate School District to delay the opening of the so-called magnet high school for advanced math and science.

"We couldn't find a financial godfather," explained William G. Keane, superintendent of Oakland Intermediate Schools. "Rather than opening the math and science center this fall, we'll wait until 1993."

Even that date is tentative, Keane said Tuesday when talking about the decision to delay the opening, which was made earlier this month. "I'm not announcing that we're opening in 1993. I'm anticipating the economy will turn around by then . . . and companies will be more receptive."

Keane and other officials had counted on donations from companies, along with state aid, to open the high school for advanced math and science for about 300 students. The center was to also provide additional training facilities for teachers and closed-circuit television programs.

THE CENTER HAS been planned since 1988, and is to be patterned after other math and science centers in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. The Kalamazoo center is supported by the Upjohn Corp. and the Battle Creek facility is sponsored by the Kellogg Corp.

But both the private sector and the state came up short. "Most of the companies we approached said the math and science center is a great idea," said Keane. "But they simply can't support it now. Times are too tough.

"We were counting on the state to provide an additional $300,000 (per year). But it would only pledge $135,000.

"Rather than opening with incomplete financing, we decided to wait," Keane said. "But we're not giving up on the idea of promoting math and science."

This summer, for example, the intermediate schools will offer special math and science classes for seventh- and eighth-graders. "It will include algebra and some pretty advanced science," said David C. Housel, the district's science consultant.

"We expect to have the details completed in February and a brochure available in March," said Housel. "We're also going to initiate some in-service programs to help teachers."

'I wish we could see you more often'

By Judith Doner Berne
staff writer

His vow to run for a 19th term came off a little weaker than usual

But U.S. Rep. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, gave a strong performance before about 75 people at the invitation of the Oakland Branch of the American Association of University Women early Monday afternoon at the Salvation Army Church in Royal Oak.

"What a difference a year makes," he told the attentive, responsive audience, referring to last year's war with Iraq and "America's military might, technology and leadership.

"We were the A-team. No one could touch us. Now, a year later, we're down in the dumps."

He called the recession "a symptom of our problems" and worried that too much hype preceded President Bush's State of the Union message and its solutions for the economy.

In his prepared speech he covered:

- Japan — I have no intention of bashing the Japanese but something's unfair in our relationship with that county. We send them potato chips and they send us computer chips. Closing markets is not the answer to our trade problems. Competition has been good for us.
- Deficit — There isn't an agency in government that couldn't use trimming. We can reduce it substantially.
- Peace dividend — Take the money and give some of it back to the people in the form of tax cuts.
- Education — Money alone isn't the problem. Per pupil spending is up from 15 years ago, but test scores are down. Accountability is needed — setting standards in five major subjects and using achievement tests to see they are met.
- Postal service — The shootings at Royal Oak really drove things home. I am trying to mobilize a bipartisan committee to study the postal service.

"I WISH WE could see you more often," said Arlene Victor, of Bloomfield Township, who questioned Broomfield on reducing defense spending.

"My first obligation is in Washington," Broomfield said, acknowledging critism that he doesn't hold town meetings. "Sure I think town meetings are *important*, but *most people* know where I stand."

"I think we could probably do without the stealth bomber," Broomfield said. "I support (defense) cuts. But as long as I represent this area I won't let this country be left defenseless."

Rep. William Broomfield

But his statement that "I think you would agree with me that the United States' strong defense caused the *breakup of the Soviet Union*" drew a quick and audible "No" from the audience.

"I don't have the answers," he responded to questions on why housing and health care isn't available for all Americans. "I don't want to see any national health care. It has to be controlled by state and local government."

"Would you favor a national or state work program to get people back to work?" asked Suzanne Osmer of Beverly Hills.

"It would be the highway program," Broomfield said. "It's an interesting question."

THE ISSUE OF the need for gun control drew a burst of applause from the audience, which was largely made up of senior citizens, mostly from Beverly Hills and Royal Oak.

"We've got to stop the availability of guns," Broomfield agreed.

As far as his retirement, Broomfield, the longest-serving Republican in Congress, seemed to hedge just a bit. "I know there are people who want me to retire." He suggested that we'll just have to wait and see how the redistricting goes.

"There's no short cut in this business. I had a dream the Republicans *would control the House. I would like* to continue to serve. I'll put my qualifications up against anyone."

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