

District seeks tighter focus on MEAP tests

BY MARIE CHESTNEY
STAFF WRITER

In-house competency tests given to Clarenceville High students will be abandoned as the district gears up to stress exams given by the state.

Both Clarenceville Superintendent David Kamish and the guidance committee have recommended ditching Clarenceville's own reading, writing and math competency tests so that the district can put its full weight behind the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) exams and the new state proficiency test slated to take the place of MEAP in 1997.

The Clarenceville Board of Education Thursday gave first reading to dropping the in-house tests, beginning with the Class of '94.

Kamish called the change a "wise move" for tests which are "out of date" when compared to skills tested on the MEAP tests.

"The proficiency test and the interim MEAP requirements should be the point of concentration for the district," Kamish said.

The whole arena of testing has taken center stage in Clarenceville, a district which includes southeast Farmington Hills as well as northeast Livonia and northwest Redford. Responding to poor scores earned on the 1992 test, Clarenceville has made boosting MEAP scores a top priority.

Progress made to boost the scores will be discussed at every board meeting, Kamish said. School principals will give their first report at the Feb. 25 board meeting.

Clarenceville High students who failed any or all of the three 1992 MEAP tests can retake them this spring. Clarenceville has launched several remedial programs, both during school and after-school.

CLARENCEVILLE

Small group sessions will be held to identify students' reading problems. These students will then be either pulled out of class or attend after-school tutoring sessions, Kamish said.

Students weak in science will be able to attend daily tutoring sessions after school. The sessions will begin one month before the MEAP test is retaken, Kamish said.

Because math scores were so low, the teaching of MEAP objectives to all math students will take place daily, Kamish said.

Special tutoring sessions also will be held for students who still need extra help.

Clarenceville principal David Simowicki said all students — not just those needing extra help — may attend tutoring sessions.

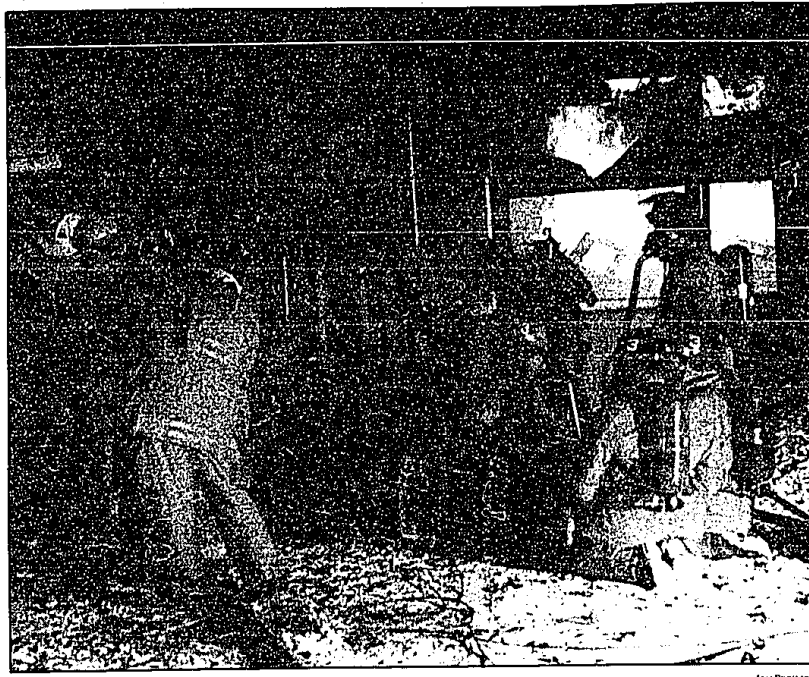
He also said school officials can't mandate students attend after-school tutoring sessions. With the spotlight now being put on the MEAP tests, Kamish said Clarenceville would be stretching its resources too thin to continue requiring students to pass competency tests.

In 1994, the state will require students pass all three MEAP tests to get a state-endorsed diploma. In 1997, students must pass a proficiency test now being written to get a diploma from the state.

Kamish suggested Clarenceville try to become a pilot district for this proficiency exam. The test will be given in pilot schools one year before it is given statewide.

In doing away with the competency tests, the trustees said Clarenceville runs the risk of being without them if the idea of a proficiency test given statewide after 1997 somehow gets sidetracked.

Burn awareness



JON FREELICH

Training burn: Farmington Hills firefighters conducted a training burn of two houses on Springbrook south of 10 Mile Friday as part of a live television program on WDIV. Assistant fire chief Pete Baldwin said a developer donated the houses. TV cameras were taken inside the burning houses to show viewers what fighting fires is like. "We're trying to get people to be conscious of fire dangers through education," Baldwin said.

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