

# Plan to build school quality blueprinted

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Public Schools officials believe they have developed a blueprint for quality education.

The draft document, titled "Quality Education for the Future: Creating a Learning Organization," is a comprehensive workbook that would provide an organizational and philosophical overhaul of how schools will operate.

The plan is designed to enhance the working environment while bringing buzz phrases such as "total quality management" and "shared decision making" into clearer focus.

The framework would bring ongoing individual school improvements, evaluation and assessment needs in line with recently adopted districtwide goals and student learning outcomes.

"All this stuff doesn't mean anything if you don't improve student learning," said Superintendent Michael Flanagan.

That's the bottom line, according to school officials. They see this plan as an innovative step.

Among the most notable changes proposed:

- The formation of a 20-member district support council, which would serve as a central committee to provide advice and support for new programs or improvements suggested by committees at each school site.

- Shared decision making, in which more people are brought into the process at the building and district levels. For example, some decisions traditionally made by building principals would be shared with staff, students and community.

- Developing a mission statement at each school, which would reflect the vision, goals and student learning outcomes of the district.

The Superintendent's Planning Committee developed the outline.

The committee includes assistant superintendents Pam O'Malley, Bruce Barrett and Judy White, as well as Director of Evaluation, Assessment and Special Projects Frederica Frost.

White presented the plan to the Farmington Board of Education Oct. 18. Board members, who have not yet voted on the plan, generally gave it glowing praise.

Trustee R. Jack Inch, though, wasn't initially enthralled with the shared decision-making process at the building level. He thought it undermined a principal's duties as the head master, though the plan states administering the schools remains the function of the building principal.

"I don't like it," Inch said at the meeting. "I think it muddles the authority."

Flanagan said the plan has a strong emphasis on site-based management, in effect creating "mini-superintendents" at each building.

Board members say they wanted to see more parents represented on the district council, which calls for one or two parents. White said more will be added.

The district council would also include five subcommittee chairs, four teachers (one from each level and one selected by the teachers' union, the Farmington Education Association), three principals, two recent Farmington school graduates, a secretary, a custodian, a paraprofessional, and a transportation representative.

"I'd love to see this mailed to the governor tomorrow — Federal Express it — so he can see what this district is doing," Trustee Helen Prutow said. "I have to commend you in going forward in these times of chaos."

Flanagan puts the plan on par with what's taking place in industry and corporations.



Bagging the treats: Farmington Public Safety employee Karen Sutherland and daughter Katie and neighbor Molly Mather join Commander Chuck Lee and Kmart manager Darrell Turner in to pitch a safe Halloween night for children.

## Halloween help

### Trick-or-treat safety in bag

Farmington Public Safety Department will be passing out a special treat to children on Halloween night Sunday.

Commander Chuck Lee will be going throughout the city in the department's Crime Prevention Van passing out "Trick or

Treat Safely" bags. Each bag will contain a 911 coloring book, a ruler, a junior police badge and a Halloween snack.

Also, in cooperation with the Farmington Kmart, kids will receive a special Halloween Ob-Stick that they can use to help

illuminate themselves while going door to door.

The department also reminds children to follow the following safety rules:

- Wait until you get home to eat your treats. Have your parents check the treats before you

eat them.

- Trick or treat only in your neighborhood and in well-lit areas.

- Take a parent or older sibling along. Never go out alone.

- Make sure you walk, and don't run. Also make sure you can see well.

## Parks and rec asks council: Why have you forsaken us?

By BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Some members of the Farmington Hills parks and recreation commission are feeling left out of some important decisions.

During Monday's regular meeting, two members of the commission, Stuart Selis and Michael Horner, said the commission's exclusion from important decisions in their areas of expertise have left them wondering.

Selis said senior programs, an ice arena study committee, the purchase of the Mercy Center and a plan to get young people involved in future recreation programs had included little input from the commission.

"I think we are really the appropriate forum for that type of discussion," Selis said. "We'd like to know what is our role? Does this signal a lack of confidence?"

The comments came during a discussion of a proposal by councilman Jon Grant to establish a series of public hearings for com-

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munity teenagers.

Horner, who chaired the campaign to pass a special parks and recreation tax in 1991, said the money from that tax had been pledged toward specific projects. Money earmarked for one of those projects, the future expansion of the San Marino golf course, had been shifted to pay for the Mercy Center without input from the commission.

Council members said they'd done nothing wrong but wouldn't do it again.

"Two years ago I sent a memo to the parks and rec committee (about the ice arena study committee)," said Mayor pro tem Larry Lichtman, who chairs the ice arena study committee. "The response was not to pursue it. Some parks and rec people are on it. We'll be meeting with parks and rec and the council with our findings."

Grant said he would want parks

and rec input but thought a less formal hearing would be less threatening.

"We've run public hearings," said Selis in response. Councilman Aldo Vagozzi seemed to reflect the council's sentiments that Grant's plan go forward. The council will include it in its Nov. 13 study session.

In other actions the council:

- Postponed action to provide a tax lien collection procedure for false alarm fees.

- Enacted an amended zoning ordinance code adding the definition of commercial vehicle.

- Enacted a zoning ordinance amendment concerning entrances and signs.

- Voted to transfer a class C liquor license to the Cadillac Cafe on Grand River.

- Voted to transfer ownership of a hotel liquor license with a dance permit at the Botsford Inn from the Anhut Hotel Co. to Green Smith.

- Appointed Jeff Stewart to the parks and recreation commission.

## Troop scouts up holiday wreath sales

Fifty Boy Scouts from Troop 179, sponsored by the First Pres-Geritan Church of Farmington, hit the streets this week selling holiday wreaths to kick off their 25th year of Scouting in the Farmington area.

One of the largest and most active Boy Scout troops in southeastern Michigan, Troop 179 had a busy summer, with a trip to the National Scout Jamboree near Washington, D.C., where they gathered with 80,000 other Scouts from around the nation and world to take part in activities like scuba diving, hot-air shooting, rappelling with rope down a 40-foot tower, kayaking, hiking, and trading Scout patches.

The Farmington Scouts also participated in hundreds of displays where they could try out a

NASA anti-gravity training device, sit in the driver's seat of an M-1 tank, or earn merit badges on any type of farm equipment to model rocketry.

The Scouts toured Washington, D.C.'s museums, memorials, and the National Capitol and its surrounding areas, including Busch Gardens, the Luray Caverns, and Civil War battlefields. Their trip was made possible by raising funds with last year's wreath sale, a special Scout popcorn sale in the spring and donations from many Farmington area businesses and service organizations.


Projects for Troop 179's new Scouting year include plans to tie red ribbons to lamp posts in the downtown Farmington shopping center to promote a drug-free holiday season as well as several service projects to benefit its spon-

sor, the First Presbyterian Church.

Monthly weekend trips will also bring them to Toledo for a 17-mile backpack trek, to Kensington Metropark for fellowship and competition with other area troops, and to Splatball City, an indoor paintball arena in Detroit.

The Scout wreath sale will run through mid-November when the boys will deliver the hand-made 25-inch live wreaths to residents and businesses who have pre-ordered them at a cost of \$14.50. Orders may also be placed by calling Pat Thurbis at 478-2490.

Troop 179 meets each Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall of the First Presbyterian Church, Farmington Road and 11 Mile. Boys ages 11-17 are invited along with their parents to visit the meetings.



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