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of thing," Rea said. "We've been waiting for them."

Ice time for the fall season is definitely in demand, he added. "I've got a list for the hockey association in excess of 120 kids waiting to get on a house league," he said.

Approximately 450 children, which is a maximum capacity, are already on the Troy Hockey Association house league.

"We anticipate having ice some time toward the end of June which will allow us to have travel team try outs," said Rea.

Fred Przybyz, a parent who represented many soccer parents at the school board meeting made a presentation before the board approved the four soccer teams.

"We believe that the time has come to recognize this sport along side the other sports recognized at the freshman level,"

Przybyz said.

Many students who played in the Troy Youth Soccer League have a difficult time once they compete for a slot on their high school junior varsity team, where the students are taller and older, Przybyz added. And often, the students don't return to try out the next year.

Cindy Milburn, who has a child in middle school playing soccer, said "other districts have freshman teams and we feel we should have a freshman team too," she said.

"More and more parents are getting involved in soccer," added parent Donna Wetzel, that's why many people got on the bandwagon to get a petition drive moving.

More than 1,000 signatures were collected recently for the cause, Przybyz said.

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She discussed the words with students, used them in spelling tests and made them a part of her own classroom lexicon.

"I saw a big improvement," she noted.

Amy Price, Avondale reading consultant, said she also asked teachers to develop plans to "fill in the gaps" for students who had attained moderate and low scores. Every elementary school initiated an after-school program to boost reading and math skills.

Price said schools also invited parents to informational meetings about the MEAP. Teachers explained how they analyzed the test and developed improvement plans. They also detailed ways that parents could help their children improve essential reading and math skills.

"The key for parents is to show they are interested in their student's work. Ask questions. Ask how and why they got that answer in math," he said.

Price said parents can ask youngsters to explain reading passages and to separate the main idea from other details in informational text.

She said the district plans to share MEAP results with parents this year, too.

Here are Avondale's scores:

- Fourth grade math scores: 76.8 percent satisfactory, 17 percent moderate and 6.3 percent low. n Fourth grade reading scores: 69.7 percent satisfactory, 22.1 percent moderate and 8.1 percent low.
- Seventh grade math scores: 65.1 percent satisfactory, 20 percent moderate and 13.9 percent low. n Seventh grade reading scores: 63.3 percent satisfactory, 29.7 percent moderate and 17.1 percent low.

Here are building scores for fourth grade reading:

- Auburn - 68.4 percent satisfactory, 30.3 percent moderate and 11.2 percent low.
- Deerfield - 83.9 percent satisfactory, 15.1 percent moderate and 1.1 percent low.
- Graham - 78.8 percent satisfactory, 17.3 percent moderate and 3.8 percent low.
- Stiles - 48.6 percent satisfactory, 27 percent moderate and 24.3 percent low.

Here are building scores for fourth grade math:

- Auburn - 66.3 percent satisfactory, 23.6 percent moderate and 10.1 percent low.
- Deerfield - 92.6 percent satisfactory, 6.5 percent moderate and 1.1 percent low.
- Graham - 78.8 percent satisfactory, 19.2 percent moderate and 1.9 percent low.
- Stiles - 59.5 percent satisfactory, 24.3 percent moderate and 16.2 percent low.

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Inspirational speaker Chuck Dodge will present a free program, "Achieving Balance in Your Life," at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27 at the Troy Public Library in civic center off of Big Beaver west of Livornois.

Dodge, a former teacher and corporate executive, will share his anecdotes and personal stories in a discussion that explores individual potential, improving relationships and effective living.

Dodge hopes to inspire audiences to achieve their dreams. He made dramatic changes in his own life three years ago when he decided that his personal mission in life was to be a "life coach" and teach others how to reach their goals and objectives.

For more information or to reserve a seat, call 624-3638 during library business hours.

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