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more bugs they get worked out... It (the breakdown) will say a lot more to us."

In addition to the category-by-category writing assessment, changes include:

■ Not using the social studies portion of the HSPT until districts better align classes with the state's core curriculum.

■ Employing Michigan teachers to grade writing answers, rather than out-of-state judges, by 1999.

■ Giving the HSPT and Michigan Education Assessment Program tests simultaneously, instead of staggering them throughout the school year.

Maxfield liked the idea of both tests being done at the same time, but wasn't so sure about the practicality of using Michigan teachers for grading purposes.

About simultaneous testing, Maxfield said "We applaud that, although I thought (the state) had already made that decision. As long as you're gearing up for

testing, it's really intrusive. You might as well do it once.

"There's something wrong about testing kids in September. The MEAP stuff is practically waiting for them on the first day."

That timing makes elementary school teachers "feel the need to do crash preparation," he added.

Teachers such as Forest Elementary School's Kathy Koperski look forward to having several additional months to get themselves and their students ready for MEAP, which this year will come around the February mid-winter break. Koperski primarily teaches fifth-grade science.

"Hopefully, it will make kids take it more seriously, knowing everybody's taking it at the same time," Koperski said. "And it's a good thing for all the teachers who do preparation. They can get together on scheduling and complement each other" about the sequence of when subjects are taught.

"We can start working on specific skills beginning in October or November, instead of cramming."

Maxfield said he wasn't convinced of the merit of using Michigan teachers for grading long-form writing answers. "The reason they went out of state is, frankly, they couldn't line up enough people to do it."

The superintendent said extensive training of recruits is essential before turning the grading task over to them. He then asked, rhetorically, "Can you recruit and train enough people to make it work?"

Carvers from page A1

a cigar humidor, featuring boxes of Arturo Fuente and Partagas cigars, plus Macanudo Double X cigars (\$36 each) in individual wooden cases. The humidor, said Dicker, includes a water system that blows moist air up into the case, to keep cigars fresh.

"These aren't 'el cheapo' cigars, the kind that smell terrible and make you turn green right away," explained Dicker. "These are extremely well made. The flavor and aroma are more smooth, more rich. You can't even tell they're smoking in here."

For customers who don't care for even an unoffensive puff of cigar smoke, however, there is plenty of dining space for non-smokers. (Non-beef eaters also should know that Carvers serves up chicken, fish, lamb chops, veal chops, loaves of bread with butter baked right in, desserts and salads.)

In the not-too-distant future, the cigar humidor will be relocated to another lounge wall, said Suchara, referring to the

pending construction of a small, wooden stage.

Weekend entertainment

That platform, being built this week, will be where nighttime entertainment will be played on Friday and Saturday nights, beginning Aug. 1 with performances from jazz singer Kimmie Hornsby, who has performed at NFL Super Bowls and the Montreaux Jazz Festival.

"It'll certainly add some character," said Suchara, who holds a bachelor of arts degree from Northwood. Insouciant in hotel/restaurant management, the nice menu, an excellent wine list (more than 100 selections), phenomenal music of Sinatra and his buddies, fine cigars...

"Entertainment is the logical next step. It's going to be a very clubby atmosphere." In October or November, that will be kicked up a notch with the introduction of cigar- and wine-tasting dinners.

Those attractions should help Carvers continue to draw more

customers, according to Suchara. He has seen a "slow build" of clientele has been taking place since the switch from more-casual Mountain Jacks. The business people like the sophisticated environment, but folks from all walks of life are repeat customers. There are two women in their 60s who pop in every week for slabs of barbecued ribs. A pastor from Dearborn goes for the prime rib on a weekly basis.

Through such customers, and word-of-mouth, Suchara is confident the blend of atmosphere, food and friendly service will be enough of a "quality statement" to bring new people in and keep them coming back. He makes that statement despite the average per-meal cost of \$30, which includes wine and dessert, but not cigars.

"We are the treat," said Suchara, emphasizing that people can watch their diets and still splurge when they want to. "This is where people go when they want to treat themselves. Everybody has a craving and



Today's fare: Carvers offers "the treat" for people who otherwise watch their diets, according to manager Frank Suchara.

that's where we fit in." (For more details about Carvers Steaks & Chops, 24275 Sinacola Court, call 248-476-6333. Reservations suggested.)

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Drug store from page A1

mercy community affairs director. "Rite Aid and Arbor can do volume buying for all their sites and that has to say something for their profitability."

But, added Soronen, "People don't always shop on price. It could be for service. It could be for special products. It could be for convenience."

The employees are what made Maple Drugs special, D'Anna said. The store delivered prescriptions and, whenever possible, added a personal touch.

"They were very kind," said D'Anna, who has a pacemaker and is diabetic. "They had a little time to (socialize). We were buddies. We all kissed and hugged when they left."

Medellina Brumer said she didn't find out Maple was shutting down until a few days before the

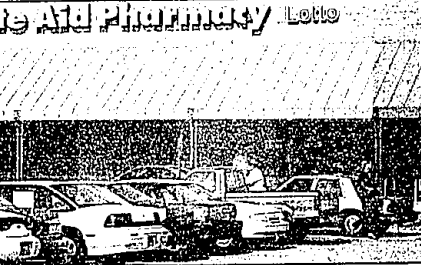
final day of operation when a clerk told her.

All employees were offered jobs at Rite Aid at the same pay, benefits and seniority level, a company spokeswoman said.

"Because of pressure of the industry, it's getting more and more difficult for the independent pharmacies to survive," said Sarah Datz, Rite Aid spokeswoman. "We occasionally offer independent drug store owners a chance to join Rite Aid and sell their business to Rite Aid."

"In many cases, we'll take on the actual owner and have them do the business they started, which is usually pharmacy."

Brumer made sure she stopped



Familiar sight: Look for another Rite Aid in town, as it replaces Maple Drugs. Shown is the store at 9 Mile and Farmington.

by on the last day just to say good-bye to employees.

"It was the people," Brumer said. "It was the pharmacists. They knew you. Even the clerks

would approach you and talk to you.

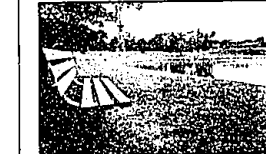
"We were like family over there. They knew us by name; We knew them by name."

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