

# Summit

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schools and middle schools raised their hands for the last two questions.

"We need to exert that positive peer pressure," Fox said. "It could be something as positive as taking away the keys, taking away an alcoholic beverage or talking to them."

The students also were asked to take to classmates the information gathered during the discussion, largely about the new "repeat offender" penalties for drinking and driving. Leading the talk was 47th District Court Administrator David Walsh.

Walsh outlined revised laws and administrative penalties for those charged with operating under the influence of alcohol, OUIL, or with an unlawful blood alcohol level (.10 percent in Michigan).

The main new administrative penalties, which took effect in October, are confiscation of license plates and immobilization of vehicles. He also talked about a category called OWI, operating while impaired, for those with a blood alcohol level of .07-.09 percent.

Penalties include the following:

■ First offense; one or more of the following: 45 days of community service; 93 days imprisonment; fines of (for OWI) up to \$300 and (for OUIL/OBAL) between \$100-\$500; possible vehicle immobilization of up to 180 days.

■ Second offense within seven years: A fine of between \$200-\$1,000 and one or more of the following: imprisonment from five days to one year; 90-90 days of community service. Also, possible vehicle forfeiture and mandatory vehicle immobilization of 24-180 days.

■ Third offense within 10 years: A fine of between \$500-\$5,000 and either 1-5 years imprisonment or probation with imprisonment of 30 days to one year and 60-180 days of community service. Also, mandatory vehicle immobilization of six months to three years and possible vehicle forfeiture.

Some students apparently thought Walsh was targeting them with his discussion and listing of penalties. One middle school student actually left the session.

"You're talking to us like we're the problem," lamented one Warner Middle School student. "What would you like us to do with this information?"

But Walsh, several times, emphasized he wasn't there to lecture to the students, only to inform them so that they could make good decisions.

"It's not my intent to stand up here and tell you what decisions to make," Walsh said. "I just want to give you more information about what the consequences are."

The court administrator later added that "by your presence here, I believe most of you are student leaders. I believe this information will go back to others."

One Power Middle School student thought student networking would be the best way to

communicate the summit's message. "We feel more kids are going to listen to us rather than adults," she said.

Students also contributed to a thoughtful dialogue about helping peers avoid falling into the trap of alcohol-drug abuse.

At East Middle School, one student said, a bulletin board helps inform people about drugs and their potential dangers, for example.

Near the end of the session, apparently set up to fulfill students' requests for information,

Betty Nicolay of Farmington Families in Action applauded the youngsters for their participation.

"I wish parents could hear what you have to say," Nicolay said. "... Go home and talk to your parents."

The summit was videotaped by the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission to air on education cable channels 10 and 12. A second interactive video was filmed later that day, about the effects of the date rape drug.



STAFF PHOTO BY BOB BAKER

**Straight talk: 47th District Court Administrator David Walsh outlined stricter penalties for drinking and driving offenses.**

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