

School teammates

FPS teams with Sorrows to offer arts and PE programs

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Next month, Farmington Public School officials are expected to approve a plan for shared time programming with Our Lady of Sorrows School for the 2002/2003 school year.

OLS, located in the district, is at 23815 Power Road. The public district would hire teachers who would work at the private school, teaching in non-academic areas.

"We feel that shared time programming with OLS would be beneficial to the district by showcasing our program at a private

school and providing net revenue to the district," said Cheryl Cannon, assistant superintendent for business, finance and operations.

A committee consisting of Cannon, Sue Zurvalle, assistant superintendent of business, finance and operations; Larry Lobert, executive director of personnel; music director Paul Barber and curriculum director Jerry Fouchey have been meeting since October with OLS Principal Roberta Clemak.

A provision in state law allows public school teachers to spend their day at OLS, Cannon said. During that time, religious sym-

bols in the classroom must be removed, she said.

The district also plans to reach out to St. Fabian School, 32200 12 Mile and Hill Day School, 32200 Middlebelt.

Subjects offered would be art and physical education in grades 1-8 and music in grades 1-7.

"In addition, OLS has requested physical education for kindergarten for which they are willing to pay," Cannon said.

The district envisions hiring four teachers who would work with about 682 students per week. Projected revenues in excess of expenditures are in the

\$175,000-\$200,000 range. Metro school districts with similar arrangements are Berkley, Clarenceville and Hazel Park. Start-up costs include salaries, equipment, ongoing supplies, computers, substitute teachers, and a technology link for recording student enrollment, Cannon said.

The school board was supportive Jan. 29. "It's almost like an outreach program for the public schools," said Gary Sharp, a board member.

The district would be subject to guidelines set by state law and the department of education.

Courses offered must be available to the public school students in the same grade level or age group during the regular school hours. The course length and grading system must also be similar.

The subjects taught must be nonessential elective sources that supplement the core curriculum of the nonpublic school — such as band, art, physical education and advanced math.

Students will be graded on the same system as public school students. The books, materials and equipment must be purchased with public funds and only used for public school programs, Cannon said.

For resident students, the full foundation aid would be provided as revenue to Farmington Public Schools. For non-resident students attending OLS, state aid that would normally go to the resident district would be provided as revenue to FPS. About 70 percent of OLS students reside in the Farmington School District.

Board Member Priscilla Brouillette asked if data could be provided to the board after the plan has been in place for about a year, to determine how much administrative work is involved.

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tions of the SUV. There have been four other incidents police believe involve the same man.

■ According to Dwyer, on Saturday morning, a 16-year-old girl walking near Dunckel Middle School was followed by a dark colored SUV, similar to the vehicle described in previous incidents.

Police said the driver spotted the girl, did a U-turn and started to slowly follow her. The girl became frightened and ran towards a home; the driver left down another side road.

■ On Feb. 1, around 10:40 a.m., a man was confronted by an office clerk at Wooddale Elementary who noticed he did not have a visitor's pass. The man said he was looking for a student, but the school did not have a student by that name. He left in a late model SUV.

■ On Jan. 30, police said at around 5:30 p.m. near Hillside Elementary School the male suspect drove by two girls, ages 7 and 8, rolled down his window and asked them to perform a sex act then drove away. He came back a few minutes later and said something the girls couldn't understand. The girls ran off.

■ On Jan. 29, an indecent exposure and assault of two girls near Botsford Elementary School in Livonia was reported. In that case, the man grabbed two girls, ages 8 and 9, walking on the street and exposed himself. He grabbed one girl by the arm and the other by her ponytail.

"It's a major concern to us," Dwyer said of finding the suspect.

Wooddale PTA President Angie Smith has a child attending Wooddale and another at Dunkle.

Safety tips for children

The Farmington Hills Police Department offers the following safety tips for kids:

- Walk in groups.
- Don't take shortcuts through secluded areas.
- Walk confidently and be alert of what's going on around you.
- Walk the same way to and from school.
- A child should check in with a parent or a trusted neighbor as soon as he or she arrives home.
- Don't talk to people you don't know.
- If a car pulls up to you, turn the opposite direction of the car and run away.
- Set up a password with your family, if someone tells you that he or she is there to pick you up from school and that person doesn't know the password, don't go with him or her.
- Parents should refrain from having children wear anything with their names on it. This can confuse a child when someone knows his or her name.

She said when news of the recent incidents occurred she called a meeting and made sure parents were aware of the facts.

"We work with the staff at the school," she said of getting the word out.

Smith said it's only natural that parents are worried about the safety of their kids, but that as long as the school staff and parents work together, the suspect should be

caught or they can limit his chance of accosting any more children.

"We're assuring parents we're going to keep a good watch on (the children)," she said.

Monitoring the children has been increased, she said. Parents volunteer to be greeters at the elementary school to make sure the people are there for the right reasons, she said.

She credited the secretary for responding properly to the incident at Wooddale. According to Superintendent Bob Maxfield, the office worker was following existing procedures, in place since the district's school safety plan was implemented.

After school starts, all doors are locked down except the front door. School renovation projects have been designed to move offices as close as possible to that entrance, Maxfield said.

"This guy came in the front door and just wandered down the hall," Maxfield said. "The office clerk stopped him. She said he wasn't threatening, he just seemed confused. She asked him a few questions, and he left."

In a regularly scheduled meeting with local police officials and school liaison officers, Maxfield said the district was advised not to completely lock down the schools. "You need to be sure everybody is on alert, but you can't achieve a level of user unfriendliness," he said.

Smith also pointed out that each year the children are giving a safety awareness class through Farmington Hills police and the Michigan Community Child Watch program.

"We got our guard up," she said.

—Staff writer Joni Hubred contributed to this story

CARRIER OF THE MONTH

Jon Garvey has been named Farmington Observer's Carrier of the Month for January. He is the son of Timothy and Karen Garvey of Farmington Hills and has a brother, Mike. Garvey is a junior at Harrison High School with a 3.5 grade point average. His favorite subjects are U.S. history and symphony band. In his spare time Garvey enjoys weight training, running and raising tropical salt water fish. He and his fellow marching band members were state champions in 1999 and 2001. He was also a state champion on the Harrison track team in 2000. Garvey plans to attend Michigan State University after high school and pursue a degree in law. He has been an Observer carrier since 1994.



Jon Garvey

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sign with a big eye, the symbol that identifies a safe house.

The department does background screening on potential volunteers.

"We keep strict records of who has what sign," Unruh said. "The sign is our property."

She said the department can take away the sign if a home is no longer deemed suitable. Since the program started in late 1999,

about 200 signs have been issued.

"We're always seeking new volunteers," said Unruh, "the more houses the better."

Volunteers must attend a police-sponsored training and everyone in the home age 17 years or older must have a background check.

To learn more call, Unruh at 473-9632.

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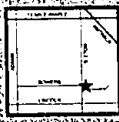
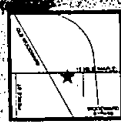
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