# Public will be surveyed at start-time meeting

By Sue Buck
Staff Writer
sbuck@oe.homecomm.net

Supporters of later high school start times based on adolescent sleep time research reiterated their convictions and Farmington school officials acknowledged financial concerns during a meeting held Feb. 4 at the Farmington Training Center.

"The board is not going to accept a recommendation that just says go ahead without paying any attention to the budget," said Farmington School Superintendent Bob Maxfield. "There are just too many key issues."

While the district had originally considered a fall 2002 implementation, the change is now targeted for the 2003-2004 school year. A committee charged with examining related concerns will still make a recommendation to the board in April; board members are expected to vote on the issue in May.

A public forum is scheduled for 7 p.m. Feb. 28 at the Costick Activities Center on 11 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

Those who attend will be asked to fill out a survey touching upon preference for high school start times. The survey will also measure the extent to which people are in favor, asking whether they support it if the cost is minimal or only if no programs are cut.

The subcommittees will meet again at 7 p. m. March 4 at the Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas Street.

"There is an incredible array of constituencies which needs to be heard," Maxfield said. "Every time we have one of these meetings, there's new people who have read about it."

Some public reaction has included concern over implementation costs in light of the district's financial woes. Officials need to cut $5.2 million from the $132 million budget next year because of a reduction in school aid experienced by all school districts.

"I've talked about this a lot in the last several days," Maxfield said. "As much as I've tried to stay positive, it isn't always received that way."

He mentioned that the West Bloomfield School district was already holding a public forum. In that district, the time change will decrease bus routes and result in cost savings, Maxfield said.

The issue seemed simple at first, he added.

"It was an easy conversation to have if we could do it in a cost neutral way," Maxfield said.

The district is looking at cutting 35-50 teaching positions. "Many think this is a great idea but not if it costs them their job," said Michelle Harris, a Harrison teacher and chairman of the school start time committee.

Robert Blair, a Farmington Hills resident, said when students enter the work force they will have to adapt to a work schedule. "The system won't adapt to them," he said.

Tim Garvey, a Farmington Hills resident, took issue with research and comments that the present start time is "abusive" to students.

"It's painful to read about the cuts," said Pam Charleston-Lyons, a parent. She preferred decisions which benefit all kids.

Henry Grysh, a Farmington Hills resident, asked why there isn't a national groundswell of support for changing start times.

Maxfield explained interest exists in other places like Minnesota and Washington D.C. suburbs. "Does this mean it will happen everywhere?" Maxfield asked. "At least the question is being asked."

## CRIME WATCH

*The following reports were filed during the past week with the Farmington Hills Police Department:*

**STOLEN DVDS**

A 44-year-old Detroit man was arrested for shoplifting after he stuffed two DVDs in his coat and later hid them in a container in his father's shopping cart while shopping at Sam's Club on Haggerty Thursday. The items were worth $40.

**DRUNKEN DRIVING**

Police responded to an accident at Flamingo mobile home park around 10:40 p.m. Thursday. A car had struck a central air conditioning unit attached to a trailer. The driver, a 56-year-old Farmington woman, was arrested for drunken driving but refused to take a take a breathalyzer test. Damage was estimated at $1,000.

At the I-696/Orchard Lake exit ramp, police responded to a vehicle in the ditch around 2 a.m. Saturday. The driver, a 22-year-old Canton woman, was arrested for drunken driver after recording a .16 blood/alcohol level.

**ITEMS STOLEN**

A man living in an apartment in the 24500 block of Lincoln Ct. told police Friday he returned home from work during the day and found his TV, computer printer and about $700 in cash stolen. There were no signs of forced entry.

**JEEP TAKEN**

A 28-year-old Novi man said he rented a room at a local hotel and called an escort service during Saturday evening. Two women came to his room. He told police he was doing cocaine during the night and passed out. When he awoke, he discovered his 2000 Jeep Cherokee and its keys were missing.

**DRUG BUST**

At around 7:45 p.m. Friday, a 23-year-old Detroit man was arrested after officers found him sitting in parked car at a motel. He had an open liquor container and nine baggies of marijuana in the vehicle.

**STOLEN SHOES**

After 1 a.m. Saturday, three hockey players said someone took two pairs of shoes and $60 cash from the unsecured locker room at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena.

**CASH TAKEN**

A 47-year-old Farmington Hills man said when he got done exercising at the YMCA on Farmington Road around 8:15 p.m. Saturday, he discovered the lock to his locker was taken off and $60 in cash was taken from his wallet.

**ANGRY CUSTOMER**

Around 2:50 a.m. Sunday, a driver at the White Castle restaurant apparently became upset after being told at the pay window of the drive-through that if he wanted to order more food, he would have to get back in the service line. The man drove around, got out and destroyed a 36-by-30-inch window with a trash container and took off.

**STOLEN MIRROR**

At about 10:50 a.m. Sunday, management at the Radisson Suites hotel told police they spotted a young guest take a mirror from her room and put it into a pick up. Police questioned the girl, 13, from Canton, who told police her father told her take the mirror, but to go out the back way.

*--Compiled by Paul R. Pace*

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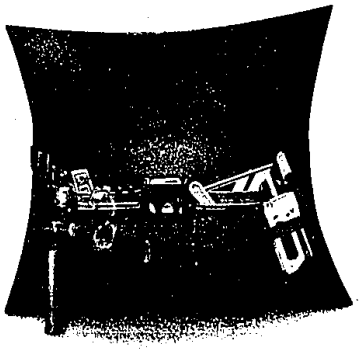

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