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County looks into illnesses after catered school event

BY SUE BUCK
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When several school employees talked among themselves Monday about their bout with some type of stomach flu last weekend, the incidents took on more than coincidental similarity.

The employees all participated in Students Operating Schools Day held March 8, when students shadowed teachers and administrators to learn about careers in education.

The employees ate lunch with the 45 participating students at the Farmington Training Center.

The "culprit" seemed to be chicken salad sandwiches, said Farmington Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield. He spoke from experience because he, too, consumed it and became ill later. So did Diane Bauman, director of school community relations,

Forest Elementary Principal Lloyd Lewis, William Grace Elementary Principal Mark Marowski and Debbie McCracken, one of Maxfield's secretaries, and Board Member Priscilla Brouillette, to name a few people.

North Farmington High Principal Rick Jones and Sue Zuvalec, assistant superintendent for staff and community services, who ate turkey sandwiches, were fine, Maxfield said.

The employees seemed to become ill between midnight and 4 a.m. Sunday morning, he said. This was the second time this caterer was used. The first time was for a Farmington school board dinner held prior to the pre-meeting which took place before the 7:30 p. m. March 6 board study session, Maxfield said.

The district, on its own, decided to notify the Oakland County Health Department. "We haven't heard of any kids being sick," he

said. Maxfield said he didn't know the name of the caterer because he didn't make the arrangements. Bauman declined to name the caterer, because the investigation is on-going.

The company isn't Farmington or Farmington Hills-based, Bauman said.

Oakland County health officials started contacting parents Thursday, after they were notified on March 13.

Parents are required to grant permission in order for their children to be interviewed, said George Miller, manager/health officer of the Oakland County Health Division. "We will be interviewing 80-90 people."

He also wouldn't divulge the name of the caterer. "We don't know if that is the problem," Miller explained. "We don't want to put anybody's business in jeopardy."

All-Night Party committee needs help

BY JONI HUBRED
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It used to be that parents raised money for the Senior All-Night Party at Clarensville High School with a popular casino night at which alcohol was served.

These days, organizers are more conscious of setting a good example when they raise the \$10,000 needed to hold the alcohol-free event. So they're coming up with new ideas - like providing baby-sitting services for busy parents last weekend.

The irony wasn't lost on school board member John Shaw, who is co-chairing this year's event

with his wife, Diane.

"It's like when D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) calls me to a deal where they have a cash bar," he said at a recent Board meeting. "It doesn't make sense."

According to CHS Principal David Simowski, only a handful of parents are actively involved, and they need more help. Activities thus far have included selling concessions at sporting events, bake sales, selling Little Caesar's pizza kits and soliciting donations from area businesses.

Co-chair Sharon Shaw said the baby-sitting day offered a variety of activities for children at a cost of just \$20 for four hours, with

no more than \$30 charged per family. It was staffed by seniors, with the help of their parents.

Students have also had the chance to sign up as volunteers for planned fund-raisers, which is now this year.

Superintendent of Schools Thomas Tattan suggested using funds from the sale of Coca-Cola products to help out.

"Even if we don't fund the whole thing, we could start them out with five grand," suggested Board member John Kanyo.

Anyone interested in helping out with the All-Night Party or signing up to assist with fundraisers, may contact the school, at 248-473-8926.

Blood drive held at First Presbyterian

Anyone who is at least 17 years of age and in general good health and would like to help meet the needs of our community should attend the American Red Cross Blood Drive held at

First Presbyterian Church of Farmington on March 25, 2 p.m.-8 p.m.

It only takes about an hour to donate. Please call the church

office at 474-6170 to make an appointment.

Walk-ins are welcome, also. The Church is located at the northwest corner of Eleven Mile and Farmington Roads.

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