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for art through different artists. "I'm not an art professional," Kabadian said. "I don't mind doing that, being in the classroom, but that's not how an art program should be done. An art program run by the public schools is head and shoulders above what we have now."

The separate Art in a Cart program brings in about 25 part-time volunteers, he said. Sorrows has a music teacher for K-5 but not preschool or 6-8. There are two teachers in the physical education program. It's expected that these "variable" teachers would be offered different jobs, O'Malley said.

Communication

She admits there was an initial communication problem. "I don't think we were at a stage where we were ready to communicate it, but things leaked out. We didn't expect a story to appear in the paper on something which was so much in-the-air planning. We were scrambling to play catch up."

Our Lady of Sorrows has a music teacher for K-5 but not preschool or 6-8. There are two teachers in the physical education program.

Ideally, the teachers affected and the staff should have been notified before the general population, O'Malley said.

There was a 15-minute meeting before school on a Monday morning so unfortunately these teachers found out about it 15 minutes before they went to their classrooms. They were upset because it affected their careers and then they had to teach all day.

In OLS Principal Roberta Clemak's defense, Kabadian said, it's not her job to handle public relations on this particular topic.

Most people in the church are being patient, said Bruton, who serves on the Parent Teacher Guild, a group of volunteers who schedule activities.

There's a willingness to work with the parents who disagree with the concept of shared time. "We need to work together," O'Malley said. "We are a great parish. These people who we disagree with are our friends. We love these people and we are going to work this out."

Chris Gullen, 25, doesn't have children at OLS, but remembered the fine education he received there. "It influenced a lot of my later thinking."

He was embarrassed by some of the comments parishioners made at the last School Board meeting. "The Roman Catholic Church is already not being looked at in a favorable light," Gullen said. "This just adds more fuel to the fire."



A league of their own: City officials attending the National League of Cities convention in Washington, D.C. spent some time with Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Michigan). From left to right: Councilmen Barry Brickner and Christopher McRae, assistant city manager Dana Whinnery, Mayor Nancy Bates and Sen. Stabenow.

Officials learn about national issues

Members of the Farmington Hills City Council attended a four-day conference at the nation's capital in early March to learn more about national legislative issues and policies that could affect the city.

Hills Mayor Nancy Bates and councilwoman Vicki Barnett arrived a day earlier than council members Barry Brickner, Jerry Ellis, Christopher McRae and Jon Grant, to serve on committees.

"It was a good conference," Bates said of the National League of Cities Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

She plans to use the information she learned about homeland security with a new committee she is spearheading. The goal is to have a Hills homeland security plan in place to cope with any large-scale disasters. She plans to conduct the committee's first meeting soon as other city administrators gather more information about the subject.

Bates said the conference is a way for city officials to learn the latest news about legislative



Youth in government: Josh Rabinowitz and Courtney Creitz of the Farmington Hills/Farmington Youth Council made a presentation to Sen. Carl Levin.

issues that affect cities. Also, national legislators learn city leaders' concerns about federal funding that supports cities.

The major issues discussed included increased road funds, financial assistance for sewer system enhancements, Community Development Block Grant

Funds and funding for youth programs.

Six high school students, who are members of the Mayors Youth Council, also attended the conference, working with young from across the nation to establish agendas for the coming year.

--by staff writer Paul Pace

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