

Parents and officials discuss global education

BY JOHN HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER

A small but concerned group of parents turned out March 13 to talk about how to educate children who live in a more global world.

Farmington Schools Supt. Bob Masfield said the forum grew out of a community-wide interest a year ago in giving community members a venue to talk about the local impact of world-wide issues. A panel discussion held last year included people from the community who are from and still have relatives living in war-torn Middle East countries.

"Parents are calling the schools, asking 'What do I say to my kids? How do we do more to grips with being citizens of the world?'" Masfield said.

The district has already made some curriculum changes, necessitated by Michigan Educational Assessment Program testing. Because 9th graders are tested on government, school officials moved government courses previously offered to seniors back to that level, replacing it with courses on global cultures and international affairs.

Parent Mike Leeds said he's concerned about the government class being moved to into the lower grade, because older students should have the emphasis on voter and government participation.

"I would think it's important to send our graduating class off with that," he said. "I would like to see our ninth graders getting the diversity training."

School board members Linda Enberg and Priscilla Brouillette stressed the decision was no in the district's hands.

"It was out of our control. It became a state issue," Brouillette said.

Director of Bilingual Education Samir Haddad said a

shrinking world creates the need to teach kids more about life in other countries.

"The world really is getting smaller and smaller," he said. "That kind of international perspective comes with a price, the challenge of how we deal with people who are different from us."

In looking at the components needed to ensure graduates are global citizens, he said the district looked at knowledge of conflict, how it evolves and is controlled; knowledge of economic systems, governments and world populations trends; and how culture influences identity, among other elements.

"The ability to look beyond our own culture... is the essence of what global education is all about," Haddad said.

Director of Curriculum Jerry Fouchev said a diverse student population serves as a resource in educating with a global perspective. Even in the face of shrinking resources, global education is important, because of the growing diversity within the community. "The ability to relate to people different from ourselves is rapidly becoming an essential skill," he said. "It's not whether kids need it, but when."

A number of curriculum areas address global ideas, not just specific classes. He referred in particular to foreign language programs, which begin at grade 4 and go on through Advanced Placement levels.

The district's hiring practices and staff development offerings also demonstrate valuing diversity.

Community commitment is evidenced by the Multicultural Multiracial Community Council and the annual Heritage Festival, among other events. North Farmington High teacher Elias Khalil described his students' participation in a Model United Nations program. Drawing students from across the state, the

Model U.N. assigns students a country to research, then challenges them to represent that country in a U.N.-type assembly.

"They have to take on the perspective of someone other than themselves," he said. "They embrace the idea and they are changed because of it."

The program provides resources for research. Parents expressed concern about whether students were getting complete, unbiased information about their country, and whether materials were offered to present opposing points of view.

Khalil encourages students to look beyond the tools offered by the program. "They present as much as they've learned," he said, stressing the three-day Model U.N. isn't a classroom teaching situation, but an extra-curricular activity.

"I'm just a facilitator for the club," he said. "I don't think they see themselves exclusively to those views, because the conference is about countries, and no two countries see things the same way...You really have to fight hard to win a battle."

One parent who later asked not to be identified requested that because American students are being educated with American dollars, the American point of view should be an ingredient in what they're learning, even if they're studying about a different country.

"Don't you think we're doing that on a daily basis?" countered Haddad.

Sue Zuravale, Assistant Superintendent for Staff and Community Services, also noted fundamental democratic values are built into curriculum offered throughout the district.

"(The Model U.N.) is a wonderful example of co-curricular programming that will teach kids a global perspective," she said.



Breaking ground

The Garrison Company, a design/build firm in Farmington Hills, celebrated the groundbreaking ceremony of Wellspring Church, a member of American Baptist Churches USA founded in 1906. The Garrison Company is providing design and construction for the new 12,000-square-foot church, which will feature sanctuary space for 120 persons, infant and toddler's rooms, administrative offices as well as a lower level multi-purpose room. Pictured left to right are Mark Tucker, president of The Garrison Company, Richard Diavellet, pastor Jane Moshenruse, Judy Hittie, Jim Watson, John Hohman and Jason Klingensmith, vice president of Garrison.

OBITUARIES

Herbert Long
Private memorial services are pending for Herbert Elwood Long, 84 of Farmington Hills. Mr. Long was born Aug. 9, 1918, in New Concord, Ohio, and died at Beaumont Hospital March 7. He graduated from Miami University of Ohio in 1942, then went to work for the accounting division of Fisher Body in Flint.

Throughout his career, he worked at locations in Michigan, Ohio and Florida as an accountant, controller and eventually became president and CEO of Miami's Mercy Hospital; where he worked until retiring in 1984.

Survivors include his wife, Betty; children Matt, Pam and Linda; five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

To make a donation or to learn more, call (248)956-4473.

Heeneey-Sundquist Funeral Home handled the local arrangements. Memorials may be made to the Mercy Ministry Fund, 29000 11 Mile, Farmington Hills, MI 48336-1405.

Sister Mary Hilda Duffey
Services for Sister Mary Hilda Duffey RSM, 82, were March 20 at McAuley Center in Farmington Hills with burial following in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

Sister Duffey was born Nov. 6, 1921, in Jackson to parents Francis and Mary Ellen Duffey and died March 19 at McAuley Center. Buried at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

Sister Mary Generose Kubesh, who worked with Sister Mary Hilda Duffey at Mercy Hospital in Grayling, remembers her as

quiet, considerate, helpful and always anxious to do whatever she could to improve patient care. Sister is survived by two nieces, a nephew and the sisters in her Mercy community.

McCauley Funeral Home in Farmington Hills handled the arrangements. Memorials may be made to the Mercy Ministry Fund, 29000 11 Mile, Farmington Hills, MI 48336-1405.

Leona Davis
Services for Leona Bertha Davis, 80, of Farmington will be 10 a.m. Monday, March 24, from Our Lady of Sorrows Church with the Rev. Ronald Brown officiating.

Mrs. Davis was born Nov. 28, 1922, in Detroit and died March 21 at Providence Hospital. She enjoyed doing crafts.

Survivors include her children, Thomas Davis; John (Katie) Davis; Scott (Lori) Davis; Lori (David) Thomas; sisters Joyce Larkin; Dolores Yurmanovic and Naneie Guthrie; nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Preceding in death were her husband, Vernon Davis and brother, Leo Koch.

Cremation rites were accorded. Heeneey-Sundquist Funeral Home handled the local arrangements. Memorials may be made to Hospice of Michigan, 400 Mack Ave., Detroit, MI 48201.

Western athletes seek drive pledges

Walled Lake Western High School athletes are seeking pledges for the 22nd Annual Volleyball Marathon, scheduled 4 p.m. Friday, April 4 to noon Saturday, April 5 at the high

school. Each student is required to raise a minimum of \$100 in pledges in order to participate in the marathon. Proceeds will benefit the Children's Leukemia Foundation of Michigan.

Since 1981, more than 4,700 students have participated in the marathon, raising \$455,000 for local charities.

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