

CENTER

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Todd Lipa, program director for Farmington Hills Youth and Family Services, said the center's expansion and redesign, with input from students, exceeded expectations.

"It turned out better than we planned," he said. "We heard nothing but great compliments." Lipa said students painted murals on the center's walls.

"You can tell the kids are appreciative of having a place to call their own," he said.

The center can also be rented out for parties. Other youth programs in the community are welcome to use the facility, Lipa said. "The kids know that the community put the money together to build this so it's intended to be used by the community," he said. On Friday, a local band is scheduled to perform on the ice, Lipa added.

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Bill Bretler | Staff Photographer
The newly rebuilt 2nd floor features things that kids enjoy. They can play games or grab a snack in the cafe area. Krissy Yodanis, and Nick and Val Gladd enjoy pizza at the dedication of the newly remodeled after school center.



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CHOICE

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as the present system doesn't give siblings priority. Farmington School Board members will meet at 5:30 p.m. April 1 in a policy and board operations committee to discuss the subject.

The untelevised meeting will be held in the school administration building on Shiawassee, east of Farmington Road.

The in-district schools of choice plan is taking on more significance because the recently approved out-of-district schools of choice plan allows for sibling priority under state law, if there are openings at specific grades.

Ryberg's son, Ben, is a School of Choice student now in his senior year. The family lives in the Warner Middle/Harrison High School attendance area,

but chose Dunekel Middle School. If Ben hadn't been picked for North Farmington High School through a lottery, Ryberg would have sent him to the International Academy, she said.

Jan Colliton, assistant superintendent for instruction, said she received about a dozen letters from parents on a variety of issues following a Feb. 7 lottery for in-district schools of choice. Some parents asked her to reconsider sibling priority and some asked her to consider special circumstances.

"Transfers are given for very rare occasions, for very rare instances," Colliton said. "They have to be such extenuating circumstances. We have three good high schools which can meet the children's needs."

"They will get a good education at all three, Colliton said.

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DUST

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Barnett argued special assessment districts are typically done for residents looking for an improvement, such as repaving a subdivision's roads.

"This is a maintenance issue," she said. "We should allow maintenance items in the budget." Council's Barry Brickner and Christopher McRae agreed it was a maintenance item as well.

Mayor Nancy Bates said,

"Money's tight but that doesn't justify looking for it in the wrong places... It's clearly maintenance."

Ellis said he knew his proposal would lose, but wanted to make his case.

The motion was defeated by a 4-3 vote, with Ellis, Grant and Councilwoman Cheryl Oliverio voting in favor.

"This is just to keep dust from getting into their houses," Ellis said. "I believe people who live on gravel roads should pay for it."

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