

10 Farmington School Board Candidates Give Views On Issues Concerning Residents

By EMORY DANIELS

FARMINGTON
With 12 candidates running for the Farmington Board of Education, it can be taken for granted a divergence of opinion exists.

In this campaign there is a wide divergence with even the liberals disagreeing on some issues and conservatives and moderates likewise differing with their fellow philosophers.

THE ONLY single area of agreement at the five "Meet the Candidate" programs is that 10 are opposed to cross-district busing.

Joe T. Fowlkes and Paul Oliver Jr. have failed to answer all of the candidate's nights and have ignored questionnaires sent out by the Farmington Enterprise & Observer, and so their views on busing are unknown.

The two candidates who have come the closest to seeing eye-to-eye on issues have been Bruce E. Duke and David V. Gayner, both nine-year members of the John Birch Society and active in the abortive school attempt in the midst of the sex education controversy.

The views of candidates expressed at candidate meetings follow below with candidates listed in alphabetical order.

WILLIAM CORLISS says it appears the board can make out this year without cutting into curriculum.

What is needed is implementation of the best possible management techniques to make sure the funds the district has are spent in the best possible way, he continued. "New methods of management should be investigated."

Corliss says he believes that teachers have rights to vote in school board elections and work for the candidates of their choice.

On the minority understanding program, he responds: "The purpose of education is to prepare students to live in the world, there can be no question that the minority understanding program is not only advisable and desirable but it is imperative."

He said he has not studied in depth the question of consolidating elementary schools but, on the surface, would oppose such a step.

Asked about curbing vandalism in the schools, Corliss said the schools must become more deeply involved in the community and vice versa because the problem of vandalism is similar to the problem of graffiti.

"You just don't destroy what is yours. A more positive attitude is needed in the community about learning."

On sex education, Corliss urged parents to go to the school and examine the guidelines and decide for themselves. He noted that on the junior high level only three per cent of all parents for their children to be removed from sex-ed classes.

On the fifth junior high, Corliss said two junior highs are already overcrowded — Dunckel and East. Harrison High has ninth graders attending and ninth graders belong in junior high surroundings, he added.

"The Farmington area population will double before it stabilizes. I don't care about declining birth rates because when you have twice as many people as you have room to assume you will have more children than now. The district's total enrollment has increased each year, and, although elementary has declined, there are new

subdivisions under construction."

Corliss concludes that it's a shame that in a community as affluent as the Farmington area persons place more emphasis on snowmobiles and cabin cruisers than on education.

BRUCE E. DUKE said three years ago he became involved in the fight against sex education and minority understanding and discovered other weaknesses in the system, he added.

He said there is a lack of discipline and the schools must teach self-discipline. Duke said after three millage defeats, the board should get the message but still hasn't. A fourth election shouldn't be held, adds, because "the system is failing."

Duke said the questions need for the fifth junior high especially, since the board was thinking of closing Bond Elementary and Cloverdale. (Since the meeting in Power Junior High, the board has decided against closing Bond but will partially close Cloverdale Elementary.)

The neighborhood school concept is very important and should be expanded. Duke says his priorities are quality education program stressing the "3 R's" followed by a top sports program and teaching self-discipline to achieve these goals.

On finances, Duke said the administration should come up with two or three proposals for the board to consider. He personally would provide for quality education first, sports second, and trim from the budget, he said.

Gayner said he opposes consolidating of elementary building and construction of the fifth junior high.

To save money, Gayner suggests elimination of building the new junior high, eliminating the position of director of elementary education and eliminating some of the newer courses.

Gayner said he voted against the last three millage proposals and would support the board to consider. He believes that the board can be made without jeopardizing a good education for students and homeowners cannot afford a fourth.

He said the teachers' union doesn't have the right to campaign in a trustee's election and work for a candidate because the union may not represent the teachers' views.

Duke adds he was taught understanding for minorities when he was in school and believes a formal minority understanding program is unnecessary.

To combat vandalism, he said, vigorous enforcement of the law is needed and anyone caught should feel the full weight of the law. The district should publicize the amount of vandalism occurring so parents will know what's happening.

Families living near schools and students attending schools should cooperate with police by turning in the names of anyone they see vandalizing school property, he added.

Duke said sex education failed to accomplish the goal it should have, leads to increases in illegitimate births and promiscuity.

On the fifth junior high, Duke said enrollment is down in elementary grades and added that since Judge Steven Roth issued his decision, 95 per cent of his calls on real estate have been cut off in the Farmington area. Homes sales in Farmington will be drastically down, he added, if Roth orders busing.

ALBERT DARIAN says he would like to make budget cuts in areas other than curriculum, vocational education and special education.

He said he voted for the last three millage proposals but doesn't feel a fourth millage request should be placed on the ballot. He said he is over-anxious about busing and property tax relief. If the community requested another millage vote, Darian said he would support putting one on the ballot.

He said he is in favor of sex education but against the present plan which states parents must ask for their children to be excused from the classes. Instead, Guion said, sex education should be an elective course with students having to ask to take the class before being enrolled.

With 75 per cent of the budget going towards instruction, he added, any property tax cuts should be in the lunch programs and study halls.

Guion said he actively supported the last three millage requests but would be reluctant to support another at this time. He said he supports maintaining some type of property tax in order to maintain control of local schools but would like legislation to relax the tax burden from the schools.

He said he is opposed to consolidation of elementary schools. He added that business methods should be employed for the schools but this meant there was more to consider than just the profit and loss columns of the schools.

On vandalism, Guion said the teachers should not be made policemen and, somehow, families had to be involved in the school system and community.

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Darian said he is strongly opposed to consolidation of elementary schools and questions the benefits. The loss of local neighborhood schools would degrade the system, he added.

DAVID V. GAYNER says he supports quality education which he defines as emphasis on the "3 R's" and sports.

On sex education, he said he was willing to let the schools teach about the biological functions of the body but felt parents should teach the intimate parts of sex education and apply their moral codes.

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KENNETH POYE says the district's main problem is financial and the board must find ways of solving problems by applying techniques used by business.

When making budget cuts, Poye said trustees should avoid being swayed by emotion but analyze the situation objectively and make unbiased decisions after analyzing all the facts.

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DAVID M. JONES said the number one issue is the financial condition of the schools and stated millages would pass if the board gave voters the specific details on why the funds were needed.

Jones adds he is very opposed to busing because it would result in a situation where residents would lose control over their local schools.

He said he felt the board is strong in failing to come out strong enough in expressing opposition to cross-district busing.

MERVYN ROSS comments that as a trustee he sees new crises almost every week from federal, state and local levels.

The function of the board is to set policies and guidelines with the end in mind of the development, education and maturing of children, he stated.

"Many serious problems are being dealt with at that level regardless of which candidates are successful."

Ross said his primary concern for youth is that, upon graduation, they will feel comfortable entering their new life.

The budget is a constantly fluid amount of dollars carried and if programs are developed there must be provisions for them in the budget, Ross continued.

"Cuts have to be made and are being made, but I don't want to see any further cuts in our programs that advance our children."

Ross said he supported the last three millage requests vigorously and said all seven members of the board are unanimous that the money was needed and the district is spending funds prudently.

Because of the large turnout in the last election, Ross emphasized the board must adhere to the will of the community and he would not support another millage election at this time.

Ross said he supports all three millage proposals and there is nothing more critical today in our society than the effect of our lack of these kinds of programs."

Mingo said he opposed consolidating of elementary schools and would like schools to be opened to the community to persons other than students during the school day. "School is a place for persons to get enrichment regardless of learning."

On solving budget problems, Mingo said he would shorten the school day and enlist community volunteers to provide non-credit extracurricular activities after school such as sports and music.

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JACK MINGO says he knows what is going on inside the schools more than any other candidate because he is a recent graduate of North Farmington High.

"We need students on the board who can see what is happening in the schools. We also need teachers on the board. It is time we begin to run schools for the purpose of learning."

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ALBERT A. DARIAN, 24605 Glen Orchard Dr., is a professional senior engineer with Ford Motor Co.; has lived in Farmington area for 15 years, 11 in township and four in city; was vice president of former Neighborhood Civic Assn.; civil engineering graduate of the University of Michigan; he is opposed to cross-district busing and is interested in seeing a full-line of curriculum pursued to equip children for the future; he hopes voters will financially support the district to maintain the integrity of its fine programs.

DAVID V. GAYNER, 32218 Hull Ave., is a supervisor for Michigan Bell in Pontiac; former secretary-treasurer, Communications Workers of America Local 4017; was member city study committee in Nankin Township, now City of Westland; graduate St. Mary Catholic High School in Wayne; believes more emphasis should be placed on the "3 R's" with a full sports program; is opposed to cross-district busing, the fifth junior high, sex education and minority understanding curriculum programs. Has been member of John Birch Society for nine years.

KENNETH POYE says the district's main problem is financial and the board must find ways of solving problems by applying techniques used by business.

He said budget cuts could be eliminated if the new junior high, lowering of the 10 per cent architectural fee, which he described as exorbitant.

Strelczuk criticized hiring a construction manager at \$50,000 a year for the fifth junior high when the district is paying a building and grounds manager to do the work for the district.

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Guion said an unfortunate

trend is developing for society to take on responsibilities which used to belong to the family unit, citing sex education as an example.

POYE said his first reaction is to oppose consolidating elementary schools and added that his business approach to running the system is not so ruthless to be limited to profits only.

Poye said in deciding budget cuts, he cannot see why special attention should be given musicians, artists and dramatists without giving the arts consideration to other athletes.

MERVYN ROSS, 31152 Carridge Hill, is a medical doctor and has served for the past year on the Farmington Board of Education; as a trustee, he has served on the board's public relations and safety committee and has functioned as the board's representative to the Farmington Area Advisory Council; he believes the district must preserve the concept of a total educational program so graduates can feel comfortable entering their new life.

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WILLIAM H. CORLISS, 23440 Wilmeth, is owner of contracting firm in Farmington for past seven years; involved in labor negotiations for past six years; president in 1970-71 of Michigan Contractors Assn.; active in many youth groups; believes in increased citizen involvement, a district-wide pre-school evaluation, curriculum coordination between elementary and secondary schools, and better programs for the non-college bound student; he is opposed to cross-district busing.

KENNETH J. GUION, 25771 Kilreigh Ct., associate of Smith, Hinckley & Grylls Associates architectural-engineering firm, Detroit, former U. of Toledo instructor; past president, Middlebelt PTA; he opposes cross-district busing, supported recent millage proposals, opposes requiring attendance in sex education classes and against making parental action necessary for withdrawal. Has a master's degree in engineering from the Univ. of Michigan.

BRUCE E. DUKE, 28415 Inkster Rd., is a real estate broker and builder and owner of Bruce E. Duke Construction Co.; served on Family Life Education subcommittee of Farmington Schools; member John Birch Society nine years; chairman, South Oakland MOTOREDE, a JBS ad hoc committee; has served on board of Builders Assn. of Metropolitan Detroit; attended Redford High School; says his top priority is a quality education program encompassing the "3 R's" and a quality sports program; feels schools should teach self-discipline; is opposed to cross-district busing and construction of the fifth junior high.

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