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Daily Editorials

School arrogance not needed

By: JOHN CUSUMANO , Of The Oakland Press

07/19/2003

July 19, 2003

What are Farmington school officials thinking? A better question: Are they even thinking?

It appears some school trustees are going out of their way to antagonize and ignore a group of parents who have a simple request - to be informed of any significant changes that impact their children's education. The problem centers on a new and somewhat controversial social studies curriculum for the district's three high schools. Worse is that parents believe they were not adequately informed of the changes. That, rightfully so, has them angry.

As a result, parents want promises that they will be informed of future curriculum changes and will be more involved in the entire process.

Schools officials contend they're cooperating, but there's little evidence of that.

Some Farmington board members are losing sight of who they work for, which is never a good practice regardless of the endeavor.

And with public education under such a microscope these days, such arrogance and aloofness in any school district is the last thing that's needed.

Oakland County was served well

Elected officials often do not fare well on this page, whether it's letters from our readers or in Oakland Press editorials.

That's not the case today.

There has been a lot of celebrating this week by local officials on the reinstatement by the state of four major road projects here - the interchanges at Interstate 96 and Beck in Novi, M-59 and Adams in Rochester Hills, I-696 and Franklin in Southfield and I-75 and Crooks in Troy.

The four projects were among 10 in Oakland County previously dropped by Gov. Jennifer Granholm because of the state's financial crisis. They were resurrected this week - along with 13 others across Michigan - as part of a deal worked out between the governor and Legislature.

But behind the scenes some very effective and intense lobbying was done by Oakland Executive L. Brooks Patterson and our state representatives and senators - lobbying that apparently was instrumental in the county faring so well.

Our kudos to Patterson and our state legislators. Hopefully, these nice words won't change once Oakland County is bogged down in the construction tie-ups that surely will engulf these four projects.

Darts and Laurels

Thumbs Up: To Steve Peck of Birmingham, who's working to build a baseball field in the county for mentally and physically challenged children.

Thumbs Down: To the in-fighting at Pontiac Central, which might cost the high school its marching band.

Thumbs Down: To Southfield attorney Ralph Mayers, who decided to dump client information into public trash bins.

Thumbs Down: To former Country Day and University of Michigan basketball phenom Chris Webber, who apparently never learned that lying is a no-no.

JOHN CUSUMANO

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