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Thursday, November 15, 2007

Letter

Ferndale doesn't produce a 'dropout factory'

It is imperative to set the record straight about the graduation and dropout rate at Ferndale High School.

The Oct. 30 article, "Michigan study's dropout list" indicated 78 Michigan schools are "dropout factories," according to Johns Hopkins University researchers. Labeling Ferndale High School a "dropout factory" grossly misrepresents our school district.

Actually, our graduation rates are high. The Class of 2006's retention rate was 97.72 percent, the dropout rate was 2.28 percent and graduation rate was 91.27 percent.

Michigan retention and dropout rates are defined by a formula that calculates the number of ninth graders who graduate from high school within four years, adjusting for the students who move in and out of the district, leave school in any one year and transfer to alternative programs.

Johns Hopkins used raw numbers of students enrolled in 2003 and 2006, and did not take into account student mobility. The researchers drew an inaccurate conclusion that students no longer in the district dropped out of school.

Our Ferndale High School graduates are accomplishing great things and continue to make us proud. Our accomplishments and success continue despite the protracted state fiscal crisis over the past five years that forced us to eliminate 17 percent of our expenditures. We are committed to a full-service, instructionally sound public school district with successful graduates who are well-prepared for the world at large.

Gary W. Meier

Superintendent

Ferndale Public Schools

Ferndale