

Staff of 120 working at special education school

(Continued from page one)

apartment type unit, to teach less severely impaired youngsters such skills as cooking, cleaning and making beds. The more independent they can be, the less costly burden they will be to society.

Diagnostic testing of pre-school children who may have handicaps will be done at the school.

The administrators hope to eventually make the facilities, such as the pool,

available to handicapped adults and possibly the community at large. "Our philosophy is, we want the facilities used more than six hours a day," Jones commented.

COST

Total cost of Highland Pines, according to Jerome Thienes, TISD assistant superintendent and director of business and finance, was \$3.53 million. That includes construction, architects' fees, equipment, etc.

Of that amount, \$1.8 million came from the state to cover its share of the cost for providing facilities for the teaching of residents at the Regional Center.

The rest of the money is coming from the .6 mill approved by county voters in February, 1976, which first appeared on tax bills that December.

Some money from that source has been spent directly for the building. In addition, revenue from the millage is being used to pay

off the four-year bonds sold to help finance construction. There are two years remaining to pay off the bonds.

Including that levy, a total of 1.6 mills is levied within the county for all special education. It is all a charter millage, with no expiration date.

The state also pays part of the operating cost at Highland Pines. It pays 100 percent for the Regional Center residents enrolled there.

The state subsidizes all special education programs, which works out to about 40 percent of the cost per child at Highland Pines who is a county resident. The remaining 60 percent comes out of the 1.6 mills.

Jones and Mahan are hopeful the total cost of educating the mentally impaired in Tuscola county will be reduced, through such means as energy savings, bus transportation and maintenance.

The new building has a staff of 120, including teachers, therapists, aides, bus drivers and custodians. That is a few less than were employed last year for the same programs, due to fewer students.

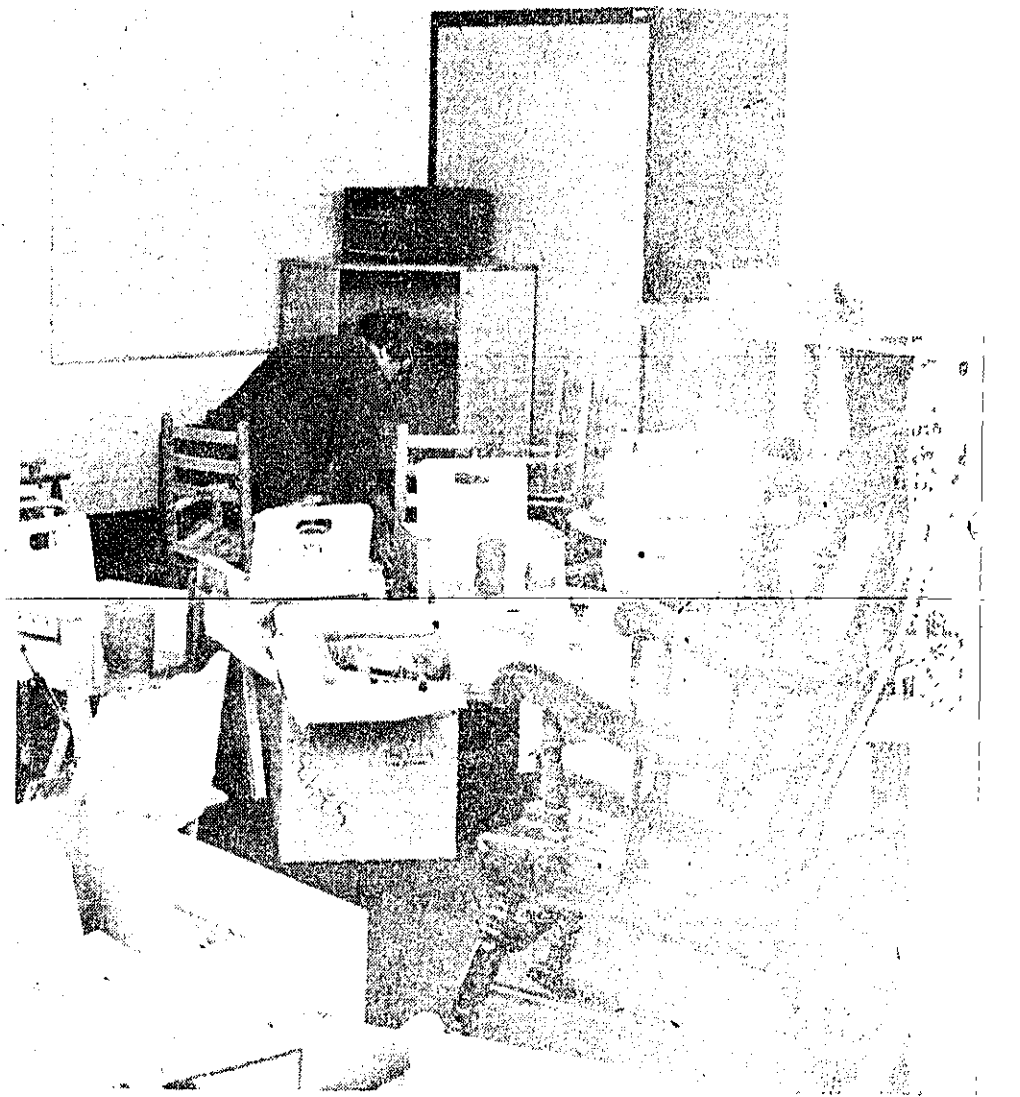
As for whether the 1.6 mills for special education can be reduced once the bonds are paid off in two years, Thienes said, that is the goal of the TISD Board of Education, but with the state of the economy and uncertainty over future state funding, that can't be guaranteed.

Set open house for facilities

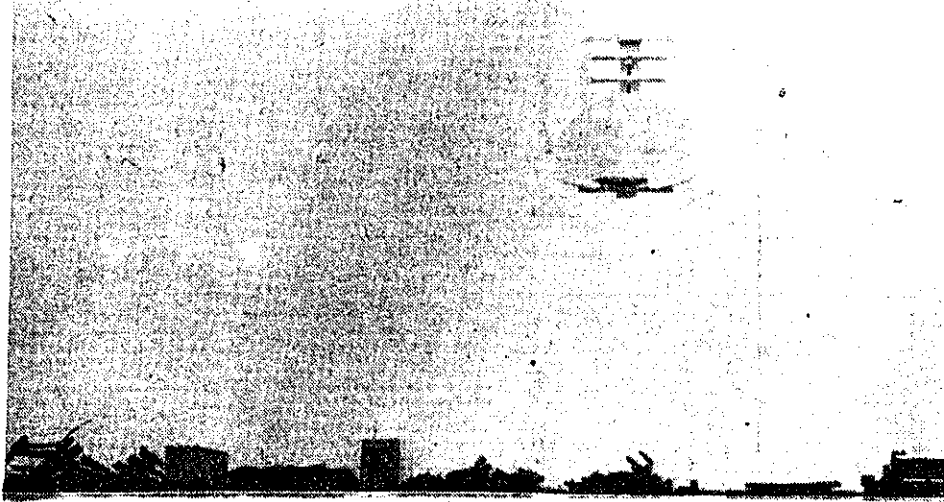
The public will be able to see the new Highland Pines School and the \$4 million Tuscola Area Skill Center, which opened in September, at an open house from 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9.

The buildings are side-by-side on Cleaver Road, north of M-81 on the east edge of Caro.

Dedication ceremonies for the two buildings will take place on a yet-to-be-decided date in the spring.



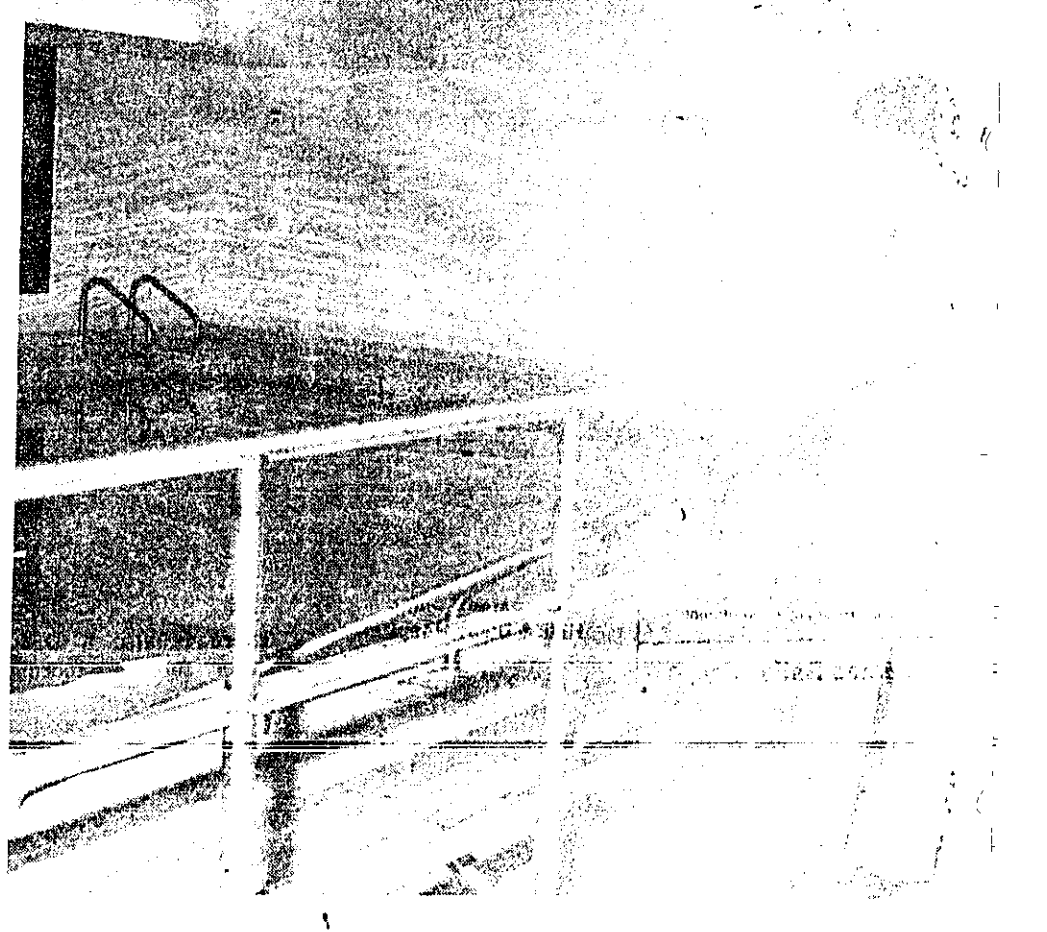
THE MESS was only temporary last Thursday as furniture and equipment formerly at Darbee School was being put into place in the early awareness room at the Highland Pines School. In the background is Shirley Warren.



THE BALL BOUNCES the same in the carpeted gymnasium, but it sounds different. The carpet provides a cushion for students who fall due to seizures, is warmer than a regular gym floor, necessary because many activities will be conducted with students sitting on the floor, and is cheaper to maintain.



WHIRLPOOL BATH is needed for some students to relax their muscles before they exercise. Operating it will be licensed physical therapist Linda DeGrow.



SWIMMING POOL -- Highland Pines Principal Allen Jones at the rail of the 20-by-32 foot pool. Lanes and one are used for therapy as well as recreation. Both have ramps so wheelchair users can be wheeled into the water.

Law now demands special ed.

A happier, more independent life can begin with getting a good job—particularly for disabled young people. Fortunately, laws now provide for education that offers proper job preparation.

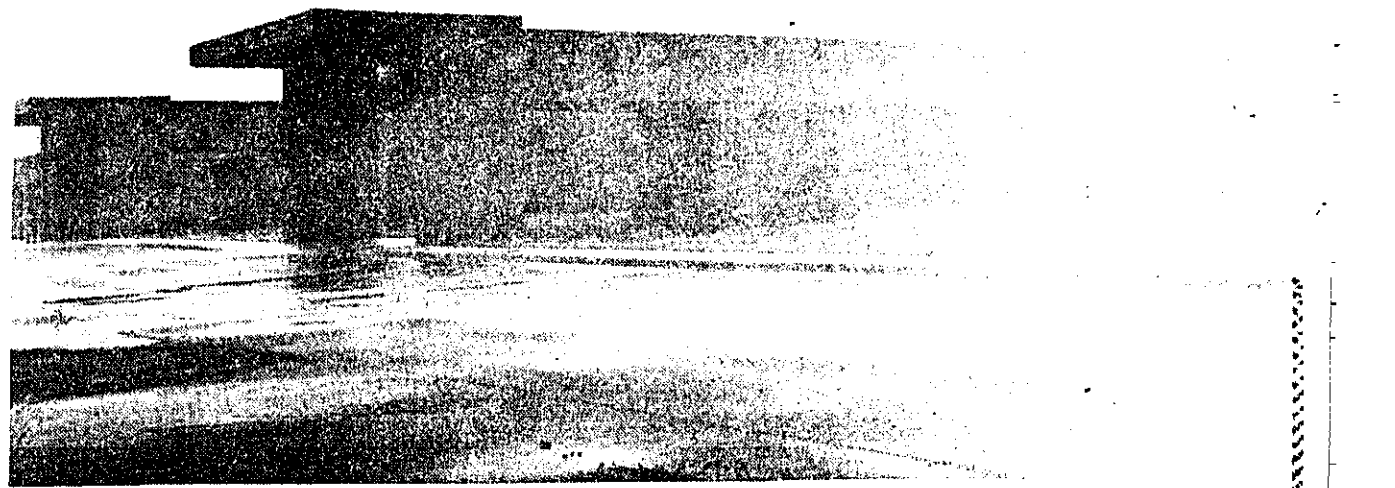
The laws guarantee disabled students in the public schools the right to an opportunity to obtain vocational education that will permit them to obtain employment and lead a more fulfilling work life after graduation.

According to the Education for All the Handicapped Children Act, an individualized education program must be provided for all handicapped students who need special education services at the secondary level. The Act includes the right to prevocational and vocational experiences in the "least restrictive environment."

Nondiscrimination on the basis of a handicap is required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) at all schools where education programs receive federal financial assistance.

Another law—the Vocational Education Amendment of 1976—provides that ten percent of vocational education funds be set aside to help provide "quality" vocational programs for handicapped students.

For free information about the improved vocational prospects for disabled young people, write to the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20210.



ENTRANCEWAYS into the new Highland Pines School are covered to protect students getting on and off buses. The school is off Cleaver Road, behind the Tuscola Intermediate School District office and next to the Tuscola Area Skill Center.

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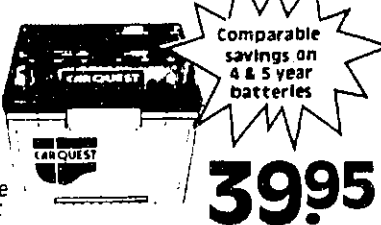
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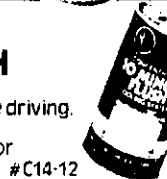
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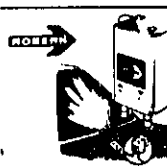
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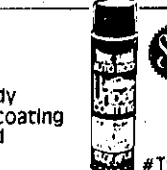


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