

Raynor makes a wistful farewell

By MATT SPEISER

Today Wallace Raynor showed up for work without a tie. Unlike his usual dapper self, the Pajaro Valley schools superintendent was dressing down for a casual last day on the job. Tomorrow Raynor will begin a one-year leave of absence from his duties as chief administrator of the 12,000-student school system.

The school board gave Raynor the leave earlier this year to attend to personal concerns, but today the outgoing superintendent was touched with a bit of sentimentality.

"The hardest thing about leaving an institution is leaving the people," Raynor commented.

The intensity of his feelings is perhaps accentuated by the possibility he may not return next year. Raynor is quite candid about that prospect.

"I just don't know," he said. "It depends what happens in the next year," a year in which he plans to attend to family, church and business concerns. "I just don't know. But as I've gotten closer to my leaving, I've had greater reservations about not coming back."

In his five years with the district, Raynor prides himself on the "close, warm" working relationships that has developed between the school board and the administration.

"On some boards there is such dissension directed toward everything. This board has been superb."

Raynor noted that when he came to the district in 1975, the schools were recovering from a bitter teachers' strike.

"I tried to downplay it," said Raynor, adding that people in the district had feared it would be difficult to overcome such a divisive and emotional affair. "It was very heavy."

Today, however, the damage to morale has been repaired, Raynor said. "The trust and warmth has created a better environment for the kids, too."

The relationship between the board and administration also has been improved by a success in reaching the goals set by the school board, he added.

"I think we've done a good job implementing the goals," Raynor said, mentioning that the administration has tightened the curriculum, the evaluation process, homework requirements and attendance.

The superintendent offered his views on the future of public education in California. He said one of the larger issues facing schools is

the growing control by the state over local education.

He said 80 to 90 percent of the district's financing now comes from outside, adding that that is "one of the great disasters of Prop. 13."

"Local control is eroding very rapidly," he said. "It's becoming much more state controlled." When the legislature realizes the problems entailed with this, Raynor said, the trend will be reversed.

"We will see the use of more incentives in the systems, voucher type incentives, to make it more competitive," he said. "School systems will break down into smaller units. Bigger systems will have to become smaller because it works better that way."

He also attributed most of the district's biggest controversies in recent years to outside forces, such as desegregation. "But those things have to happen."

In fact, Raynor says he is proud of the district's accomplishments in setting up special education and migrant education programs.

"It was just a crime to have 1,700 to 2,000 migrant children and not have anything for them," Raynor said.

During the past two years, the issue that has taken center stage in school concerns has been desegregation.

Raynor continually maintained an apolitical stance on the development of a desegregation plan, which was finally adopted earlier this month. "I think it echoed the community point of view. Ninety to 95 percent of the people agree with it," he said.

Raynor added that since the plan has been adopted during the coming year "political issues will be in a lull."

Raynor's replacement, assistant Superintendent Jim Baker, will take control Friday. Raynor predicted that during the coming year the school board will be attempting to tackle the problems in the high schools and will begin the work of the desegregation plan.

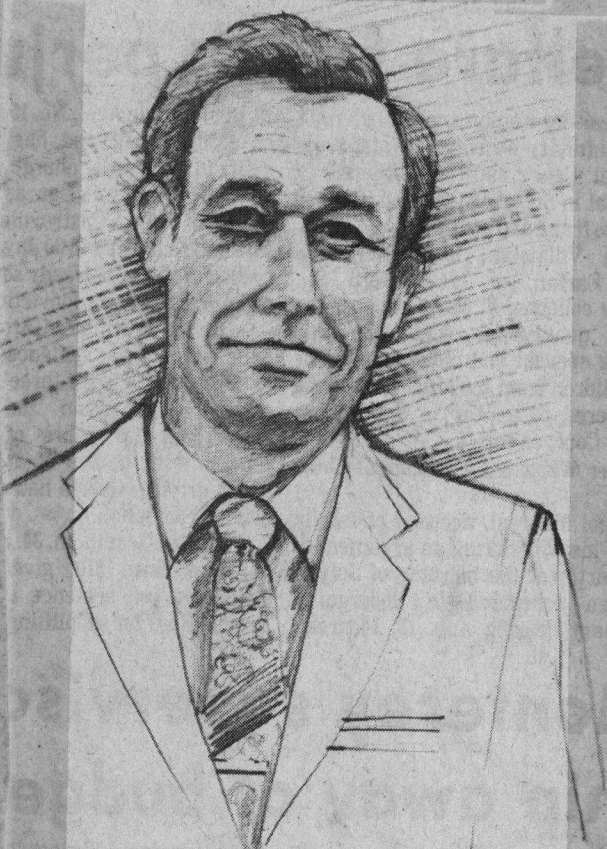
He added that transportation of students will become a larger issue, as energy costs soar. And he added that the district's summer program, which has suffered financial cutbacks, will most likely be reassessed.

On his replacement, Raynor has nothing but praise.

"Jim has great skills, and is well known to the community. Jim is a better planner than I am. He's a good systematic kind of person."

"He's got to develop his own structure, though" he added.

(Raynor said he will inform the the school board by Jan. 31, 1981 of his plans for the following year.)



Drawing by Marguerite Jaramillo

WALLACE RAYNOR — Taking a year off.

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