

# Board decides to bus kindergarten students

The Northumberland-Newcastle Board of Education Thursday accepted a proposal of its eastern area superintendent Douglas Sifton to bus Castleton kindergarten students to Colborne Public School next fall because there aren't enough pupils to form a kindergarten class at Castleton.

The board also plans to bus kindergarten pupils at Smithfield Public School to Murray Centennial Public school for the same reason.

## TWO FACTORS CAUSED SERIOUS PRESSURES

The board was told two factors have caused serious pressures in staffing schools of the Eastern area. First, assessment of pupils with severe learning problems has revealed the need for at least four additional special education classes. Secondly, declining enrolment has made staffing of smaller schools increasingly difficult.

The board was informed that recent pre-registration of kindergarten pupils at Castleton and Smithfield Public Schools indicated that there were scarcely enough pupils to justify continuing the class. Projected enrolments at nearby schools would permit the accommodation of these children without increasing staff.

At Castleton Public School, where the actual kindergarten enrolment was counted as 19 on Sept. 30, 1978, it is projected to drop to 12 pupils by Sept. 30, 1979 to provide for a half time class teacher.

At Colborne where 29 kindergarten pupils were counted

last September, the projected enrolment is expected to be 30 next September allowing for a full time teacher.

At Smithfield, which just had 12 pupils enrolled last September, the enrolment is only projected to go up to 14 this coming fall which would require a half-time teacher.

At Murray Centennial, last September there were 43 kindergarten pupils, but this is expected to drop to 28 in the projected kindergarten class there next September.

At Brighton Public School, 49 kindergarten pupils were recorded last September but only 41 are anticipated for next September.

Sifton's report stated that it was proposed to transport for the kindergarten year only, Castleton pupils to Colborne Public School and Smithfield pupils to the Murray Centennial kindergarten.

No additional staff would be required for Colborne and Murray Centennial Public Schools but alternate assignments would be required for Castleton and Smithfield teachers.

## TRANSPORTATION COSTS OF MOVING KINDERGARTEN CLASSES

The administration has estimated that the cost of transportation of the Castleton kindergarten pupils to Colborne Public School would be \$2,213.50 a year while the cost of transporting the Smithfield kindergarten pupils to Murray Centennial school would be \$1,966.50 a year.

Sifton commented that there would be this cost against the cost of two part-time teachers.

Campbellford trustee Brian Gibb questioned whether alternate assignments would be available to part-time teachers.

Sifton said the administration already knows there would not be enough assignments.

Port Hope trustee Mrs. Harriet Reisler said she thought the board was going to have to encompass full-time kindergarten classes in the future.

The board was told that some of these costs might be reduced by judicious routing of buses returning pupils to their home area. The distances would be seven miles to transport the students from Castleton to Colborne and four miles to transport the pupils from Smithfield to Murray Centennial school.

The trustees were informed that because staffing had been reduced in area schools as drastically as the program would allow, it seemed desirable to accomplish the saving of the equivalent of one full-time teacher.

Brighton trustee Dr. Douglas Galt was unsuccessful in getting the recommendation tabled to another meeting for further study, although the trustees voted six to five for tabling. Galt voted against the resolution to bus the kindergarten pupils from Castleton and Smithfield.

Sifton contended that some of the children may not have as long a trip as they would otherwise have had.

# Parents say No!

Castleton parents reacted to the Board's decision to transport their kindergarten-age children to Colborne by holding a special meeting Tuesday evening at the Castleton Town Hall.

Some parents expressed strong disapproval of this action saying it had no benefit for their children whatsoever. In fact, a common concern was the time these young children would spend on a bus being transported to Colborne.

Charley Conquergood stated that the Board should have taken a better approach and proved that savings would be made because of this proposal.

He said that his tax bill has doubled in the last 6 years because of increased education costs. Conquergood pointed out that when a local board was in existence education costs were lower, and the board was more accessible to the average person in its jurisdiction. Like Galt, he said no savings seemed to accrue from this move.

According to the Board's figures, only 12 kindergarten pupils were registered for Castleton Public School. However, Bill Pratt, principal, says that registration stands at 15 plus whatever pupils move into the area between now and

next September.

The Castleton principal was informed of this proposal on Wednesday, the day before last Thursday's Board of Education meeting. He said that the decision came after parents had already registered their children for classes in the fall. Pratt also failed to see where any savings in money would result from this action.

The community's feeling in Castleton is well reflected in a parent's comment to the effect that nobody seems to know what the board is going to do, until it's done.

## News from Castleton

The Senior Citizens met in the hall on Monday afternoon with 24 attending. After the Lord's Prayer and the minutes, euchre was played.

High ladies score went to Edith Broomfield; lone hands, Mina Boudy; consolation, Marion Haynes; men's high, Ted Black; lone hands, Andrew Kemp; consolation, Orma Calberry.

A lovely lunch was served by Orma Calberry and Rubie Carr. Next meeting will be for supper at 6:30.

The May meeting of the WI will be at the home of Mrs. D. Ducie, with convener Mrs. W. Turney. Rollcall is bring a friend and introduce her.

Mr., Mrs. Bert Lindle are in Coe Hill for a few days because of the death of her uncle.

Mr., Mrs. Delbert Peebles of Colborne had supper with the Charles Harndens on Tuesday night.

Mrs. Jean Todd of Toronto visited the Allens on Tuesday.

Mrs. A. Allen and girls had dinner with her aunt in Campbellford on Thursday.

Mr., Mrs. Charles Harnden spent Saturday with the Gordon Harndens at Eddystone and enjoyed some fishing.

Mrs. Pauline Neilson of Toronto spent the weekend with Mr., Mrs. A. Young.

Mrs. Irene Somerville and Jack Levesty were dinner guests of Mr., Mrs. Jim Stark at Newtonville on Thursday.

Earl Welton of Edmonton spent the weekend at Mrs. N. Welton's and attended the funeral of his mother, Mrs. F. Welton.

Mr., Mrs. Kenneth McKague of Ogema, Sask., also Mrs. Audrey Lenard of Winfield, B.C., spent several days with Mr., Mrs. Eric McKague and other relatives.

The Community Club presented a record player to the story hour.

Miss Susie Warner of Oshawa was home for the weekend.

Mrs. Nina Fisher of Zephyrhills, Florida, flew home for the funeral of her sister, Mrs. F. Welton, and returned home on Sunday.