

52 Principals Answer Questions On Mackay Recommendations

About 71 per cent of Halton County public school principals who responded to a questionnaire on religious education were in favour of implementation of the 12 major recommendations of the Mackay Report.

The Halton County Public Schools Principals' Association says in a brief to the board of education's ad hoc committee on religious education that the recommendation which received the greatest indication of disagreement was one which deals with the appointment of a program consultant.

The questionnaire was sent to all members of the association and of the 73 distributed, 52 were returned.

Forty-nine of the principals agreed with recommendation one — That the present course of study in religious education in the elementary schools of Ontario be discontinued, and that its aims as set out in related legislation programs of studies, regulations, and guide books be abandoned.

Recommendation two, calling for the repeal of Regulation 45, which permitted local boards of education to teach religion within secondary schools for two half hour periods per week, received support from 37 principals. Three principals disagreed with the proposal and 12 offered no comment.

Forty-three principals agreed and nine gave no comment on recommendation three which says legislation pertaining to school visitors should be repealed.

The Public Schools Act gives judges, members of the Assembly, members of municipal councils and local clergymen the right to visit public schools in their municipalities. They may attend school exercises, examine progress of pupils and inspect the state and management of the schools. They may even give advice to the teachers, pupils and any others present as they think fit.

Forty-five principals agreed with number four which recommends that in elementary schools opening exercises consisting of the National Anthem and prayer — either of universal character appealing to God for help in the day's activities, or the Lord's Prayer — be held in the home rooms each morning. Five principals disagreed on this point and two abstained from comment.

Recommendation five calls for similar exercises for secondary schools at the beginning of any student assembly, but not daily in the classroom. Thirty-three principals agreed, five disagreed and 14 abstained.

Forty-six principals agreed on the recommendation that the duty of public education to foster character building be discharged through a universal program in elementary and secondary schools. The Mackay Report said, "his program which is to be distinguished from a course of study, should be carefully planned and administered incidentally throughout the whole spectrum. It will have, as its focus, character building, ethics, social attitudes, and moral values and principles." Three principals disagreed and three abstained.

The Mackay Report said the acquisition of information about and respect for all religions should be recognized as an essential objective of the educational system from kindergarten to Grade 13.

This should be achieved by a program of incidental teaching and study, not through a formal syllabus, the report specified. Forty-four principals agreed on this point, while seven disagreed and one had no comment.

Forty-two principals agreed with the recommendation calling for a formal course of study dealing with principal religions of the world. The course would be offered as one of the options in Grades 11 and 12. Seven principals disagreed with the proposal and three offered no comment.

Thirty-one principals agreed, 10 disagreed and five abstained from comment on the recommendation that a program consultant be employed in each regional office of education throughout the province.

The proposal says the consultant would be responsible for the implementation and direction of the new program in religious education and moral development.

The recommendation also indicated a program co-ordinator should be added in the curriculum section of the department of education.

"Further the special interest of the general public in this area of the curriculum should be given continuous representation through an advisory council of education."

Expanded opportunity for communication between teachers and educational researchers received support from 47 principals. One principal disagreed and four gave no comment.

The Mackay Report's views on teacher education received support from 43 principals. The report calls for teachers' colleges, future faculties of education, and colleges of education to assume teacher-training responsibilities in relation to the new program.

"The department of education should provide for the professional development of the present teaching body." Six principals disagreed on this point and three offered no views.

In its final recommendation, the Mackay Report proposes credits for appropriate courses in religion to provide accreditation of students who will take courses in a college of education. Forty one principals agreed, five disagreed and six abstained.

Some comments from individual principals were included in the brief:

"The whole question of moral teaching is doubtful in my mind. What is moral for one may not be for another. It is difficult for me to envisage a universal-type course which could be imparted to students of any age."

"I fail to see how a program which is distinguished from a course of studies can be carefully planned on the one hand and incidentally administered on the other."

"In general, I feel that the schools should foster an environment where loyalty and honesty are regarded as desirable traits of character. It is also desirable for pupils to develop an attitude of tolerance and understanding of others whose religious, political, or cultural views may differ . . ."

14 NEW BRIEFS

More Briefs Expected, So Extend Religion Deadline

Halton County Board of Education's ad hoc committee on religious education agreed last Tuesday to extend indefinitely its Jan. 31 deadline for receiving briefs.

Chairman Douglas Palmer suggested the action after the committee received 14 new briefs in the past two weeks more than it had received previously in the entire four months it had been meeting.

The committee has received 21 briefs to date.

However, the committee will be faced with determining exactly what can be considered a brief.

ONLY LETTERS

Eric Balkind, secretary, told the group that several of the submissions hardly deserved the designation of 'brief,' and appeared to be only letters.

The committee plans to report its findings to the Halton board sometime in March.

Members devoted time last week to discussing the Mackay Report on religious education in Ontario schools, and conducted the first of a series of interviews with persons who have submitted briefs.

UNJUST SOCIETY

Mrs. Katherine Cordaro, of Georgetown, spoke in connection with her brief which supports continuation of the system of religious education, and denounces the teaching of evolution and sex education in schools.

She rapped the "unjust society" which she says forces a group of Georgetown residents to establish and pay for their own school, because they do not approve of teaching evolution and sex courses in public schools.

NEW BRIEFS

The 13 new briefs are from: The Milton and District Ministerial Association; the Session of Knox Presbyterian Church, Milton; Bahai's of Halton County; a committee of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Halton County; Virginia L. Young of Oakville; Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Ear of Acton; Mrs. James Reese of Milton; Mrs. Alma Jackett of Milton; Vivian Baskin of Lincolnton; Mr. and Mrs. Jim Bailey of Georgetown; Mr. and Mrs. Peter Binnie of Acton; Mr. and Mrs. George Forrest of Acton; and a group of eight Halton residents.

Former briefs were from: Halton County Public School Principals' Association; Mrs. Katherine Cordaro, Georgetown; Christian Science Committee on Publication for Ontario, Toronto; Gladys Speers, Public School; Mrs. Margaret Beeson, 151 Tracina Drive, Oakville; Mrs. Margaret Harding, Georgetown; Lorne Campbell, 1230 White Oaks Blvd., Oakville.

The principals' submission contains a summary of views on the 12 major recommendations in the Mackay report.

The views were obtained through a questionnaire distributed to the 73 members of the association — 52 of the questionnaires were returned.

Mrs. Cordaro urges the committee not to abandon religious education as proposed.

The Christian Science Committee describes religious teach-

ing as "very personal" and says its place is in the home and church.

"The Gladys Speers school report covers 'a wide range of ideas and opinions.' Mrs. Beeson says, 'We have just read the report of the Committee on Religious Education in the public schools of Ontario and are thoroughly disgusted with what it said.'

Mrs. Harding supports the Mackay report, and Campbell says he agrees "with the general conclusions and recommendations contained in the Mackay Report."

DID YOU KNOW?

One kilowatt-hour is the amount of energy needed to operate a television set for three Ed Sullivan shows at a cost of a little more than one cent. In 1969 Ontario Hydro customers used nearly 60 billion kilowatt-hours.

Evolutionists, Psychiatrists Blamed for Rebellious Youth

A Georgetown woman says in a brief to Halton Board of Education's ad hoc committee on religious education that evolutionists and psychiatrists are to blame for an unruly nation which would "now ban the God of our fathers in favour of that of other gods."

Mrs. Katherine Cordaro, 11 Ewing St., says "Evolutionists scoff at the Bible calling it myth."

"Psychiatrists are responsible for the rebellion in our schools and universities."

"They have had their day. The permissiveness advocated by psychiatrists back in the beginning of 1930 now shows its ugly head in rebellion and the wrecking of millions of dollars in equipment at our universities."

ALARM

She says that she views with alarm the major recommendations put forward in the Mackay Report.

"As I see it you propose to ban our Christian heritage information regarding a conglomeration of religions foreign to our Christian faith."

"In my view, what you are proposing is nothing short of the confusion of Babel."

When religious education was established in 1944 by George Drew we were at war, pleading with almighty God to deliver us from our enemies.

"We have allowed Communists to invade our schools and universities. Their aim is, as Lenin said — religion must go."

"If religion will pass out quietly, our attitude will be one of benevolent tolerance, but if it resists, we will hasten its exit with violence proportioned to its resistance."

JUSTICE FOR ALL

Mrs. Cordaro says, "This country was founded on the principle of justice for all."

"That does not mean that we must abandon the faith of our fathers to accommodate those who prefer to worship other gods foreign to Christianity."

"And since we are in the process of changing our laws on the matter of religion, may I point out a grave injustice that is being perpetrated on a people, who because of Christian principles cannot tolerate the God-denying theory of evolution being foisted upon their children."

She was referring to a non-denominational public school in Georgetown which she said was established because the people object to evolution and sex programs in schools.

Mrs. Cordaro recommends teaching of the 10 Commandments in schools, the abandonment of sex programs and inclusion of the Lord's Prayer at opening exercises.

THE GEORGETOWN HERALD, THURSDAY, FEB. 12th, 1970, PAGE 13

Party Proceeds to Multiple Sclerosis

A recent meeting of the Zeta Alpha Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi was held at the home of Mrs. D. Ellis. After a short business meeting, the rest of the evening was spent preparing for the card party to be held on February 24, at the Holy Cross Church. Proceeds from the card party are for Multiple Sclerosis.

SMILE

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