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Early problem study released

If the problems in a child having difficulty at school are not identified by the time he is seven-or-eight-years-old, the likelihood is increased that he will picture himself as a failure, become frustrated at his inability to learn and develop an attitude which makes more difficult the possibility of success, Halton board of education was told Thursday.

Be they due to social, emotional, physical, intellectual or combinations of these factors, the problems "are threatening to or (are) already, inhibiting the academic potential of a number of children early in their educational career," the board heard in a preliminary report of findings in the Halton Early Identification Study (HEIS).

The purpose of the five-year study, expected to be wound up this fall, is to train the classroom teacher to detect difficulties or signs of future problems which might then permit an intervention program early in a child's school career.

The research in the study begun in schools in North Halton on 383 children in 1972 with an pre-kindergarten assessment on three groups. The first group was given the tests prior to entry into Kindergarten, then again prior to entry into Grades 1, 2, and 3. Data collected was stored and children continued without further research interruptions.

The second group was also tested but the results of the test were made available to the teachers, who in conjunction with the primary junior consultants, created individual program for children throughout the four-year period.

The third group received the same tests but individual programs were done only in Kindergarten.

By the end of the study, 247 children of the original 383 were still in attendance in schools.

The report concluded that the HEIS Kindergarten programs based on the assessed needs, strengths and weaknesses of each child is beneficial and enduring.

The child's motivation toward school and learning is increased as is his positive perception of himself.

And while the Kindergarten program alone is beneficial, continued evaluation and involvement further enhanced the gains children made.

There is no change in general intelligence, which is what the researchers expected.

The HEIS report was carried out by Ron Chapman, now superintendent of special program, Lorna Scott, assistant co-ordinator of primary education, and Barbara Robinson and Charmaine Belanger, primary-junior consultants.

Industrial park plan

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Regional director of business development assured the board that the region would look favourably at such a scheme because there will be a need for industrial land of this type in the Halton Hills area in the future.

What land is now available for light dry industrial development should run out fairly quickly, he predicted.

Ward 1 Coun. Les Dudy feels the proposed development would be good for Halton Hills because of its proximity to Highway 401. It would help the municipality to compete with Milton, Oakville and Burlington for this type of industry.

Mr. Venditti told the board that it was "safe to assume that 30 to 40 per cent of the jobs created by new industries would go to people in Halton Hills." He also admitted that the developer proposing the scheme already has some prospective industries lined up for the area.

Mrs. Norton, a resident from the area of the proposed development wanted to know what provision would be made for the increased traffic on Highway 25.

Mr. Venditti said that the region plans to upgrade the highway to four lanes. The proposed Dorval expressway south of the area is also planned to carry truck traffic and relieve congestion on smaller roads, he said.

Bill Serifini, another area resident is concerned about the affect the development would have on local water supplies and the noise levels of industries working three shifts.

Board chairman Roy Booth told him that buffering would take care of the noise and the board already had a hydrologist's report stating that a million gallons a day could be available to the developer without affecting local wells.

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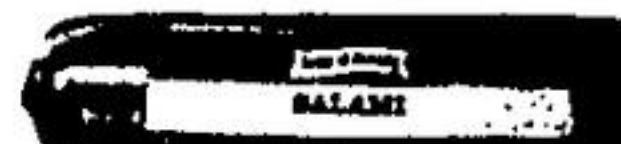
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