

New budget means school board costs up

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budget went retroactively into effect.

Notebooks, pencils, paper, art, physical edu-

cation, science, music, and technical supplies will now be taxed. Materials for equipment and building repairs will also be

taxable, he said.

Mr. Warren said the increase in OHIP premiums mean a \$70,000 increase in board spending.

for 1982 to cover contract benefits for board employees. Since OHIP is paid every three months, the

board only has two quarterly premiums to pay off for 1982—in July and October. However, in 1983 there will be four premiums at the increased rates, to cost the board \$140,000 in benefits payments.

The board's executive committee, made up of education director Wally Beaver, chairman Len Auger, vice-chairman Florence Meares and superintendents, held a meeting Monday afternoon to decide the board's reaction to the province's newly added financial burden.

Mr. Warren said the executive committee decided to refer the problem to the finance committee of the board.

"They will be asked to look at what can be done to offset the increased costs," he said.

Mr. Warren said it was unlikely the finance committee would re-open the much-disputed budget. "They'll try to look at

everything and come up with some answers. There's not a lot of leeway (in the budget) to absorb \$400,000," he added. "It's very difficult to ask our schools to reduce by that amount of money."

Finance committee chairman Bill Priestner told The Herald a budget is merely a guess made by the following year's needs.

He said he doesn't expect to open the budget for review. Because the budget is a collection of best estimates for the year's expenses, it may

balance itself out in the end, he indicated.

Some expenditures in the budget may be put off, Mr. Priestner said, citing building repairs.

New money may come in that isn't revenue budgeted for in the board's 1982 budget. Mr. Priestner said there are always new houses and businesses set up during the year which provide new sources of tax assessment and extra income for the municipality and the board.

"Even though we know things like that will happen, we aren't allowed

to anticipate new assessments and plan for them," he said.

Last year, the board received \$900,000 in extra assessments income brought in from Oakville Place, a new shopping mall. The extra income it provided was used as a credit toward the board's 1982 budget, reducing the board's budget increase, Mr. Priestner said.

Underlining the tentativeness of the planned budget, he said the board has even allotted anticipated salary increases for

its staff and bus companies that transport children.

"We could be off by a long way," Mr. Priestner said. "Some years you come out laughing, and some years you come out crying."

He said the board has had deficit budgets in previous years, the latest one being in 1975 when the board negotiated a teachers' salary increase of 30 per cent that hadn't been budgeted for. The deficit was made up the following year.

School trustee protests unexpected tax increase

There needs to be more co-operation and communication between levels of government, Halton Hills school trustee Betty Fisher charged Monday.

"The thing that really galls me the most is this: we at the municipal level have been told to get our budgets in by the end of March, then the province brings down their budget in May, a budget that circumvents ours," she protested in an interview with The Herald.

The Ontario government's budget was presented to the provincial legislature Thursday night and adds a seven per cent retail sales tax to formerly exempt student supplies.

Mrs. Fisher is angry because the new taxes that will be levied, retroactive to May 13 once the budget is passed, mean an extra expense of \$435,000 to the Halton board of education. It's an expense the board hadn't provided for in its 1982 budget because it came totally unanticipated.

And it's an expense that may bring the year to a close with a deficit.

"They turn around and turn the guns on the board of education," Mrs. Fisher said. "Surely they could give us some clue

that they were going to do this before we were put into a deficit position. It's insanity."

There has to be more co-operation and communication between levels of government so that this kind of thing doesn't happen, she said.



BETTY FISHER

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"It's like we're all working in our own little cocoons. We have no threads between us," Mrs. Fisher said. "The sooner this attitude stops, the faster we'll have governments that are really responsible to the people."

She said small school boards will be most affected by the provincial budget, especially those without reserve funds, like the Halton board.

Mrs. Fisher said the Halton board is caught because it stopped keeping reserve funds six years ago, upon the advice of the provincial

government.

The Ontario government's budget must be stopped, according to her.

"We're looking at a government that says, in essence, it can no longer afford to do the things it has put in place. The same government that brought in Bill 82 now says it can't afford it," Mrs. Fisher said.

Expenses for Bill 82, a provincial bill requiring school boards to implement special education, are being met through municipal taxes. With the new Ontario budget, the taxpayer is now being taxed by the provincial government on what his municipal taxes will purchase, Mrs. Fisher said, calling it double taxation.

"A budget that taxes kids to pay for Suncor is intolerable, and we are protesting against it by every means at our command," Liberal leader David Peterson told Queen's Park reporters Monday.

Liberal members walked out of the provincial legislature Thursday night after treasurer Frank Miller's presentation of the budget. A single division bell rang over the weekend until Monday afternoon, when Liberals returned to vote against the first reading of the Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act.

The taxes went into effect Thursday night after Mr. Miller announced them and weren't affected by the walkout of the 33 Liberal members.



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Internal theft at Acton tannery

Five people arrested for internal theft at the Beardmore tannery in Acton will appear in Milton provincial court June 7.

Halton regional police Staff Sgt. Les Graham said the thefts, amounting to about \$15,000, occurred on three different occasions from last September through December.

Skins were being shipped by two employees of an Acton trucking company working for Beardmore, to a Toronto shoe repair shop, he said. There, the skins were being made into soles for shoes, Sgt. Graham said.

Two employees in the shipping department were the inside connection to the thefts. Both were subsequently fired.

Charged with theft over \$200 and conspiracy to commit theft are Beardmore employees Mark Richard Gourlay, 21, of Acton, and Allen Doley, 34, formerly of Acton, now of Bracebridge.

Facing the same charges are Tyler Transport employees John Jordan, 27, and David Hall, 37, both of Acton.

Charged with conspiracy to commit theft over \$200 is the owner of Nick's Shoe Repair Nick Marinov, 52, of Toronto.

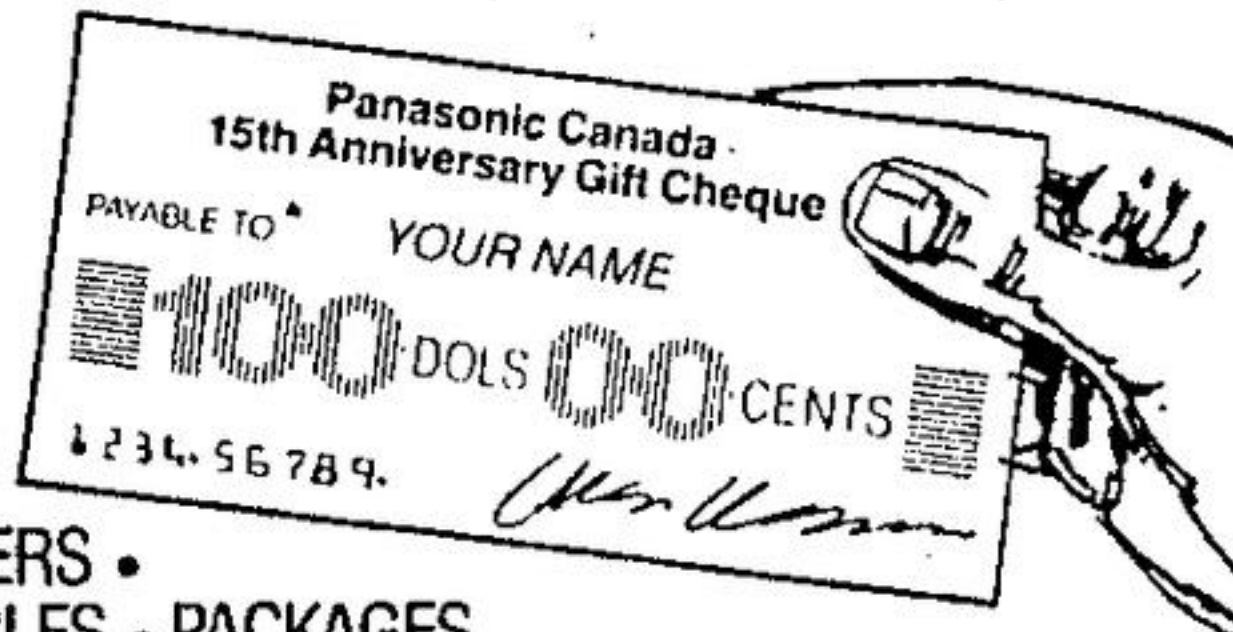
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