Briefly

SOS report

At the first of three public meetings about school closures, members of a group called the Save Our School Committee (SOS) presented a report. The Howard Wrigglesworth group was represented by Tom Politi Monday

They asked Halton Board of Education Chairman Irene Bruce to distribute their report to the trustees.

Mrs. Bruce said it was necessary to have all written material for delegations submitted to the Board no later than March 11.

The public meeting was not a forum for debate, reminded Consolidation Committee co-chairman Ron Chapman. He said the meeting was set up to explain the consolidation process and to answer questions.

Alternate plan

A group of parents have worked out a formula they feel can keep their school, Howard Wrigglesworth, open.

Their SOS report suggests that Stewarttown Middle School be closed and Joseph Gibbons Public School be converted into a grade 7-8 institution. Park and Pineview Schools would remain as kindergarten to grade 6 schools and a trainable mentally handicapped unit would be moved to Harrison Public School.

Students from Joseph Gibbons from kindergarten to grade 5 could be located to Park and Glen Williams Public Schools, their report indicates.

With Park and Glen Williams Public School at near capacity from the changes, Howard Wrigglesworth could be kept open, the report states.

Unique school

In a detailed plan, members of a group fighting to keep Howard Wrigglesworth from closing gave a number of reasons why they felt their school was unique and should not be closed.

Among the reasons were: the school is debt free and the only papital expenditures for the next five years are for windows, costing \$60,000; senior citizens from Durham Street work as volunteers In the classrooms, providing service to both students and seniors; Juture development to the south of Georgetown can be accommodated at their school.

The report also mentions that Howard Wrigglesworth has a better " ... stewar .own

The Halton Hills Consolidation

Committee ended its vow of secrecy

at Thursday's Halton board of

· Four members of the Committee

presented nine recommendations

and the 41 page report explaining how the Committee worked. The

four were co-chairmen John

Kavanagh and Ron Chapman and

Committee members Jim Kinnear

. The Committee explained they

adopted four principles. Those prin-

ciples reveal why some of the

-students' well-being is more im-

-many rural parents want their

-kindergarten to Grade 5 schools

and Grade 6 to 8 schools are prefer-

-after 1990, development in Georgetown and Acton could have a

The Committee's projections of

great effect on Halton Hills schools.

children educated in rural schools;

recommendations remain.

portant than schools;

education meeting.

and Pat Bodig.

'Hot seat' members defend report

Consolidation members were put on the hot seat by over 100 parents and taxpayers in the Howard Wrigglesworth Public School area.

At a public meeting Tuesday, the authors of the school closure report in Halton Hills were asked to explain how they came to their decisions.

Howard Wrigglesworth is one of three schools in Halton Hills that has been recommended for closure in September.

A committee of parents from Wrigglesworth also presented their own report to the consolidation members. Called SOS (Save Our School) Report, this 15 page document outlines reasons why they feel their school should not be closed.

In a sometimes emotionallycharged question period, parents sought reasons why members came to their conclusions.

One gentleman questioned the validity of the decision to close the school because of new construction off of King and John Streets near the school. Co-chairman Ron Chapman replied that figures were from the school board and regional planners

the consolidation committee members:

Park Public School.

Vote: 25 3 1

Vote: 22 3 1

Vote: 19 7 1

Vote: 24 5 B

to grade 5 schools,

Vote: 25 4 0

Vote: 21 6 2

Vote: 25 4 0

Vote: 25 1 3

Four principles adopted

than close Limehouse.

\$1,27 million as soon as possible.

enrolment do not go past 1990. With

charts, the Committee showed the

total functional rated capacity

(FRC) at Halton Hills schools will

decline from 62 per cent in 1986 to 57

per cent in 1990. By closing three

schools, the FRC percentage rises.

In 1986, it will be 76 per cent and in

A Committee member said the

report states all votes deciding a

school would close had between a 68

per cent and 77 per cent majority.

Criteria used to reach recommenda-

tions came under the following

headings of considerations: com-

munity, facilities, financial, human

resources, location, program, regional growth and development

In their presentation, Committee

members commented little on why

recommendations were made. In-

formation on why will be sent to trustees after three public meetings have concluded, co-chairman John

Kavanagh told The Herald on the

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go to Park Public School.

HOW THE VOTE WENT

Of the 16-member Halton Hills Consolidation Committee, 32 had the

right to vote. Voters include 28 ratepayers (two from each school), Halton

Hills 1985 trustees Betty Fisher, Arlene Bruce and Dick Howitt and co-

chairman John Kavanagh and Ron Chapman, who each had a half vote.

The other 13 non-voting members of the committee are principals, used

as resource people. The following is a list of how the voting went among

1. In Sept., 1986, Howard Wrigglesworth Public School be closed and its

students go to Glen Williams Public School, Harrison Public School and

2. In Sept., 1986, Joseph Gibbons Public School be closed and its students

3. In Sept., 1986, Speyside Public School be closed and its students go to Limehouse Public School, Pineview Public School and Brookville Public

t. In Sept., 1986, Stewarttown Sentor Public School become a middle

school, grades 6 to 8, for children from Limehouse. Park and Pinevlew

5. In Sept., 1986, Limehouse, Park and Plneview become kindergarten

6. When necessary, that McKenzie-Smith Middle School and M.Z. Bennett Public School be administratively combined, and if necessary, that

McKenzie-Smith be converted to a kindergarten to grade 8 school rather

7. That Stewarttown Middle School be appraded at an estimated cost of

9. In Sept., 1986, for safety that busing be provided for students of Har-

rison Public School north of Guelph Street and west of Maple, and for

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display.

8. In Sept., 1986, Park Public School be upgraded at a cost of \$14,700.

students of Park Public School north of the CNR tracks.

Some parents were concerned that

about development growth.

students bused from Wrigglesworth would still be exposed to the heavy traffic on Guelph and Maple Streets travelling to pick-up points. One tady, a school bus driver, said she felt the areas around Glen Williams, Park and Harrison schools were more dangerous for busing than Howard Wrigglesworth.

"How is the closing of the school in the best interests of my son?" asked one mother. Co-chairman John Kavanagh replied that although classroom sizes won't be affected, a student benefits in other ways.

For example, he said, there would be fewer split grade classrooms, more extra curricular activities, more specialty teachers such as librarians, the availability of more board consultants and rural students would still have a rural school to at-

One man felt the Committee had been biased in favor of rural schools in the decision-making. "Why keep Stewarttown as a rural school open when a large part (about 50 per

John Kavanagh Dick Howitt

cent) are from the urban area?" he asked.

Stewarttown Public School is centrally located and there was a desire to preserve rural schools, Mr Chapman said.

Trustee Dick Howitt said many urban parents he had talked to preferred having Stewartlown remain open. There are no shopping malls for students to latter about and parents know where they are during school hours, he said

Board Chairman Arlene Bruce challenged one man's statement that the Committee had been easy on rural schools. "People in Speyside (also recommended for closing) says we're biased against the urban schools," she said.

Committee member Ray Denny also defended the attitude of his group towards non-rural schools. Committee members said the same things as have been mentioned at the

public meeting tonight about their

schools, Mr. Denny said. The concerns about the quality of education were all very similar from each of the schools' representatives. But the decision-makers also had to consider differences in the schools such as geography, how students are moved about and cost factors, he said.

Loud applause followed after one man asked why the consolidation report was completed if not to save

taxpayers any money. The sale of the properties will go into capital costs for other schools, Chairman Bruce said.

Committee member Rod Taylor said his first impression was that money could be saved by closing schools, but most of the board's budget goes towards teachers' salaries, he said.

The report came down to doing the best for the greatest number, he said, "We came down with the fairest option. Clearly, you're not going to be happy with that," Mr. Taylor said.

If the Committee recommended no closures, there would be trouble down the road, he said, answering one man who asked why a report had

to list any schools at all for closures. A woman was re-assured by Ron Chapman that special education students at Howard Wrigglesworth would not be split up, even though the boundaries will change if the report is accepted.

A board matter

The school closings being proposed by a Halton board of education committee are a board matter, concluded town councillors Monday night.

Coun Pam Johnston said she's had a number of calls about the Halton Hills Consolidation Committee report and wanted to know

how to deal with them. "We have two distinct corporations (the town and the board) and we're all serving the community," Coun. Johnston said. "I want to know what our municipality's

jurisdiction is, if there is any. Mayor Russ Miller said the board has elected representatives (trustees) and they're the ones residents should take their concerns up with.

FRC better

The major reason why Harrison Public School was chosen over Howard Wrigglesworth has to do with a term called FRC

John Kavanagh said Functional Rate of Capacity (FRC) means the amount of students a school can comfortably handle.

Harrison can handle a transfer of Howard Wrigglesworth students, but the reverse isn't true, he said. Harrison is also considered a better structure, he said.

21 alternatives

During the final 9 meetings, there were 21 alternatives discussed concerning school closures, said Ron Chapman.

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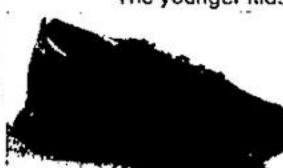
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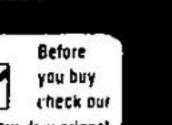
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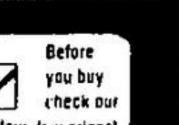
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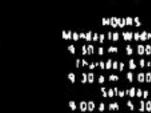


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