

# \$72 final school tax rise

By SANDY CAMPBELL  
Herald Staff

Trustees of the Board of Education approved a budget Thursday night that will increase education taxes \$72 for a home assessed at \$7,000. The taxpayer with a home assessed at \$7,000 will now pay \$816 a year.

The increase in the mill rate is 9.63 per cent. This year's budget is just over \$166.5 million which is a 6 per cent increase in operating expenditures over 1985.

It was not a budget easily accepted by trustees who were split on accepting it. Ten trustees voted for it and eight voted against it.

Those against the budget supported an alternative proposed March 17 by the Halton Board of Education Finance Committee which is made up of trustees. That budget was \$1.4 million less and would have meant an 8 per cent increase in the mill rate. Taxpayers with a home assessed at \$7,000 would pay \$59 more in 1986.

Trustee Paddy Hughes of Oakville originally proposed the budget smaller by \$1.45 million, and he spoke out against the new budget. He called the increase "disgraceful" and asked trustees to consider the cost to the retired and unemployed. "You can only dip so long into the bucket," he said.

Trustee Linda Glover, who supported the increase, responded to Trustee Hughes. "I often hear the education system is not meeting the needs of students," she said. The



Paddy Hughes

cost of education is higher because of new programs parents want, like special education, computers and guidance, she said.

How can the budget go up so much from a 3 to 3.5 per cent increase last year when there is a 2 per cent decrease in enrolment this year, Trustee Priestner of Burlington asked. Trustee Glover's reply was that a 2 per cent decrease in enrolment does not reduce costs significantly at schools because no one school experiences a great decrease.

Trustee Len Crosier of Oakville said a reduction of \$1.45 million would have no "crippling" effect on education in Halton. He did not support the budget.

The finance committee's March 17 decision to cut the budget by \$1.45 million was made with the understanding the administration would make the cuts. The administration did not make decisions on where cuts would be because they were waiting for the \$1.45 million in cuts to be approved by the Board, and the cuts were not.

Before voting on the budget, trustees asked the administration where cuts would be made. Wally Beever, the director of education, answered the question by breaking up the cuts into three groups of \$500,000.

The first \$500,000 would be cuts to all new additions to the budget. Director Beever said. The major additions to be cut would be 10 special education teachers, the summer program for trainable mentally handicapped students, start up funds for French programs, five or six administration support staff and books for French libraries.

The second cut of \$500,000 would be to day-time instruction, the day-to-day costs of running the schools. The final \$500,000 would come from present accounts, "expenses that directly or indirectly affect programs and people," Director Beever said.

The bill to the municipalities of Halton is \$100,923,736.

## Down meeting

The Halton Down Syndrome Association will be holding its annual meeting and election of officers April 14 at 8 p.m. at St. Raphael's Church in Burlington. For more information, call 335-0941.

## Home to stay

NORVAL-Get well wishes to Ruth Hyatt, formerly of Norval and now of Brampton who is home following surgery to a gall bladder. Welcome home to Irene Hunter of RR4 Georgetown who along with Isabel Carney and Bruce and Muriel McClure spent the last month in Australia and New Zealand.

## 10 euchre tables

NORVAL-Pinegrove euchre had 10 tables last Monday. The winners were Ada Fereday, Marie Murray, Prairie Bessy, Gord Early with the lucky draw going to Kay McMillan.



## Winter's mess

The father and son team of Jim and Tom Fisher took part of the sunny Saturday afternoon to work on the lawn of their 96 Delrex Boulevard home. It's something I

didn't want to do last fall, but I have got to do it now the snow is gone, the older Mr. Fisher said. (Herald photo)

# Parent wants town to take a stand on school closings

The town shouldn't be sitting on the sidelines when it comes to the closure of three schools in Halton Hills, says a Dayfoot Drive resident.

Ron Hiseman told councillors they should be getting involved in the controversial school closure issue since it impacts negatively on the town.

Last week he said the town should be making sure there are no errors in the Consolidation Study recently released by the Halton board of education. It recommends Howard Wrigglesworth, Speyside and Joseph Gibbons Public Schools be closed in September.

"I know there's at least one error in that report about the number of students in a school. The Consolidation Committee has one school down for 15-20 students less than it has," Mr. Hiseman said.

"I believe you're wrong. You should be involved," he said. "You are also a public body and have the right to represent our attitude to the board." In recent discussion, councillors had decided not to get involved as a town body but to do so as individual parents in the board's decision.

Schools provide a focal point for area residents and taking them away could affect development in the town, Mr. Hiseman said. He also warned real estate values of homes in the area of the closed schools could go down by at least \$5,000, and

tax appeals could ensue, meaning lost tax dollars to the town.

"We're looking at double and triple the traffic flow of buses taking children to school. I'd like to ask if there's been any study done on this," he said. Mr. Hiseman said he hadn't attended any of the public meetings on the Consolidation Study and that he didn't know who the Study representatives from his area school were.

Both Councillors Betty Fisher and Pam Sheldon picked up on the discrepancy in that the town and board liaison when school properties are being zoned or schools are to be built, yet now, when schools are to be closed, there's no communication between the two public bodies.

"We have no legal recourse. Legally, it isn't circulated to us for our opinion, so what can we do as a council?" Coun. Fisher, formerly board chairman, said. "I happen to feel the concept of community is intriguing and as elected officials who represent the community, possibly we should have more direct liaison with the board," Coun. Sheldon said.

Both Councillors Joe Hewitt and Al Cook were members of the Consolidation Committee that named the three schools for closure. "It was a closure study right from the start. It wasn't an easy decision," Coun. Hewitt said. "If we didn't pick one school, we had to pick another."

# Board breaks policy delays closure vote

Parents fighting three school closings didn't stop trustees from voting "yes" to a contested report, but they slowed down the decision-making process.

Halton public school trustees voted Thursday to break board policy and delay a vote on a consolidation report until April 10.

The vote to postpone the decision was made after a lengthy meeting of presentations from parents representing Howard Wrigglesworth, Joseph Gibbons and Speyside.

The Halton Board of Education has a policy that all September closures must be voted on by March 31, said Trustee Dick Howitt.

It was decided by trustees that more time was needed to study the Board's consolidation report and the 11 briefs submitted opposing the closure decision. Nine of the briefs submitted by concerned parents total about 120 pages.

The board room was filled last Thursday with parents and ratepayers cheering the nine speakers who opposed the recommendations. Many spectators stood the entire meeting or stood in the hall and listened to the meeting broadcast over a public address system.

Each speaker was applauded after completing their presentation which was limited to ten minutes. A variety of tactics were used by the three speakers from Howard Wrigglesworth, two from Joseph Gibbons and four from Speyside. Slide shows, maps and overhead notes were used.

Kevin Freier of Speyside spent his ten minutes criticizing the decision-making process of the committee. His nine years in management revealed to him the process was "flawed and in error," he said. Jim Sheldon from Speyside said the Halton Hills study broke rules made by the province on how to handle consolidation.

The speakers did all they could to prevent the closing of their school. They criticized and suggested alternatives. Ron Buckton of Speyside even used humor. "Together we stick. Divided we're stuck!" he said. His suggestion was to postpone making a decision until March 1987 when trustees would be more certain they were making the right decision.

Trustee Dick Howitt had the last word, and that word was received with groans from the audience. Trustee Howitt is a member of the Halton Hills Consolidation Commit-



Dick Howitt

tee, and one of the few trustees who voted against postponing the decision until April.

The recommendations of the consolidation committee were made by people elected by the public, Trustee Howitt said. Other boards have their

administrations do consolidation studies. "We feel we have one of the better democratic processes," he said.

Trustee Howitt told The Herald

the alternatives suggested and information provided by the speakers of briefs were not new. "The delegations have not added anything new to what was already explored at the committee level," he said.

Trustee Howitt said many of the suggestions in the briefs were looked

at before. By asking Board staff and the co-chairmen of the Halton Hills Consolidation Committee, Ron Chapman and John Kavanagh, Trustee Howitt responded to some of the criticisms directed at the consolidation committee.

The people presenting briefs did not get an opportunity to rebut the final remarks made by Trustee Howitt. Many members of the au-

dience scoffed at the responses. Particularly when Jim Hunt, the Board's transportation officer, "could not say" whether Pineview was a rural or urban school.

# Youth easily understood?

By KAY WILSON  
Herald Special

NORVAL-The March meeting of the Brampton West Women's Institute was held at the home of Lois Fraser. Betty Johnson, Mae Dixon and Tena Dyckstra assisted the hostess.

The theme of the meeting was "do we understand our youth?" Isabel McKay, first vice-president, president and secretary Jane Terry recorded the minutes.

The ladies mentioned several different types of schools in Brampton which are able to provide specific instructions to suit the students' differ-

ing needs, as they answered the roll call "name a school of learning in Brampton."

Bev McMurchy who is involved in YMCA introduced Valerie Wilson, who spoke of the areas of development, of young people through adolescence.

There are many services available to youth, which offer counseling and support, to assist young people to develop life skills and help them to be successful, she said.

Betty McClure gave the motto The Voice of the people, Young, Middle and Old.

Wilma Archdekin gave the courtesies. The next meeting will be April 8 at 10 a.m. hosted by Mae Dixon.

## Did you know?

The 1981 CENSUS says that the ranks of the female professional are swelling and these considerable gains were made in the last decade. In 1981, there were six times as many female lawyers, five times as many female engineers, and three times as many female accountants as in 1971.

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