

# School News

## Robert Little School hoping to acquire much-needed funds

Alterations and additions amounting to over \$2,000,000 to Robert Little School in Acton are desperately needed, says a local trustee who hopes the Halton Board of Education will approve a tentative budget and work plans for the school at their next meeting.

"It's been a long time coming for this school," said Trustee Arlene Bruce. "The school needs a lot of upgrading and more space."

Ms. Bruce, along with Trustee Dick Howitt, are members of the board's property committee investigating the scope of work needed at the school. Their report, complete with site plans of the proposed work, will be presented to the board Thursday (tomorrow) where members will be asked to approve sketch plans.

Ms. Bruce said there's been a lot of letters sent to the board by parents unhappy with the lack of space at Robert Little. "Shortage of space and the need for guidance and testing space were concerns expressed about the school," said Mrs. Bruce.

From viewing the school herself, she's seen the overlapping of space teachers and students have had to make. "The principal's office has been used to test children and halls are where gym equipment is stored," she said.

The proposed addition will negate the need for overlapping.

The amount of work needed in the report includes an extension to the present gym and a gym storage room; altering the present classroom and administration area at the front of the school and expanding the area to include two change rooms, one instructor's office, one general office, one health unit, one guidance centre and one special services area; construction of caretaker and school storage facilities; construction of four new classrooms;

upgrading of roof, windows, ceilings and light fixtures; provision of additional parking and bus turning circles; upgrading building to present building and fire code requirements and providing facilities for physically handicapped students.

Ms. Bruce says there are still some quirks in the plans to iron out but is basically happy with all the additions except for the bus situation.

"It's not an easy place to put a bus turnaround," she said. "Nobody is very happy with that point of the plan. It will need a lot of changes before it is passed."

The estimated cost of the proposed project is \$2,014,000. That amount breaks down to: \$664,000 for the front addition and alterations, \$192,000 for restoration work; \$390,000 for site work; \$498,000 for furniture and equipment and \$40,000 miscellaneous.

Mrs. Bruce said the cost is higher than first estimated because the property committee felt it should expand with an eye on the future so that this year's expansion won't be too small in four or five years.

The committee outlined in its report the effect of long-term development by indicating future development in Acton along with the potential of Junior Kindergarten and the school's own French Immersion Program ensure that enrolment at the school will remain high.

If the Board passes the sketch plans at Thursday's meeting, the committee hopes to start advertising for tenders by April 26 and have the alterations completed by Sept. 3, 1991. The classroom additions have been timetabled for completion by Jan. 6, 1992.

The project will also require committee of adjustment approval from the Town of Halton Hills before construction can begin.



## Reading Celebration Day

Several moms and school officials were on hand at Joseph-Gibbons School last Thursday to take part in the school's Reading Celebration Day. Linda Hunter was one mom who camped out on the floor and read stories to students Matthew Moore (left) and Daniel Schultheiss (right) who snuggled with their teddy bears and pillows. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

## Acton High School joins new educational concept

By COLLEN GREGG  
Herald Special

This year the OAC Geography class at Acton High School has been granted the privilege of taking part in a new and exciting

educational concept.

Under the supervision of geography teacher, Keith Black, students will represent their home country of Canada in a universal negotiation program, similar to that of the "real life" United Nations organization.

The program is called ICONS - the International Communication and Negotiation Simulations project.

This project is worldwide and multi-institutional; assisted by computer terminals. It is an experimental project developed by the University of Maryland.

ICONS involves the participation of 22 different countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, China, France, Hungary, India, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Poland, Pakistan, Peru, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, U.S.S.R., Germany and Zimbabwe.

The project functions on the sending and receiving of messages. Messages are directed to the University of Maryland, where they are processed (or translated into the appropriate language) and sent to a 'receiving country.' All countries involved have computer laboratories working to their advantage, complete with a computer terminal, modem, printer, dedicated telephone line and a communications and word processing software package.

Messages involved in ICONS are actual negotiations 'talks,' concerning the world issues of: European Economic Unification, Arms Control, Third World Debt, Global Warming, and Human Rights and the Persian Gulf/Middle East situation. To ensure that the program operates successfully, the University of Maryland is responsible for calling 'conferences' between countries, two or three times a week.

Working on Greenwich time, students from all over the world will communicate with one another for 60-75 minute time periods.

The ICONS project forces students to experience the difficult world of negotiations and attempted maintenance of universal peace. Students must not only reach harmonious status amongst themselves over Canada's world policies, but they must also create a courteous and negotiable image for their 'partner countries.' Students are expected to research thoroughly the actual policies Canada and the other participating countries have on the discussed world issues, in order to obtain an unbiased perspective.

ICONS offers an experience not available to students through everyday educational settings. ICONS has the potential to teach students about world difficulties; and perhaps better the understanding of why solutions are often hard to come by.



## Public Speaking Contest

Limehouse Public School held its annual public speaking contest last Thursday, which Grade 5 student Meredith Sones (front left) won. She's pointing to New York State which was the topic of her winning presentation. Shirley Grant, Grade 5, seated beside her, displays her braces which made for a comedic speech that earned her runner-up. Other

finalists in the competition included: (middle row, left to right), Donald Mackay, Grade 5; Margaret Brown, Grade 4; Ann Grant, Grade 5; (back row, left to right) Jeff Kranendonk, Grade 5; Leah Cosgrove, Grade 4; Gregory Denny, Grade 5; and J.J. Shoebridge, Grade 5. (Herald photo)

