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## New program at George Kennedy an educational innovation

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT  
The Herald

The first day of school can be one of the most difficult days of the year for an inexperienced teacher. Thanks to a new student-teacher program that offers more in-classroom training, six teacher candidates at George Kennedy Public School know they'll be able to handle the pressure.

The teacher candidates, Ineke Bosboom of Acton, Norma Cushnie



Carol Howitt

of Milton, Lisa McLay of Stratford, Roger Skelly of Waterloo and Brent Phillips and Audra Reimann of Kit-

chener, are enrolled in York University's Consecutive Program. The program offers people with undergraduate degrees a chance to earn their teacher's certificate with two days of campus training and two days of practical training per week.

"It's a whole new concept to have teacher candidates in public schools every week to earn their teaching diploma's," said Carol Howitt of Georgetown who, along with Milree Latimer of Acton, are the Consecutive Program's course directors.

They teach the course at Munn's Public School in Oakville, one of nine sites in the greater Toronto area where the course is offered.

"It's a great program. The teacher candidates get their theory in the campus classroom two days a week and can apply it immediately to the host-school classroom," said Ms. Howitt.

Of the 7,000 people who apply, only 760 are accepted to be matched up with a host teacher at a public school. At each school, an "adjunct professor" is chosen to act as a liaison between the host school and York University.

Besides the two days in the host school, teacher candidates also spend two one-week blocks and one three-week block in the school assuming the role of teacher. After spending half the school year in one school, they're transferred to another school to get their practical training.

Even the host teachers role is unique in this course said Ms. Howitt.

"When I had practical experience in school, the teachers were called Masters and would sit at the back of



George Kennedy Public School grade 2 teacher, Kim Phillips, checks student note books with teacher candidate Brent Phillips of Kitchener. Mr. Phillips is one of six teacher candidates at the school working as a team with the regular teachers

to gain practical teaching experience. George Kennedy is one of several Halton schools opening their doors to these York University Consecutive Program student-teachers. (Herald Photo)

the class and mark me but these host teachers act as mentors to the teacher candidates," she said. "The teacher is there to coach and help and they learn to operate as a team."

She wishes that when she was going for her teachers certificate, there was a course like this one available.

"The teacher candidates in this course are so much better prepared. They have a wide knowledge of so many areas," she said. "When I was in school, we were basically taught to teach lessons, but these candidates are taught to see the whole picture."

Peg Elliott, George Kennedy's

adjunct professor, feels the same way.

"These teacher candidates are able to work with an experienced teacher and learn a lot of teaching techniques as well as having the chance to practice and perfect their own techniques," she said.

The program is also beneficial to the school because there are more adults on staff to work with the children, she added.

The teacher candidates themselves are no less excited about the course.

"With all the hands-on training, I see how the teachers interact with kids and learn the little tricks they use," said Ineke Bosboom, a

mother of two teenagers who decided to pursue her dream of being a french-teacher this year.

Roger Skelly said he chose the York program because "it offered the best experience of any program." Besides the in-class training, the campus learning is also very practical and much more related to a classroom setting he said.

The teacher candidates have also been made to feel very welcome at George Kennedy he said. "They're obviously excited about us being here. They see the course as not only helpful to them but helpful for us."

## Taxpayers Coalition and teachers butting heads

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT  
The Herald

The Halton Taxpayers Coalition (HTC) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) are butting heads.

The OSSTF is insistent on the desire quality education be factored into the cost discussion, while the HTC wants reduced education costs. Both have come out with documents attacking each other's perspective.

Frank Gue, president of HTC, at the Halton Board of Education meeting Sept. 26, told school trustees "the OSSTF wants to blackmail you into meekly agreeing that quality equals cost and that you will requisition from taxpayers whatever OSSTF may request in the name of quality. This bait you must not swallow."

He asked to speak at the meeting to comment on an OSSTF Political Action paper which came out in April this year.

In it, OSSTF calls for activists to "counter the thrust of the tax revolt messiahs that are now networking in the province." Called the Tax Revolt Fightback Campaign, the paper states "unless we are able to blunt their momentum, they risk intimidating trustees and election candidates who defend quality education programs."

In his address to the board, Mr. Gue said the permanent state of affairs in every enterprise is "your costs are too high and your quality is not high enough" and gave examples.

He pulled out an old-style soup can explaining it had three times the seam length of newer cans thus increasing the possibility of perforation and food spoilage and costs 35 per cent more than the new style soup can.

"The new style soup can is of far higher quality and significantly lower cost-so it should be and so should you expect it to be," he said.

"What your taxpayers want is to see this progress in the education process linked with reductions in the education cost," he added.

Georgetown's school trustee, Dick Howitt said no one can quarrel with Mr. Gue's ideal of improving quality while reducing costs but he said he does quarrel with Mr. Gue's examples.

"His comparison of education to tin cans, TV's and computers aren't good comparisons because you can't punch kids out like an assembly line," said Mr. Howitt. "He's talking about economics of scale in industry but you can't equate that to kids."

He also rebutted Mr. Gue's statement that the OSSTF is pressuring trustees.

"There's absolutely no pressure behind the scenes from the federation," he said. "It just isn't there."

The OSSTF itself admits the HTC isn't wrong but that their actions are misdirected.

"The great tragedy of the tax revolt movement isn't that they are wrong. It is that by their actions, the supporters of the movement may deprive our underfunded schools of the revenues they need," the political action paper states. "Worse, their slash and hack demands may destroy the ability of school boards to deliver expected services."

Sally Rewbotham, president of the OSSTF in Halton said "we don't oppose tax reform. We don't disagree that taxes are too high-every teacher in the province pays taxes-but we do believe in a quality product."

She admits some of the wording in the political action paper could cause people "not to react too well to it" but said teachers in Halton are not politically militant and are concerned only about the kids.

"It's disheartening as a teacher and representative of teachers to

see this kind of criticism which paint us as being solely interested in money because that's just not the case," she said.

The OSSTF itself blames downloading (higher levels of government delegating some of their costs to lower levels of government) for higher taxes.

They say the federal government cut \$2.4 billion from its Established Programs Financing for the Ontario budget. "If the province had received the \$2.4 billion that was

cut from the EPF and applied it to eliminate local over the ceiling expenditures, there would be no tax revolt in Ontario," states the political action paper. "The federal Conservative government funding practices are at the root of the squeeze that local taxpayers are now enduring."

OSSTF said the provincial government is also downloading in that it mandates educational programs but does not provide the grants necessary to pay for them.

"When angry taxpayers target what the tax revolters term irresponsible local trustees, they are missing the real target-provincial and federal lawmakers," states the OSSTF document.

Trustees at the board received copies of both Mr. Gue's speech and the OSSTF political action paper but there were no questions or comment from the trustees after Mr. Gue made his presentation to the board.



Thrifty business

Saturday was the official opening of Hemy-Downs, a thrift store in Moore Park Plaza. To celebrate the occasion, owner Slavica Geylani, her husband John and son Sasa served cake, cookies

and squares to customers. The store sells new and 'lightly worn' clothing from \$3 for mens' shirts to \$15 dresses and \$25 jackets. Nothing in the store is over \$25. (Herald Photo)