



**BUS DITCHED:** No children were on this bus when it slid into the ditch on Highway 25 at 25 Side Road on Friday afternoon. The driver had pulled off on the shoulder and was attempting to get back on the highway when the back end of the bus slipped into the ditch. — Marie Shadbolt photo

# January is Alzheimers awareness month

With more than 500,000 Canadians living with Alzheimer disease, it is astonishing how little people know about the disease and programs that offer help, including Acclaim Health which has programs to help those living in the Halton Region combat the struggles that come with caring for someone who has dementia.

This year alone, more than 103,000 Canadians will develop dementia; equivalent to one person every five minutes. By 2038, this will become one person every two minutes, or more than 257,000 people per year. If nothing changes, the number of people living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia is expected to more than double, reaching 1.1-million Canadians within 25 years.

During Alzheimer Awareness Month, the Alzheimer Society is

asking Canadians especially those 40 and older, to practice prevention by learning the risks and making simple lifestyle changes. It is also just as important for those living with someone that has Alzheimer disease to understand that there are programs and services available to help them through this process.

Acclaim Health provides education and support through informative seminars and support groups. The new Acclaim Health Caregivers Compass online resource is part of a unique caregiver dementia program. It includes home visits along with seminars and support groups for caregivers of those affected by dementia in Halton.

Found at [www.acclaimhealth.ca/caregiverscompass](http://www.acclaimhealth.ca/caregiverscompass) the Caregivers Compass is a tool for caregivers. This program supports people

providing care to individuals who have any form of dementia.

Acclaim Health understands that compassionate support and practical knowledge are crucial to the journey, well-being and success of a caregiver. The Caregivers Compass program is designed to provide valuable caregiving strategies and education about specific disorders and challenges that caregivers deal with on a daily basis. It also provides caregivers with valuable direction, insights and strategies on how to care for a person with dementia. It is a guide that will help them navigate their way through the caregiving journey by providing information on Alzheimer Disease, tips on caring for people with dementia, caregiving strategies and information on support and education groups offered in communities across Canada.

# Catholic Board rescinds Equity and Inclusive Education Policy

Trustees with the Halton Catholic District School Board Trustees voted on Tuesday to rescind a controversial ban on gay-straight clubs and replace it, in the interim, with the Ontario Education Services Corporation's (OESC) Catholic template policy.

Even though Ontario law allows gay-straight clubs, before last fall's municipal election, the Board said the gay-straight alliances would not be allowed. On Tuesday night, that decision was overturned.

"The Trustees of our Board have decided to adopt the OESC's Catholic template policy as an interim measure, because it better reflects the intent and objectives of the newly elected Board," said Board chair of the Board Alice Anne LeMay in a press release.

LeMay said the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, as written and approved in November, 2010, was "too restrictive and narrow in focus," and

the Board's decision to rescind the policy, which included a ban on Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs), is based on this acknowledgement.

"As a Catholic school system that teaches the respect, dignity and love of all people, we take seriously our faith-directed and legislated responsibilities to provide safe, equitable and inclusive school environments," LeMay said.

Until trustees debate a new policy, the Board will follow the OESC's Catholic template policy statement, developed in 2010 in consultation with the Catholic community, educators and equity and inclusion policy specialists. The template is designed to assist Catholic school boards in developing policy that meets Ministry requirements and is aligned to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

"The most compelling voices on this issue have come from some of the

students in our care, who have expressed to us that they don't always feel included and they have not always felt safe, and we need to listen to the voices of our students. Those voices are for us the most significant, and we are responding to that articulated need for support," said Michael Pautler, Director of Education.

"We will create safe and supportive forums for all of our students, including our youth who are gay, straight or questioning their sexual orientation. In these gatherings, students can safely discuss issues and concerns and examine ways to address homophobia, bullying, discrimination and harassment of any kind."

The Halton Catholic District School Board will operate under the template Equity and Inclusive Education for Catholic Boards provided by OESC until the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy is reviewed and amended.



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