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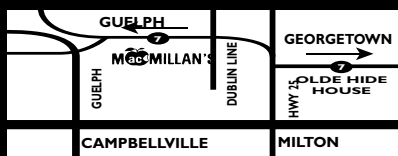
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SPECIALS FROM: May 26th to June 13th

# School board warns of cuts

Continued from pg. 1

The board has an operating budget of \$509 million for the 2010-11 school year, as well as a \$231 million capital budget that will pay for the several new schools the board is building.

Parfeniuk, who led the discussion, told the gathering that with funding cuts from the Province, if the school board were to operate with a status quo from the current year, the board would have a budget deficit. He added cuts must be made in certain areas to accommodate the funding shortfall.

In determining the budget spending the school board has to first honour provincial mandate, such as providing enough teachers for students, and it has to honour its contractual agreements, such as a three per cent raise for its teachers. After that money is allocated, the board will determine where the money can be saved through cuts.

Parfeniuk explained where some of the funding shortfalls come from.

The Province is providing the school board with an additional two per cent for electricity, however the utility has gone up by 14 per cent.

Furthermore, the province is rolling out its Early Learning Program for JK/SK students, which gives parents the option to keep their four and five year olds in schools for the full-day.

The Province is providing funds for 436 students in the program, but the HDSB has 495 registered for the school year.

"We're not turning kids away," Parfeniuk said. "And we don't get extra grants for those extra programs."

The board will be down some \$900,000 to pay for those extra student spaces.

Another shortfall of \$1.3 million comes from the school board now paying for stu-

dent fees, that previously were paid for by student's parents.

"We should not see students pay for anything that is curricular-based," he said.

He noted things such as pigs, for dissecting, will now be paid for by the school board. However, extra-curricular activities, such as field trips and after-school programs, will still be paid for by parents.

The board also has a \$400,000 structural deficit from the current year to the next. The school board spent \$1 million of reserve funds for operating purposes, but is now left with only \$600,000 in reserves.

The board will also be curbing its spending on textbooks and technology this year, as the province cut funding to each by \$650,000. Technology funding pays for items such as computers.

The school board is also installing wireless networking into its schools that will allow students and staff to log on to the Internet, and potentially the school network, remotely.

Despite some of the funding shortfalls, the school board is getting additional grant money to support its pupil growth.

"We are the fastest growing school board in the province," Parfeniuk said.

At the elementary school level, the board is growing by 3.1 per cent, or 1,038 students. Of those new students 750 are heading into the French immersion program, while the remainder will be in the English track. At the secondary school level, the board is growing by 2.9 per cent, or 504 students.

The budget proceedings are going to run throughout May and June. A meeting is scheduled for today (Tuesday) at Silver Creek Public School (gymnasium), 170 Eaton St, Georgetown at 7 p.m. For more information visit www.hdsb.ca.



STEVEN  
PARFENIUK

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