

Controversial Grade 9 sex ed. lessons under fire by parents

By KATHY YANCHUS

Special to The Independent/Free Press

It's a waiting game for opponents of the Halton Board of Education's Grade 9 Healthy Sexuality curriculum.

Concerned parents, students, teachers and special interest parties have voiced their concerns about the explicit nature of some of the material and their feelings that emphasis on abstinence is lacking.

They did so again at the June 23 board meeting, but as it stands now, nothing has changed since a June 20th special board meeting on the subject, and the curriculum will continue to be taught in Grade 9 classrooms this fall. (Two thousand students have already studied the curriculum.)

Notices of motion were submitted requesting revisions and abstinence emphasis, but these can't be voted on until the next board meeting, expected to be September 8, but could be as early as August.

Superintendent of Instruction Service Graeme Barrett said emphatically he has no intention of revising the curriculum.

One motion specifically request-

ed inclusion of a one-hour segment devoted to the "virtues of abstinence" and elimination of the game board and question section, replacing it with expanded information on the risks of becoming sexually active. (Cards for the game board include questions such as: Out of every 10 women, how many would you estimate have masturbated either as children or after they were

and informative course of study for our students," reasoned Burlington trustee Noel Cooper.

Other motions called for reviewing and modifying the information on birth control to include possible side effects; eliminating the arousal material in the Condom section and making the Condom section of the curriculum one of fact, withdrawing the reference to the purchase of condoms being similar to the buying of jeans.

CURE (Citizens United for Responsible Education) spokesperson John Teklenburg said, "I'm optimistic that the public will, through the trustees, win this issue."

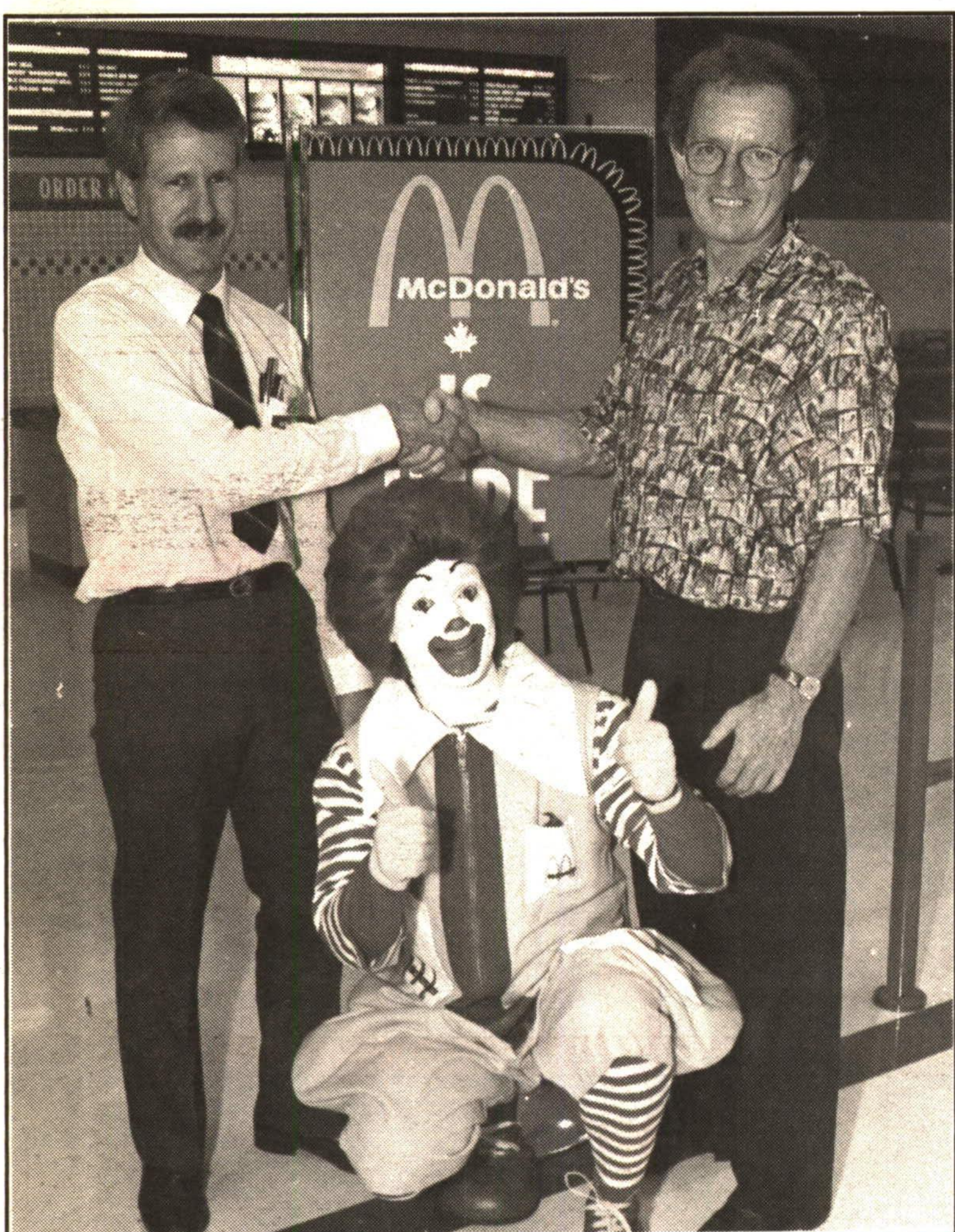
Teklenburg, who believes his group is being unfairly labeled fundamentalist or a bunch of Victorian prudes, said he is not against giving students pertinent information on how to protect themselves if they engage in sexual activity. CURE simply wants more emphasis on abstinence as a viable alternative.

Burlington trustee Anne Barbu's motion that information sessions for parents would be held at every high school prior to the curriculum being taught, was carried.

'I'm optimistic that the public will ... win this issue.'
— CURE spokesperson

growing up? What do you think is the length of the average man's erect penis? The female has three sets of lips...which lips are the most sensitive to sexual stimulation?)

"I believe that the issue of a more abstinence-oriented program coupled with the deletion of some of the more explicit areas of this document, will offer a compromise to both sides in this debate while still maintaining an extremely useful



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