

School streaming termed discriminatory

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years with no labels and then decide where they are going to go.

"What Premier Bob is using it for is to get equity — he wants to make everybody equal. Now say that your gifted kids are a 10 and your very basic kids, unfortunately who in Toronto are minority kids, and make them a one. The NDP want to see them all educated at about a five, but practicality dictates that the lowest common denominator is where they will go and they will all be taught at a one."

Whiting said he agreed with the concept of equality but not the political reasoning behind it. "You don't want some of the naturally bright kids getting bored and there is a risk with de-streaming."

Superintendent Fink said Thursday that de-streaming will delay for one year the very important education decisions that will affect the rest of the student's life.

"This move started with the provincial Liberals in 1988 with a Throne Speech announcement that

program levels in Grade 9 would be phased out," Fink explained.

"The advanced, general and basic levels of high school education would be abandoned and there would be emphasis on making the transition years from Grades 7, 8 and 9 more of a group. The NDP has picked up the policy and run with it.

"Probably the most compelling argument I give to parents in favour of de-streaming is that kids are making decisions about levels of courses that will effect their lives and they are making them in Grade 8 where they only have a half-time guidance instructor and limited career information," Fink said.

"My own daughter is a good example. She was not a brilliant math student but was average and ended up in general level math. What that means is she now has general level Grade 12 math and can't be a nurse, as an example. Kids are making decisions that are affecting their whole lives."

Fink said he accepts the argument from the Province that stream-

ing is discriminatory. "If you look at the structure of general and basic classes across the province they tend to have a greater percentage of students of lower incomes and visible and cultural minorities. The nice middle-class kids go into the advanced and all the rest congregate in the others.

"In terms of the whole NDP equity argument, it is somewhat discriminatory and I think there's a very basic ethical argument that the government is making and that I accept."

Fink said that the change from streaming is a philosophical one and, from his point of view, it is just one very small piece of a much larger shift that should occur.

Fink said educators need to move away from a system design for an industrial society to one that prepares kids for the information age.

"We not only need product development, we need process development in industry. Hopefully de-streaming will help us educate the bottom 50 per cent of students to a much higher level.

"Not only do we have to raise the ceiling of expectations, we have to raise the floor and turn out students who are more literate and numerate and can solve problems and make decisions with less supervision," Fink said.

Chance meeting benefits town's teen moms

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"It's rough. Rents are high and what's available is usually in very poor condition. The housing is just part of the Baptist Church program for teen moms."

Cullen said his involvement with the teen moms program also resulted from a chance meeting.

"We have this great building at Acton Baptist Church that we heat and look after. It's used for church programs and on Sundays but throughout the week it was vacant," Cullen explained.

"We looked for a community group that would like to use it and it would be some sort of ministry for us.

"It was another chance meeting. I was talking to Ann Day, who was co-ordinating the teen mom education program. They were too crowded at the band hall so they moved in here and it's been a perfect marriage. If we can get this housing for them it will be great."

The YMCA building, built in 1934, has been vacant since Halton Region Police moved out in the fall of last year.

The building is owned by the Central Ontario Lakeshore Y.

NEWS SHORTS

Robbery at Rockwood store

Guelph OPP are looking for two suspects in connection with an armed robbery and forcible confinement Sunday morning at the Rockwood Village Store on Alma Street.

Police report two suspects, one armed with a crowbar, entered the store at 1 am and forced the clerk and two customers to the floor.

The suspects emptied the till of cash and lottery tickets worth \$300 and forced the victims into a storage room. As the suspects left the store, one of them took the car of another customer who just pulled up, and drove away, followed by the second suspect in a Chevrolet truck. The stolen car was recovered 3 km from the scene.

Police report one customer in the store was slightly injured during a scuffle with one of the suspects.

The first suspect is a white male, in his early 20s, 5'4" to 5'6" with a thin build and stringy, shoulder-length dirty-blond hair. The second suspect is a white male in his early 20s, 5'10" to 5'11" with a stocky build and closely-cropped dark hair with a pale complexion.

Police are also looking for a dark GMC Jimmy or a Chev Blazer that may have damage to the left front corner.

Bower blades

There have been two knifings in the past four days at an apartment at 50 Bower Ave. Both of the incidents involved alcohol.

In the latest incident on Sunday, police report an Acton man, who was visiting the apartment, received a small cut on the arm when he and a woman argued over his ex-wife.

Police said the accused, who had been drinking, pulled a small knife out and waved it at the victim who was injured when he tried to kick a knife out of the accused's hand. The accused was cut on the thumb in the fight and was taken to hospital for stitches and then charged.

Charged with assault with a weapon and possession of a dangerous weapon is 51-year-old Irene Katherine Searle of 50 Bower Ave.

The victim was also connected to a stabbing at the apartment on Thursday. He posted \$5,000 bail to free an Acton woman charged with stabbing her common-law husband.

Police were called to the apartment at 50 Bower Ave. at 2 am to deal with a domestic dispute. They found a man had been stabbed in the arm with a 7 1/2" kitchen knife. The victim was taken to hospital for treatment and kept overnight.

Charged with aggravated assault with a weapon is 45-year-old Debra Miller of 50 Bower Ave.

Smash and Grab

Police have no suspects or witnesses in the smash and grab theft of a car stereo and other items from an Acton woman's car.

The woman had parked her car in the Mountainview Road-John Street area of Georgetown Saturday night.

Hours later she found someone had smashed the right front window of her car and ripped a \$1,600 car stereo from the dash.

A leather coat was taken from the trunk and a tool set was stolen from under the seat.

Total value of the theft was \$1,900.

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I know of kids who are in no position at the end of Grade 8 to decide what they want to do with their lives."

— Dave Whiting, Acton School Board Trustee, Page 1

Acton Seniors' Centre plans keep rolling

After nearly two decades of waiting, Acton seniors are a step closer to having their own recreation centre.

Early in the new year, seniors will be asked what they need and want in their new centre in the old Fire Hall on Bower Avenue.

Toronto architect Simon Davis is currently working on three conceptual design plans and wants seniors' input.

Councillor Gerald Rennie said in an interview Saturday that re-designing the fire hall for the seniors will have to be done in phases.

"It would be too expensive to do all the work at once, so what the architect needs from the seniors is an idea of what they consider most important. We know we need washrooms, a kitchen and a general meeting room," Rennie explained.

"The seniors might decide they want carpet bowling and a lounge.

The seniors have a facilities committee that is looking into the design plans."

The Town has ear-marked \$42,000 in this year's capital budget to begin construction work. The seniors, who have raised \$30,000 to help with the costs, are responsible for \$10,000 of the cost. They also received a \$23,116 grant from the federal New Horizons program.

"Even last week the architect couldn't tell us how far that \$42,000 would take us," Rennie said. "It is possible that we will need more than that to do the first phase. In that case we would have to scrounge around to find some more money. Maybe the seniors will have to put a little more in. I just don't know."

Rennie hopes and that Acton seniors will be in the building in 1993 but Town staff say full occupancy will not happen for three years.

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