

Acton trustee elected vice-chair of Halton Board of Education

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

Acton trustee Dave Whiting knows he has work cut out for him as he takes over in the new year as vice-

chair of the Halton Board of Education.

"The board is pretty-much split on any issue you can name, it doesn't matter," Whiting said in an interview Thursday.

"Every time we try to do something it comes out in a 10-8 vote. People have different agendas but the four trustees from the north are usually on the winning side of the votes. It seems to be a matter of working with the administration or fighting them."

Whiting said he feels the administration should administrate, the teachers should teach and the trustees should do their job and oversee the allocation of education dollars and the general policy issues which

arise.

"There are factions on the Board that are still upset over the decision not to re-build the Oakville Trafalgar High School. The request for a police investigation came from that issue.

"The other split is a control one over out-of-province travel. One faction felt they should be working in co-operation with staff on the committee studying the issue and that's the way the Board has generally worked. The other faction is trying to exclude teachers from the committee. It's hard to get things done," Whiting said.

As vice-chair Whiting will run the private committee of the whole discussions of the board, a job he said calls for a facilitator not a debater.

Whiting, a first-term trustee, defeated an Oakville trustee for the vice-chair job. Chair Dave Coons was unchallenged for his second 3 year term.



HE AIN'T HEAVY: Santa does a bit of role reversal with Acton's Geoff Moon at Thursday's Red Cross blood donor clinic at the Legion. Geoff, the clinic co-ordinator, would not reveal what Santa wants for Christmas. (Frances Niblock photo)

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Teen Education and Motherhood program to expand in Acton

Despite a wide-ranging public relations campaign, media coverage and active promotion, news of Acton's successful Teen Education and Motherhood (TEAM) program is only reaching a few Acton moms.

The program, run by the Halton Board of Education and Acton Social Services and Information Centre, offers pregnant teens and young mothers the chance to finish their high school diploma in a supportive, non-threatening atmosphere.

TEAM co-ordinator Donna Kurtin said the toughest job is to get the young mother to come forward.

"It's a great program. The moms work at their own speed on the credits they need to graduate. We provide wonderful, free daycare for their children and one-on-one tutoring five afternoons a week," Kurtin said in an interview Thursday.

It is estimated there are 50 to 60 young mothers in Acton who would

qualify for the program. Last year 11 moms were enrolled and two graduated. Four returned and this year there are nine students.

"It's a good way for these girls to finish their high-school education through independent learning, correspondence courses. We have two teachers who come in five afternoons a week to help them and some are eligible for maturity credits," Kurtin said.

"These girls feel good about themselves and their kids because they are doing something to help themselves. They get a break in the daycare, they don't have to pay for the courses and they are getting out of the house every day."

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