

BONJOUR MON AMI: Exchange students from St. Jorioz, France join their friends from Acton High School. The students are enjoying the early spring weather and discovering Southern Ontario. - Angela Tyler photo

## Funding answers not ready

By MAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY The New Tanner

Recent funding formula announcements from the Ministry of Education have left nearly as many questions as they answered for trustees with the Halton Board of Education.

Halton Catholic school trustees are a lot happier with the announcement, but neither is ready to explain exactly where the new granting system leaves them with their programming.

North Halton Catholic School trustee Irene McCauley said her board will be breaking down the figures and discussing them at their April 14 meeting.

For now they can only say a 24.2 per cent increase in funding from the previous system is "good for us".

"(Equality) has been a long time coming and it isn't full equality yet," McCauley said, pointing out the province first announced equality between the public and separate system in the early 1980s." But it's a step forward and we're quite happy."

Halton Public School Board chair Ethel Gardiner says her board is "still on hold" and she finds that "very unsettling" given the issues remaining to be worked out before a budget can be struck. They got preliminary numbers" but now they are waiting for more specifics to come from the

government.

McCauley said she expects the separate board will be hiring teachers since there has been significant growth in Halton and this increased funding will support that.

Boards know they will receive a basic foundation grant of \$3,367 per pupil for elementary students and \$3,953 for each secondary student. What they don't know is how to interpret the information concerning the other grants they receive, Gardiner said.

"Staff could go ahead and work out the numbers if they were sure how to interpret the ministry's information," she said. "They aren't sure and

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