

Board votes against closing schools

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Director of Education Dusty Papke said the board is now in the same position it was at the beginning of the accommodation process.

"The board has an accommodation problem and it still has an accommodation problem. I don't know where we go from here."

The board must eliminate about 1,800 surplus elementary spaces to obtain provincial funding for new schools.

Gardiner said the decision contradicts an earlier decision of the board to minimize the use of portables. She said she expects as many as 50 portables (up from the 16 currently in use) at Georgetown schools in the next two to three years. She said north Oakville will also see a big increase in portables.

In addition to the overcrowding issue, Gardiner said the decision could have a financial impact as well.

"We may have just thrown \$3.5-million out the window," Gardiner said in reference to the Educational Development Charges, the provincial funding used to buy school sites. In order to receive the grant, the board must, over a five-year period, have an average enrollment that equals its schools' capacity.

Papke said initial projections showed the board would get the EDCs—qualifying by 26 students. That leaves room for less than 1/10 of one per cent in error for the projections.

Voting against closing the schools were Burlington trustees Bird, Michael Ellis, Oakville trustees Lynn Roberts and Sheila Flook and Marianne Hawthorne.

Voting in favor of closing the two schools were Gardiner, Milton trustee Erica Andrews, Burlington trustee David Abbott and Oakville trustees Peter Petrusich and Debbie Marklew.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer
(with files from Dennis Smith, special)



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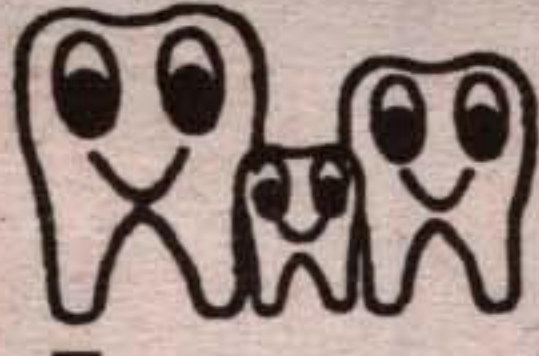
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<p>Tips for children on how to Stay Alert...Stay Safe in April</p> 				<p>Always go places with buddies when possible.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p>Never send your picture over the Internet without checking with your parents first.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>Step well back if a stranger stops to ask for directions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>
<p>Always tell your parent or a teacher you trust if something has happened that bothers you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>If a bully bothers you on the school bus, sit next to the teacher or driver.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p>If you find yourself lost in a store, just go to the closest cashier and ask for help.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p>	<p>Always avoid hanging around lonely parks, woods, parking lots or even school yards late after school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p>	<p>Have a special message center in your home where phone numbers you might need are written down.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p>	<p>Know where the Block Parent home is in your neighbourhood.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p>	<p>Plan regular routes to get home from places you know, and be sure your family knows these routes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10</p>
<p>Know who your parents have said you could go places with.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11</p>	<p>Responding in a friendly manner, or with humour, will sometimes stop a bully.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12</p>	<p>If somebody grabs you, struggle, bite and scratch, roll around, spin in circles, yell and scream for help.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">13</p>	<p>If a car is following you, turn around quickly and walk the other way.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">14</p>	<p>If somebody you don't know is trying to get you to go with them, say no.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">15</p>	<p>If you have a bully in your class, ask them to help you with something you know they're good at.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">16</p>	<p>Always choose the person you want to help you if you find yourself in trouble.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17</p>
<p>Stay Alert for tricks by people who want you to go with them. Keep your radar up!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">18</p>	<p>Always try to share a problem with a friend or grown-up.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">19</p>	<p>If you are alone in the house, don't open the door to strangers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20</p>	<p>Make sure to tell a grown up that you trust if a bully's behaviour towards you continues.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">21</p>	<p>Don't trust people who act one way in front of grown-ups and differently when you are alone.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">22</p>	<p>If you're alone on an elevator, remember to stand by the control panel.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">23</p>	<p>Keep names on clothes or accessories hidden on the inside.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24</p>
<p>Safe people to approach might be other parents with children.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">25</p>	<p>Be careful on the Net; adults can pretend to be kids. Keep your radar up!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">26</p>	<p>Never feel forced to give away anything that belongs to you to a bully.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">27</p>	<p>Don't take shortcuts, especially through dark alleys or lonely parks.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">28</p>	<p>Always listen to your radar. It's that little voice inside that tells you when something doesn't feel quite right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29</p>	<p>For more information on Stay Alert...Stay Safe's streetproofing program please call 1-800-301-SASS www.sass.ca</p> <p style="text-align: center;">30</p>	

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