

# Public school board considers junior kindergarten for next year

Establishing 30 junior kindergarten classes at a cost of \$324,000, plus teacher salaries, has been suggested for the Halton District School Board.

A plan outlined last week recommended setting up JK incrementally, starting in September 2000. The first phase would accommodate about 600 students.

The proposal is still in the discussion stage, but trustees heard an information update which suggested starting with 13 classes in Burlington, 10 in Oakville and seven in north Halton (Milton and Halton Hills). Proposed locations are: two classes each at Joseph Gibbons (Georgetown), McKenzie-Smith Bennett (Acton) and J.M. Denyes (Milton) and one class at Percy Merry (Milton).

Families outside these school boundaries can apply for their children to attend JK based on current optional attendance policy and practices.

"We did our best to spread it out and have an equitable number of classes, with minimum disruption to other early learning classes," said superintendent Paul Anthony. "We need both kinds of learning."

He said, where possible, the first schools targeted for JK will be those with excess capacity. When questioned later, Anthony said portables would be needed as the junior kindergarten program expanded.

Trustees opted last spring to reconsider JK after an Early Years Study emphasized the importance of learning during the first six years. Junior kindergarten provides half-day education for children aged four.

The cost of JK and its impact on other early

grades were two major concerns expressed by trustees. Early learning grants for primary grades could be lost if JK is established.

Anthony said any losses would be offset by the head start JK provides.

"You get kids into school a year earlier and get them assessed a year earlier," he said. "We hope to find a balance to retain early learning teachers."

JK classes would require 15 full-time equivalent teachers and it was suggested some early learning staff could be reshuffled to fill the positions.

Superintendent Wayne McNally said JK startup funding is not in the 2000 budget but could be obtained there or through reserves, a school renewal budget or the anticipated budget surplus.

"I'm not uncomfortable saying we can find the funding in one of those places," he said.

Anthony said most of the \$324,000 cost is a one-time expense, except for a \$37,500 ongoing budget for supplies like paper.


Jolante Grzeslo of the board's early learning team said special training is needed to teach children ages 3-6.

Grzeslo said language development is particularly important for JK with class time also required for other situations such as activity, small groups and outdoor play.

The board operated 13 JK classes for a year in the mid-90s, after it was mandated by the former NDP provincial government. But it was dropped following a government change and cuts in provincial funding.

—By Dennis Smith, special

50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50



## Happy 50<sup>th</sup> JIM

Love  
Patty, Chris & Mike

THE ARTHRITIS SOCIETY Ontario Division

### KIDS GET ARTHRITIS TOO.

Please help us find the cure! To donate, or for more information, call 1-800-321-1433

## DON'T PAY FOR 90 DAYS ON ALL GAS FURNACES

Plus FREE FIVE YEARS PARTS WARRANTY

Payments as low as **\$39.95 per month**

- 92% High Eff. Furnace
- Lifetime heat exchanger warranty
- No pilot light to save energy
- Multi speed motor for optional air conditioning





**APPLEBY SYSTEMS** 118 GUELPH ST., GEORGETOWN  
"Your Neighbourhood Union Energy Dealer" MILTON 876-3267 877-8990  
Fireplace, Heating & Air Conditioning Contractors  
30 years of Quality Service to the Halton Community. Hours: Monday - Friday 9-5, Saturday 11-4, Closed Sunday. Appointments available after hours upon request.

# St Clair

the paint and paper people

## Colour & Advice

Company's Coming ...are you ready yet?



# 25% OFF

## Luxury Velvet Satin Lustre #167

Over 6000 colours

## & Ceiling Paint #170

3.78 L



# 20-40% OFF

## All Wallpaper Book Orders



GEORGETOWN STORE ONLY. SALE ENDS DECEMBER 24, 1999

# St Clair

the paint and paper people

211 Guelph St., Georgetown  
873-0288

