

**Despite \$234,000 savings...**

**Catholic board won't change JK schedule**

The Halton Catholic District School Board won't even consider offering all-day, alternate-day Kindergarten.

Trustees, at a recent meeting, voted to reject a proposal to start reviewing the all-day, alternate day scenario and not conduct public meetings on the issue this fall.

According to Superintendent of Education (Halton Hills) and Curriculum Diane Rabenda, the board had to consider several "serious issues of concern," not the least of which was the impact on childcare scheduling. This was made clear by the organizational models floated for the board's consideration, which included a variety of sometimes confusing attendance patterns.

As far as transportation is concerned, Rabenda said all-day, alternate day Kindergarten would save an estimated \$234,000. On the flipside, the board would have to accommodate the noon-hour riders who would require busing mornings and afternoons.

However, the cost of paid noon-hour supervisors would reduce these savings by varying amounts depending on the all-day, alternate day model used. Other issues are logistical, such as the scheduling of nap times, snack breaks and the need to purchase refrigeration equipment for prepared meals.

The Halton District School Board is

implementing the all-day alternate-day model for Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten (JK), this fall. The switch coincides with the board's implementation of JK at half its elementary schools. The Catholic board has offered JK since the fall of 1989.

The advantage of all-day, alternate day Kindergarten— exclusive of monetary concern— is that students have more opportunities to learn and teachers have added time for interaction, observation and evaluation.

Rabenda said most studies that examined alternate Kindergarten systems are as much as 20 years old. One such survey, she said, found that teachers noticed a decrease in student academics in the full-day program. Because of these various issues, Rabenda cautioned that "extensive dialogue" with parents would be necessary before any decision is made and changes implemented

in September 2002.

"We have a very successful program and don't want to do anything to destroy it," she said.

Halton Hills Trustee Irene McCauley said simply: "I think we should stay as we are and move on."

While the board might realize savings in transportation costs, Oakville Trustee Alice Anne LeMay continued, these might easily be outweighed by the financial implications of other factors.

—By Howard Mozel, special

'I think we should stay as we are and move on.'

—Trustee Irene McCauley



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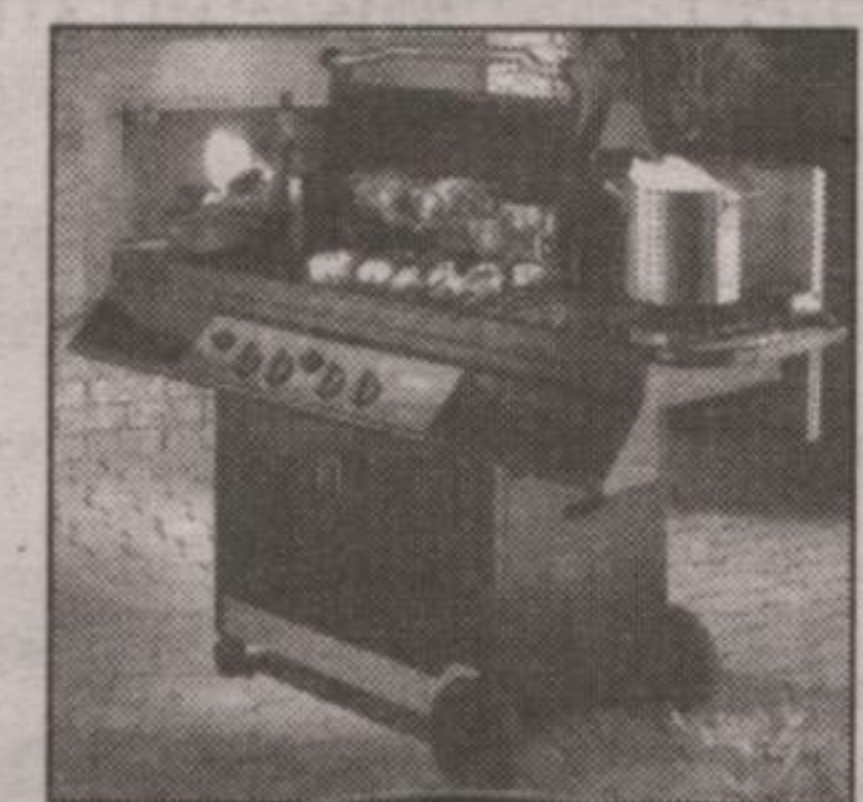
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Four awards of \$250.00 will be presented to students, residents of Halton Hills, who have successfully completed one semester of the Adult Learner Program at Georgetown & District High School.

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This award of \$250.00 in memory of a former CFUW member, will be presented to a student of Georgetown & District High School who is pursuing post-secondary studies in the field of Business, Journalism or Public relations.

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