

Editorial

# Sick of it all

For those out there who believe there is nothing wrong with Ontario's education system we direct you to today's front page story, Teacher payout blamed for school board budget shortfall.

Halton District School Board business superintendent Carla Kisko announced Wednesday the board is facing a \$2.2 million operating budget deficit for 2000-01, largely because the board has to pay retiring teachers gratuities this year.

The gratuities have been part of the teachers' negotiated agreements for decades and is calculated by taking the number of sick days a teacher has saved over his/her career and determining the value up to 50 per cent of one year's salary.

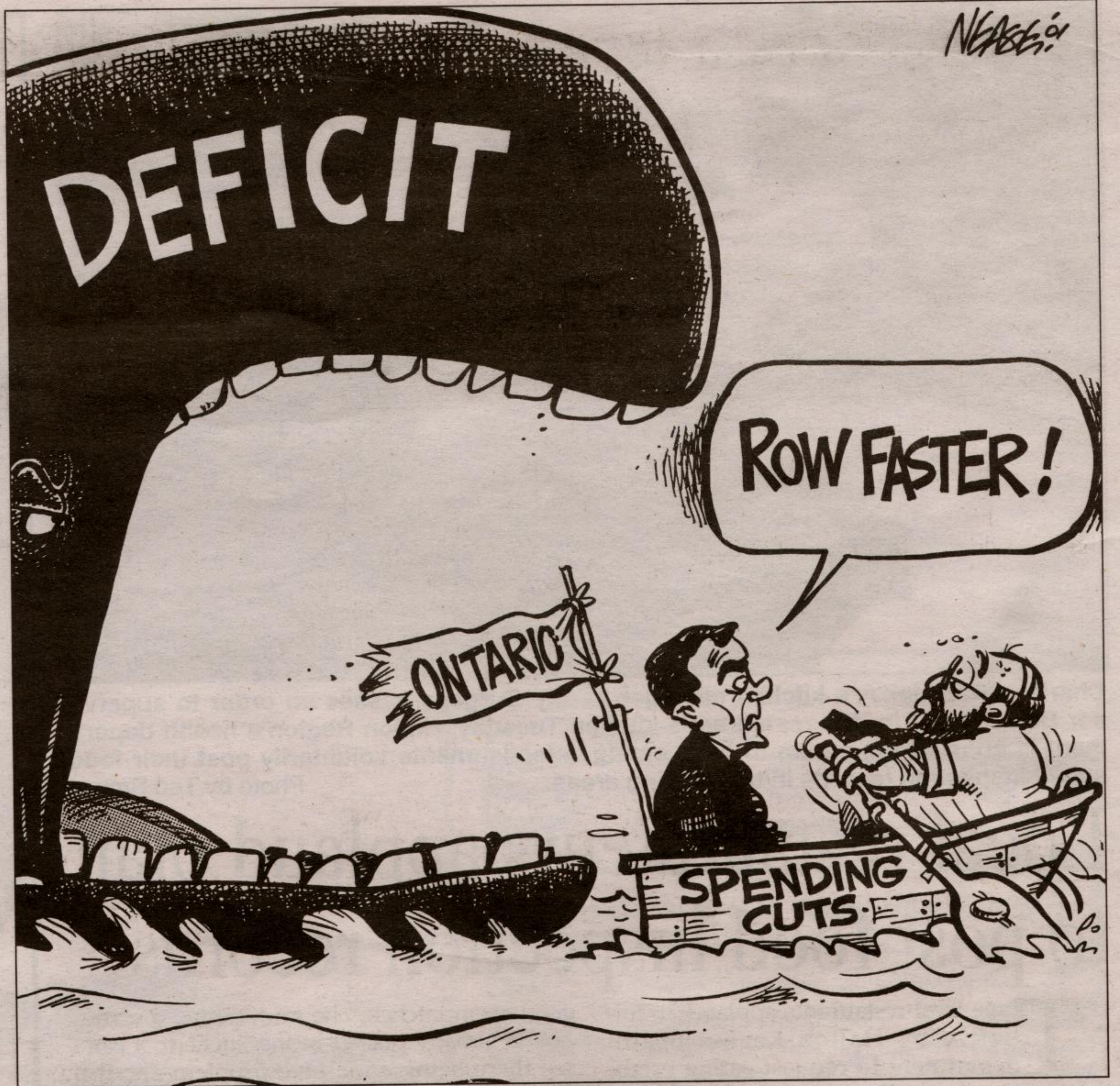
Teachers are permitted 20 "sick days" over 10 months and may bank them if unused. The average payout for a long time teacher would be about \$30,000. In Halton 150 teachers retired last year.

While we recognize the fact the "sick days" concept has been a negotiated part of the teachers' package for years that doesn't mean we have to like it. Paying someone to be ill and then allowing them to bank those days if they manage to stay healthy is an idiotic idea. While we can understand union negotiators grabbing this idea with both hands the government/school boards who have, in the past, agreed to this should have their heads examined.

Think how many books, computers, equipment, etc. \$30,000 can buy... and that's only what we, the taxpayers, are paying one retiring teacher!

While we're pleased to see the Halton board has stopped the sick day practice with its elementary teachers, the board doesn't expect to see savings for about 20-25 years.

Frankly, the whole issue makes us feel... well, sick.



## Letters to the editor....

### Support for community open house appreciated

Dear editor,

The Cooperative Program Planning Committee (CPPC) would like to thank all youths who came to

the Community Open House at the Georgetown Market Place recently.

Approximately 100 local youths actively participated by completing volunteer information passports in order to gain a better understanding of what youth volunteering opportunities are available in the community. Youths who returned completed passports were entered in a draw to win nine prizes.

The winners were: Amanda Nielsen (Wonderland passes), Jesse Modzelewski (manicure and hot tub session), Jason McNede (leather wallet and teddy bear), Angela Feenstra (leather manicure set and teddy bear), Rebecca McKenzie (T-shirt and water bottle package), Matthew Buxton (T-shirt and water bottle package), Katie Stiehl (angel figurine), Bryce Burrows (water bottle and fingerboard package).

This was a great way for youth to find out what types of volunteer positions are available to them that are geared specifically towards their interests. We want to say a big thank you to the local organizations who

donated prizes: Boardtopia, Downtown Spa and Relaxation Centre, Hallmark, Halton Hills Public Library, Halton Region Health Department, Paramount Canada's Wonderland, the olde Hide House and Willow Park Ecology Centre.

Also, we would like to extend our appreciation to *The Independent & Free Press*. Without their continuous support and thorough promotion of our event, it would not have been as successful as it was.

Some prizes have still not been collected. If you have not yet picked up your prize you may do so at the Recreation and Parks Department on the lower level of the Civic Centre, 1 Halton Hills Dr. (Georgetown) between 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"Youth volunteers are not leaders of tomorrow, not the hope of the future—rather they are the leaders of today and the future is now."

Andrea Neilson,  
Co-ordinator of Youth  
Volunteer Services

### Vandals 'thanked' for efforts

Dear editor,

At a time in this world when there is so much turmoil, it is nice to see that there are still some "nice" young boys in our town.

I would personally like to thank the four young men who, on Monday, (Nov. 12) evening saved me the job of hiring someone to come in and trim the two maple trees that were planted in our front yard last year—they were really starting to grow nicely.

By breaking one down to the ground, it will now give the one you only broke in half a head start for next year. I would also like to thank them for bending the lighted Christmas tree that is also in the front yard. It does look much better with that slanted look that you gave it while trying to steal it.

Had you been successful in stealing our lawn ornaments, it would have saved me the trouble of storing them in the non-Christmas months. And face it, my children probably would not have missed the lights anyway. What child looks forward to all that nonsense that goes along with Christmas—the lights, Santa Claus and the spirit of giving?

So, I'm assuming, that you were trying to take the reindeer and the trees to give to your parents.

The next time you decide to come by, knock on my door. My husband would like to help you get them out of the ground without damaging them for you to give... in the Christmas spirit, of course.

Kim Marais, Georgetown

### Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited.

**Mail or drop off**

Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, Ont., L7G 4B1

**Fax**

(905) 873-0398

**E-mail**

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

**Editorial e-mail addresses**

**John McGhie**

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

**Cynthia Gamble**

cgamble@independentfreepress.com

**Lisa Tallyn**

ltallyn@independentfreepress.com

**Herb Garbutt**

hgarbutt@independentfreepress.com

**Ted Brown**

tbrown@independentfreepress.com

# The Independent & Free Press

Weekend Edition

Mailing Address: 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, Ont. L7G 4B1  
Telephone: (905) 873-0301 Fax: (905) 873-0398  
E-mail: production@independentfreepress.com

Ken Nugent, Publisher  
Steve Foreman, Advertising/Production Manager  
John McGhie, Managing Editor  
Lorne Drury, Editor-in-Chief  
Carol Young, Business Manager  
Dave Coleman, Director of Distribution  
Nancy Geissler, Circulation Manager

Distribution e-mail: distribution@independentfreepress.com

News Editor: Cynthia Gamble  
Staff Writers: Lisa Tallyn, Herb Garbutt  
Photography: Ted Brown  
Advertising Sales:  
Dianne Fascinato, Cindi Dermo, Alexandra Stabins,  
Jeanette Cox, Sue Spizziri, Angela Reynolds  
Classified Manager: Carol Hall,  
Classifieds: Mary Watson, Sharon Pinkney,  
Accounting: Pat Kentner, Rose Marie Gauthier  
Production: Mary Lou Foreman, Kevin Powell, Shelli Harrison,  
Dolores Black, Debbie MacDougall  
Distribution: Kim McClure

The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of the newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd., which includes: Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Bancroft This Week/Barry's Bay This Week, Barrie Advance, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes,

Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Huronia Business Times, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Mississauga Business Times, Napanee Guide, Newmarket/Aurora Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Oldtimers Hockey News, Orillia Today, Oshawa-

Whitby/Clarington Port Perry This Week, Owen Sound Tribune, Peterborough This Week, Picton County Guide, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville/Uxbridge Tribune, Forever Young, City of York Guardian.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature will not be charged for, but the balance

of the advertisement will be paid for at the acceptable rate.

In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time.

Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited. Price: Store copies 50¢ each; Subscriptions \$26.00 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130.00 per year in

all other countries. Plus G.S.T. Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Independent & Free Press is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.

