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Off and running at new school

It only made sense that the fastest student in Ontario was the first through the doors at his new school. Principal Nijole Vaitonis and vice-principal Jim Locke held the doors open at Christ the King Catholic Secondary School as Ian Butcher, a gold medallist at last year's provincial high school track and field championships, prepared to charge into a new school year. Six hundred and thirty students will attend the first Catholic high school in Georgetown, which opens Tuesday.



Photo by Herb Garbutt

School board officials defend \$48,000 retreat for principals

A \$48,000 retreat held last week for Halton's 160 principals and vice-principals was an important and worthwhile team-building exercise, according to school board officials.

Director of Education Dusty Papke and board chair Ethel Gardiner both adamantly defended the conference, which came under attack this week by Burlington Trustee Peggy Russell.

Russell questioned the decision to hold the conference at the Talisman Mountain ski resort, rather than using a board facility here in Halton.

"We have high schools with air-conditioning and nice facilities this could have been held at," she said. "I'm sorry, but we've all got to get smarter about how we spend money."

The professional development conference, which has

been held annually since 1969, offers the school administrators a chance to discuss important system goals, attend workshops and hear from keynote speakers, said Papke.

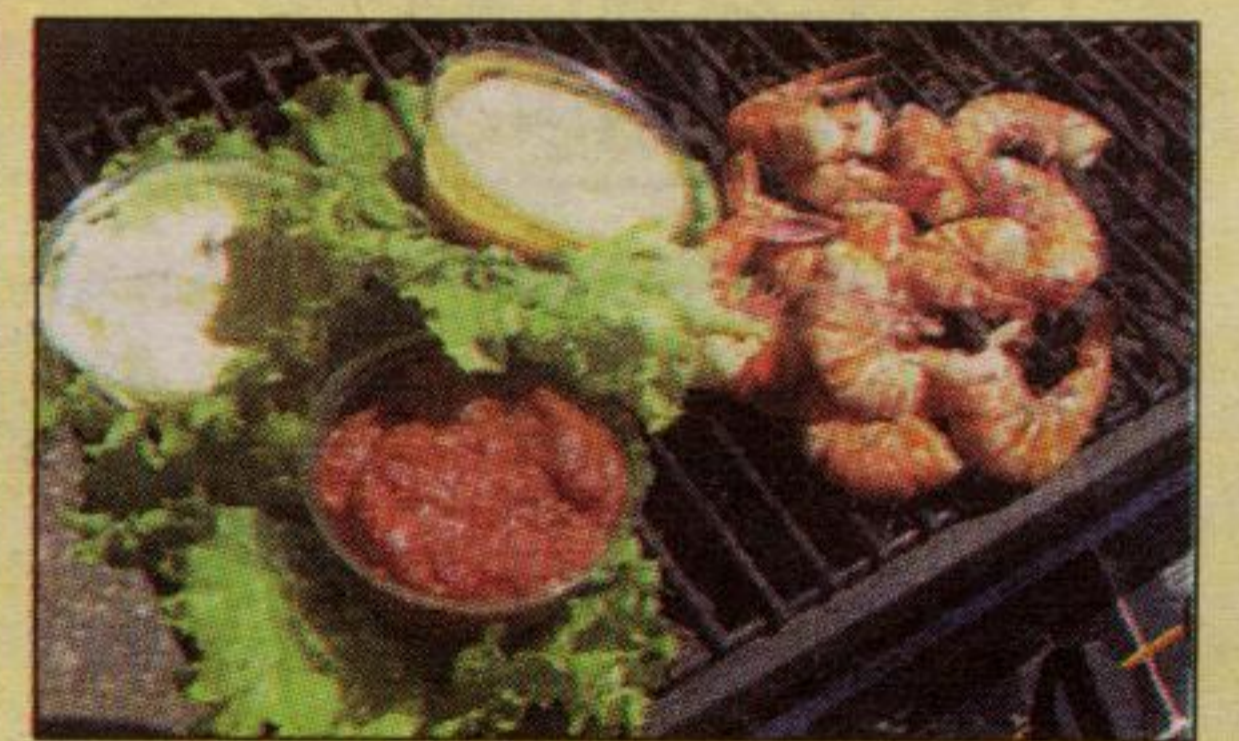
It has traditionally been held outside of Halton, to allow people to focus, avoid distractions and build a sense of team, he added.

The board also has a contractual obligation with its principals and vice-principals to provide professional development opportunities.

"It's a very important part of our system growth," said Papke. "I think it pays dividends for us."

Halton Hills Trustee Gardiner added that board staff managed to keep the cost of the two-day conference down to \$300 per person, and even sought corporate sponsors to help cover the expense.

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