



Tot transportation

The Halton District School Board and Halton Catholic District School Board held their annual School Bus Orientation Day Saturday at various schools in Halton. Getting a taste of her first bus ride at Georgetown District High School is Mikayla Hepburn, 4, of Georgetown. Children were shown a safety video and given instruction on how to properly ride the bus.

Photo by Trish England

Upcoming year features changes for Catholic board

Halton Hills' Catholic students will return to school on Tuesday (Sept. 3) and many of those will be attending the newly-opened Christ The King Secondary School in Georgetown.

The newly constructed three-storey school, located on Guelph St., has a 1,131-pupil capacity. It is one of four new Catholic schools opening in Halton this fall. The others are a high school (Holy Trinity) and elementary school (St. Joan of Arc) in Oakville and an elementary school (St. Elizabeth Seton) in Burlington.

During the summer Holy Cross School in Georgetown received asphalt playground replacement and improvements.

This fall, Kristyna Opletal, a student at Christ The King, will begin her duties as a student representative on the Halton District Catholic School Board (HCDSB). Opletal will join two other student representatives.

Also this year, St. Joseph's School of Acton will celebrate its 25th anniversary.

At the same time as HCDSB accommodates an increase in enrolment, it will also be dealing with important funding and curriculum issues.

"Our system is committed to sustaining demonstrable progress in all areas of its operations," said Director of Education Lou Piovesan.

"And, in particular, with the start of the new school year, we will focus our attention on school improvement planning in terms of student achievement, as well as budget management and improved communication with our partners in Catholic education."



LOU PIOVESAN

The board has purchased new learning materials, texts and resources on the new Ontario curriculum for all elementary grades— Junior Kindergarten through to Grade 8. At the secondary level, new texts have also been bought to match the new Ontario curriculum including the new Grade 12 program.

It's expected the board will see a growth in enrolment of 3.4 per cent for a total of 25,810 students (18,402 elementary and 7,408 secondary). The board has hired 69 new teachers (47 elementary and 22 secondary) for a total of \$1,407 teachers and 714 non-teaching staff.

Catholic students will break for Christmas holidays, Dec. 23 to January 2 and for March Break, March 7-14. There will be four professional development days throughout the year with the last day of classes for elementary students on June 27 and for high school students on June 26.

For more information about the Catholic board visit their Web site, www.haltonrc.edu.on.ca.

—with files by Howard Mozell, special

Retreat gave principals a chance to 'team-build'

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Twelve corporate sponsors contributed to the conference, with donations ranging from \$100 to \$2,500.

Papke said the conference, which was moved to the summer months about four years ago to avoid disruption to the school year, allows school administrators a chance to connect and create mentoring opportunities.

"These are critical leaders in our system," he said. "There's a real team-building atmosphere when

you get people together like this."

Papke added that the \$778,000 the board spends on professional development for all of its staff amounts to less than a half of one per cent of its expenditures— far less than the three to five per cent some management consultants suggest is a reasonable



DUSTY PAPKE

investment in human resources.

But Russell said she believes the board should save money on out-of-town trips like the one to the Talisman, and reinvest it in crucial classroom services.

Without those types of changes, she questions whether the board will be able to convince the provincial government that it is spending its money wisely and truly deserves more.

"It's our kids that are paying the price, because of the perception," she said.

—By Kim Arnott, special



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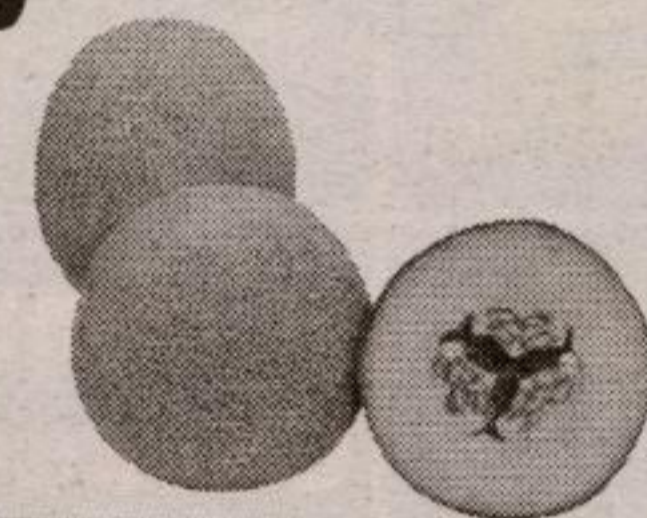
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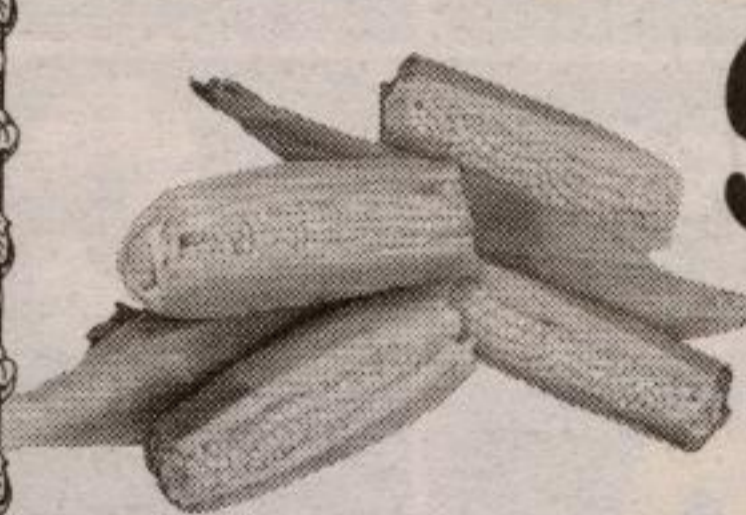
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