



# OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

## Drop us a line

Dear Editor:

I'm speaking on behalf of the grade threes, fours, and fives at Brookville School.

Not long ago you came to interview some kids in the junior classes at Brookville School. That was very nice of you and our class appreciates all that you have done for us very much, but there is a tiny problem.

Well, the URL is wrong and if the purpose of advertising is for people to come to our homepages then they need the right URL.

Our URL is: <http://www.hatonbe.on.ca/brookville>

There are no spaces or capitals.

When we gave you our URL we made a couple of mistakes and we are terribly sorry.

Thanks again for everything you have done.

Sarah Mcleod, for the Junior Team  
Brookville School, Brookville

## Tate elaborates on comments

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank The Champion and Brad Reaume for continuing efforts to keep the people of Halton informed and aware of the funding issues in our schools.

Since Tuesday, Feb. 24, my phone has been ringing off the hook regarding the article in The Champion titled "Parents worried", about the issue of requests to student councils and parents for money to provide various materials in the schools of Milton.

Since I was widely quoted in the article I would like to clear up a few comments that I made, that concerned parents have raised with me in those telephone conversations.

The requests for money and donated supplies from school councils/parents have been made in several schools in Milton, but no requests have been made to the Martin Street School Council beyond the normal annual fund raising and expenses of our council.

Our principal and staff respond to the council's requests to communicate to the council the annual needs list. This needs list generally relates to extracurricular activities such as field trips, in school programs, investment in technology and other like items, but has never related to providing what would normally be considered, school/school board funded and provided essentials.

Our parent volunteers spend many hours annually raising these funds, which have always been used to enhance the educational opportunities of our children at Martin Street School.

I feel that it is essential that the parents of Martin Street who support our fund raising programs understand that there are no plans by our council to spend these hard-earned dollars in any manner that does not reflect improving our children's opportunities. This basic premise is the essential component of a good school.

I do not want it construed that I believe the provincial government will be generous in its application of funds to our school board. My statement that the government will provide us with the funding required, stems from the fact that for years our cost per student has been well below the provincial average.

Consequently, it would only seem appropriate that the provincial funding would meet our needs. Our low cost per student is

due primarily to our school board's efforts to control costs and our teachers' salaries being drawn down by fiscal responsibility and the Social Contract. My comment, therefore, was based upon our own substantially 'made in Halton' efficiencies that already existed.

Lastly, it is true the curriculum that is set by the Ministry of Education is directed at the mid-range of students who account for about 70 per cent of all learners. Children who have special needs or who are gifted fall outside of the mainstream.

Budget cuts have a greater impact, generally speaking, on this group. In the case of gifted and special needs students, this means that potentially the system cannot provide the extensions necessary.

Traditionally, when these students were identified within the school system they received programs that extended their learn-

ing. Since there have been major cuts to education funding in the past three to four years, formal extended program funding and the necessary staffing has been reduced throughout the province.

The programs still exist in reduced format or availability, therefore, in many cases, it has become necessary for individual schools and their staffs to provide extended resources through their own efforts and school council support.

This is an unfortunate circumstance. With the reduction of funding across the board it is necessary for all parents, regardless of their child's abilities, to investigate, participate in and stimulate their child's education.

Please keep investigating and reporting upon education issues. Our future depends on it,

Paul Tate  
Milton

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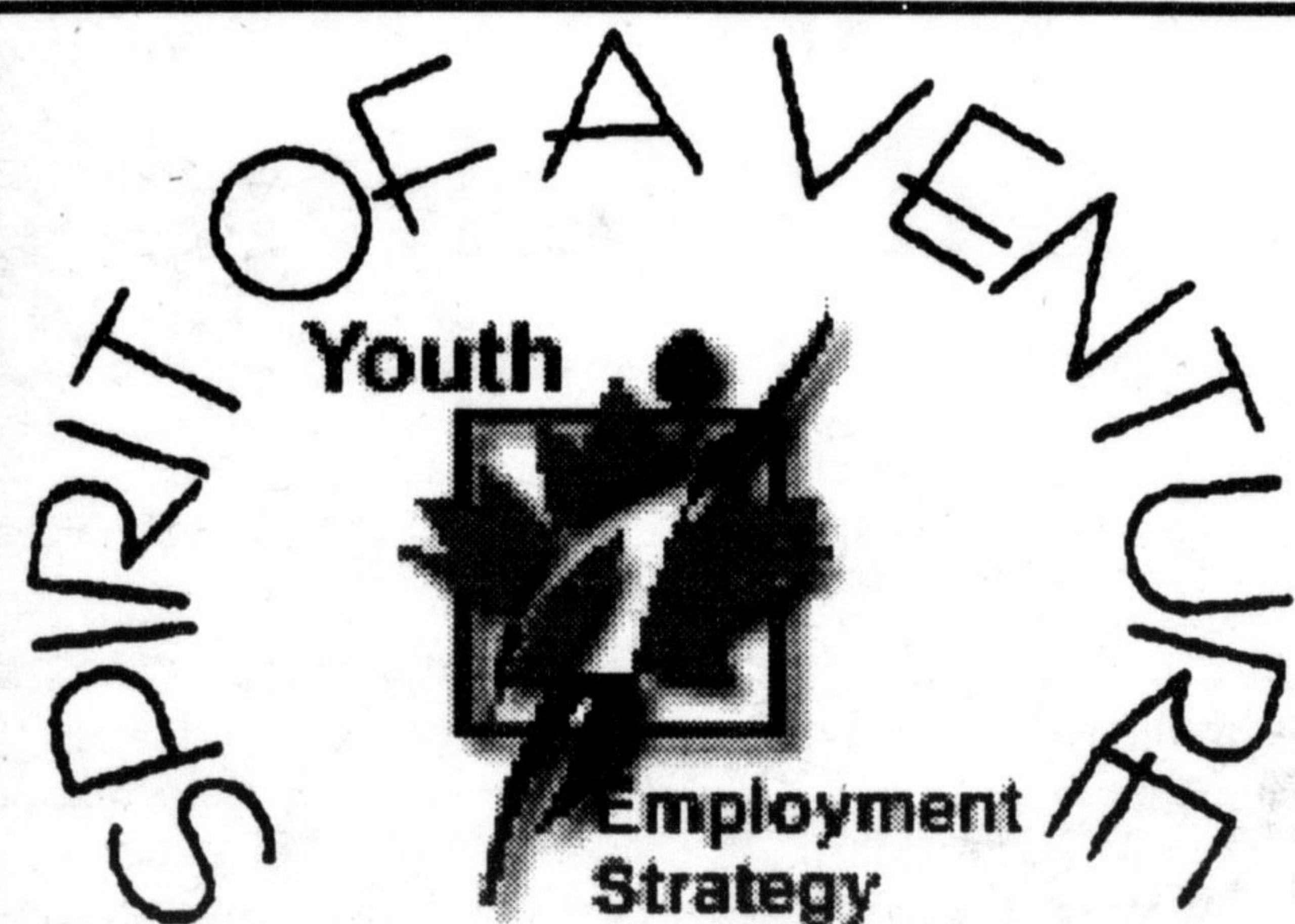
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