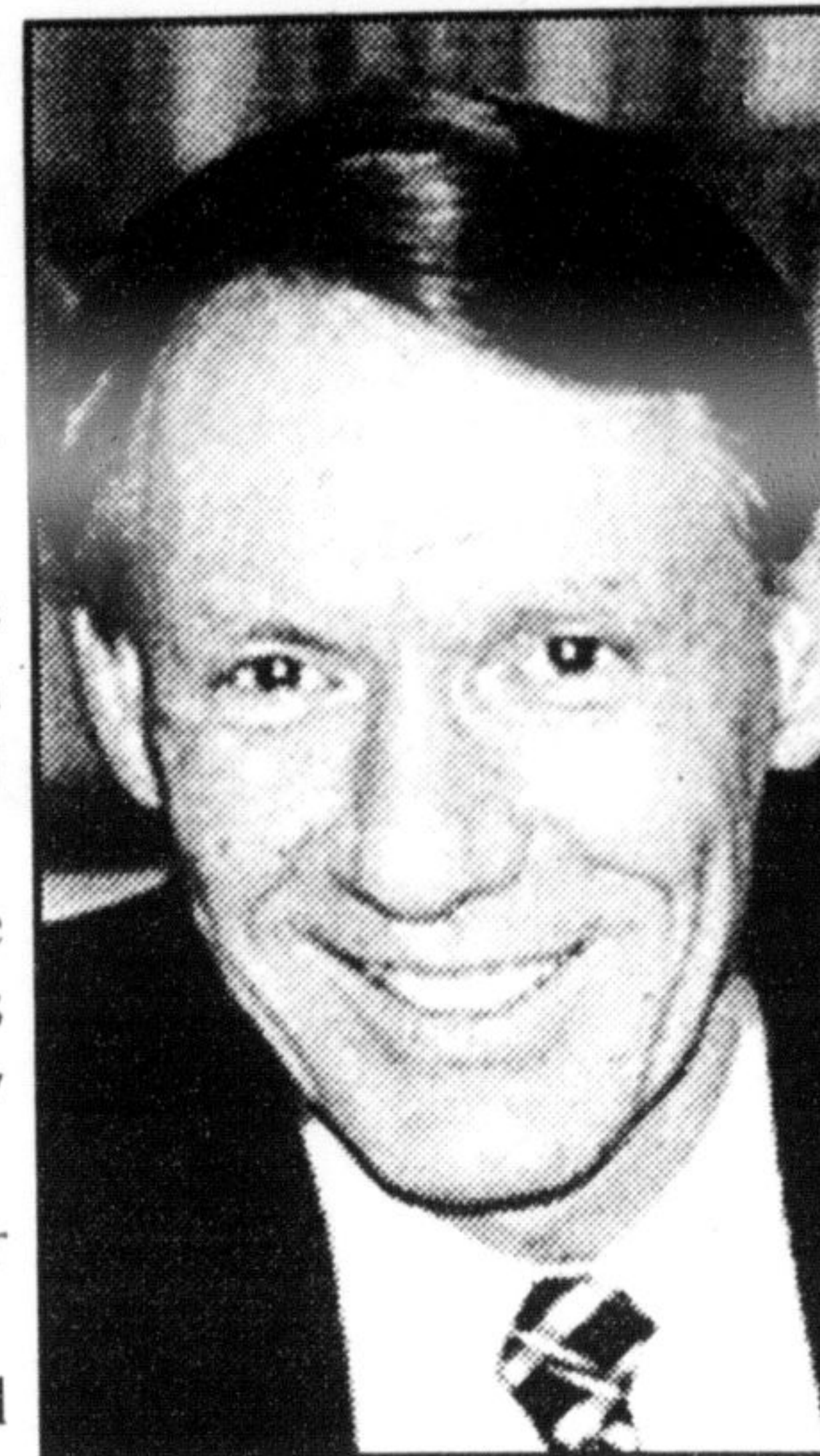


Johnson: Changes good for kids



Dave Johnson

Putting more money into the classroom and placing greater emphasis on core subjects will equal better education for Ontario students, says Education Minister Dave Johnson.

He stressed that the new provincial funding model — announced more than a week ago — means funding shifts, not cuts.

"In-class funding has increased everywhere, including Halton, while administrative funding has gone up in places and down in others but has generally gone down across the province," said Mr. Johnson, during a special technology-in-education conference at E.C. Drury School for the Deaf Friday afternoon.

"We've made no bones about the fact that we're taking money out of administration and putting it back into the classroom."

In response to the Halton District School Board and the Halton Catholic District School Board's

confusion over budget figures, Mr. Johnson said he hasn't heard of any misunderstanding elsewhere so far, but that "certain school boards may not wish to understand."

His ministry's sweeping changes include a complete revamping of the elementary and secondary school curriculum.

Ontario's education facelift will include the introduction of province-wide testing, the addition of computer software packages in every school and enhancements in science and technology.

Upgrades in this last area, Mr. Johnson said, are desperately needed. "During visits to the People's Republic of China I found that they hold very low regard for our knowledge of science."

"Improving young peoples' education is our number one priority, what it's all about."

"I'm firmly convinced these changes will accomplish this for years to come."

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