

Catholic board approves \$157 million budget

The Halton Catholic District School Board has passed its \$157-million 2001-02 budget.

Last week at its regular board meeting, trustees voted in favour of budget estimates for the 2001-02 school year, which were based in part on funding information released in May by the Ministry of Education. Some regulations and program details are still forthcoming from the Province.

The \$157-million budget consists of \$134.4 million worth of operating expenses (roughly \$113.1 million of that will be salaries and benefits) plus \$22.6 million of capital related to pupil accommodation.

"The board is pleased that it has managed to achieve a balanced budget despite the many constraints imposed by the regulations and limited funding in relation to

the many real needs that had to be considered in arriving at the final estimates," said board Chair Al Bailey.

"Although the new flexibility in use of available funds is appreciated in principle, the reality faced by the board was that most of it was needed to provide for the staffing needed related to increasing enrollment with the balance substantially applied to cover the shortfall in transportation funding."

Board Director of Education Fred Sweeney expressed relief that a balanced budget estimate was achieved. He noted several obstacles including finding \$600,000 for reclaimed grants which the ministry initially paid in 1998 and an additional \$800,000 to fund the start-up of two new secondary schools and a pair of new elementary schools opening in 2002.

Mr. Sweeney voiced his concern, however, over the fact that there will be no new funding for Special Education until 2003 and over the lack of sufficient funding for the new curriculum required in grades 11

and 12. The results of this have been reduced initiatives in technology, curriculum and staff development to levels "that may make it difficult to meet the ministry's program expectations."

Due to early deadlines, watch for Canada Day coverage next Friday.

Local man promoted to Catholic superintendent

Some high-level retirements have paved the way for major promotions within the Halton Catholic District School Board.

The positions were made available by the retirement of current Academic Superintendent Diane Rabenda and Superintendent Lou Piovesan's appointment as director of education.

As a result, at the last board meeting, Chair Al Bailey announced that Richard MacDonald of Milton will become superintendent of education and Elaine Hine of Oakville has been named acting superin-

tendent of education. Both positions are effective August 1.

Mr. MacDonald, now supervising principal of Special Education, assumes the portfolio of Special Education and the North Halton Family of Schools. He started with the Halton board as a teacher in 1980 and since then has worked in all of the region's four municipalities.

Ms Hine, currently the supervising principal of curriculum, will be responsible for curriculum services and the Oakville Family of Schools.

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