

# School board director to get 8.5 per cent wage hike

BY TIM WHITNELL

Special to The Champion

While the Halton District School Board struggled Wednesday to balance a \$4-million deficit, its education director will soon be getting his second 8.5 per cent salary increase in as many years.

Dusty Papke's pay for 2001-02 is \$152,000 in base salary. His base stipend for 2002-03 will be \$165,000. The figures don't include the value of his vehicle allowance and benefits package.

School board Chair Ethel Gardiner led the group that approved Mr. Papke's contract.

She said she believes the pay increases for the education director last year and in September are deserved and simply the cost of retaining top executives in the Greater Toronto Area.

Ms Gardiner is adamant it should be a non-issue that Mr. Papke was given an 8.5 per cent boost in base pay for the current school year and is due for another 8.5 per cent increase this fall.

However, raises for the majority of teaching and non-teaching employee groups within the Halton public board were phased-in in two parts for the current school year,

blending for a net increase of 2.7 per cent, said board Business Superintendent Carla Kisko.

A five-year director in Halton — previously he was director at the smaller Muskoka board — Mr. Papke is just completing his first year of a three-year contract.

Information contained in the Halton board's draft budget for 2002-03 shows that five of its superintendents, Gerry Cullen, Carla Kisko, Keith Johnson, Brenda Kearney and Al Greyson, will get just 0.7 per cent salary increases next year.

Superintendent Gary Sadler will get a 6 per cent boost while fellow superintendent Barry Finlay will get a 4.3 per cent hike.

Human Resources supervisor Dawn Beckett-Morton is in line for a 10.5 per cent raise.

All of the superintendents will make between \$113,262 and \$115,177 for the next school year.

Ms Kisko said Mr. Sadler, Mr. Finlay and Ms Beckett-Morton's raises are significantly higher because they get an annualized raise and move up one place on a salary grid.

All superintendents then will be at the top of the three-year grid, she noted.

Some trustees and board staff have been loudly protesting about a lack of funds for public education,

particularly over the last year.

Mr. Papke said he doesn't understand the fuss about his contract.

"My salary is the average salary of the other four public boards in the GTA, but it's a year behind.

"I didn't use leverage (but) there were other options available," said Mr. Papke.

"They (Halton) made an offer and I accepted it. They said they wanted to be fair. If an employer came to you and said, 'Is this fair?', what would you do? I think it's fair."

Ms Gardiner said she believes Mr. Papke's contract is appropriate and that keeping him is actually beneficial and cost-effective for the board.

"There are only a handful of experienced directors. He gets called regularly by boards much larger than Halton," she said.

The interest shown in Mr. Papke is indicative of his talent and the dearth of qualified directors in this area, she said.

Ms Gardiner noted that during the director's performance review last year, conducted by a committee of trustees, she was contacted by an executive search company.

"He was being actively encouraged to consider a position with another board."

She added that a search for a new

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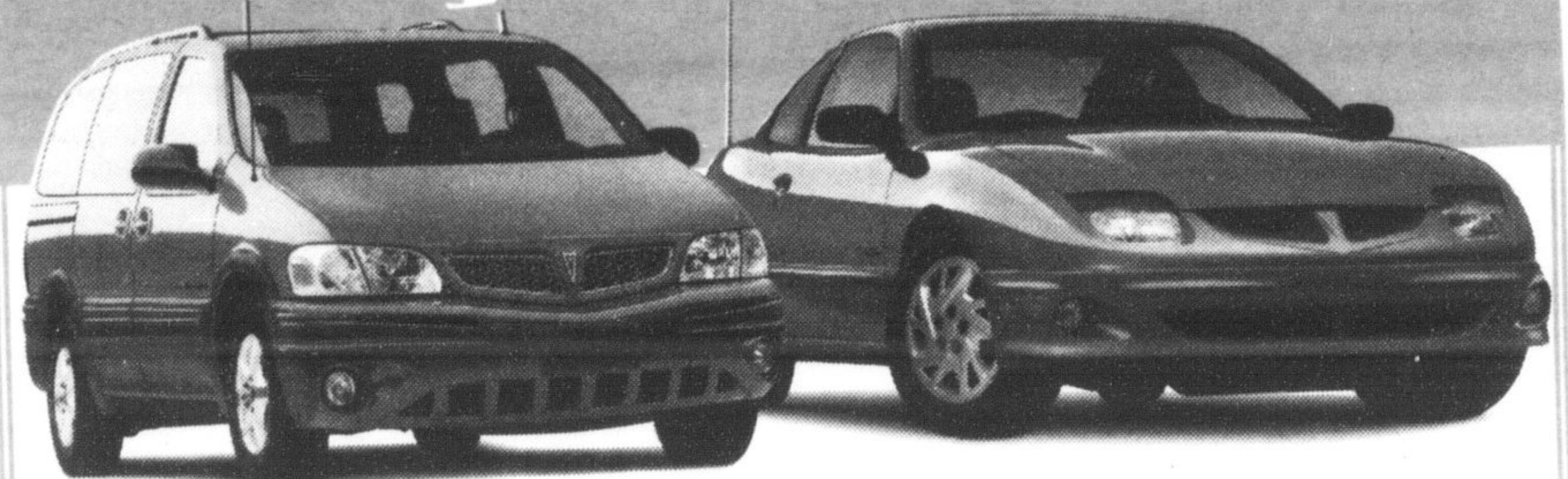
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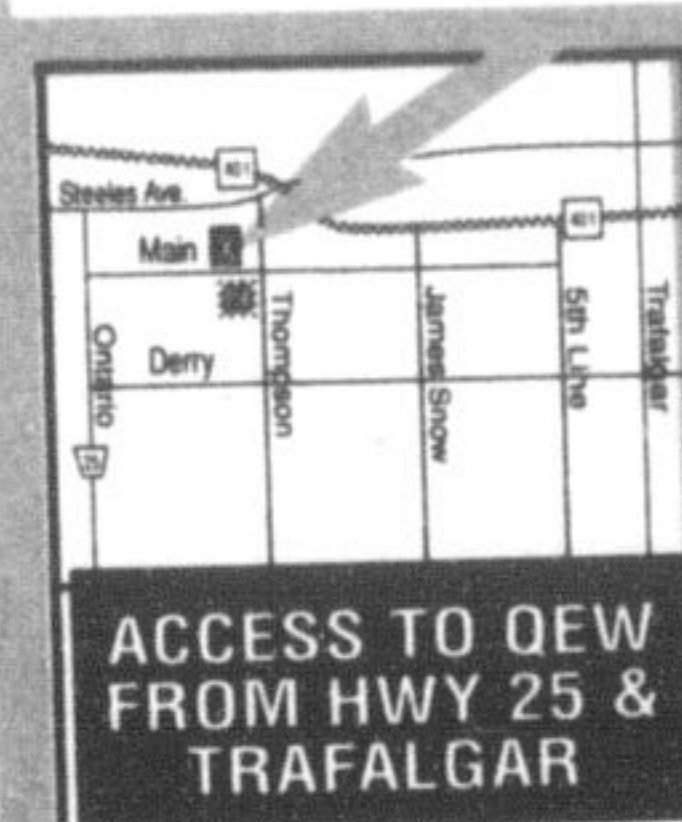
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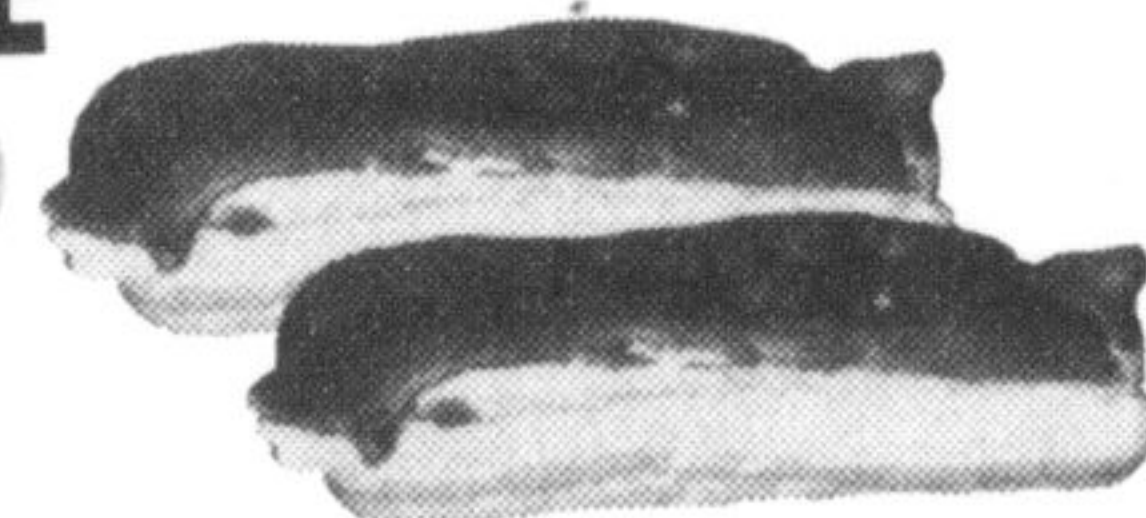
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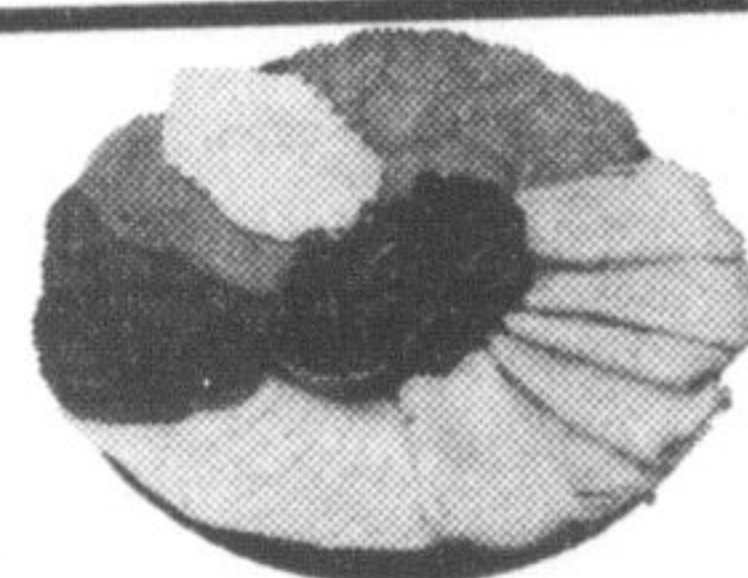
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