

Schools bursting at seams as town continues to grow

By MELANIE HENNESSEY

The Champion

While school has only been in for one week, it's already easy to see that Milton's population explosion has the town's newest public school bursting at the seams.

The hordes of young families with school-aged children moving into new homes in Milton's east end have filled Chris Hadfield School to almost twice its capacity.

At the new school that opened last September, enrolment that exceeds capacity and temporary building additions have become a necessity to accommodate the growth the town is experiencing.

Principal Rick Nodwell reported that by the end of last week, enrolment was sitting at 1,138, well above the 650-pupil capacity.

"We knew that we were going to grow as a new school," he said. "But, we've been able to find a spot for everybody. We basically utilized every single space."

Since the school opened last September, a 10-classroom addition and four portables have already been added to the facility to make room for the extra students.

And, Mr. Nodwell predicts the school hasn't seen the end of enrolment increases.

"We'll probably continue to grow," he said. "We have some (students) coming in November

"It's no surprise to me that we're in this situation. Nothing's going to stop growth. These folks are coming, and we can't stop it."

PAUL TATE

and December."

Halton Trustee Paul Tate said he predicted that Chris Hadfield would have more students than what the Halton District School Board had expected for this year, which was 1,017.

"It's no surprise to me that we're in this situation," he said. "Nothing's going to stop growth. These folks are coming, and we can't stop it."

Mr. Tate said he plans to bring a motion to the school board soon to form a committee that looks at accommodating students.

While Guardian Angels Catholic Elementary School opened its doors last week in Milton, it hasn't seen quite the enrolment boom that Chris Hadfield has.

Principal Sonia Bien said they've

had about 50 more students enrol since the school opened last Tuesday, bringing the student population up to about 700. The school's capacity is 598.

"Right now, we're accommodating everybody," she said. "The enrolment will increase throughout the year as (mortgages) close."

She said the school site is approved for portables, which will most likely be needed as the school population grows.

Around town at schools that have been in Milton for some time, Mr. Tate said the school board has seen a bit of growth in student populations, leading to facility additions such as a new portable at E.W. Foster School.

"We are seeing more kids coming into some existing schools too," he said.

Chris Hadfield school will see some relief next September when another public school opens in Milton on Bennett Boulevard.

Halton District School Board Manager of Planning Elaine Westerhof said the school will be designed to accommodate 650 students and will also have a 10-room temporary addition put on in its second year.

"Children in Chris Hadfield now will be redirected to the new
• see BOARD on page 4

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