

OPINION

Gardiner missed

The public education system in Halton — and particularly schools in north Halton — suffered a serious loss last Tuesday with the passing of Ethel Gardiner.

Gardiner, 69, spent her entire adult life trying to make a difference in the education system, be it through her 39 years of teaching — 29 of which were spent in Halton schools — or her 11 years as a Halton District School Board (HDSB) trustee.

HDSB Education Director Wayne Joudrie echoed the comments of many colleagues when he said Gardiner "always put kids first." To say that about some in the education field would be disingenuous; about Gardiner it was the truth.

It is our opinion the HDSB never ran smoother than when Gardiner sat at its chair. Even during turbulent times, Gardiner attempted to get trustees to keep Halton students first and foremost in their thoughts when it came to decision-making.

While Gardiner's gravelly voice may now be silenced, her dedication to students, teachers and parents cannot be minimized or forgotten.

We suggest the HDSB would be wise to quickly establish an award — recognizing the efforts of a student or students — that bears Gardiner's name.

It would be a fitting tribute to this selfless educator who always put the kids first.

Donald Trump at the Conrad Black trial...



ReadersWrite

E-mail your letters to miltone@haltonsearch.com.

Some students in older parts of town left with no school busing due to changes for eligibility

DEAR EDITOR:

Unlike the majority of people in this town, I am Milton-born and bred.

I have watched the area become a thriving bustle of activity from the quiet little bedroom town it used to be.

While I am not opposed to the new growth we are experiencing, it will soon be blocking the lovely views of our escarpment.

The extra 15 minutes that is added to my commute to get in or out of town due to the expansion still does not bother me.

However, the latest move by the school board has set me back on my heels.

My children — aged six, seven and nine — have been riding the bus to school since they have been in junior kindergarten, and this coming fall the Halton District School Board has decided that we do not meet its criteria (we have been an exception to the policy), so they will no longer be able to take the bus.

When we registered our kids at school, no one ever advised us that we were an exception to the policy.

Their friends, who live 15 houses away, will still qualify for the bus, and yet others who have been taking the bus are expected to walk.

According to the board's transportation policy:

1. Only students residing in the Region of Halton, registered in a school operated by the Halton District School Board or under purchase of service agreement may be eligible for transportation service.

2. Distance Calculations
a) The distances stated in the Transportation Policy statement shall be used to determine eligibility. The distances measured will be the shortest safe walking route along road or walkway from school property line to home property line.

b) The Transportation Department using transportation software with the appropriate municipal map will make all measurements for transportation purposes.

For me as a parent, safety is paramount. For my children to be expected to walk there should be sidewalks, no construction and

crossing guards.

After discussion with the appropriate authorities, I asked what the board's determination of the "shortest safe walking route" was (according to the board transportation policy), and I was advised that my children could travel along Laurier Avenue, up Vanier Drive, along Bell Street to Heslop Road and then be at school.

I informed the manager that Bell does not have a sidewalk, and questioned if this was safe? Their response was "There are lots of streets in Halton without sidewalks." There is construction along Heslop at the moment, however I am assuming that will be finished by September. The other option was to walk through the Milton District High School area, where there are no crossing guards.

When questioned about the plan, I was advised that it was to accommodate the new growth in Milton. So, in my opinion, the board and the Town are now accommodating the newest members of this community and are turning their backs on the rest.

I don't disagree with the fact that this new area will need busing, especially until their new school is built, but why should all of the children and adults who have established roots in this community be just pushed aside?

I have been told that as I don't meet the criteria, there is nothing I can do. For all the parents who have routines and work commitments, or provide daycare services, this is truly an inconvenience, and most definitely leaves a bad taste in our mouths.

**CHRISTIAN HARRISON
MILTON**

**JANET MARTIN
LAURIER AVENUE**

Please fix tennis courts at Bishop Reding

DEAR EDITOR:

A while ago someone made the point that Milton didn't have enough activities for young people.

I see parks, conservation areas and enough room for physical activity. The one thing lacking, which I think the Town has neglected, are the area tennis courts.

Unless you're willing to pay for membership, you're left with the Town courts. Most have no netting or poor netting, as well as

uneven surfaces.

Others, such as those found at Bishop Reding Secondary School, are really bad. Citizens use them despite their conditions. I suggest the Town get together with the school to fund the revitalization of these courts off of Harris Boulevard. This would save both the school and the Town, and allow people to have another activity.

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