## Board cuts some fees in Halton

By Tina Depko METROLAND WEST MEDIA GROUP

Student fees for items such as textbooks and course materials like wood and fabric will be a thing of the past at public schools in Halton starting this fall.

The Halton District School Board (HDSB) approved a new student fee policy recently that eliminates charges for registration, textbooks and course-related materials at both the elementary and high school levels.

tary items and activities' such as yearbooks, field trips and athletics, board staff expects the new policy to ease the financial burden on Halton families.

Director of Education Wayne auto 0/D Joudrie drafted the policy with the help of board staff.

He said the HDSB is ahead of the curve, with the Ministry of Air Cond, Power Windows, Power Education currently looking at student fees charged at schools across Ontario in anticipation of a similar movement toward affordable education.

"This is a significant change in practice," Joudrie said. "It is very clear the Education Act does not allow us to charge course fees that currently exist in Halton and likely across the province. I expect the minister and ministry will be looking at doing the same kinds of things we are doing in Halton straight across the province."

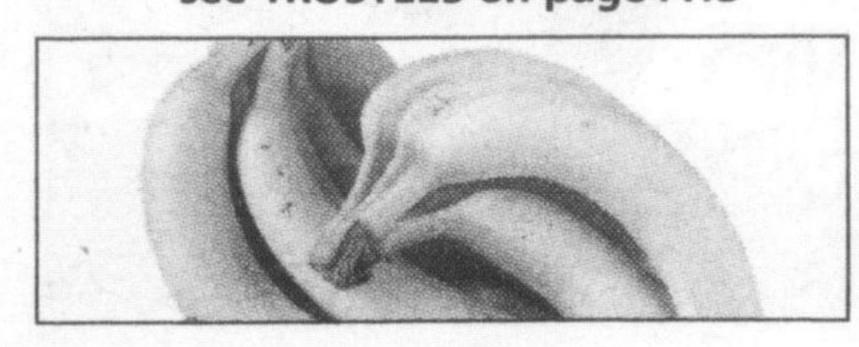
Through the new policy, elementary schools will receive \$20 per student from the board. High schools will receive \$35 per student.

This is a total cost of \$670,000 at the elementary level and \$600,000 at the secondary level, with a combined price tag of \$1.27 million. This cost will be added as an annual line item in the budget.

The \$35 and \$20 figures were calculated by board staff following a review of fees charged by Halton schools.

The review of secondary school fees for courses showed that the average charge per pupil per year was \$35. The range of fees per student/school was between \$23 and \$41.

The review of program fee charges at the elementary level showed that charges for in-school see TRUSTEES on page A13



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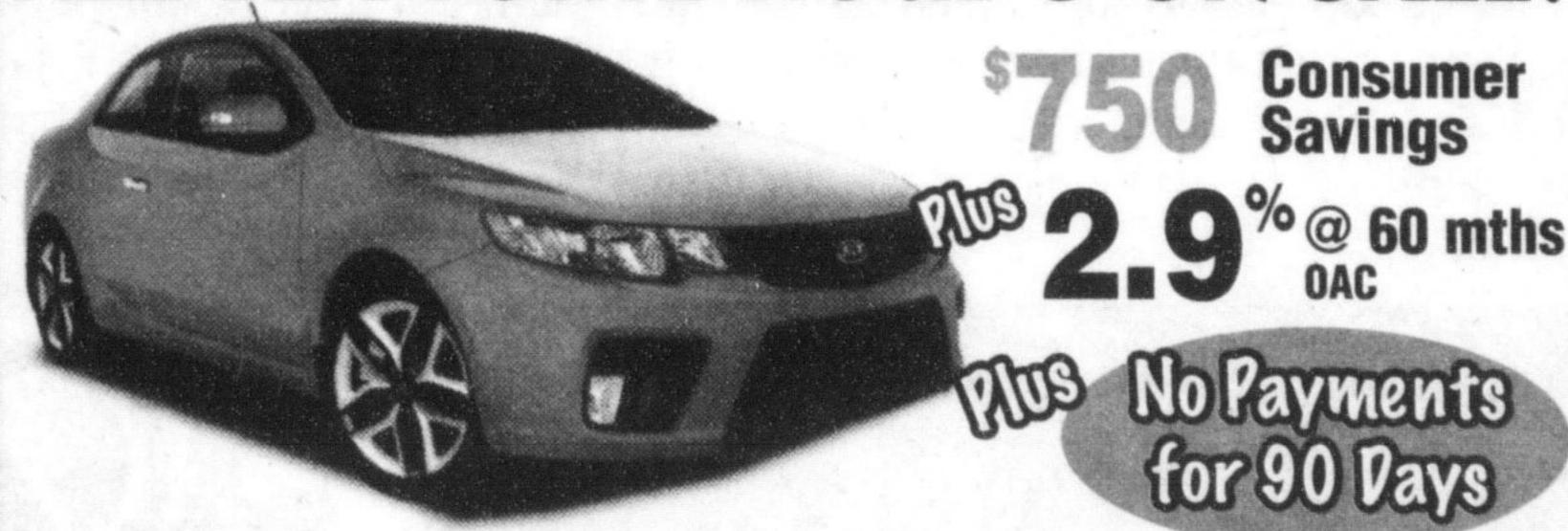
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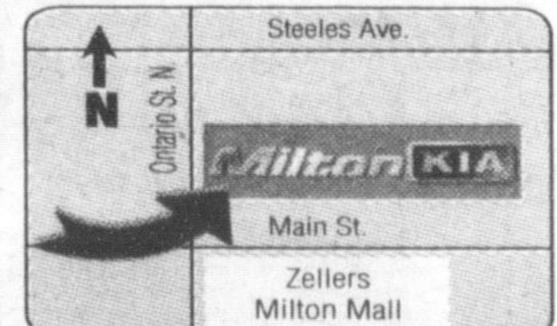
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