

# 49,000 county students return to school

## Enrolments stable at both public and separate boards

An estimated 49,000 Simcoe County students will trudge back to the classroom in less than two weeks, with both the public and separate boards of education projecting almost the same enrolment they had in 1974-75.

At the elementary level, he estimates a jump over last year of 576 students to 15,295, but in area three, taking in North Simcoe, he expects only 29 more students to enrol.

In many parts of Ontario, the number of students is dropping, leaving teachers and their boards with tough budgetary problems to face. But this area, despite a birth rate that has been falling since the mid-sixties, is holding its own with a slow but steady migration of people from metropolitan areas to the south.

Sid Owens, superintendent of planning with the Simcoe County Board of Education, said Monday that he is predicting an increase of 102 students at the

All the growth, he said, is taking place in the south half of the county — the part closest to Toronto, within commuting distance.

At the elementary level, he expects to see a drop in enrolment in area 3, from 4,724 to 4,630.

Frank Macdonald, director of the Simcoe County Roman Catholic

Separate School Board, said in an interview that "we expect the enrolment to be just about static." The board will be operating three new portable classrooms in Barrie this year, since a

new school planned for the city is not expected to be completed until "some time in 1976."

As with the public board, the separate board's enrolment is growing in the south end of the county, but holding its own or shrinking

elsewhere. Macdonald noted that kindergarten registrations jumped 15 per cent last year and he foresees an increase in September based on registrations last spring, but again, he said "we can never be sure."

## County teachers have no contract

There is not talk of a walkout, but one problem hanging over the heads of members of the Simcoe County Board of Education is that teachers will be returning to the classroom in September without a

contract. The local branch of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, and their elementary school counterparts, have been unable to reach agreement with the board on a pay scale for 1975-76.



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