

**YOU'LL HAVE CHANCE
TO SAY GOODBYE TO SCHOOL**

► **DANCING FAREWELL:** Before the new school opens, the old school on Bramble Crescent will have to be closed and a chance given for students and teachers to say a final goodbye.

The celebration for the old school is slated for June 1, with rooms filled with memorabilia, numerous student-run activities, a beef barbecue hosted by the Stouffville Lions Club and a dance. In keeping with the school's history, square dancing will be part of the evening.

As part of the school's physical education program, square dancing "is a very unique part of the curriculum," principal Arlene Smith said.

Science labs, library impress teachers

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on schedule.

It's like a house that has become too small for a growing family, said Pat DiPede, a teacher/librarian at the school, who took part in design consultations with the school's architects.

She's looking forward to a library that will be three times the size of the one at the current school. For her students, it means not having to scramble for computers since they'll have 39 to work at instead of the current 20.

Right now, the computer area "is maxed out," she said.

Students will have more opportunities for learning since two or three classes can be going at the same time in the library and the reference section will be

enhanced.

When it comes to the growing science field, the new school will boast eight labs specialized for subjects such as physics, chemistry and biology. And they'll have the latest in safety features.

"The demand for people with science backgrounds is growing," Andy Cherkas, SDSS science department head, said. "This is one area where they can't get enough graduates."

Because of Canada's huge bio-engineering and bio-genetics industries and the growth in other scientific fields, people need to be "scientifically literate," Mr. Cherkas said.

The current school is short on lab space, which is divided between both the ground and second floors. Mr. Cherkas was one of the department heads consulted on new school design.

"We have a large population of students taking two or three sciences," he said.

When he arrived at SDSS 18 years ago, there were more girls than boys in his science classes, which was opposite to what he found in previous schools.

Drama students will finally have their own 100-seat theatre with the appropriate lighting and sound systems. The stage opens on both sides, one side facing the theatre room and the other side opening onto the cafeteria. The

seats in the theatre room are retractable, opening up the space as a classroom when no performances or rehearsals are taking place. The new facility will help students who want to practice their craft both on stage and behind the scenes.

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SDSS may be unique in the fact it has a yearly art show at the Latcham Gallery, a public art gallery, hosted by its Grade 12 visual arts students. After working with gallery staff, the students hang the show, host the reception and handle publicity for the show.

Art students will have a better place to learn as well, with two side-by-side art rooms, said art teacher Catherine Chartrand. The communications/media technology department will be adjacent to the art rooms, so students can take advantage of digital equipment to create their art, and both programs enhance each other.

In her meetings with Grade 8

students heading off to high school for the first time, Mrs. Chartrand has been able to outline how the new school will benefit them. That includes an integrated technical program where students can get a idea of what's involved in trades.

The enhanced programs in the new school will better equip students to choose their educational path, especially since "we are asking kids to make decisions about their future learning in Grade 10 and 11," she said.

As a sustainable school, it was built with long-term energy savings in mind using strategies ranging from lower-energy light bulbs and higher-efficiency windows to state-of-the-art heating and cooling systems.

The school has been designed as a pilot in energy management. A monitor in the atrium tracks the building's energy consumption, and it can be accessed by teachers and students to be incorporated into the curriculum.

The school features a large glass-covered atrium and a gym twice the size of the current one.

While there are about 900 students at SDSS now, the new school can accommodate up to 1,500 students. It probably won't be at capacity until about 2011, Mrs. Smith said. But it was built so a permanent addition can be easily constructed.

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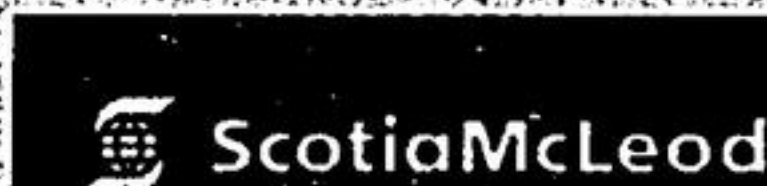
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