

Students to move to two new schools

From page 1.

She remembers the time former principal Steve Baber was duct-taped to the flag pole in front of the school. He had challenged the school to raise a certain amount of money in the school's annual magazine drive. It did.

Another principal, Sandi Jones, got to spend a school day on the roof, after the school topped its magazine drive goal.

Support for the end-of-year celebrations is being sought from the larger community. School council president Christina Baggs, who attended the school as a youngster, is heading a committee.

The celebrations are to be held during the school's fun fair, this year to be called the Orchard Park Fun Farewell.

She'll be sad to see the school close. Her husband, Christopher, attended Orchard Park, as do their children, Andrew, who is in Grade 8 and will be part of the school's final graduating class, and daughter, Taylor, who is in Grade 5.

"It is a wonderful, wonderful school," Mrs. Baggs said. "It is a small school. That is what makes it so special."



SUE CHEWINS: Longest serving teacher at Orchard Park also attended Sunset Boulevard school.

She's hoping the Fun Farewell will be both a celebration and a reunion as former teachers, principals, staff and students come together.

Her feelings about the school come out in the large mural she painted in the school's front lobby, with the help of students.

Head custodian Bob Gilmour, who is still at the school, was honoured in 1997 for his infectious enthusiasm and work with a York Region District School Board award.

The focus now, however, is on the new school year.

A year from now, students will head off to two new elementary schools: Harry Bowes Public School in northeast Stouffville and the new Orchard Park on Hoover Park Drive.

"Building community for these new schools won't happen until the end of the year," principal Laura Ryckman said.

Throughout the years, the school has contributed to the Stouffville community and farther afield.

Students regularly send school supplies and money to a school in Haiti.

Fun fairs to raise money for the school and charities have been held annually. A mitten tree and food drives are also part of the school's activities.

This month, students will participate in The Terry Fox Run, for the 11th year in a row.

The school has raised more than \$34,000 for the fund during the last 10 years.

Mr. Sutherland was principal for the first 25 years.

He was followed by John Hincks, Jan deLaat, George McElvey, Norma Luks, John Hopkins, Sandi Jones, Steve Baber and Laura Ryckman.

The school board has not decided what it will do with the Orchard Park property.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Grade 8 student Katie Stedman is in the final graduating class from Orchard Park Public School on Sunset Boulevard. For additional back-to-school photographs, go to yorkregion.com

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