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Classified: 1 800-743-3353  
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EDITORIAL  
Editor

Jim Mason  
jmason@yrmg.com

ADVERTISING

Advertising Manager  
Stephen Mathieu  
smathieu@yrmg.com

Marketing Manager

Mike Banville  
mbanville@yrmg.com

DISTRIBUTION

Systems Manager  
Carrie Castaldi  
ccastaldi@yrmg.com

Circulation Manager

Tanya Pacheco  
tpacheco@yrmg.com

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The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

Letters to the Editor,  
The Sun-Tribune  
6290 Main St.  
Stouffville, ON  
L4A 1G7  
jmason@yrmg.com

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# OPINION

**Stouffville  
Sun-Tribune**

6290 Main St.  
Stouffville, ON L4A 1G7  
www.yorkregion.com

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

EDITOR IN CHIEF  
Debora Kelly

BUSINESS  
MANAGER  
Robert Lazaruko

DIRECTOR,  
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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Liberal FIT program will bankrupt us

Perfrer Dalton McGuinty is proud of his record on energy wherein the Ontario taxpayer is supporting alternate and green sources such as solar PV and wind turbines under the Liberals' FIT and MicroFIT programs.

He is, however, hiding an inconvenient truth. The FIT programs generate energy that, when delivered to the consumer, will bankrupt us all.

Using MicroFIT as an example, Mr. McGuinty is paying solar generators 80.5 cents per kwh generated.

For conventional electricity generation, Ontario is paying about \$0.004 to \$0.006 per kwh, depending on the source, which includes purchases from the United States or various modes of local generation in Ontario.

Although 80.5 cents instead of 6 cents is unconscionable,

the economic reality is actually much worse since our hydro invoices then mark up this generation cost with six additional charges — the adjusted usage charge, the time of use charge, the delivery charge, the regulatory charges, the debt retirement charge and the HST.

With these additional charges on our bills, we are actually paying more than \$1.70 per kwh for microFIT power.

This is the highest rate for electricity paid anywhere in the world and has the potential to bankrupt the province.

While we all should support a modest premium for green energy, the Liberal approach does not meet any sensible criteria.

Mr. McGuinty never speaks about this economic outrage, preferring to talk about how "progressive" his government is.

ALLAN BOWMAN  
NEWMARKET

You can read letters, columns and stories from The Sun-Tribune on [yorkregion.com](http://yorkregion.com)



## Over-'board' with overaccommodation

If The Liberal newspaper offices ran like the York Region public school board, there would be no paper produced on Rosh Hashanah. Shellfish and ham sandwiches would be prohibited in the lunchroom. And during Passover, no one could bring in sandwiches at all. That will be all in the name of accommodating me, the lone observant Jew working for York Region Media Group.

Ridiculous, yes, but that's much like the York Region District School Board's policy that the some 200 schools under its purview are prohibited from having a field trip on religious days, such as Rosh Hashanah, the second holiest day on the Jewish calendar.

This year, some schools wanted to take their students to the Markham Fair, which happens to fall on Rosh Hashanah. That's a no-no.

Our Thornhill reporter spoke with Len Rudner, spokesperson for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) — which touts itself as a representative voice for Jews in Canada — who says the board is doing right.

Let's unpack this argument.

Demographically, this issue only really affects at best a handful of schools in Thornhill that have a significant Jewish population. Yet a high school in Georgina was forbidden to take its junior girls



Dave Gordon

basketball team to its annual weekend sports camp — even though there are no Jewish girls on the team.

Instead of a blanket rule, why not apply this policy on a case by case, school by school basis?

It seems unfair to ban children who aren't Jewish from taking the traditional, educational trip to the fair.

Let the principal make an executive decision as to whether there are enough people affected to justify cancelling trips, exams or concerts.

If this current policy is allowed to continue, among many things we fear for the few Jewish kids in Newmarket is they may be taunted and made the butt of snickering and harsh looks when other kids take out their frustrations — particularly if the Jewish kids

would otherwise only make a token visit to their Temple. We also hope that field trips aren't cancelled for an entire month when the Muslim fast of Ramadan lands during the school year.

We do understand the students who will feel left out if a few hundred other schoolmates are having a great time on a field trip. As for the Jewish children who choose to attend synagogue, it's up to their parents to instill in them the respect for and appreciation of observing this spiritually important day.

It'd be a different story altogether if a teacher intentionally planned an exam on a Jewish holy day and disallowed a make-up exam. So too it would be a different story if a designated educational lesson developed from the Markham Fair trip, from which the Jewish students would be disadvantaged. Both would be unfair, but neither has happened. What this is, is a case of rare, unfortunate timing — even though one councillor thinks it's a case of needing better calendars.

Not to waste a multi-culti opportunity, a local councillor has proposed creating a faith calendar for Markham that lists the significant holy days, intimating this would ensure there are fewer scheduling conflicts in future. But there exists such a calendar, put out by the school board, given to each student — and can

be found online.

Meanwhile, Jewish students can derive an important lesson in all this.

Taking on the responsibilities of religious observance sometimes mean inconveniences and tough decisions. Doing what's right isn't always easy, and often involves making sacrifices.

Recall, it was Sandy Koufax, pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers, who sat out a World Series game in 1966 when it fell on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. Jews around the world felt a great sense of pride that he made the right decision, and still do. It'd have been absurd for Koufax, or World Jewry, to expect — or force — the Series game to be cancelled on his account, in the name of "accommodation".

We understand the York school board doesn't want rules for one school and not another. One-size-fits-all is fine for many policies — zero tolerance for bullying, banning nut products, appropriate clothing and so on. The board doesn't want to appear hypocritical or inconsistent. But going overboard with religious sensitivities to make Gentiles observe Jewish holy days?

That's chutzpah.

Dave Gordon is assistant editor of The Richmond Hill/Thornhill Liberal, part of York Region Media Group.