

Local trustees cut Emerson school budget

The River East School Board cut almost \$62,000 out of the Emerson School budget at the April 26 meeting, to bring it in line with the budget approved by

the Public School Finance Board (PSFB).

The PSFB approved a budget of \$1,331,219 for the school in March, which according to division architect Jerry Macdonald, of Macdonald, Cockburn, McLeod and McFeeters, in today's prices would be \$1,358,019. However, when the tenders were opened, the lowest by for \$1,433,000.

Early kindergarten admission denied

The River East School Board voted last week to uphold the division policy of not allowing children born after December 31 to enter kindergarten that school year.

The board made the decision after hearing an appeal by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Smorang, 130 Reay Crescent, of an earlier board decision to uphold the policy.

Mr. Smorang, whose son David was born January 1, told the board that he, along with the principal of Betrun E. Glavin school, where David would attend, teachers and a doctor, feel David is ready for school.

"I appreciate you have to have cutoff dates," he told the Board, "but I can't see being so cut and dried about it." He said some children born December 31 are not ready for school but can attend, while others who are ready must wait another year because of their birth date.

"Somewhere there has to be a grey area," he said.

Mr. Smorang added there is room in the kindergarten class for David as only 77 are registered at B.E. Glavin, which has a capacity of 110.

Mrs. Smorang read a letter to the Board from a former primary school teacher whose daughter

plays with David, testifying to his maturity. She said they are prepared to have him tested by division resource people and a psychiatrist to determine his readiness for kindergarten.

Dr. D.A. Downie, superintendent of schools, told the board there would be room in the school for the child in September, but said the policy is not to admit children on the basis of readiness for kindergarten.

"We don't pretend to do that," he said, instead children are admitted by age. The school staff is expected to accept the children whether they are mature age four or seven, he added.

"It is not the function of this board to make a medical decision," trustee Peter Graham commented. He said I.Q. tests are too "shakey" to base a child's future on.

Trustee Jim Baty said the board should either stick to the policy or change it. He said word of mouth gets around that one child was admitted after the cut-off date while another wasn't.

"We get into this hassle by not sticking to our guns," he said.

Trustee Bob Fraser supported the couple's

The Board deleted or reduced a number of areas of the budget, to bring it to \$1,371,475, for submission to the PSFB for approval.

Mr. Macdonald told the Board if the budget is not approved, there are more items which could be cut.

Among the items cut was \$14,975 for asphalt paving for the driveway, bus loop and parking lot. Mr. Macdonald said because of objections from area residents to the proposed parking on the north side of the school, the lot has to be re-arranged on the west side, reducing the amount of asphalt required.

As well, the board approved a change to resilient tile from carpeting in the partitioned off open area, deleted the mortar color, change the type of brick to that being used in the new St. Stephen's Anglican Church, reduced the width of the hollow metal door frames, deleted the domestic hot water supply insulation, changed the wiring and is using squeeze brick laying, as in John De Graff school, instead of the normal flatbrick walls.

The board also voted unanimously to award the tender to Kraft Construction Co. Ltd. and its subtrades.