

## Schools getting funding from Town for environmental projects

By Bill Rea

Seven Caledon schools are going to be getting some monetary assistance from the town for their energy and environmental projects. Caledon council recently agreed to release almost \$15,000 from the School Green Fund in the Energy and Environment operating budget for this year.

The fund is aimed at assisting with local school environmental projects, and it supports the Town's Community Climate Change Action Plan, as well as the Peel Climate Change Strategy.

Town staff reported part of these plans involves educating young students about climate change.

The largest grant approved by council was for \$3,000 for Herb Campbell Public School, where staff reported there are plans for a water refilling station.

The environmental council at the school has set up an awareness campaign on the hidden costs of bottled water. One such fountain was installed last fall, and the school was seeking funding for a second one on the second floor. The use of the fountains will be a reminder to the students of the number of 20-ounce plastic bottles that are not ending up in garbage dumps.

The staff report also stated that St. Cornelius Elementary School in Caledon East will be getting \$1,980 as partial funding to plant trees on the school grounds. As development continues on the surrounding lands, this project is seen as a way to improve biodiversity and ecological sustainability of the property. As part of the project, all the students will be involved in watering, weeding and mulching the trees, with parent volunteers working to maintain them in the summer.

Ellwood Memorial Public School in Bolton will be getting \$1,422.87 as partial funding for the creation of an outdoor classroom. The Eco-team at the school last year started to transform the interior courtyard at the school into outdoor learning space. The next step, according to the staff report, is to create an outdoor classroom, with raised beds to plant vegetables that could eventually be donated to Caledon Community Services.

Palgrave Public School is to received \$2,953.21 in full funding in order to improve on their vegetable and butterfly gardens.

The vegetable garden was started last year with the help of the Albion Hills Children's Learning Garden program. The butterfly garden was begun two years ago, and some of the money will be going to buy a greater variety of plants which should attract more butterflies.

Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School in Caledon East is slated to received \$1,980 in partial funding for a water bottle refilling station, in an effort to avoid plastic bottles being wasted. The hope is to cut the waste in half.

St. John the Baptist Elementary School in Bolton is due to get \$1,932 to fully fund a water bottle refilling station of its own.

Southfields Village Public School will be getting \$1,664.82 to partially fund improvements to the school's community garden, as well as to increase the Vermi Composting Program (which uses worms) to increase student involvement. The money will go toward buying a shed to store tools, rocks to create outdoor learning space and Vermi worms to expand the program.

?What a green agenda,? Councillor Rob Mezzapelli declared as they dealt with the report, adding that changing behaviour and increasing awareness helps the environment.