

■ EDUCATION

# Timing of school-closing meeting 'bad judgment'

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Some London-area rural voters face a tough choice tonight — go vote in the federal election, or rally against the likelihood trustees will decide to close three schools.

But one trustee says voters should have time to do both.

"If they're that passionate about being there, they'd find the time to vote and attend the meeting (too)," said Joyce Bennett, a Thames Valley District

school board trustee.

At a 7 p.m. meeting, trustees are expected to decide to close Caradoc South school in Melbourne, Metcalfe Central near Strathroy and M.B. McEachren in Lambeth.

The timing may not be an issue for those who can vote by day in the federal election, said Southwest Middlesex Mayor Doug Reycraft, a defender of rural schools.

But it's still "bad judgment" for the board to hold the meeting right when most people



Doug Reycraft

are preoccupied with the election, he said.

"It guarantees that the board's decision won't be the front-page headline Wednesday morning."

Reycraft, a former MPP, noted. The proposed school closings are part of a long process, so-called accommodation

reviews, to deal with declining and shifting enrolment across the four-county school board.

Last month, the board recommended cutting London's Brick Street and Manor and Highland Park schools.

Lucan, Prince Andrew, Plover Mills, Biddulph Central and Leesboro public schools were last June recommended for closing, after others in St. Thomas, Drumbo and Princeton met the same fate.

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