

PROTEST: Only 11 of Metcalfe Central public school's 112 pupils showed up for classes yesterday near Strathroy



KEN WIGHTMAN ken.wightman@sunmedia.ca

Families such as the Langfords and the Brodies are opposed to the closing of Metcalfe Central public school. On the left are Rob and Lori Langford with their children Ally, 9, left, in Grade 4, Cole, 4, in kindergarten, and Ben, 7, in Grade 3. On the right are Mike and Angela Brodie with their children Lauren, 8, in Grade 3, Jamie, 3, and Steven, 6, right, in Grade 2.

Boycott battles school closing

BY JOE MATYAS
and KATE DUBINSKI
Sun Media

Parents kept 90 per cent of Metcalfe Central public school's pupils out of the classroom yesterday to protest a school board decision to close the school.

Only 11 of the 112 pupils registered at the elementary school southwest of Strathroy attended classes.

As parents concluded a morning protest on the

grounds of the junior kindergarten to Grade 8 school on Calvert Drive, principal Christine Knight-Smith said she respected their passion.



VIDEO: See yesterday's protest at Metcalfe Central. Click on videos at Ifpress.com

"They care deeply about their children, their school and their community. My job today is to make sure every child is safe and accounted for,

whether they're in school or with their parents."

Some parents participated by not sending their children to school at all, but the majority had their children bused to Metcalfe as usual. The children arrived to find their parents in the parking lot, waiting to pull them out of school and take them home for the day.

The board decided last week to close the school by September 2010. The protest was a one-day event and

pupils were expected to be back in class today.

Protesting, parents were joined by Adelaide-Metcalfe Mayor John Milligan, who sat on the committee that studied the fate of five schools in the west end of Middlesex County for about a year.

The committee included representatives of the five schools, municipal officials and board trustee Sarah Doub, who represents the area, as chairperson.

see **BOYCOTT** | Page A9