

# Bid for Greek-language class put aside by Toronto board

A group of Greek-Canadian parents was denied the support of the Toronto Board of Education last night in its bid for a change of law to permit a Greek-language class at Franklin Public School.

The board instead requested a report of its director on the possibility of foreign-language classes in public schools. The report will be ready in six weeks.

The Greek parents want classes in Greek for their children one hour a day to preserve and help them read and write their native language.

About 350 of the school's 700 pupils are of Greek origin.

The board decided to take no action at all on foreign language programs until it receives the report. This cut out the possibility of its approving another request from the Ital-

ian community for the transitional instruction of immigrant children in Italian.

This request, proposed by Toronto teacher Tony Grande, had the support of the Federation of Italian-Canadian Associations and Clubs, the Dante Society of Toronto, the Italian Community Education Society (COSTI) and the Associazione Democratica Italo-Canadese.

At present, all instruction in Toronto public elementary schools is conducted in English or French. Provincial law says only these languages may be used except when children cannot understand them.

The Greek parents will meet Education Minister Thomas Wells on April 5 to request a change of legislation. Thirty-five parents pushed to the front of the board chamber last night while Gerry Haron, a parent of children at the school, put their request for support.

Trustee Irene Atkinson put the motion stipulating no action until the study, which she requested, was completed. She argued that the board needed full information on the feasibility of such programs before making a decision, in order not to show favoritism among ethnic groups.