

To: Mayor and members of Burlington City Council

From: Councillor Paul Sharman

Cc: Tim Commisso, Mary Lou Tanner, Angela Morgan, Danielle Manton

Date: September 19, 2019

Re: Resolution on Student Mental Health

Whereas, Mental Health awareness and education are necessary in high schools to support the well-being of all students.

Whereas, Mrs. Natalie Pierre delegated to the Halton District School Board on Tuesday, September 3, on the subject of student mental health.

Whereas, The Halton Catholic District School Board have moved and carried the following motion.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Halton Catholic District School Board accept the delegation regarding Student Mental Health and have a staff report forthcoming in conjunction with our mental health advisory and steering committee and that report addresses the concerns and suggestions identified in the delegation for the Boards 2019-2020 Mental Health and Well Being Strategy.

In addition to providing education in physical health, schools are uniquely positioned to provide students with mental health education, giving students the tools they need to navigate mental health problems they might encounter, and learning to recognize when a friend or loved one might be struggling. Addressing and supporting mental health early on in life is important. 50 percent of individuals with a diagnosable mental health disorder will receive a diagnosis by age 14, 75 percent by the age of 24, and most will begin experiencing symptoms years before that. Given these facts, programs that better connect health and education systems should be prioritized. Students need to understand signs and symptoms of mental distress and their treatments, how to look after their own mental health and where to get help.

School-based mental health education can provide support and resources for young people, who otherwise may feel isolated. Teaching mental health education as part of the school curriculum is long overdue. If everyone in our schools is empowered with knowledge, and dialogue is encouraged, students will have the freedom to open up about what they are going through and know where and how to get the support they need. Open and honest discussion about mental health reduces stigma.

Whereas, Burlington residents are working with their local MPP to present a petition in the Ontario Legislative Assembly to ask the Provincial Government to support mental health instruction in all Ontario secondary schools;

Whereas, several members of Council have written to the Halton Catholic District School Board in support of the residents' request to add mental health instruction in secondary schools;

Therefore, be it resolved that: Burlington City Council endorse the request to the Province of Ontario to include and expand mental health education and programming to the Ontario secondary school curriculum.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Sharman". The script is cursive and fluid.

Councillor, Ward 5