

Local resident aims to bring some youth to Peel District School Board

Written By JASEN OBERMEYER

Dmytro Basmat, a resident of Bolton, is running for the position of Peel District School Board Trustee in the upcoming municipal election, and if elected, will be one of the youngest Canadian politicians.

He is calling for a priority for youth issues relating to mental health, youth engagement and leadership, focusing on accountability, inclusively, and creativity, 'in a modernized school system,' and fully supports the Peel Youth Charter, which helps foster youth needs across the region.

The 19 year-old told the Citizen that he doesn't feel pressured by his age, but instead hopes to inspire others around his age to be welcomed into politics. 'I think we need more youth in politics, because they're severely unrepresented right now.'

Mr. Basmat pointed out that Stan Cameron, the current trustee, who announced his intent to again run for the position, won't be acclaimed like the last election in 2014. 'It's time for a new fresh face in Caledon politics.'

He explained that elected, he would freeze wages for the trustees, as they have had a wage increase for the past two terms. 'That money should be going to schools, not into their pockets.'

He also noted that in the Ministry of Education's ranking last year, Caledon East Public School was deemed in 'critical condition,' while Mayfield Secondary and several other schools were ranked as 'poor.'

'What does that say about our schools?' he asked. 'They're old, and we need to modernize them.'

Mr. Basmat said they need a more inclusive, tolerant system for students of colour and minorities. 'We have to ensure that our school system is not only completely racism free, but we help marginalized groups.'

He added they need to set Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSA) groups earlier. 'That's how you get rid of the stigma.'

He described implementing, through lobbying the Ministry of Education, a curriculum that deal with famous Canadian women, so females can be taught to go into non-traditional roles. 'Girls need to be taught that they have a huge potential.'

Mr. Basmat recalled that during his time in high school, students in applied were looked down upon by those in the academic program, and wants to see an open system in Grade 9, as even some pressure comes from the parents for their kids to attend just university.

'Students right now I feel aren't led to success with applied and academic,' he said, adding that although he attends Ryerson University, he didn't consider college a bad choice. 'We need to teach kids that college is definitely not a bad choice.'