

'I CAN BARELY EXPRESS MY HEARTBREAK': AWARD-WINNING MAYFIELD MAGNETICS CLASS SLASHED IN ONTARIO EDUCATION CUTS

It was an emotional day for music students at Mayfield Secondary School on Friday when they learned that the award-winning vocal group, the Magnetics, was among the classes axed because of provincial education changes.

"I cried when I heard about all the music cuts," said Charlotte Powell, a Grade 10 music student in the regional arts program at the Caledon high school.

"What is a music program going to look like with no choirs, no vocal groups and no band to go to? It's going to be devastating to the music kids who just want to write, perform and showcase their creative talents."

A letter circulating on social media over the weekend claimed 42 classes were cancelled at the school as a result of Ontario education changes - mainly due to increased class sizes.

It stated that Mayfield's staff for next year was cut by seven teachers. Three of the lost positions were teachers who retired, whose vacancies will not be filled. The other four were part of 193 who were given layoff notices across the Peel District School Board.

Carla Pereira, spokes-

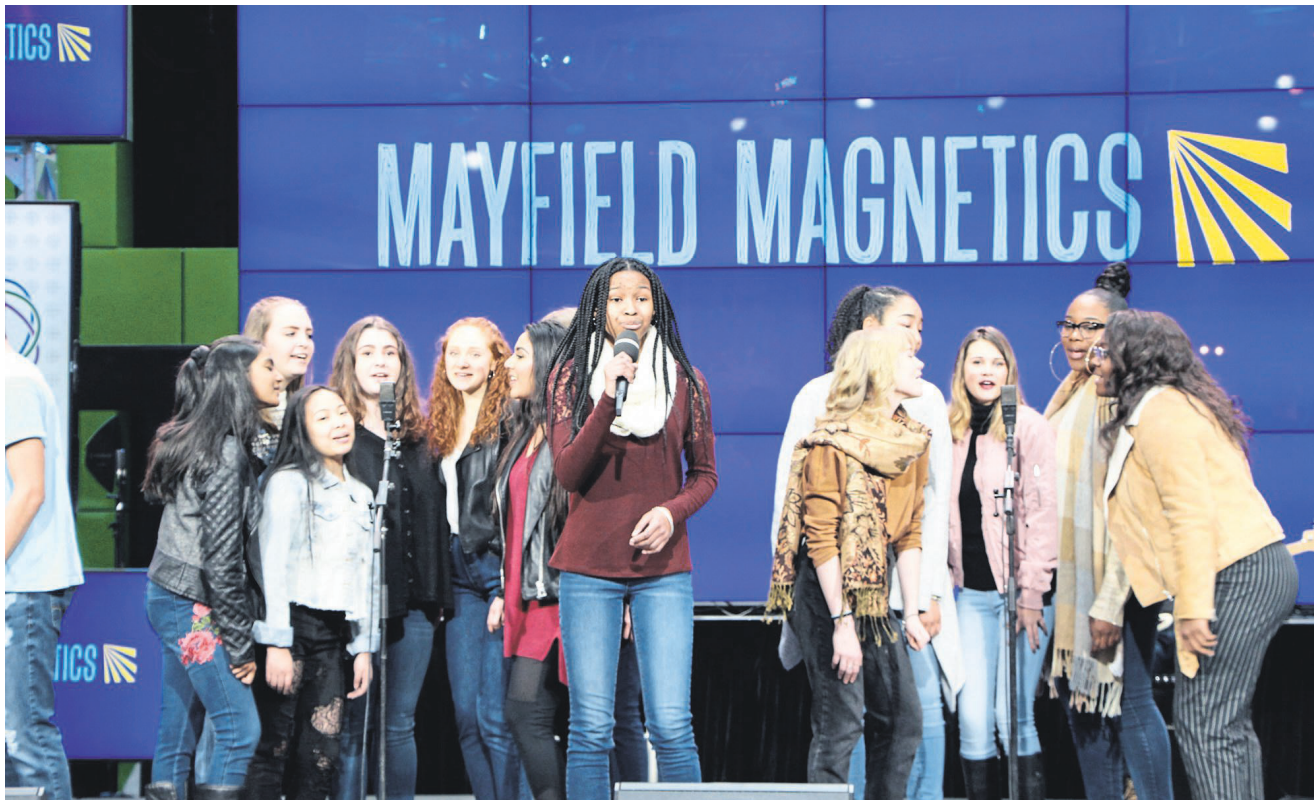
THE ISSUE:
ONTARIO
EDUCATION
CUTS

LOCAL IMPACT: CALEDON
HIGH SCHOOL'S
AWARD-WINNING MUSIC
GROUP AMONG CLASSES
SLASHED

person for the Peel District School Board, said the administration sent a letter home to students last Tuesday about selecting new courses. She did not know the origin of the social media letter.

Have you seen this amazing letter sent home to parents with students at a high school in Ontario? An amazing call to action! All parents need to be similarly informed so that they can remind their MPP's that #CutsHurtKids! #NoCutsToEducation pic.twitter.com/ZLDUawMvr6- Random Teacher (@TeachRandom) May 4, 2019The school board is still working out how the provincial government's attrition funding will be applied to mitigate the education changes.

She said Mayfield be-



Jennifer Moon/Photo

The Mayfield Magnetics hit the stage at the CBC building in Toronto as the sole entertainers of a new signature Blue Monday event.

gan its course selection and timetabling process by looking at classes that had enrolments of 75 per cent or less of their cap size.

Once the school identified those classes, staff worked to ensure there were enough required courses for students in workplace, college and university destinations.

She said their focus was to offer courses that students need to graduate.

"Like many schools, Mayfield is no longer in a position to offer students credits beyond those that are required for graduation. This led to a difficult decision related to Mayfield's regional arts program," Pereira said.

Among the classes cut

was the Magnetics.

Students in grades 10, 11 and 12 audition to be part of the Magnetics class. This year, the group were top-10 finalists in CBC's national Music Class Challenge contest; they won the contest in 2016. They were also the only non-professional group to perform at CBC's Echo Beach Music Festival in

2017 and the following winter performed for CBC Toronto's Blue Monday event.

Several successful Canadian musicians are Magnetics alumni including Grammy winner Larnell Lewis, Juno winner Tara Davidson, Marcus Ali and Lydia Persaud.

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