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Catholic board workers to undergo police checks

Py July 1, 2003 every Halton Catholic District High School employee with regular contact with students will have a criminal background check in their personnel file.

This measure— which also applies to volunteers who work with students and service providers— was mandated by the Ministry of Education. Last week trustees approved the following be included in board

policy: "That the board will require either Criminal Reference Checks or Offence Declarations to be collected yearly in accordance with Ont. Regulation 521/01 as a condition of employment with the (Board). The Board will also require the same from all service providers that have regular contact with students."

Under the Safe Schools Act, the board currently requires criminal reference checks for all newly hired employees - teachers and non-teachers - prior to employment. The new regulation also allows for boards to collect personal information on a regular basis.

This will be accomplished by employees, volunteers and service providers handing over Criminal Offence Declarations on a yearly basis. These basically swear that the undersigned have not been convicted of any criminal offence since their last check or declaration. Declarations must also be collected prior to the transfer of any teacher, administrator or non-teaching employ-

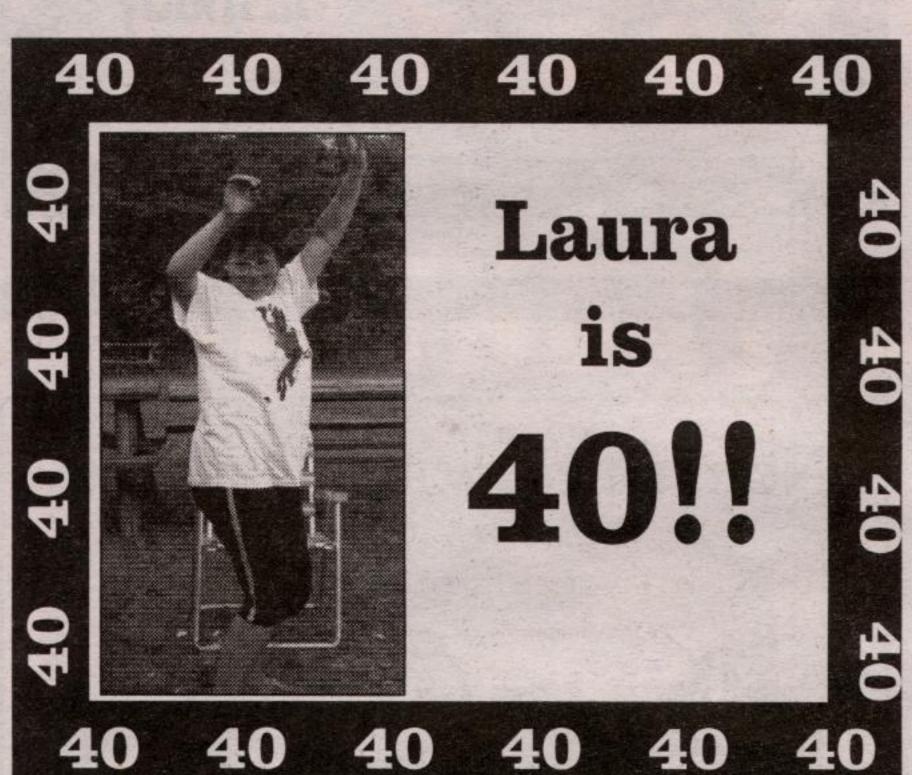
Board-wide service providers must likewise give declarations to the board prior to the issuance of any contracts.

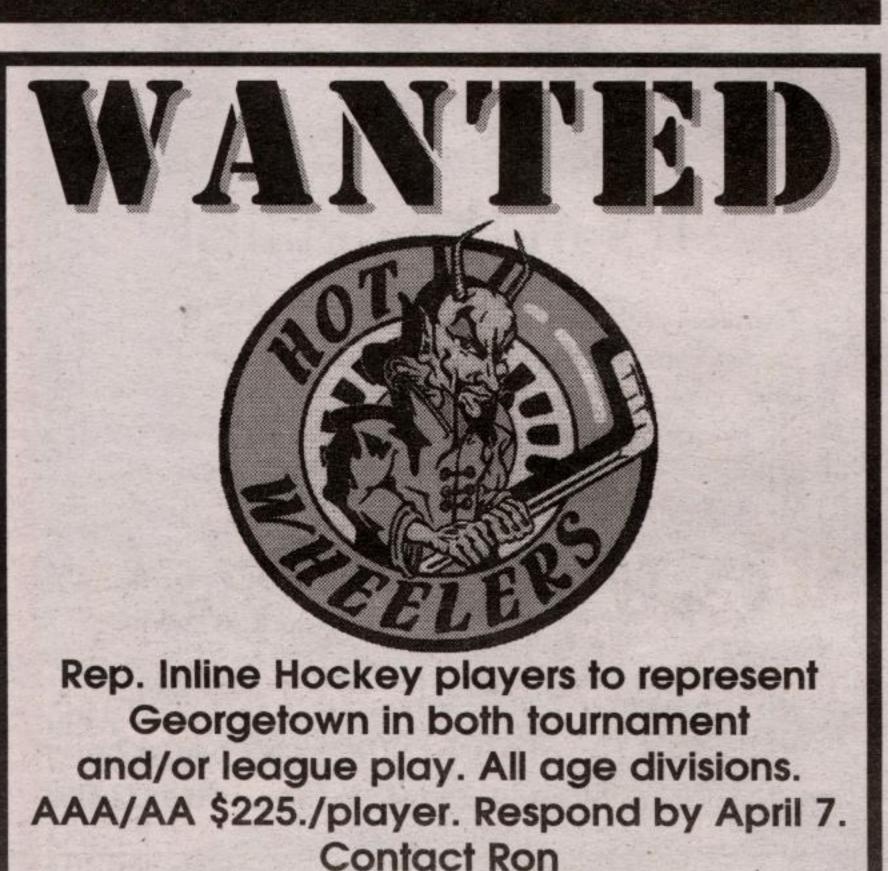
This prompted Burlington trustee Bob Van de Vrande to wonder whether anyone with harm in mind will fill out a declaration honestly.

"It sounds like a whole lot of paperwork that accom-

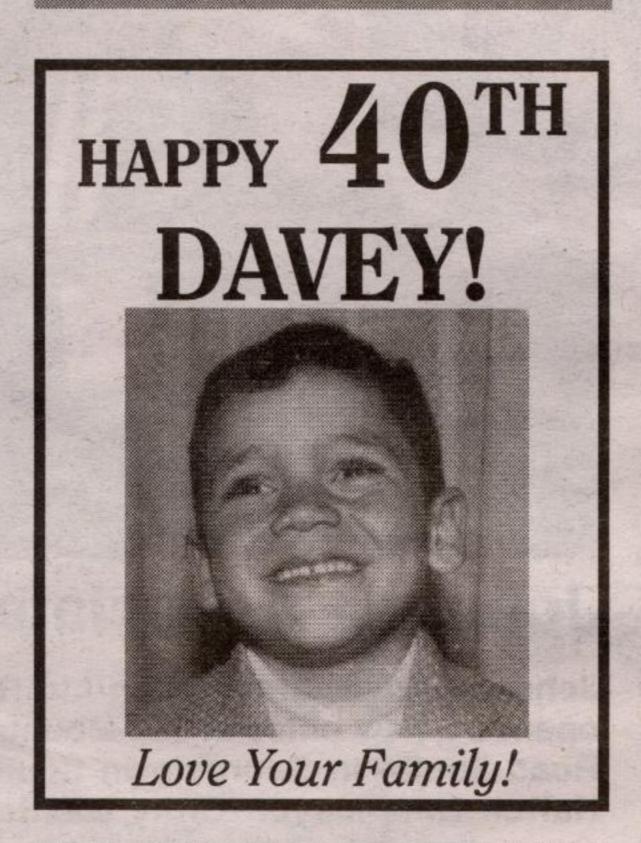
plishes nothing maybe?" he said.

Superintendent of Human Resources John Fauteux agreed that the system isn't perfect but said it is at least a start. Fauteux also explained that trustees are exempt unless they, too, have regular contact with students in some capacity.





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