

# McGuinty wants York Board initiative in all Ontario schools

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN  
Staff Writer

Calling character education a best practice everyone should adopt, Ontario Liberal party leader Dalton McGuinty admitted he borrowed heavily from the York Region public school board program to launch his new initiative.

Mr. McGuinty is proposing character education be made mandatory in all Ontario schools, saying today's students need to be taught more than reading, writing and math.

"I want all children schooled in values," he said in an interview. "All parents want their kids to be honest, all parents want their kids to take responsibility for their actions, to persevere, take initiative, all those things."

As part of the Liberal party's new education platform, which also includes anti-bullying policies, surveillance cameras and a school safety hot-line, McGuinty promised if he were premier character education would be part of every school's curriculum.

"What I like about the concept is that it's not a case of one individual imposing his values on others, it's a way of bringing people together," he said.

"No matter what your background, faith, culture or language, there are certain universal



**DALTON MCGUINTY:** "I want all children schooled in values," says Ontario Liberal leader.

ter attributes for secondary school students and staff to concentrate on, including courage, optimism, integrity and fairness.

"We recognize that changes don't occur overnight, but we're hearing positive anecdotes," said public board spokesperson Ross Virgo.

The Region of York has also jumped on the character bandwagon, declaring itself a community of character with the councils of the most of the region's nine municipalities following its lead.

Public meetings are being held this month to determine which and how many attributes will be adopted by the region.

In Markham, Regional Councillor Tony Wong chaired a public meeting Thursday night. More than 25 people showed up, many of them asking for character training so they could eventually become trainers themselves, he said.

Mr. Wong wasn't surprised by Mr. McGuinty plan, saying government should support school boards and municipalities of character.

"We are the first region to proclaim itself a character community, but that's only the first step. If we can promote the program provincially and nationwide, it would support many of the goals we all have."

values everyone considers admirable."

He said he began thinking about character education following a meeting with Avis Glaze, the former assistant education director at the York Region District School Board.

"In a large measure, this plan came from the York Region school board experience," he said. "It's a wonderful initiative we should all be picking up as a best practice."

The York board began working on the character initiative two years ago. It held public forums and identified 10 char-

## NOTICE - PUBLIC MEETING UNDER THE MUNICIPAL ACT PASSING OF A NEW SIGN BYLAW FOR THE TOWN OF MARKHAM

This is a notice, pursuant to clauses 210 146(e) and (f) of the *Municipal Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.45 as amended, of a Council meeting at which the proposed Sign Bylaw is to be discussed.

A public meeting will be held on Tuesday May 28, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Markham Civic Centre, 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham, Ontario L3R 9W3.

The purpose and effect of the proposed Sign Bylaw is to update and consolidate Sign Bylaws 121-93 and 247-94, both as amended, into one new bylaw for the Town of Markham.

The purpose of this Council meeting is:

To inform landowners, residents, and interested individuals and entities about the proposed Sign Bylaw;

To provide an opportunity for interested individuals and entities to express their views regarding the proposed Sign Bylaw.

Council shall hear any person who, prior to the Council meeting indicated in this notice, wishes to contact the Office of the Town Clerk at 905-479-4744 and applies to be heard.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, signed written submissions will be accepted by the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

The proposed Sign Bylaw and background information is available to the public at Office of the Town Clerk, Markham Civic Centre and is also posted on the Town's web site, [www.city.markham.on.ca](http://www.city.markham.on.ca). For further details, please contact Elvio Valente at 905-477-7000 extension 2720.



Website: [www.city.markham.on.ca](http://www.city.markham.on.ca)

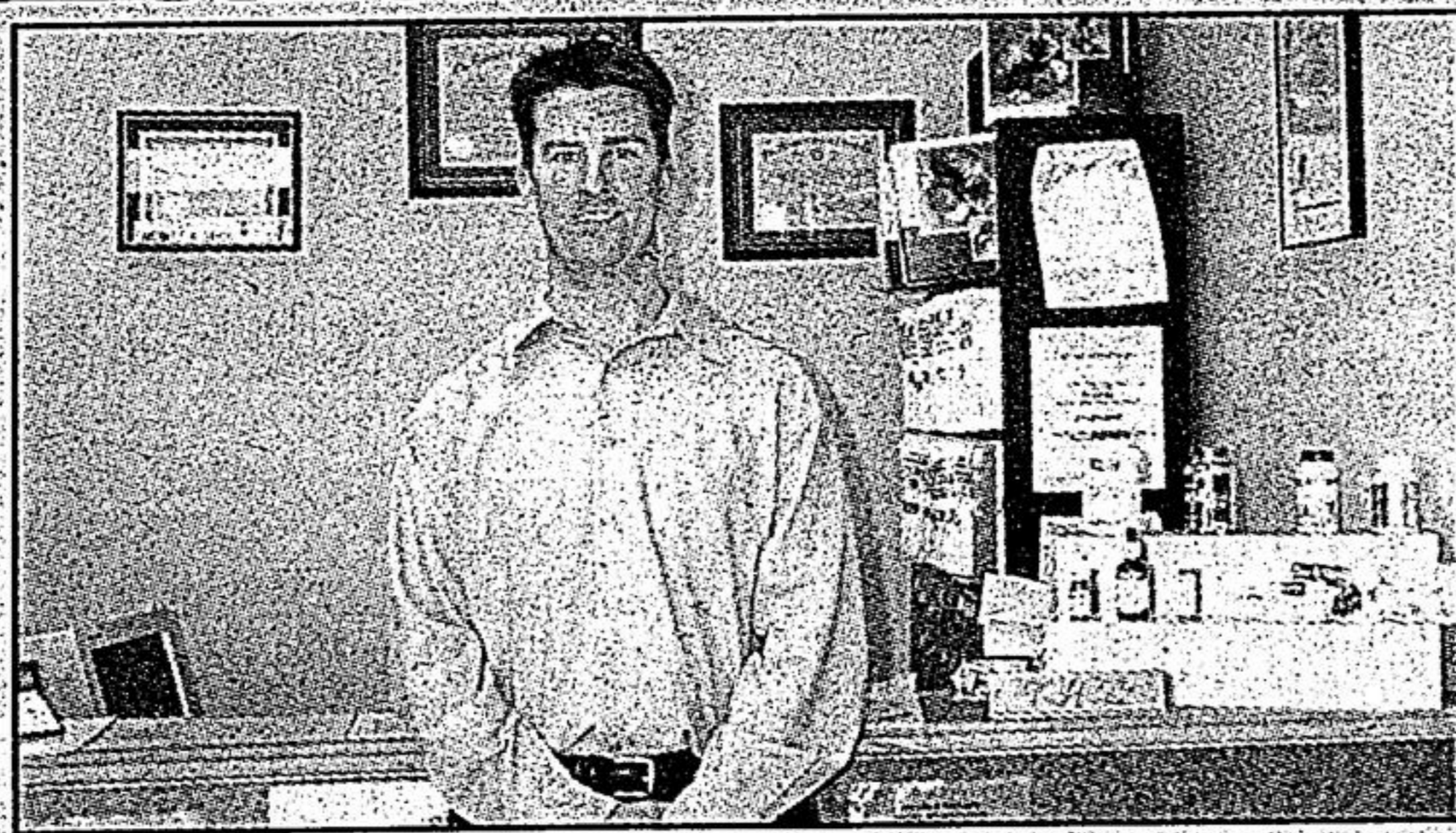
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