



**City of Everett**  
Office of the Mayor  
**Carlo DeMaria, Jr.**  
484 Broadway  
EVERETT, MASSACHUSETTS 02149

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Monday, May 1, 2017**

### **MAYOR DEMARIA PROCLAIMS THE FIRST WEEK OF MAY AS CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK**

On Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup> Mayor Carlo DeMaria proclaimed May 1-7, 2017 as Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. The Mayor met with Superintendent Fred Foresteire, members of the school department, and twelve professionals from Elliot Human Services, and Walker Partnerships to discuss teenagers and youth of Everett with mental health needs in high school, elementary, and middle school.

One in five children has a diagnosable mental health disorder and one-half of all lifetime instances of mental illness begin before age 14. Some children and youth with the most intense needs may not receive services. The Mayor emphasized the need to learn to recognize the early warning signs of mental health needs and where to obtain the necessary support, assistance, and treatment that gives children and youth better opportunities to lead full and productive lives.

Mayor DeMaria stated, "As a parent and Mayor the health and well-being of our children is so important. It is crucial to diagnose and treat mental illness early, so that our young adults can grow to be healthy, happy, and productive citizens."

At a meeting with the Mayor and Special Education Counselors, Superintendent Foresteire pointed out that the Everett Public Schools has joined forces with Eliot Human Services and Walker Partnerships to provide mental health support to students and their families. In this new model, schools not only provide services during regular school hours, but also provide additional services available outside of the school day. Services are also available for parents and families.

District Special Education Director Dr. Michael Baldassarre stated, "This model for mental health services for students is among the most innovative in the state. Since, we changed our model we have tripled the amount of students that we serve."

The implementation of the program at EHS has brought a significant reduction in student suspensions and increases in both grades and attendance.

On Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> the Everett Public Schools will host its annual Mental Health Summit. There officials from the Fire Department, Police Department, Department of

Children and Families, Department of Mental Health, Eliot Human Services, Cambridge Health Alliance, and many others will meet to have an open and honest dialogue about how the work of these organizations and the Everett Public Schools can be coordinated to best meet the needs of Everett's children and families.

\*Picture included in email

Top row (L to R)- Charles Obremski, Kevin Shaw, Michael Baldassarre, Frederick F. Foresteire, Mayor DeMaria, Keith Wales, Alyssa Cetoute Kelley McGurl, Ann Fitzgerald

Bottom row (L to R)- Brianna Strunk, Julie Murphy, Kiah Banfield, Teresa Diaz Kara Grant, Danielle Crews, Jessica Giantonio, Liliana Patino

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For additional press information please contact:

**Tom Philbin**

Director of Communications

City of Everett

484 Broadway

Everett, MA 02149

617-309-8038

Tom.Philbin@ci.everett.ma.us