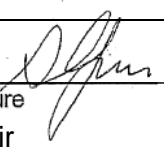




Hamilton

CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

To:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
From:	Sharon Gibbons Hamilton Cycling Committee - Interim Chair  Signature
Date:	May 2, 2016
Re:	Cycling Education in Ontario Schools

Recommendation:

That the attached letter (Appendix A) be sent to the Ontario Ministry of Education in support of mandatory cycling education in Ontario curriculum.

Background:

Annually, representatives of the Hamilton Cycling Committee attend a joint meeting of cycling committees from this area of the province, the western end of Lake Ontario. At their May 2015 meeting, this joint group passed the following motion "That Bicycle Education be included in all Ontario schools as part of their Safety Curriculum". All cycling committees were asked to convey this message to the Province through their municipal process. Cycling committees in the following municipalities are pursuing such action: Brampton, Burlington, Milton, Mississauga, Niagara Region, and Waterloo Region.

Analysis/Rationale:

Members of the Hamilton Cycling Committee have investigated and concluded that references to bicycle safety in the Ontario Curriculum are only part of a larger category of safety skills, with references to cycling as an example. Bicycle safety does not appear to be a formal expectation in the Ontario Health & Physical Education Curriculum.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Letter to the Ministry of Education

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Ministry of Education,

At a joint meeting of cycling committees from the western end of Lake Ontario in May 2015, attendees passed the following motion “That Bicycle Education be included in all Ontario schools as part of their Safety Curriculum”.

We therefore ask that this subject, cycling education in schools, be investigated by the Ministry and adopted as mandatory in-classroom instruction (as a minimum) in the Ontario Elementary and Secondary School Curricula; on a graduated basis, integrated with existing curriculum, from grade one to grade ten, including both safety and skills training.

We offer the following as additional background justification:

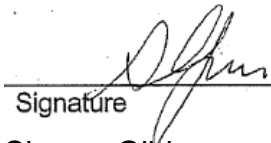
- #CycleON - Ontario’s Cycling Strategy (MTO, 2013) clearly identifies the merits of cycling as a mode of transport, and cycling is to be encouraged for all ages;
- Share the Road Cycling Coalition’s Green Paper states “Curriculum-based learning which is complemented by bicycling tests, in the same vein as driving tests measure learned skills, is seen as a critical step forward in standardizing cycling education in schools in Ontario and encouraging children and their parents to consider cycling to school as a viable optionⁱ ;
- studies have shown that active transportation to school increases brain activity for up to four hours, and increases academic performance and decision-making opportunities^{ii iii};
- City of Hamilton staff have been actively promoting cycling to school children for the past five years;
- fewer students are walking or cycling to school and the percentage being driven is increasing. In Hamilton, students walking or cycling to/from elementary school has decreased from 60% to 41% between 1986 and 2011. During the same 25 year period, elementary students being driven (excluding school bus) has increased from 7% to 20%^{iv} ;
- only four to seven per cent of Canadian school-age children and youth receive the requisite one hour per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity^v ;

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- reduced driving would ease parking lot congestion, may increase safety of students in school zones, and would reduce air pollution; enhancing the health of students and staff, thus improving community health and reducing costs^{vi} ;
- The City of Washington, DC is an example of a jurisdiction that has implemented a mandatory cycling education program in schools.^{vii}

We look forward to a response from the Ministry providing details of the results of the investigation.

Regards,



Signature

Sharon Gibbons
Hamilton Cycling Committee

Cc: Minister of Education
Ministry of Children & Youth Services
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Ministry of Transportation
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Hamilton Police Service

ⁱ Share the Road. When Ontario Bikes, Ontario Benefits, March 2010, p.22
<https://www.peelregion.ca/health/resources/healthydesign/pdf/moh-report.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Vinther D. Children who walk to school concentrate better, Science Nordic, November 30, 2012
<http://sciencenordic.com/children-who-walk-school-concentrate-better>

ⁱⁱⁱ Hillman C.H. et al. (2009). The effect of acute treadmill walking on cognitive control and academic achievement in preadolescent children. Neuroscience. 159(3):1044-1054.

^{iv} Buling R. Colley M. McGowan J. Salmon B., School Travel in the City of Hamilton: A Report on Trends, December 2015, p6-7
www.metrolinx.com

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^v Active Healthy Kids Canada. The 2014 Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

http://www.participaction.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/AHKC_2014_ReportCard_ENG.pdf

^{vi} Mowat D. Gardner C. McKeown D. Tran N. Moloughney B. Burse G., Medical Officers of Health. Improving Health by Design in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area: A Report of Medical Officers of Health in the GTHA, May 2014 2nd Edition, p.26

<https://www.peelregion.ca/health/resources/healthbydesign/pdf/moh-report.pdf>

^{vii} Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/all-dc-public-schools-students-will-learn-to-ride-a-bike-in-second-grade/2015/09/23/22a0b356-6203-11e5-b38e-06883aacba64_story.html