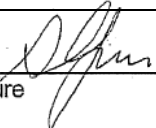




Hamilton

# CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>To:</b>	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
<b>From:</b>	Sharon Gibbons  Hamilton Cycling Committee - Chair Signature
<b>Date:</b>	September 17, 2018
<b>Re:</b>	<b>Cycling Education in Ontario Schools – follow-up</b>

## **Recommendation:**

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

## **Background:**

The Hamilton Cycling Committee (HCyC), with the approval of PWC, sent a letter to the Ministry of Education in 2016 specifically asking that “cycling education in schools be investigated by the Ministry and adopted as mandatory in-classroom instruction”. Various municipal cycling committees including Niagara, Brampton, and Mississauga sent letters with this same message to the Province at that time.

## **Analysis/Rationale:**

Two years have passed, and the HCyC has not received a response from the Ministry of Education. There was some informal information conveyed prior to the change in provincial government; but as there has been no formal response, and with the change in government, the HCyC would like to follow-up with the Ministry to seek clarity on the current plans for cycling education in schools.

## **Appendices:**

**Appendix A – Letter requested to be sent to the Provincial Ministry of Education**

**Appendix B – Letter sent to the Provincial Ministry of Education June 27, 2016**

**SUBJECT: Cycling Education in Ontario Schools – follow-up - Page 2 of 4**

**Appendix A – Letter requested to be sent to the Provincial Ministry of Education**

Ministry of Education,  
Province of Ontario.

The Hamilton Cycling Committee (HCyC) is writing to follow-up on our letter sent to your Ministry on June 27, 2016. In that letter the committee discussed the deficit of education around cycling in Ontario. The HCyC expressed concerns about youth and road safety in our communities, and suggested that cycling education be included in the Ontario academic curriculum.

Subsequent to that letter we have heard nothing in the way of a response from your Ministry.

Some of our members have attended provincial events, where it has been indicated that the Province will not be including cycling education in the curriculum. We hear rumours of other avenues of education, but no formal response has clarified this for our Committee.

Therefore we are writing this follow-up as a request to get a response to our letter and to understand which direction the province plans to pursue on this issue. We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Yours Truly,

Sharon Gibbons  
Hamilton Cycling Committee, Chair

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

**Appendix B – Letter sent to the Provincial Ministry of Education June 27, 2016**

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.

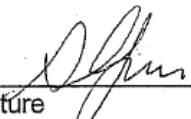
We offer the following as additional background justification:

- #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 option<sup>i</sup> ;
- studies have shown that active transportation to school increases brain activity for up to four hours, and increases academic performance and decision-making opportunities<sup>ii iii</sup>;
- 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%<sup>iv</sup> ;
- 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<sup>v</sup> ;
- 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<sup>vi</sup> ;
- The City of Washington, DC is an example of a jurisdiction that has implemented a mandatory cycling education program in schools.<sup>vii</sup>

**SUBJECT: Cycling Education in Ontario Schools – follow-up - Page 4 of 4**

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

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<sup>i</sup> Share the Road. When Ontario Bikes, Ontario Benefits, March 2010, p.22

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

<sup>ii</sup> Vinther D. Children who walk to school concentrate better, Science Nordic, November 30, 2012

<http://sciencenordic.com/children-who-walk-school-concentrate-better>

<sup>iii</sup> 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.

<sup>iv</sup> 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](http://www.metrolinx.com)

<sup>v</sup> 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](http://www.participaction.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/AHKC_2014_ReportCard_ENG.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> Mowat D. Gardner C. McKeown D. Tran N. Moloughney B. Bursery 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>

<sup>vii</sup> 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](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)