



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	November 7, 2023
SUBJECT:	Kanétskare Recreation Centre (Ward 1)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 1
SUBMITTED BY:	Steve Sevor Acting Director, Recreation Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

INFORMATION:

On Friday, November 10, 2023, Ryerson Recreation Centre located at 251 Duke Street in Hamilton will be renamed to Kanétskare Recreation Centre (pronounced Ga-nét-sga-re), a Kanien'kéha (pronounced Gah-nyen-geh-hah) word meaning Bay or Inlet. Kanien'kéha translates to People of the Chert/Flint or commonly, Mohawk (English given name). From that date forward, all programming at this facility, including winter registered programs that will be listed online on Monday, November 13, 2023, will be accessible by searching for the new name.

All references to the previous name, Ryerson, will be concurrently removed from the facility and the Hamilton.ca website. The exterior signage on the side of the building is scheduled to be replaced pending the approval and award of sign installation tender (expected in the coming months).

Notice of the upcoming name change, including a Frequently Asked Question sheet created with input from the Indigenous Relations Team that provides context on its importance (Appendix "A"), will be posted to Hamilton.ca and shared via the City's corporate social media channels. Active users of the facility will also be notified via email. Further, the Indigenous Relations team will develop signage to be placed inside the facility with information and a QR code linking to further resources.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

BACKGROUND:

Changing the name of the facility is in line with Council's direction from July 2021 to "remove the name Ryerson from the municipal recreation centre" as part of the City's broader journey towards meaningful reconciliation. This change was also identified by the Indigenous Relations Team, through ongoing Landmarks and Monuments Review work and the [Honouring Our Roots](#) report (HSC21025(a)/PED21149(a)/PW21038(a)), noting the facility as a high-priority site.

On May 11, 2023, the Facility Naming Sub-Committee approved the renaming of this facility to Kanétskare Recreation Centre to match the new name of the adjacent elementary school.

Should you require further information, please contact Dawn Walton, Manager, Business Support, Recreation Division via email at dawn.walton@hamilton.ca or by telephone at (905) 546-2424 ext. 4755.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" – Kanétskare Recreation Centre FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Kanétskare Recreation Centre (pronounced Ga-nét-sga-re)

Background and Context

On November 10, 2023, Ryerson Recreation Centre will be renamed Kanétskare Recreation Centre (pronounced Ga-nét-sga-re). All registered and drop-in programs at this location will be accessible by searching for Kanétskare Recreation Centre.

How can recreation users find programs at this facility?

When the name change takes effect, all mention of Ryerson Recreation Centre online and in registration systems will be replaced with Kanétskare Recreation Centre. This will not affect registration status for any members of the public (anyone already registered in programs will still be signed up, but the facility will now be listed as Kanétskare Recreation Centre).

Why is this facility being renamed?

Due to Egerton Ryerson's relationship to the residential school system, in July of 2021, a motion was approved by City Council to remove the name "Ryerson" from the recreation centre.

Who was the facility originally named after?

Egerton Ryerson was the Chief Superintendent of Education in Upper Canada from 1844 to 1876 and advocated for a school system for Indigenous children that would focus on teaching the Christian religion, and on labour rather than actual education. In his words, the goal of these schools was to "civilize" Indigenous peoples. This framework is widely believed to be the basis for the residential school system.

What was the impact of the residential school system?

The long-lasting impact of the residential school system, and its negative effect on Indigenous peoples across Canada, cannot be denied. The impacts of the residential school system are still being felt by Indigenous peoples and communities today in many ways, some of which are:

- Intergenerational Trauma
- Loss of Language
- Loss of Culture
- Mistrust of Government, Healthcare, and Educational Systems

In May 2021, it was announced that the remains of 215 children were found in unmarked graves at the Kamloops Residential school. The announcement understandably caused massive pain for Indigenous peoples across Canada and overall triggered the start of many politically active movements against figures like Egerton Ryerson. The search for unmarked graves is ongoing at other Residential Schools.

Changing the name to Kanétskare is an amazing example of trying to revitalize Indigenous languages and right some of the wrongs of the past.

City of Hamilton Actions

What are some steps that the City of Hamilton is taking to acknowledge and reconcile this systematic wrongdoing?

In 2021 the City of Hamilton procured First Peoples Group, an Indigenous consulting firm, to do a systematic review of high-priority landmarks and monuments across the City that may be problematic for Indigenous people. First Peoples Group consulted with a Circle of Experts that included Indigenous elders, historians, artists, and leaders which resulted in the creation of a report called [Honouring Our Roots](#) that identified five high-priority problematic sites, with the Ryerson Recreation Centre being one of those five sites.

At the same time, in June 2021, members of the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) motioned to rename Ryerson Elementary school (which is adjacent to the recreation centre) in consultation with members of the Indigenous community. Following a process led by a Naming Circle created for this purpose, the school's name was changed to Kanétskare (pronounced Ga-nét-sga-re), a Mohawk word meaning "Bay" or "Inlet" in June 2022. The intent from the renaming committee is that this word could be interpreted as "By the Bay" for the Kanétskare school. In May 2023, a motion was approved by Council to rename the recreation centre to match the new name of the elementary school.

More information on the ongoing work at sites across the City of Hamilton is available on the Landmarks & Monuments project page.

What other work is the City of Hamilton's Indigenous Relations Team engaged in?

For more information about the ongoing reconciliation efforts led by the City of Hamilton, visit the [Indigenous Relations Team](#) webpage.