

Motion in Support of Active Transportation to School and Back in Winter

Whereas, the Toronto District School Board has had a Charter for Active, Safe and Sustainable Transportation since 2013; and

Whereas, research shows that walking and cycling to school is the healthiest way for children to get to school, allowing them to arrive at school having had some of the 60 minutes of exercise that children and youth need daily, supporting increased health, mental health, self-reliance and focus, and putting in place lifelong habits that thwart obesity and chronic diseases in later life; and

Whereas, being active outside in Canadian winters is important for child and youth health. As a life skill, students need to know how to dress for severely cold weather, and how to keep themselves protected from frostbite, hypothermia and other cold weather hazards; and

Whereas, the first Wednesday in February is widely celebrated in Canada as Winter Walk Day, with many resources being available to help schools to plan and promote winter walking to school on this day (as for example, Safe Routes to School Canada's webpage <http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/winter-walk-day/>);

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the first Wednesday in February be declared as Winter Walk to School Day and recognized as an official day of significance in the Toronto District School Board;**
- (b) That the Director develop a communications campaign to encourage all schools to participate in Winter Walk to School Day;**
- (c) That the Director develop a plan to encourage and support active transportation to and from school during the winter months, to include:**
 - (i) ensuring that all school sidewalks, pathways and cycle racks are cleared of snow and ice well in advance of school opening and closing times after snowfalls,**
 - (ii) making sure that all students and their parents are aware of how to dress for outdoor activity in the cold, and encouraging weather- appropriate clothing be worn to school,**
 - (iii) working with parents to promote the health benefits of students walking and cycling to school in all weather conditions, as long as students are dressed appropriately,**
 - (iv) debunking the misconception that children and youth should be driven to school during cold weather for safety reasons, and instead encouraging active safe and sustainable transportation to school as a first choice in all weather.**