



June 19, 2020

The Honourable Stephen Lecce  
Ministry of Education  
5th Floor  
438 University Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

To the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education,

On Wednesday, June 3rd, 2020, the Board of Trustees of the Halton District School Board unanimously passed a motion to declare the **first student-led school board Climate Emergency Declaration**.

During the past year, both the Student Senate and students across the Board have indicated their concern about the Climate Change Crisis and how the Board and students are taking action to the Student Trustees. This Climate Emergency Declaration has been drafted by the HDSB Student Trustees, Olivia Lau and Matthew Burnes, and the two Student Senator representatives on the HDSB Environmental Management Team, Luka Simeunovic and Claire Jung, on behalf of the students of the HDSB. It was brought to the Board of Trustees to highlight the concerns of the students and set a direction for both students and the HDSB to move forward in addressing the complex challenge of climate change.

This Climate Declaration comes from HDSB students, on behalf of all students, staff and the HDSB community. All students will see both their place in affecting climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as understand what the Board is doing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase awareness and knowledge of the complexity of climate change. This Climate Declaration is a momentous first step in taking action on all sustainability issues; social, economic and environmental.

The preamble reads as follows:

**WE THE STUDENTS** of the Halton District School Board (HDSB) declare a climate emergency on behalf of the students, staff and the wider HDSB community.

**WE** acknowledge that the students of the HDSB can have a significant impact on mitigation and adaptation efforts for climate action.

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**THE STUDENT SENATE** of the HDSB has expressed their grave concern about the climate crisis and their interest in supporting a climate emergency declaration to safeguard our environment and our way of life while inspiring action to mitigate these threats. The Student Senate, on behalf of everyone in the HDSB, puts forward the following motion.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the HDSB declare a climate emergency to recognize the challenges that this issue brings to our Board while also aiming to inspire our students, families, and staff to take collective action in combating climate change within their communities through the following actions;

- **LISTEN** to Student Voice using Board-administered surveys to identify actionable and measurable opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with student interaction with buildings, transportation and waste.
- **EMPOWER** students to initiate and take action through support of a network of school-based, student focused groups, connected to the Environmental Management Team, that set their own metrics for measuring and reducing GHG emissions.
- **COMMUNICATE** with students through annual reports to Student Senate on Board level actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **INCLUDE** Student Voice on Sustainability Issues in School and Board Directives, using the Family of Schools structure.
- **RECOGNIZE** student achievements through an Environmental Excellence Award, presented in conjunction with the HDSB Inspire Award to a person who has undertaken or inspired environmental action.

Sincerely,



Andréa Grebenc  
Chair of the Board of Trustees  
Halton District School Board

Cc: Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
Hon. Jeff Yurek, Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks  
Hon. Ted Arnott, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
Stephen Crawford, MPP  
Parm Gill, MPP  
Jane McKenna, MPP  
Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP

Gary Carr, Regional Chair  
Rick Bonnette, Halton Hills Mayor  
Rob Burton, Oakville Mayor  
Gordon Krantz, Milton Mayor  
Marianne Meed Ward, Burlington Mayor  
HDSB Board of Trustees  
The Canadian School Boards' Association (CSBA)  
The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)  
The Ontario Student Trustee Association (OSTA-AECO)