Waterloo Catholic District School Board

Active Transportation Charter

A ctive transportation consists of human-powered forms of travel such as walking, cycling, in-line skating, skateboarding and manual wheelchairs. Active modes of transportation can be efficient alternatives to automobile travel.

Walking, cycling or other active modes of transportation are a vital part of an individual's daily physical activity. By using active modes of transportation to school, students gain independence that contributes to their social and psychological development. This prepares them for learning and fosters a lifelong habit of using active modes of transportation. By reducing automobile use, air quality around schools can be improved. In order to travel safely, conveniently, directly and comfortably, employees, parents and students require adequate infrastructure, programming and a supportive environment to meet their travel needs. This Charter promotes the principles outlined in Ontario's Foundations for a Healthy School.

To ensure active modes of transportation are safe, comfortable and convenient, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board respects the following principles:

Accessibility

Active modes of transportation are direct means of accessing educational facilities by everyone.

Activity and Learning

Daily physical activity prepares students to learn more effectively.

Equity

Active modes of transportation are the only modes of travel that are universally affordable, and allow the majority of children and youth to travel independently.

Personal and Community Safety

An environment in which people feel safe and comfortable using active modes of transportation increases community safety for all.

Health and Well-Being

Active modes of transportation are proven methods of promoting personal health and well-being.

Environmental Sustainability

Active modes of transportation rely on human power and have negligible environmental impacts.

Community Cohesion and Vitality

A supportive active transportation environment encourages and facilitates local community that is a place for all.

To create an environment in all parts of the region that encourages and supports active modes of travel, the Waterloo Catholic District School Boards will work with the Waterloo Region District School Board, individual citizens, parents, community and school groups, businesses and the local municipalities to:

- Support and encourage the adoption of Active and Safe Routes to School programs in schools across the Board

- Encourage the development of School Travel Plans for every school

- Improve end of trip facilities (e.g., equipment storage and/or bicycle racks, access to showers, provision of sidewalks and shaded areas, etc.) to support active transportation

- Participate in regional and international walk to school day events and other initiatives encouraging active transportation

- Incorporate active transportation encouragement policies in facility planning decisions

- Encourage the Ontario EcoSchools consortium to include school initiatives that encourage active transportation into the Ontario EcoSchools certification requirements

- Support research on active transportation

- Support policies to improve the condition of sidewalks, walkways and pathways

- Advocate for safety enhancements including establishing safe active transportation corridors for travel to school and the workplace

- Encourage interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration of schools, communities and government agencies

- Develop policies that incorporate these principles into all Board decisions

- Identify needs for retrofitting all neighbourhoods/ communities with more efficient active transportation and transit infrastructure that encourages intermodal travel

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Active schools encourage and facilitate active living and support student health, vitality and safety. This will result in decreased automobile dependence and traffic congestion, lead to cleaner air and support student achievement. Such environments improve the quality of life for all school community members, contribute to success for each learner and create a place for all.

Active & Safe Routes to School