

January 30, 2013

Dear Joe Swan:

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 17 years old and live on Bridle Path off of Kipps Lane. I am writing to request that you support young people who have financial disadvantages with transportation. I struggle to get to school because the 2.6 km walk is challenging with snow and rain. My family does not have a lot of money for bus tickets and sometimes I don't have appropriate clothing, shoes or boots. I am not eligible for the school bus because I don't live far enough away for it to pick me up. I have asked the bus company and School Board Trustees to support me, but they cannot change the set guidelines of 3.2 km. Buying bus tickets has left me without food at times. I struggle with attendance at school, as do many of my peers, and this has a lot to do with not having reliable transportation to school. I also have difficulty getting to medical appointments and to the volunteering that I do at the Boys and Girls club because I don't have access to reliable transportation. My mother is on ODSP and I have asked if they can help me with a bus pass but they say I have to have significant medical problems to get this.

I know the school bus zones are the same distance for everyone in the school board but the people who don't live in poverty have the resources to buy bus tickets, parents who have cars to drive them to school and they have warm clothes to walk in the cold. For this reason, I don't believe this rule is equitable. It would be very helpful if the school board could accommodate the people who live on Bridle Path and Arbour Glen Crescent and have the bus transport us to and from school. It would help us if we could get a student bus pass. I cannot afford eighty one dollars a month for a bus pass. I think this would allow us to get to school and other appointments easier and we would be more successful as a result. I want to go to school and graduate but poor transportation is often a barrier. Thank you for your consideration, I look forward to hearing back from you about my request.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]