

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.