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June 18, 2024

Greetings Chair Bravo and City Council Colleagues,

Re: Use of City Parks by Schools in Scarborough North (Ward 23)

At the heart of Scarborough North's neighbourhoods lie our schools—both Catholic and Public—and our parks, side by side. In Ward 23 each of our parks is adjacent to one or two schools. Goldhawk Park hosts four - Banting and Best Public School, Prince of Peace Catholic School, Laure-Riese Elementary School and Agnes Macphail Public School.

So, while we understandably might think and act in terms of our land boundaries and property requirements at times, our youth just see paths, grass, swing sets, trees, fields - and future possibilities. During the pandemic, the City of Toronto supported the resilience and health of our school communities by enabling our school communities to use their adjacent parks during school hours. Apart from restoring that practical precedent, we would like to:

- Cultivate further cooperation by exploring joint climate resilient greening projects;
- Expand possibilities for year-round programming that supports lifelong learning and healthy communities; and,
- Explore strategic opportunities to use public lands to their full potential.

I recommend that:

1. City Council direct the Deputy City Manager Community and Social Services and General Manager Parks, Forestry and Recreation to convene a Discussion Table with counterparts from each of the school boards to discuss the use of City parks by schools and to explore related property usage matters within Scarborough North, in consultation with the local Councillor.

Sincerely Yours,

Jamaal Myers
Toronto City Councillor, Ward 23, Scarborough North

