



FRIENDS OF  
EGERTON  
RYERSON

November 28, 2022

Dear Premier Ford and all MPPs

**re: the Ryerson University name change**

We are saddened to see the loss of the Ryerson name, but we do not expect you to reverse the change. We write instead to inform you of how flawed the process was by which the decision was made, and the failure of the (then) Ryerson Board of Governors, nine of whose members were appointed by the Government of Ontario, to have such a decision reviewed by experts. Not one member of that Task Force was an expert on Ryerson!

Since then, the situation at Ryerson/Toronto Met has only become worse, with the administration's refusal to release the briefs sent to its Task Force on the name change. The administration first promised a peculiar form of disclosure, redacted briefs, with all the names of individuals and organizations removed! Censorship. On an access to information claim, it declined information on all 109 items! All 109 organizations and individuals who sent in briefs, are listed in Appendix B of the Task Force report, and said to be a source for "what we learned."

The administration failed also in its duty to care for students, faculty and staff, so many of whom accepted without question the false accusations against Ryerson, and were deeply troubled by seeing his statue on campus. Not only did the administration fail to answer the false accusations in circulation, but it chose to add to them.

We urge that future appointees to the Board of Governors be apprised of the censorship proclivities of the administration. Perhaps the Province of Ontario should follow Quebec's lead and bring in legislation against censorship in institutions of higher learning, adopted there in June, 2022.

On the relevant facts of Egerton Ryerson, did you know that he had **NOTHING** to do either with the design or the implementation of the residential school system in Canada? contrary to the plaque erected by the president, Dr Lachemi, in 2018?

That Ryerson, instead, supported only the voluntary, bilingual schools wanted by Indigenous parents and leaders themselves?

That Ryerson lived with the Mississaugas of the Credit, learned Ojibway and was named a brother by an Ojibway chief, who gave him the name "Cheehock," or "Bird on a Wing"?

That Ryerson supported the land claims of the Mississaugas of the Credit and assisted a leading chief with introductions when he went to England to further their claim. All those efforts were unsuccessful.

We look to a future president of Toronto Met apologizing for the gross errors made in the process and then to restore Ryerson's good name. He was, after all, the pioneer in founding the free public education system we have now (when the UK and the other provinces had only fee-paying schools); he was also the founder of the free public library system (again when other jurisdictions charged fees); he was a leading journalist, founder of the then highest-circulation magazine in Ontario, one which gave considerable coverage to Aboriginal communities.

For other information on Ryerson, visit our website at <https://friendsofegertonryerson.ca>.

Yours sincerely,  
56 Friends of Egerton Ryerson