



Dear teacher/principal,

From 8-11 March 2020, the Windsor Law Cities and Climate Action Forum will play host to approximately 130 students from across Ontario for a Youth Workshop on Local Climate Action.

Students aged 13-18 will have the opportunity to learn from politicians, academics, community builders, journalists, law students and each other to build the skills and knowledge to engage in meaningful and collaborative climate action at the local level.

This generation of youth is more engaged than any before it on the issue of climate change. As much as 60% of emissions globally, and in Canada, are committed or regulated by municipalities. Municipalities have also had to endure some of the worst effects of climate change in recent years - flooding and shoreline erosion to name but two increasingly common occurrences. Local institutions - municipalities and school boards among them - are also the easiest levels of government for students to get involved because the action happens close to home. Yet students (and other community members) often lack knowledge about the structures and responsibilities of municipalities.

Schools and students are clamouring for more climate education (see <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2020/02/23/eco-anxiety-is-a-crushing-weight-for-many-youth-canadians-and-they-say-schools-arent-doing-enough.html>). Funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada's Climate Action Fund and supported by the University of Windsor, Windsor Law, and several other faculties as well as a number of other community partners, this Workshop aims to help fill that gap. In addition to formal learning opportunities, students will build a network of students from across the province who share their interests, and will have an opportunity to hear about a variety of education and career pathways, from science to film-making to law, which address climate change in some way.

A full programme and more details about the Workshop is available at windsorlawcities.ca/events. Keynote speakers include Dr. Dianne Saxe, former Environment Commissioner for Ontario; David Miller, former Mayor of the City of Toronto and Diplomacy Director for C40 Cities; Miranda Baksh, founder of the Peel Climate Council; Waasekom, water-walker from Saugeen First Nation; and Mike de Souza, environment reporter with Global News Toronto. In affiliation with the Windsor International Film Festival, the new film "2040" will

have its Canadian premiere at the Workshop. Representatives and trustees from several Ontario school boards will also participate.

One or more of your students has been accepted to participate in this Workshop. By their presentation of this letter along with an email confirming their acceptance into the Workshop, we request on students' behalf(s) that you excuse their absence(s) between Monday 9 March and Wednesday 11 March as they are participating in an educational activity.

Any questions may be directed to me at asmit@uwindsor.ca or 519 563 7401.

Should you wish to follow the ongoing work of the Cities and Climate Action forum, and/or to see the events of the Workshop unfold between 8-11 March, please follow us at @CityClimateAct on Instagram, Twitter or Facebook. If you would like to request a workshop at your school in the coming months, please feel free to be in touch.

More about the Cities & Climate Action Forum:

The Cities & Climate Action Forum is the first major externally-funded project of the Windsor Law Centre for Cities. With Windsor Law students at its core, It is an interactive platform that seeks to empower youth, other community builders, and municipal governments to work for institutional climate mitigation action at the local level.

More about the Windsor Law Centre for Cities:

The Windsor Law Centre for Cities supports collaborative research, teaching and public engagement on the most pressing legal and policy issues for municipalities and local institutions. Our focus is on the tools for building and maintaining sustainable and inclusive communities.

Yours sincerely,



Anneke Smit
Associate Professor and Director, Centre for Cities
Windsor Law