



**GOLDIE GHAMARI, MPP**  
Carleton

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February 19, 2019

**The Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister**

Ministry of Education  
Mowat Block, 22<sup>nd</sup> Flr  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON, M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Thompson,

**Re: Call for a public high school in Riverside South**

The community of Riverside South, which is located in my riding of Carleton, is a new development area in the City of Ottawa and is home to numerous young families. To date, approximately 8,000 houses have been built and are currently occupied. It is one of the fastest-growing communities in the entire City of Ottawa, and within the next 10 years it's expected to contain at least 20,000 houses.

The community of Riverside South is currently home to thousands of families, many of whom have young children. **Despite the fact that there are thousands of elementary and secondary-level students in Riverside South, Riverside South does not have a single local publicly-funded high school.**

Students in Riverside South must attend either Merivale High School or South Carleton High School, both of which are located a significant distance outside of the area.



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For example, South Carleton High School is located in Richmond, which is a 25 km drive with a commute of at least 25 minutes. Furthermore, all other high schools in the vicinity are already operating at over-capacity.

If a public high school was built in Riverside South by next year, it would already be operating at over capacity. In fact, the need for a public high school in Riverside South holds the **#2 spot of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's 2018 Capital Priorities List** (enclosed).

When I first began campaigning in the community, it came as a great shock and surprise to me that there isn't even a single local public high school in Riverside South, a community that houses over 8,000 families. During the campaign, I made a commitment to the residents of Riverside South that I would be a strong voice for them and that I would bring this matter to the government's attention.

Since the election, the residents of Riverside South have been working tirelessly to bring this matter to our government's attention. My constituency office has received hundreds of calls and emails, and I have met with dozens of parents, community leaders and local municipal politicians to discuss the need for a public high school.

All of this was organized under the leadership of Mrs. Laurie Rogers, a resident of Riverside South. Mrs. Rogers, who has three young daughters and is actively involved in the community, personally organized, mobilized and spearheaded the effort to gather thousands of signatures in support of building a public high school in Riverside South.



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On behalf of Mrs. Laurie Rogers, the Riverside South Community Association, and the residents of Riverside South, I am pleased to personally present to you this petition, which contains 2,596 signatures.

Minister, the need for a public high school in Riverside South is real, urgent, and necessary. I cannot think of any other community of over 8,000 families that does not have a local, accessible public high school.

I look forward to setting up a time where we can meet with Mrs. Rogers, the Riverside South Community Association, Councillor Carol Anne Meehan, and School Board Trustee Jennifer Jennekens and further discuss the need for building a public high school in Riverside South.

I appreciate you taking the time to look into this matter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. GHAMARI', written over a horizontal line.

**Goldie Ghamari, MPP**  
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Enclosures: (1) Letter from Mrs. Laurie Rogers;  
(2) Petition;  
(3) OCDSB 2018 Capital Priorities – Report No. 18-056  
cc: Laurie Rogers  
Bruce Lindsay, *President*, Riverside South Community Association  
Carol Anne Meehan, Councillor Ward 22, City of Ottawa  
Jennifer Jennekens, Trustee Zone 7, Ottawa Carleton District School Board