

November 22, 2016

To the Parents and Families of Strathcona Christian Academy:

The following letter is intended to make you aware of developments within our school community regarding Bill 10, which has become a part of the Province of Alberta School Act. The following is an excerpt:

16.1(1) If one or more students attending a school operated by a board request a staff member employed by the board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the school shall:

(a) Permit the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and

(b) Designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), an organization or activity includes an organization or activity that promotes equality and non-discrimination with respect to, without limitation, race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, including but not limited to organizations such as gay-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs and anti-bullying clubs.

(3) The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization, including the name "gay-straight alliance" or "queer-straight alliance", after consulting with the principal.

The SCA Society fully supports a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment for all students. The SCA Society would prefer that peer-support networks are not targeted to a specific group of students. We recognize that students who identify as LGBTQ may feel especially vulnerable and we wish to ensure that these students feel protected, are treated with dignity, and are given the same love and care as all others.

Our Secondary principal has been approached by students requesting the establishment of a gay-straight alliance club at SCA Secondary under Bill 10. The SCA Society and SPAC Elder boards have directed SCA Secondary to comply with the School Act. The secondary students will be establishing an equivalent and distinct club, currently called SAGA (Sexual and Gender Acceptance), during the 2016/17 school year. The principal will designate a staff liaison, for the newly formed club, who will be supported by the SCA Society Board, the SPAC Elder Board, and the pastoral staff of Sherwood Park Alliance Church, as necessary.

The SCA Society recognizes that our school principals are legally bound to all aspects of the School Act. We fully support our principals who are faced with difficult tasks as they lead an Alternate Christian School in these challenging times.

Our school ministry honours its place within the evangelical Christian faith as well as the greater Christian and Missionary Alliance family. Be assured that instruction and guidance within our schools will continue to privilege the

conviction that God's original intent was sexual union reserved for full expression within the context of a marriage covenant relationship between a man and a woman.

The SCA Society board is significantly concerned with Bill 10 and the manner in which it has been enacted into law. We will continue to work closely with our Elk Island Public School Trustees and Superintendent as we navigate this legislated landscape. We continue to seek God's guidance on this important matter and ask for your continued strong support for our Christian culture at both our campuses. We encourage you to present your concerns on this legislation directly to your MLA.

Strathcona Christian Academy Society Board

Sherwood Park Alliance Church Elder Board