

Nicole Ziegler

From: Heather Caltagirone
Sent: May 8, 2017 1:37 PM
To: 'jamie.mcnamara4@gmail.com'; 'andrea.holowka@cssd.ab.ca'
Cc: Wendy Boje
Subject: FW: New Wellness Education Curriculum - Key Messages & Topics

Hello Jamie and Andrea,

Non-Responsive

and thanks to you both- Andrea and Jamie- for providing the Key Messages and Topics Needing Consideration to Alberta Education. I have shared these materials with the curriculum development staff.

I am pleased to have been informed by my staff that Catholic School Authorities are well-represented in the Curriculum Working Groups and that there will be further opportunities for involvement throughout the development over the next few years.

As has previously been discussed, future curriculum will continue to provide the flexibility at the local level for school authorities and teachers to provide learning materials and programming in order to continue to meet the needs of their students and specific communities.

I appreciate your support of provincial curriculum development!

Heather Caltagirone, PhD

Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Learning Standards

Alberta Education

780-427-7484

Non-Responsive



Deputy Minister
7th floor Commerce Place
10155 - 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5
Canada
Telephone 780-427-3659
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MAR 01 2017

AR97248

Ms. Bonnie Annicchiarico
President
Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta

s.17(1)

Dear Ms. Annicchiarico:

Thank you for your January 17, 2017 letter on behalf of the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA), which included your conditional grant proposal for the development of Catholic human sexuality wellness curriculum.

At our August 15, 2016 meeting, you and other CCSSA representatives conveyed interest in providing input into the human sexuality component of future provincial Wellness education curriculum. I am very pleased that Catholic school authorities are represented in the Curriculum Working Groups, which got underway in October 2016. There are eight teachers from six Catholic school authorities participating in the Wellness education Curriculum Working Group.

Alberta Education will continue to engage partners, teachers, parents, students and all Albertans to seek their perspectives on topics such as human sexuality education. I will soon be calling on superintendents to nominate teachers to participate in subject area Focus Groups, beginning in spring 2017. Focus Groups will help validate draft Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) subject introductions and scope and sequences drafted by the Curriculum Working Groups. I am confident that with your help, Catholic school authority perspectives will be represented in this validation work.

Additionally, there will be opportunities this spring for Albertans to provide individual feedback on the draft subject introductions and scope and sequences in each K-12 subject area. Albertans will be able to complete an online survey; attend face-to-face engagement sessions across the province, hosted by the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia; and organize and host their own sessions to complete the survey, if they wish to do so.

As you are aware, provincial curriculum content sets the standards for what all students in Alberta are expected to know, understand and be able to do in each provincial subject and grade level. These are the provincial learning outcomes that are prescribed by the Minister of Education for all students in Alberta.

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Ms. Bonnie Annicchiarico
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Local school authorities have the flexibility to make decisions about programming and materials, including the selection of learning and teaching resources that support the outcomes outlined in the provincial curriculum. Section 60(2)(b) of the *School Act* states that “a school board may develop or acquire instructional materials for use in programs or in schools, subject to Section 39.”

This flexibility and support allows school authorities the opportunity to best address the needs of the students and communities they serve. Also, as indicated in *The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Provincial Curriculum (Programs of Study) (2016)*, future provincial curriculum will continue to provide flexibility at the local level for school authorities and teachers in how students are supported to achieve the prescribed provincial learning outcomes.

Your proposal indicates your interest in creating a distinct Catholic version of the human sexuality portion of the new Wellness education curriculum. Alberta Education does not develop or prescribe faith-based provincial curriculum or resources, nor does it provide funding to do so. As such, I am respectfully declining your request for grant funding from Alberta Education.

It is my understanding that CCSSA has experience in developing its own Catholic faith-based support resources, such as the 2006 Career and Life Management resource. No funding support was provided by Alberta Education for that resource. If I may make a suggestion, CCSSA members could consider working together across Catholic school authorities to leverage member expertise to develop faith-based resources and materials for teachers, students and parents. These materials could assist in meeting the human sexuality-related learning outcomes of future provincial Wellness education curriculum while including a Catholic worldview and supporting the tenets of the Catholic faith.

I also invite you to consider better aligning the timelines for developing resources and materials with those of future provincial curriculum development. Draft provincial K–4 curriculum in six subject areas is targeted for approval by the Minister in late 2018, followed by Grades 5 to 12 through to 2022. Implementation dates for future provincial curriculum have yet to be set. As such, current curriculum remains in effect.

If you have any questions, please contact Jocelyn Lamoureux, Director, Curriculum Standards and Implementation Co-ordination, at jocelyn.lamoureux@gov.ab.ca or 780-427-5406.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Catholic education and for your support of provincial curriculum development. I appreciate you taking the time to write.

Sincerely,



Curtis Clarke, PhD
Deputy Minister



Office of the Minister

AR95151

AUG 11 2016

Ms. Marilyn Bergstra
Board Chair
Edmonton Catholic Schools
9807 - 106 Street NW
Edmonton AB T5K 1C2

Dear Ms. Bergstra:

The Honourable Rachel Notley, Premier of Alberta, and other government members forwarded your July 6, 2016 letters regarding your board's motions that the Ministry of Education include age-appropriate sexual abuse prevention and infuse mental health and emotional well-being education into the pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) provincial curriculum. As Minister of Education, I am pleased to respond.

Alberta Education values and recognizes the important role schools play in contributing to improved positive mental health and emotional well-being in children and youth. We are committed to enhancing the health and learning outcomes of all students and supporting other government ministries, schools, families, non-profit and community organizations in working collaboratively to create and maintain a culture of wellness in school communities across Alberta.

As you know, Alberta Education is embarking on a new provincial curriculum development process. This fall, Albertans will be invited to provide feedback as part of our new curriculum development process. Our first phase of engagement will include an online survey and a series of targeted face-to-face meetings with up to 1,800 education partners across the province. Alberta Education will use this input, along with reviews of research and analysis of existing curriculum, as well as deliverables from curriculum development prototyping (in which Edmonton Catholic participated), to inform the development of new provincial curriculum.

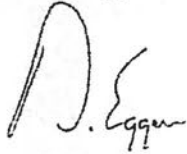
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Ms. Marilyn Bergstra
Page Two

I appreciate your suggestions and have shared your letters with ministry staff for consideration during the development of new provincial curriculum.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Eggen'.

David Eggen
Minister

cc: Honourable Rachel Notley
Premier of Alberta

Honourable Sarah Hoffman
Minister of Health

Honourable Irfan Sabir
Minister of Human Services

Records removed as Non-Responsive

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EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Growing in the **SPIRIT**

July 6, 2016

Premier Rachael Notley
Premier of the Government of Alberta
307 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

The Honourable. David Eggen
Minister of Education
228 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

The Honourable Sarah Hoffmann
Minister of Health
423 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

The Honourable Irfan Sabir
Minister of Human Services
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Dear Premier Notley, and Ministers Eggen, Hoffmann and Sabir:

At the June 21, 2016 Public Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the following motion was passed:

That the Board of Trustees sends a letter to the Premier and respective Ministers whose portfolios include services for children to request a province-wide, Pre K to Grade 12, age-appropriate sexual abuse prevention curriculum in the curriculum redesign that is currently in progress. This would include the development of teacher resources. The goal: to empower children/youth and educators to identify and report sexual abuse.

There is a huge need for a province-wide, age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention strategy and resources for students ranging from pre K to Grade 12 that would empower children and educators alike to identify and report sexual abuse.

Victims of child sexual assault will experience poor academic performance, increased high school drop-out, self-mutilation, persistent post-traumatic stress disorder, drug and alcohol abuse, a substantial increased risk for abuse in subsequent relationships, difficulty in forming meaningful and trusting relationships, cognitive deficits, depression, dissociative symptoms, and suicide. Early identification of a victim and strong supports can significantly reduce the profound human costs cited above.

Last week a petition was submitted to the Saskatchewan Government to adopt in full the principles of Erin's Law* that would see curriculum changes providing K – 12 sexual assault reporting training for every child in the province. It is important to know that that Ontario is also looking at similar legislation to empower child/youth victims of sexual assault. As an aside, Erin Merryn's goal is to have every child receive reporting education on an international basis because no child should be left to figure out how and where to go for help. Materials used in the states in the US that have implemented Erin's Law come from the Manitoba WIN Program.

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Laura Thibert
Ward 77

Joan Carr
Superintendent

Catholic Education Services
9807-106 Street
Edmonton AB T5K 1C2
T: 780 441-6002
F: 780 423-6739
www.ecsd.net

Given the Government of Alberta is currently in the midst of a rigorous curriculum redesign, this is an opportune time to design curriculum that ensures promotion of safe and caring pathways for improved outcomes and quality of life for our students who are victims of sexual assault.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Bergstra', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Marilyn Bergstra
Board Chair

Copy: The Board of Trustees
Joan Carr, Superintendent

***Erin's Law** is named after childhood sexual assault survivor, author, speaker and activist Erin Merryn, who is the founder and President of **Erin's Law**, which is registered with the State of Illinois and the IRS as a 501 (c)(4) non-profit social welfare organization.



EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Growing in the **SPIRIT**

July 6, 2016

The Honourable David Eggen
Minister of Education
228 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

The Honourable Irfan Sabir
Minister of Human Services
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Dear Ministers Eggen and Sabir:

At the June 21, 2016 Public Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the following motion was passed:

That the Board recommends to the Minister of Education and Minister of Human Services that Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Education be infused into the Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum and further, that a resolution be presented to the ASBA that the Association also adopt a policy position to the same effect.

One of greatest issues facing our population is the ongoing struggle to support mentally strong and emotionally healthy citizens. We must, with urgency, focus efforts towards prevention and the achievement of optimal emotional health. One such avenue is through education. Curriculum can serve as a mechanism to build a comprehensive understanding and a multitude of avenues to support mental health and emotional wellbeing. This can play a crucial role in relation to emotional strength and prevention, personal safety and overall quality of life.

It is well known that Alberta struggles with soaring health care costs and limited access to mental health professionals. Thus, initiatives such as expanding Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Education into Alberta Education's curriculum make would have a positive impact on our students and future generations. The current curriculum redesign is an opportune time to expand on and introduce a progressive curriculum that builds in its capacity over the course of a student's education.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Bergstra
Board Chair

Copy: The Board of Trustees
Joan Carr, Superintendent

Non-Responsive

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Superintendent

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Jo-an Galang

From: Education Minister
Sent: Friday, June 24, 2016 1:53 PM
To: Marilyn Bergstra
Subject: Reply from Education Minister (AR 94687)

Dear Ms. Bergstra:

Thank you for your June 6, 2016 email sharing your view that Alberta Education should integrate comprehensive Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12) mental health and emotional well-being components into the provincial curriculum.

Alberta Education values and recognizes the important role schools play in contributing to improved positive mental health and emotional well-being in children and youth. We are committed to enhancing the health and learning outcomes of all students and supporting other government ministries, schools, families, non-profit and community organizations in working collaboratively to create and maintain a culture of wellness in school communities across Alberta.

Alberta Education is embarking on a new curriculum development process that will set a roadmap for the future of education in Alberta. Our new approach to developing curriculum will span six years and see work done simultaneously on six subject areas. This will allow us to build better connections across subjects and include First Nations, Métis and Inuit as well as Francophone content into all curriculum. We anticipate the development of new curriculum to be completed for Kindergarten to Grade 4 in late 2018, followed by Grades 5 to 8 in late 2019 and high school curriculum in phases from 2020 to 2022. Please note this refers to development, not implementation. Dates for implementation have not been determined yet. Current curriculum remains in effect.

In fall 2016, we will begin a Gap Analysis/Needs Assessment of the current curriculum. Albertans will have an opportunity to share their thoughts on what should be included in new curriculum through an online survey. Your contribution in these efforts would be highly valued and welcomed, and I encourage you to take part in the online survey that will be available on our website (education.alberta.ca/) from September 7 to November 30, 2016.

I appreciate you taking the time to share your perspective and research on the topic of mental health and emotional well-being. As you are no doubt aware, Edmonton Catholic was one of our curriculum development prototyping partners under the leadership of Joan Carr, and we benefited greatly from the ideas that were generated.

If you have questions about the wellness-related curriculum, please contact Jeff Bath, Team Leader, Wellness Education 10-12 at jeff.bath@gov.ab.ca or by phone at 780-422-0597.

Sincerely,

David Eggen
Minister

Non-responsive

From: Bergstra, Marilyn [mailto:Marilyn.Bergstra@ecsd.net]
Sent: Monday, June 06, 2016 10:25 AM
To: Education Minister
Cc: Jeremy Nolais; [Non-responsive]
Subject: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Hello David,

Please find attached my motion to lobby government to integrate a comprehensive K-12 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing substantive component into the curriculum. The attachment also contains the link to the PSHE curriculum that is being used in the United Kingdom that I referenced in speaking with you from the floor of the ASBA SGM.

As a long-time advocate for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing, please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

[Non-responsive]

Cheers,

Marilyn Bergstra
780.964.9798

One of greatest issues facing our population is the ongoing struggle to support mentally strong and emotionally healthy citizens. We must, with urgency, focus efforts towards prevention and the achievement of optimal emotional health. One such avenue is through education. Curriculum can serve as a mechanism to build a comprehensive understanding and a multitude of avenues to support mental health and emotional wellbeing. This can play a crucial role in relation to prevention, personal safety and overall quality of life.

Opportunities for gained proficiency by students to keep themselves or others emotionally healthy is key. Important to this understanding is the recognition that students are empowered when they fully understand what it means to need help, where and how to access support and methodologies for achieving positive outcomes. In kind, the accumulative result of knowledge, understanding and awareness lends itself to increased personal resiliency and strategies to facilitate improved mental health. Collectively, this serves not only the person but also facilitates avenues for students to support friends in need.

In keeping with all of the above premises, the optimal outcomes are achieved through a progressive curriculum that builds in its capacity over the course of a student's education. Methodical design, in an environment that promotes safe and open discussions, also serves as an effective avenue for breaking down long-held misconceptions and the many stigmas that have historically plagued efforts to advance mental health and emotional wellbeing.

"While the specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching, there should always be an emphasis on enabling pupils of any age to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others." (1)

Research suggest that puberty is a precarious time with enhanced mental health vulnerability. Being aware of strategies to offset emotional challenges increases one's ability to reduce or even circumvent the onset of a mental health crisis. It is important to also note that although a significantly higher percent of mental health issues arise in during adolescence, mental illness and challenges with emotional wellbeing can and do arise prior to age 10. Consequently, the argument to introduce curriculum in the early years is further supported. In keeping with this notion, curriculum would be developmental in its design, supporting the abilities and understanding of the students as they advance throughout the K-12 educational system.

"According to data collected by the Nuffield Foundation, in 2013, 80,000 children and young people in the UK were clinically depressed; 10% of these were under 10 years of age. They also found that 290,000 children and young people in the UK had a diagnosed anxiety disorder, and one in three of these was under 10.2." (2) Although the following data was attained via British research, one could speculate that findings across Alberta would be similar in frequency on a population basis. 8% of Canadian youth describe their mental health as poor.

It is well know that Alberta continues to struggles with soaring health care costs and limited access to mental health professionals. Thus, initiatives to prevent and improve mental

health make sense on a number of levels. Be it quality of life or financial implications, a need for healthy productive populations builds a case for preventative mental health initiatives.

Through a curricular approach, students would gain an understanding of positive behaviors and associated strategies to incorporate into their personal arsenal to support them in the development of emotional wellbeing. Critical as well, is the ability to formulate healthy thoughts, behavioral patterns and strategies to facilitate the seeking of supports for either themselves or others. This gained knowledge and understanding equips the student for improved mental health and emotional wellbeing both now and long into the future. Swift action in implementing support through curriculum is urgently required in efforts to strengthen mental health and emotional wellbeing outcomes across this province.

Motion

That the Board lobbies the government and the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) to support the addition of age appropriate mental health into the curriculum.

I have attached a supporting document for your reference that may serve as a valuable resource to gain insight and perspective on my proposal (see attachment links on this site).

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and>

Footnotes:

1. PSHE Association, March, 2015, Preparing To Teach About Mental Health And Emotional Wellbeing, <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-an>
2. PSHE Association, March, 2015, Preparing To Teach About Mental Health And Emotional Wellbeing, <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and>