



**RE: Board Correspondence - Letter of Concern**

Dear Miriam Duckworth,

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns regarding the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) topics in our school curriculum. I appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns. Your letter dated October 10, 2023, was shared at a public meeting held on October 25, 2023.

In compliance with the B.C. Human Rights Code, all schools in our district are required to have codes of conduct and anti-bullying policies that protect against discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. These measures are fundamental to creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students.

Regarding the inclusion of SOGI topics in our curriculum, I would like to clarify that learning about SOGI is not mandated, but we do provide resources to support inclusivity in age-appropriate ways. This could involve diversifying library content, displaying inclusive imagery, and using language that respects all students. These efforts are part of our broader commitment to create an educational atmosphere where every student feels valued and respected.

SOGI is not a separate curriculum but a set of resources integrated within the existing Physical and Health Education (PHE) curriculum. This integration aligns with learning standards such as exploring factors that shape personal identities. Discussions around bullying and discrimination, for example, may include topics related to LGBTQ2S+ individuals, helping students understand and respect diversity.


Our approach to these topics is always age-appropriate, aiming to foster understanding and empathy among students. We believe that teaching about diversity, including different family structures and identities, contributes to reducing bullying and discrimination, thereby creating a healthier school environment for everyone.

I understand your concern about the potential impact of these discussions on young children. Please be assured that our educators are trained to handle these topics sensitively and in ways that are suitable for the developmental stages of their students. The intent is not to cause confusion or anxiety, but rather to provide students with the knowledge and understanding to respect and appreciate the diversity of our community.

Balancing the rights and values of all families in our diverse community is indeed a challenge. We are committed to engaging in a respectful dialogue with parents and guardians to find a path that respects everyone's views while upholding our legal and ethical obligations to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment.

We value your input as we work together to support the well-being and education of all our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Keller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "G" and "K".

Greg Keller  
Board Chair

**From:** [Karen Matthews](#)  
**To:** [Karen Matthews](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Letter of Concern  
**Date:** October 10, 2023 3:58:49 PM

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**From:** Miriam Duckworth < >  
**Sent:** October 10, 2023 1:44 PM  
**To:** Charlene Mckay <[Charlene.Mckay@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:Charlene.Mckay@sd68.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Concern

**CAUTION:** External Message

Dear Ms. McKay,

On September 30 we observed Truth and Reconciliation Day when we acknowledged and expressed regret for removing First Nations children from their families and communities and placing them in Residential Schools for the express purpose of cutting them from their cultural, family and spiritual foundations. We have all seen the trauma and dysfunction that resulted in their communities that continues to the present.

My observation is that we are repeating the same mistakes. Young children are being taught views on gender and sexuality that contradict and undermine many family's values and morals. At a young age, they do not have the intellectual capacity to deal with these conflicts and so the confusion brings insecurity and alienation from the people they need most. Thus, we will have more children with anxiety, identity crises and mental illness, not less.

I understand the purpose of the SOGI curriculum is to eliminate bullying. However, we can teach care, compassion and responsibility without causing all children to question who they are. I ask that you use your power to balance the rights of parents and children to maintain the integrity of all of our many cultures. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Miriam Duckworth

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