

September 20, 2023

From The Board of Education

Dear Parents, Caregivers, Staff, and Students:

In 2016, the B.C. Human Rights Code was amended to ensure that gender identity and expression are protected under the code. All education partners, including BC School Trustees Association; BC School Superintendents Association; BC Association of School Business Officials, BC Principals', and Vice-Principals' Association; BC Teachers' Federation; CUPE BC; BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils; Federation of Independent School Associations; ARC Foundation; First Nations Education Steering Committee; First Nations Schools Association and Métis Nation BC, issued the following statement:

“We know that each child expresses themselves in their own unique way and some have been bullied and ostracized in the past. All of B.C.’s provincial education partners for K-12 schools – public and independent – are standing together in solidarity to ensure every school is a place where all students deserve to be welcomed, included, and respected in a safe learning environment, while being fully and completely themselves. No student (or adult) should be excluded or bullied because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.”

There is no room for any type of discrimination in our schools. Unfortunately, we continue to see reactions to misconceptions rather than actual information. Please take a moment to read documents to learn more about what education looks like across BC schools through:

[Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity \(SOGI\) - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/sexual-orientation-gender-identity)

If you have questions, ask. School District staff will do their best to help share what learning is intended and appropriate.

As an education system we strive to be a part of dialogue, engagement and critical conversation between students, parents, educators, and the broader community, while working to ensure our students feel safe, cared for, respected, and included.

As community education partners, we stand together in this commitment where all students can freely be themselves, and see themselves, without biased discrimination or prejudice. It is our diversity and commitment to compassion that helps us grow, makes us stronger, and paves the way for a better a tomorrow.

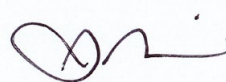
Sincerely,



Chris A. van der Mark
Superintendent of
Schools



Jessica Hill
CCTA President



Susan Sim
IUOE President, Local
959



Yvonne Davis
CCPVPA
President