

Vancouver School Board

School District No. 39 (Vancouver)

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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May 11, 2006

The Honourable Gordon Campbell
Room 156, Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

Dear Premier Campbell:

Re: **Bill M 204 - Safe Schools Act**

On behalf of the Vancouver School Board, I am offering our support for the Safe Schools Act, introduced in the Legislature by MLA Mayencourt and which received first reading on April 24th 2006.

As you may be aware, our school district has been a leader provincially and nationwide in its social responsibility, anti-racism, and anti-homophobia initiatives, and feels strongly that school communities should uphold all aspects of the BC Human Rights Code. We would be happy to lend our support in the implementation of initiatives deriving from the Safe Schools Act should it become law.

It is commendable that the Act will be consistent with the BC Human Rights Code, reflecting the diversity found in our school communities, and the complex issues that our schools are facing around identity, safety, and harassment.

Also commendable is the sentence in 2.2.(a) which states that “[n]othing in this section requires the affected student or that group or class of students or their parents to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the bullying, harassment, intimidation, and/or discrimination.” This recognizes the full scope of harassment in schools, and is consistent with the BC Court of Appeal ruling in the recent Jubran case, and the findings of the Safe Schools Task Force.

We hope that the Safe Schools Act will be carried before the end of this session of the Legislature, and we look forward to discussing all aspects of successful implementation of the legislation.

Yours truly,



Dr. Ken Denike
Chair, Vancouver School Board

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