



ALBERTA  
EDUCATION

Office of the Minister  
MLA, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater

AR85899

AUG 20 2014

Mr. Jan Buterman  
President  
Trans Equality Society of Alberta  
PO Box 2053, Station Main  
Edmonton, AB T5J 2P4

Dear Mr. Buterman:

*Jan*

The Honourable Sandra Jansen, Associate Minister of Family and Community Safety, copied me on her June 23, 2014 letter to you. As Minister of Education, I am pleased to provide a response to Trans Equality Society of Alberta's (TESA) report, *Trans\* Identification in Alberta: A brief analysis to Alberta Human Services*.

The Government of Alberta has a number of requirements in legislation that protect transgendered students across the province. The *School Act* requires that all education programs and instructional materials used in every school across Alberta – public, separate, Francophone, charter and private – reflect our province's diversity, promote understanding and respect for others and honour and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans (Section 3). Furthermore, school boards must ensure that each student is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours (Section 45).

In 2015, the Education Act is expected to come into force, replacing the *School Act*. The Education Act reaffirms the importance of diversity and respect in all educational programs and instructional materials in every school in Alberta (Section 16). In fact, it goes a step further than the *School Act* by emphasizing the importance of students, parents and school boards in contributing to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging (sections 31, 32 and 33). In addition, boards must establish, implement and maintain a policy respecting this obligation. Along with other requirements, the policy must contain one or more statements that address the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Human Rights Act* (Section 33).

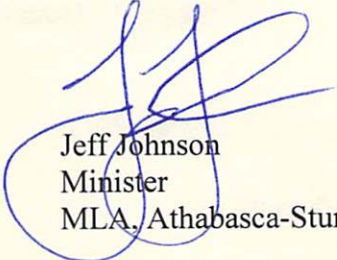
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Alberta Education has also developed resources to support transgendered students in schools, including two fact sheets, Gay-Straight Alliances in Schools and Starting a Gay-Straight Alliance in your School: A Tip Sheet for Students. You will find links to both from Alberta Education's website at [www.education.alberta.ca/admin/supportingstudent/safeschools.aspx](http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/supportingstudent/safeschools.aspx). In addition, government has developed a homophobic bullying information sheet, available at [www.bullyfreealberta.ca/homophobic\\_bullying.htm](http://www.bullyfreealberta.ca/homophobic_bullying.htm).

Thank you for taking the time to share TESA's concerns with government. I appreciate the work you do to ensure transgender students in Alberta schools enjoy a safe and respectful learning environment.

Sincerely,



Jeff Johnson  
Minister  
MLA, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater

cc: Honourable Sandra Jansen  
Associate Minister of Family and Community Safety