



January 8, 2018

Ref: 197981

Glen Hansman, President
British Columbia Teachers' Federation
Email: glen@bctf.ca

Dear Mr. Hansman:

Thank you for your letter dated November 27, 2017, to the Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education, regarding use of school property by organizations whose views may conflict with the British Columbia Human Rights Code. Minister Fleming has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Like you, Minister Fleming believes strongly that schools must be safe and welcoming spaces for all students, and he has spoken out about the recent events referenced in your letter. The joint statement he made on October 25, 2017, with you and others on this issue is very clear: there is no room for discrimination in British Columbia schools. The Ministry and all education partners are unified in our commitment to supporting inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive.

As you know, the *School Act* sets out the respective roles of the Ministry of Education and boards of education in the governance of the public education system. As the owners of school property, boards are responsible for making decisions about community use of school facilities. In considering whether or not to allow a particular group to use a school building for a specific purpose, boards of education must take into account all applicable legislation and may seek their own independent legal advice as necessary.

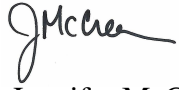
The Ministry is not in a position to direct boards of education with respect to use of their property by particular organizations. It is up to boards themselves to set local policy in this area and to make their own decisions in accordance with the law.

If you have any questions or require further information regarding the *School Act*, please contact Dave Duerksen, Executive Director, Legislation, Policy and Governance Branch, by phone at (250) 387-8037 or email at EDUC.Governance.Legislation@gov.bc.ca.

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Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J McCrea". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jennifer McCrea
A/Deputy Minister

pc: Gordon Swan, President, British Columbia School Trustees' Association