



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

July 20, 2023

The Honourable Rachna Singh
Minister of Education and Child Care
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2
ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Singh,

Subject: Action to Address Peer to Peer Sexual Misconduct

At the British Columbia School Trustees Association's 2023 annual general meeting, our members, representing all 60 boards of education in B.C., passed the following resolution:

"That BCSTA advocates for the Ministry of Education and Child Care to provide guidelines addressing how to respond to student complaints of peer-to-peer sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual assault."

I am thankful to have met with Assistant Deputy Minister Jennifer McCrea and Director of Student Wellness and Safety Christie Docking on May 31, during which we discussed several resolutions, including one on the issue of peer-to-peer sexual misconduct. At this time, a primary concern from boards of education is how to respond to peer-to-peer sexual misconduct complaints, and boards request that your ministry provide guidelines so districts can best support students facing these unfortunate circumstances.

As noted in the attached rationale, "reports of sexual assault, dating violence, and sexual harassment of youth aged 12-19 have all increased." In the absence of formal guidance on how to respond, boards are witnessing a lack of uniformity in responses across the province. While local autonomy is central to allowing boards of education to be leaders in their communities, issues of a delicate nature that affect the entire province require a consistent approach. We must ensure all students are cared for and supported across the province.

BCSTA has established a Comprehensive School Health Working Group that will begin meeting in the fall, and we ask that a representative from your ministry present to the group and provide any available materials. Ultimately, we hope this work will lead to the establishment of consistent guidelines that all districts can utilize to support students who are the victims of peer-to-peer sexual misconduct.



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I also understand that Christie Docking will be going on maternity leave starting in September, and we look forward to working with her temporary replacement during this time. Please advise us when you have an updated contact for us to work with regarding these fall meetings so that the work may proceed as expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Broady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Broady

President

British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: A202317

Enclosure: Original motion rationale

CC: Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister of Education and Child Care
Jennifer McCrea, Assistant Deputy Minister
Christie Docking, Director, Student Wellness and Safety
BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors
Rachel Garrick, BCSTA staff support for the Comprehensive School Health Working Group