

**BRIEFING NOTE
ERASE Bullying
B.C.'s Anti-Bullying and Threat Assessment Strategy for Schools**

BACKGROUND

- There are still high rates of bullying and serious risks and threats in schools around the world.
- In B.C. there have been a number of serious incidents that involved school-aged children, where warning signs were not recognized, missing an opportunity to provide intervention and supports to students, parents, teachers and administrators.
- There are some programs in place to support anti-bullying in schools (i.e. Roots of Empathy, Surrey's safe schools initiatives etc.), but we need a strategy that provides consistency across school districts, training for teachers and educators, and more resources for students and parents.
- We know that in order to reduce the number of bullying incidents in B.C. there needs to be a culture shift in our province, and the best place to model positive behaviours and culture is within our schools.
- ERASE Bullying (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) is a comprehensive 10 point strategy with key elements including:
 - A five-year, multi-level training regime for educators and community partners.
 - An anonymous, online reporting tool for students accessible through a Smartphone app.
 - Dedicated safe school coordinators in every school district.
 - Enhanced codes of conduct for schools.
 - Provincial guidelines for threat assessments.
 - New online resources for parents.
 - Formal protocols to guide and coordinate the work of school and community partners.
 - A provincial advisory committee with representatives from police, school and social agency partners.
 - Designating one provincial professional development day for teachers to anti-bullying.
 - Anti-bullying and threat assessment pre-service training for new teachers.
- A number of the elements that support ERASE Bullying, including a new public website, enhanced codes of conduct, safe school coordinators, the Smartphone reporting app for students and training will be in place for the 2012/13 school year.

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- The tools and resources developed for ERASE Bullying could be available as resources and templates for other government and private sector agencies to use, as they look to implement their own anti-bullying strategies.

KEY POINTS

- Every single child in B.C. deserves to feel respected and accepted, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion or sexual orientation.
- Bullying in our schools, on our playgrounds, online, in the workplace, or anywhere else for that matter is just not acceptable.
- Our strategy, ERASE Bullying, is about providing a safe school environment for our students, and ensuring school districts in B.C. have consistent approaches to addressing bullying.
- This is about prevention and intervention – we must support a bully free British Columbia, and ensure the proper resources and policies are in place to do this.
- This anti-bullying and threat assessment strategy will make B.C. a leader in anti-bullying measures for students, teachers and parents in our province.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What are you announcing today?

Today we are announcing the launch of a province-wide strategy – ERASE Bullying – to reduce bullying and effectively and consistently deal with negative or violent student behaviour in our schools.

It's a strategy that will focus on training, consistent standards of practice, partnerships, and proactive support for teachers, students and parents to help prevent incidents of bullying.

Today we're working towards erasing bullying and pledging to make our schools a safe environment for all students, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation or religion.

2. Why does government need to create an anti-bullying strategy?

School districts have many different approaches to address bullying and violent incidents in their schools. The Ministry of Education through consultations with our partner groups believe a consistent strategy be implemented province-wide.

There needed to be a consistent way of dealing with bullying and violence in our schools, so the Ministry of Education worked with their stakeholders,

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partners and school districts to develop a strategy that could be applied across the province.

This is about student safety and well-being – an issue that our government takes very seriously. It was time for us to create a strategy for B.C. schools so that we could be confident that every student, no matter where they are in BC, has access to the service and supports they need.

3. How is this strategy going to help reduce bullying and violence in B.C.?

We know that in order to reduce incidents of bullying, there needs to be a culture shift in our province – and the best place to start to model positive behaviours and culture is within our schools.

One of the key pieces to this strategy is training of teachers, educators and parents to see the warning signs. To see the signs a child often displays, that can be a cry for help. If we can give kids at risk of becoming bullies – or victims – the support they need, early enough, maybe we can help prevent a new case.

We know that what students learn in school will be carried through to their adult lives – meaning that incidents of adult bullying could be reduced in the future, if we start teaching our children kindness and respectful behaviour while they are in school.

One of the key elements of this strategy is a focus on partnerships – in the schools, communities and school districts – and consistency across the province, in how schools address bullying and violent or threatening behaviour.

The subject of bullying and youth violence is not something we can tackle alone. It involves a community approach. And it involves an approach that is not only reactive, but proactive, so we can intervene early.

4. What are the key components of the strategy?

The 10-point ERASE Bullying strategy:

1. **A five-year, multi-level training regime**, which will commence in October 2012, and will continue regularly to ensure new staff are trained and supported. By the end of the five years, it's estimated that 15,000 educators and staff will be trained.
2. **An anonymous online reporting tool for students**, which will be available from mobile devices (via Smartphone app).

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3. **Each district will designate a safe schools coordinator**, who would monitor the web reporting site, have direct communication with the Ministry of Education, and coordinate multi-level threat assessment training for their district.
4. **Enhanced codes of conduct** for schools that will include a duty to report and respond in each district, and strengthened language consistent with the *Human Rights Act*. New language will reflect that boards of education must reference the B.C. Human Rights Code – *the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of an individual's or a group's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation*.
5. **Provincial guidelines** for safe schools and a template for district level protocols.
6. **Enhanced website** run by the ministry, which includes multimedia resources aimed at parents (www.erasebullying.ca – to launch in Sept. 2012).
7. **Each district will develop a protocol with community partners**, including MCFD, police, and mental health workers.
8. **Creation of a provincial advisory committee**, with representatives from police, school and government partners.
9. **Designate one of the six provincial professional development days** to focus on anti-bullying, starting in the 2012/13 school year.
10. **Ensure anti-bullying and threat risk assessment training is part of pre-service training** through universities for new teachers.

5. Why are you not putting forward any anti-bullying legislation?

We have solid policies in place in our school districts. What we need to focus on is putting those policies into action province-wide.

We are supporting teachers and educators to have the tools to recognize changes in behaviour to be able to intervene earlier or prevent incidents altogether.

The ERASE Bullying strategy is about putting policy into action. It builds on legislation and measures already in place to support safer school environments. This includes the Constitution Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights, the Multiculturalism Act, the British Columbia Human Rights Code, the Official Languages Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the School Act.

6. Why are you not implementing anything specific to gay, lesbian, transgendered and bisexual students?

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We believe all students should feel safe and not be singled out. We have solid examples of school districts that have active student-led Gay-Straight Alliance groups, and we encourage all school districts to follow these leads.

- **Vancouver** - All secondary schools have student clubs, (often called Gay-Straight Alliances - GSA's) through which students take positive action for creating inclusive environments and supporting each other. Secondary schools host plays, films, and assemblies to promote awareness and acceptance. VSB has a part time anti-homophobia and diversity consultant who organizes "lunch and learn" sessions on homophobia and gender identity for many of the 74 elementary schools in the district, and coordinates the purchasing of diversity resources for schools.
 - **Prince George** – has a gay-straight alliance that meets each Wednesday at Prince George secondary school. The group is teacher led by an openly gay teacher and a second supportive teacher at the school. All secondary schools in the Prince George area advertise the Gay-Straight Alliance both with posters and also electronically (where available) on hallway monitors. The group purpose is to provide support and information to those students who are gay, lesbian, transgender, questioning.
 - **Sooke** – SD 62 has two active teacher-sponsored Gay-Straight Alliance clubs at Belmont Secondary and Edward Milne Community School. The Board of Education recently passed Gender Diversity Policy and Regulations ensuring that "Anti-Homophobia" harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated in the District. As a method of ensuring the implementation of this policy, the Board has initiated an advisory committee to aid in the implementation of this policy. The committee is comprised of students, parents, CUPE, teacher, principals and is chaired by the superintendent. A plan for education and implementation is expected before the end of the school year.
 - **Victoria** – has had a comprehensive policy in place since 2002. All secondary schools have Gay Straight Alliances. District level anti-discrimination committee meets regularly.
7. **Wouldn't teachers be able to provide more support and resources to students if you paid them more?**

ERASE Bullying is not about job action, this is about ensuring that students, teachers, educators and parents – all over B.C. – have consistent tools and resources to effectively address bullying and incidents of student violence or threats.

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We all have a role to play in shifting culture in our schools, and teachers do play an essential role. By the end of the five-year training plan, we will have trained 15,000 teachers and educators.

Also, in BC's Education Plan, we have focused on actions like increasing mentoring opportunities for teachers and more training to make sure they stay on-top of their field.

In fact, we've just committed \$195 million for the Learning Improvement Fund which support additional teaching and support staff, provide additional teaching time, and support professional development and training to help teachers meet complex needs in their classroom.

8. How are schools mandated to deal with bullying right now?

In 2007, the Province introduced legislation to require all B.C. schools have codes of conduct for their students that meet Ministry standards. The standards require these codes to address bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.

B.C. schools monitor and assess their environments to track issues and improvements in safe-school issues, including bullying, harassment and intimidation.

We believe there needs to be a consistent protocol or standard across the province to deal with bullying, and high-risk student threats. The ERASE Bullying strategy will help ensure district across the province can deal with incidents effectively at the local level.

9. What programs are currently in schools today?

There are a few province-wide programs that exist out there, to support students. One is the **Roots of Empathy** program, which is an anti-bullying program for elementary school students. It actively promotes respectful, kind behaviour and addresses aggressive behaviours. This program was expanded into 360 kindergarten classrooms in B.C. in 2011.

Another is **Seeds of Empathy**, which is brought into early childhood settings to foster social and emotional competence and early literacy skills in pre-school aged children. This program is also expanding this year, making its way into 22 more preschools and child-care settings this school year.

Another program used in many elementary schools is **WITS**. The WITS Programs (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help) bring together schools, families and

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communities to help elementary school children deal with bullying and peer victimization. WITS has two components: the WITS Primary Program (Kindergarten - Grade 3) and the WITS LEADS Program (Grades 4 - 6).

We also have innovative school districts like Surrey that have excellent programs in place to support youth, like:

- **Protecting Surrey Schools Together** – a website in partnership with the Surrey RCMP, to encourage students to discuss school safety issues anonymously. It also includes a "Report It" tip box for students to confidentially report incidents like bullying, drugs, vandalism, etc.
- **Bridges** – a project that focuses on reducing anxiety while student's transition from elementary to secondary school, via peer mentoring.
- **Wraparound Surrey** – a support project for youth at risk of gang activity, and includes partnerships with police officers, the community, students and staff.

10. How does the ERASE Bullying strategy build on the programs for elementary and pre-school children?

- These programs are part of the overall approach to addressing bullying in British Columbia and complement the new 10-point ERASE Bullying strategy by focusing on reducing bullying behaviour among our youngest students.
- These programs for younger children teach respectful, kind behaviours that have been shown to reduce aggressive behaviours and promote a culture of respect and empathy – thereby reducing the potential for bullying as they grow older.

11. So are you saying that the school's Codes of Conduct are not working, and that's why we need a new strategy?

Absolutely not – the codes were designed to begin bringing awareness and consistency to school and district approaches. This is about building on that work, strengthening it, and moving forward.

This strategy is about prevention, intervention and consistency across all 60 school districts in B.C. so that our students, regardless of where they learn, can access programs and support services they need.

12. How will you know if the strategy is working or not?

We need to strengthen relationships and create school environments that are accepting and safe for everyone. It is important we support our teachers through education so they know the signs of bullying or threats and know how to intervene; and teaching students how to get help, if needed.

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An obvious sign of success will be students feeling safer, and teachers to having the skills and knowledge to recognize when to intervene.

But there are other signs of improvement to consider as well, like:

- a larger number of students receiving the support services they may require (i.e. gang prevention programs, drug counselling, etc.);
- through the reporting tool, schools will have greater access to information directly from students and will have greater awareness of incidents that previously may not have come to their attention; and
- the school working with community partners to ensure the appropriate supports are in place for students.

13. How much is this strategy going to cost?

This is about a culture shift, and moving to action to erase bullying in our schools. The initial training – over five years – is in the \$2 million range. Other elements of the strategy are still being procured.

14. Who are the key partners in this strategy?

School districts, teachers, RCMP and police members, and colleagues in support services like mental health workers, child and youth workers, etc. will all play a key role in helping ERASE Bullying be effective.

Of course, parents and students are also a key partner to ensuring this strategy is a success. We all have a role to play in erasing bullying, and it's through strong and effective partnerships within our schools and communities that we can achieve this.

15. Why are you investing in an anti-bullying strategy, instead of putting more money into mental health or resources for troubled youth that arguably could be more effective?

There is no doubt that you could invest money into any of these areas, but unless there is a real cohesive plan in place for how a school addresses the issue of bullying, we can't expect to see an effective result.

Having an overarching strategy to guide other investments and programs will be a good starting point. It just brings all of the players together, so we can tackle this issue as a team and, hopefully, be more effective in doing so.

16. Were students with a history of bullying or violent behaviour not tracked before? Why not?

Unfortunately, many students who had a history of violent behaviour or bullying weren't tracked as they moved to another school district, because there wasn't a solid database in place and schools didn't have a duty to report incidents.

Now, schools will have a duty to report and track incidents, so a child doesn't fall through the cracks when he or she moves to another district.

It's not just about preventing or resolving incidents – the strategy is also about intervention and supporting students *before* an incident occurs.

17. How prevalent is bullying in schools?

Bullying has been around since I (Premier/Minister) was in school, but the stakes are higher today with social media, access to weapons, violence on TV, and the more we know about mental health issues.

Educators do a good job now, but we believe with more support we can all do better.

18. What grades and ages are the most vulnerable?

There isn't one set age or grade where students are most vulnerable to bullying. The type of bullying may change as a child gets older – it may start out as pushing, shoving or name-calling on the playground in their elementary years, and could escalate to physical harm or threats with a weapon when they are in high school.

We do know that it's most effective for children to learn respect and acceptance at a young age, which is why a key element of this strategy is to ensure children, teachers and parents, are supported right from elementary school.

19. What kind of behaviour is considered bullying?

Teasing and taunting of a child that is hurtful or harmful; violent action such as kicking, punching, spitting, pinching, shoving; verbal attacks or threats that again are harmful; and of course more violent actions like threats with a weapon – which is criminal, not just a case of bullying.

20. What role do parents play in reducing bullying?

Parents certainly have a critical role in ending bullying and youth violence

There is no doubt that a youngsters parents can help shape their child's views and behaviours as they grow – and that means teaching your child to be accepting of others and their differences, being kind to your classmates, teaching them right from wrong...and much more.

Behaviour is learned. It's important that parents set a good example for their children. They see and hear more than we give them credit for, and often imitate these behaviours in school

Kids these days are learning a lot from their peers and from the wide variety of uncensored, explicit and sometimes violent material that is out there today – through videogames, the Internet, TV, music, social media, etc.

A parent's job is a lot harder today than it was 20 years ago, with all of this added outside influence, so part of our job is to make sure that parents have the tools and resources they need so they can work with us to erase bullying in this province.

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COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

BC's Anti-Bullying / Threat Assessment Strategy for Schools: ERASE Bullying Ministry of Education

Subject

Ministry of Education's anti-bullying and threat assessment strategy

Background / Context / Environmental Scan*

There are still high rates of bullying and serious risks and threats in schools around the world. In B.C. there have been a number of serious incidents that involve school aged children, where warning signs were not recognized, missing an opportunity to provide intervention and supports to students, parents, teachers and administrators. While there are some programs in place to support anti-bullying (i.e. Roots of Empathy), there is currently a lack of consistent protocols, policies and practices for how schools address incidents of bullying, and this strategy aims to ensure every school in every district has a consistent approach.

The Ministry of Education recognizes that in order to reduce the number of bullying incidents (including cyber bullying) there needs to be a culture shift in our province. The best place to start to model positive behaviours and culture is within our schools, with the knowledge that what students learn in school will be carried through to their adult lives – meaning that incidents of adult bullying (i.e. workplace bullying) could be reduced in the future, if we start teaching our children tolerance and respectful behaviour while they are in school.

We know students must feel safe in order to learn. There is no "one size fits all" model. The goal is to foster good relationships, recognize behaviours, intervene, and support where necessary. There needs to be a mechanism in place for students to report incidents confidently; we need to ensure staff are trained and understand positive school cultures, so they can respond to incidents as they arise.

As identified in B.C.'s 2011 Speech from the Throne, this initiative will begin to change school cultures and expand existing anti-bullying policies in schools to include a comprehensive training regime, on-line reporting tools and advanced Threat Assessment tools and protocols. These tools and learned best practices could be available as resources and templates for other government and private sector agencies to use, as they look to implement their own anti-bullying strategies (i.e. workplace bullying).

The Ministry of Education's model is taken from best practices based on research, evaluation and lessons learned mainly from Finland, Quebec and Ontario. The goal is to foster good relationships, recognize behaviours, intervene and support where necessary.

Ministry of Education's Proposed Strategy

The proposed prevention and intervention strategy includes training, online reporting, enhanced codes of conduct for school districts, provincial guidelines for community protocols and designated staff in districts. The 10-point strategy's title is **ERASE Bullying** (Expect Respect and a Safe Education).

The 10-point strategy includes:

1. **A five-year, multi-level training regime** to reach the main populations: 80 percent of bullying incidents can be dealt with through level one anti-bullying training, while 20 percent of incidents involve high risk students and require the use of threat/risk assessment training. Training will commence in October 2012, and will continue regularly to ensure new staff are trained and supported. By the end of the five years, it's estimated that 15,000 educators and staff will be trained. Year one training includes:
 - Level 1 anti-bullying training, initially for elementary schools.
 - Level 1 threat/risk assessment training, initially for middle and secondary schools. Also available to community partners in each region.
2. **An anonymous online reporting tool for students**, which will be available from mobile devices (via Smartphone app). The Ministry of Education will create a standard incident reporting website template targeted to students that will be customized by individual schools and districts (i.e. there will be consistent standards required for the reporting website, but schools and districts can further customize the tool for their use).
3. **Each district will designate a safe schools coordinator**, who would monitor the web reporting site, have direct communication with the Ministry of Education, and coordinate multi-level threat assessment training for their district.
4. **Enhanced codes of conduct** for schools that will include a duty to report and respond in each district, and strengthened language consistent with the *Human Rights Act*. New language will reflect that boards of education must reference the B.C. Human Rights Code – *the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of an individual's or a group's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation*.
5. **Provincial guidelines** for safe schools and a template for district level protocols.
6. **Enhanced website** run by the ministry, which includes multimedia resources aimed at parents (www.erasebullying.ca).
7. **Each district will develop a protocol with community partners**, including MCFD, police, and mental health workers.
8. **Designate one of the six provincial professional development days** to focus on anti-bullying, starting in the 2012/13 school year.
9. **Creation of a provincial advisory committee**, with representatives from police, school and government partners.
10. **Ensure anti-bullying and threat risk assessment training is part of pre-service training** through universities for new teachers.

Purpose

To demonstrate that the Province of British Columbia is committed to anti-bullying, and to show that we are acting on commitments made to implement a province-wide strategy to reduce incidents of bullying in our schools – which, in addition to cyber bullying, is where a majority of our kids bully or become victims of bullying. To ensure a consistent approach to all types of bullying in the province, the tools developed for this strategy may also be applicable to provincial strategies to address workplace bullying.

Goals and Objectives

- To demonstrate that government has zero tolerance for bullying in B.C. schools and is actively implementing a comprehensive strategy to support students and educators.
- To engage students, parents and education partners in shifting cultures, in order to provide safe schools.
- To show that the ministry is committed to providing teachers and school districts with consistent and effective training and resources needed to support this strategy.

Opportunities and Strengths

- Roots of Empathy, a program that teaches children understanding and empathy for others in their early years, had its funding restored by Premier Clark in 2011. At the time, Premier Clark mentioned that government would be building on this program, and coming out with a comprehensive strategy to address bullying.
- Premier Clark has been a long-standing supporter of anti-bullying initiatives in the province.
- We have a strong example of a safe schools project in our province – the Surrey School District has had one in place since 2005 and is a clear example of how partnerships and programs like the strategy entails can result in safer, more positive school environments.

Potential Challenges

- Criticism that the anti-bullying and safe schools strategy does not include legislation, or a separate policy to address bullying related specifically to sexual orientation.
- Teachers strike/bargaining – how can we implement strategies like this, when our teachers are in the middle of job action.
- Timing of announcement – ongoing job action by the teacher's union and subsequent actions taken by government (i.e. fact finders report) may pose a challenge to the timing of the announcement.
- Independent schools will not be required to participate in the training, codes of conduct, etc. but the ministry will be encouraging them to participate and will absorb the training costs.
- Perception that education is underfunded in B.C. – how are we supposed to find money to support anti-bullying training, program development, Smartphone app, website, etc?

Key Audiences

Primary: media, parents, students, teachers, school districts, general public

Secondary: partners (RCMP, other ministry's), education stakeholders (principals and vice principals, B.C. Association of School Business Officials, B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, B.C. School Superintendents' Association, B.C. School Trustees' Association, B.C. Teachers' Federation, First Nations Education Steering Committee), MLAs

General Messaging

- *Ministry of Education's anti-bullying and threat assessment strategy for schools:*
 - Every single child in British Columbia deserves to feel respected and accepted, regardless of their race, culture, gender, religion or sexual orientation.
 - Bullying in our schools, on our playgrounds, online, or anywhere else for that matter is just not acceptable.
 - This anti-bullying and threat assessment strategy will make us leaders in anti-bullying measures for students, teachers and parents in our province.
 - We need to create safe places for our children to learn, and this strategy will ensure that every child, no matter which school district they are in, will get that.
 - This is about prevention and intervention – we must support a bully free British Columbia, and ensure the proper resources and policies are in place to do this.
 - This strategy will make sure that all school districts in the province have clear, consistent protocols in place to deal with bullying and threats to student safety. We are ensuring they have the tools needed to successfully address bullying in schools.
- *Cyber bullying:*
 - Today's generation of kids are experiencing a new and very prevalent type of bullying – cyber bullying.
 - Cyber bullying is happening everywhere – over text message, instant messenger, chat rooms, and social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter.
 - Unfortunately, it can be really difficult to identify when cyber bullying is happening to our children – so we need to ensure that we are giving kids a safe way to report these incidents while giving them the support they need to overcome it.
 - This anti-bullying strategy will not only address traditional bullying incidents, but will also include incidents of cyber bullying.
- *Workplace bullying:*
 - Our government agrees that “bullying” or harassment in the workplace is unacceptable – whether physical or psychological. Measures are in place to protect the safety of all workers.
 - By teaching children the meaning of respect, tolerance and acceptance while they are in school, we will be raising a new generation of workers who will bring these skills into their workplace.

- The training, resources and lessons learned for B.C.'s anti-bullying strategy for schools will be a key resource to share, as government and the private sector look at implementing their own programs to address workplace bullying.
- In B.C. a workplace bullying claim is addressed through a combination of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* administered by WorkSafeBC, the Human Rights Tribunal and criminal sanctions.
- Under the Part 4 of the Regulation, harassment is considered a type of workplace violence and it describes a range of behaviours that are considered inappropriate conduct on the job.
- The Regulation also states clearly that B.C. employers are expected to ensure the health and safety of employees and remedy any hazardous conditions in the work environment.
- The safety of all B.C. workers continues to be a priority for the B.C. government.
 - The Province is taking further action against bullying and harassment in the workplace. Action items include:
 - WorkSafeBC has begun work on a policy on Bullying and Harassment and will include stakeholder consultation.
 - The definition of violence will be expanded and will require employers to have formal prevention plans.
 - WorkSafeBC will also develop a prevention toolkit for employers and workers.
 - Through Bill 14, workers' compensation will be expanded to include diagnosed mental disorders caused by significant work-related stressors, including bullying and harassment.

Strategic Communications Approach

This plan will include several communication elements and will take advantage of all tools available to us. This includes several event opportunities, between now and the beginning of the 2012/13 school year, to fully leverage the benefits of this strategy as it is implemented. We will announce the overall strategy in (month), and will have follow-up opportunities to announce individual pieces of the plan, as they are fully implemented in school districts.

We will use strategic media relations that will include mainstream, regional, ethnic and Aboriginal media outlets throughout the province. Media opportunities will not only be for the Minister and Premier, but will be for anti-bullying experts that the ministry has hired, who can push tips and messages that are important to parents, students and educators.

To keep the conversation with the public going and spread our anti-bullying message, we will use our existing social media tools (Twitter, BC Education & Literacy Facebook, Government of British Columbia Facebook, Flickr, etc.). This may include sending out tips, facts, examples of innovative anti-bullying programs around the world, feature stories and videos that promote respect and zero tolerance for bullying.

To successfully implement this communications strategy, we will leverage our strengths, acknowledge or address our challenges and areas for improvement, focus on our desire to be innovative and build strong partnerships with our stakeholders and community resources to support students and this strategy.

Tools used will include:

Event Opportunities

- **June xx, 2012** - Launch of ERASE Bullying strategy
- **Sept/Oct, 2012** – Launch of the implemented components of the strategy, in coordination with back to school. This would include:
 - Launch of the public website, www.erasebullying.ca (in development);
 - Implementation of the Smartphone app / online reporting tool for students;
 - First day of training for educators and staff;
 - First professional development day dedicated to teacher training.

Online Communications / Social Media:

- Web feature on the work of the Surrey school district and their Safe Schools project, as an example of strong community partnerships
- Anti-bullying tips and facts
- Posting of new/recent anti-bullying videos from the Province, students and stakeholders
- Promotion of the new anti-bullying strategy for schools, to spread the word

Earned Media:

- Proactive calls to set-up Minister Abbott and/or Premier Clark on talk shows, one-on-one interviews with media, regional conference calls, etc. to discuss the school strategy:
 - Radio and TV opportunities:
 - Global BC mornings
 - CTV BC mornings
 - CHEK News Victoria
 - CKNW – Bill Good Show
 - CKNW – Simi Sara Show
 - CBC Radio – Early Edition
 - CBC Radio – All Points West
 - CFX – Al Ferraby Show
 - CFX – Adam Stirling Show
 - CHNL – Jim Harrison Show
 - RED FM

- OMNI TV
- Print media:
 - Globe and Mail
 - Vancouver Sun
 - The Province
 - Ming Pao
 - Sing Tao

Materials Required

- Media relations plan
- Event proposals
- News release
- Media advisory
- Issues note
- Speaking materials
- Q&A's
- Key Messages
- Fact Sheet
- Videos / Audio Clips

Evaluation

- Media coverage (pull together media packages for analysis of coverage)
- Analytics for social media/web, including comments, share stats, and increase in follower numbers
- Hits to the website and feature stories (Ministry's anti-bullying website and newsroom feature)

Sign-off

Robert Pauliszyn
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Date

Last Updated: June 18, 2012

Event Proposal

Event Title: Ministry of Education's Anti-Bullying Strategy Launch
Representative (Min/MLA): Premier Christy Clark / Minister George Abbott

Date: June 4– morning (TBC)	Media Market: Province-wide
Locations: Option A: Hillcrest Community Centre 4575 Clancy Loranger Way/Vancouver Option B: Creekside Community Centre/#1 Athletes Way/Vancouver	English Media Spokesperson: Premier Clark / Minister Abbott Multicultural Media Spokesperson: Premier Clark / Minister Abbott

THE EVENT

PROACTIVE EVENT OR INVITATION

- Proactive –

EVENT

- Launch of the Ministry of Education's anti-bullying and threat/risk assessment strategy for schools – ERASE Bullying – to enhance student safety, parent resources and teacher training/support. (ERASE - (Expect Respect and a Safe Education), This will be a high-level announcement of the key elements – the training regime, online reporting tool for students, professional development day designated for anti-bullying training, and a safe schools coordinator for every district.
- *Note: key elements of the plan (website, reporting tool, beginning of training, etc) will be ready for implementation in September, for back to school.*

GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FUNDING / PARTNER FUNDING (IF APPLICABLE):

- Government of B.C. funding: total amount TBC
- Is there Federal money and participation: no

WHO'S ORGANIZING?

- GCPE

PREMIER'S ATTENDANCE REQUESTED?

- Yes

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS and THEME:

- As identified in the 2011 Speech from the Throne, this initiative will begin to change school cultures and expand existing anti-bullying policies in schools to include a province-wide comprehensive training regime, on-line reporting tools and advanced Threat Assessment tools and protocols.
- This announcement supports Premier Clark's stance on anti-bullying and her commitment to developing a comprehensive anti-bullying strategy for B.C. to ensure kids are safe and respected in their schools.

VENUE DESCRIPTION

Hillcrest Community Centre

<http://vancouver.ca/parks/cc/hillcrest/index.htm>

A new facility and busy community centre with lots of activity and people in a central location. Pool, ice rink, library, and much more. Many programs for children and young people. A legacy of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, provides a gathering place for community to enjoy recreational activities in a spectacular setting.

Creekside Community Centre - #1 Athletes Way, Vancouver.

<http://vancouver.ca/parks/cc/creekside/index.htm>

A beautiful centre very close to downtown. However, not as vibrant as Hillside as a "community facility" as there is still some nearby construction underway.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS / PARTICIPANTS

- Premier Clark (speaking)
- Minister George Abbott (speaking)
- RCMP Commissioner (speaking)
- MCFD representative (speaking)

- Theresa Campbell- Anti-Bullying Expert (speaking)
- Roundtable students from four school districts. (roundtable participation)
- Past student tells own story (speaking)

EVENT ROLL-OUT

- Introductions (2 min.)
- PCC anti-bullying roundtable with 8 students – representing districts (Langley, Delta, Surrey, Vancouver) (30 min) Share perspectives and best practices in their respective districts.
- PCC announcement of government's ERASE – anti-bullying strategy (5-8 min)
- MGA (speaking) 3 min.
- Theresa Campbell - (Safer Schools Together –and Manger of Safe Schools – Surrey School District. How B.C.'s program is leading edge and will be best in the country (3 min.)
- RCMP/VPD representative - strengthening relationships – WRAP -importance of early interventions (3 min.)
- MCFD (TBD) – the need for collaborative relationships between organizations in all aspects of a child's life (3 min)
- Past student – benefit of intervention in his/her own life (3 min.)

Other stakeholders present: (TBC)

- Principals, supers, trustees, parents, students.
- Representatives from WRAP – Gang Prevention Program & kids from the program - different age levels.
- PARENTS (BCCPAC) - Anne Whitiker
- FNESC - Tyrone McNeil or Deborah Jefferies
- PRINCIPALS (BCPVPA) - Jameel Aziz
- Superintendents (BCSSA) - Steve Cardwell
- Trustees (BCSTA) - Mike McEvoy or Melissa Hyndes or Jane Killet
- RCMP - Asst Deputy Commissioner Wayne Rideout, Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens
- VPD - On Track - Rothwell (odd squad)

LIST OF VALIDATORS FOR POST-EVENT ROLLOUT

- Kevin Cameron (Executive Director for Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Truama response) "How BC's anti-bullying strategy is the best in the nation."
- RCMP/VPD
- WRAP - Gang Prevention Program - kids from the wrap program - different age levels
- Principals, supers, trustees, parents, gang prevention officials, students
- Students (who can speak to their experience being a victim of school bullying)
- Anti-bullying expert (Theresa Campbell)

CAUCUS PARTICIPATION

- Local MLA's may participate in the event

MEDIA INVITED?

- Yes

AUDIENCE SIZE AND DESCRIPTION / TARGET AUDIENCES

- Target audience: parents, students, general public, teachers, educators across B.C.

PREPOSITIONING:

- We are acting on our commitment to create a comprehensive anti-bullying strategy that keeps our students safe, provides resources for parents, and training for teachers.
- We want all of our students to feel safe and secure at school, no matter what gender, race, culture or sexual orientation they are.
- This is about ensuring our children have safe school environments to learn in.
- ERASE Bullying will ensure that teachers and school districts have consistent resources that they need to act on threats against student safety, or incidents of bullying, while working with students to prevent bullying.
- We want everyone to recognize and take action against bullying, whether at school, online, or in the workplace.

PROMOTING THE EVENT:

- Province-wide media, regional and majors
- Ethnic and Aboriginal media

VISUAL MESSAGE(S)

DESIRED PICTURE (STILL)

- Premier Clark making announcement, with Minister Abbott, RCMP (in uniform), anti-bullying experts, school district officials and students, others – ERASE graphics in BG.
- Premier Clark with anti-bullying roundtable students – ERASE graphics

DESIRED PICTURE (VIDEO)

- Premier Clark with anti-bullying roundtable students – ERASE graphics in BG
- Premier Clark making announcement, with Minister Abbott, RCMP (in uniform), anti-bullying experts, school district officials and students, others present various video angles of announcement. (ERASE graphics in BG)

ACTUAL SPEAKING BACKDROP

- 1.Roundtable with students - ERASE (anti-bullying program) graphics (then move to)
- 2. Podium with other speakers key stakeholders nearby – ERASE graphics.

LENGTH OF SPEECH

- 5-8 minutes (PCC)
- 3 minutes (MGA)
- 3 minutes (other key participants – RCMP, student, anti-bullying experts)

tone

- Positive, empowering – erasing bullying and standing up for safe and accepting schools

ATTIRE

- Business

WRITTEN MESSAGE(S)

NEWS RELEASE HEADLINE

- B.C. TO "ERASE" BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

DESIRED MEDIA HEADLINE

- PREMIER LAUNCHES ANTI-BULLYING PLAN FOR SCHOOLS

DESIRED SOUNDBITE / KEY NEWS RELEASE SOUNDBITE

- Every child in this province deserves to have a safe education and be free from harmful behaviour like bullying.
- We must provide our children with safe learning environments.
- We take bullying very seriously, regardless of what your gender, race, culture or sexual orientation is. We have zero tolerance for bullying.

KEY MESSAGES

- Bullying is not acceptable in B.C. schools, online, in the workplace or anywhere else.
- With ERASE Bullying, we are becoming a leader in anti-bullying measures for students in our province.
- This strategy is about providing a safe school environment for our students, and ensuring school districts in B.C. have consistent approaches to addressing bullying.
- This is about prevention and intervention – we must support a bully free British Columbia, and ensure the proper resources and policies are in place to do this.

KEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Being developed

RESEARCH NEEDS

- Other anti-bullying initiatives and policies (i.e. Ontario and Alberta) (Ministry of Education has a chart of other programs throughout Canada to see how B.C.'s compares)

ROLLOUT

COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS

- ☒ Media Advisory
- ☒ Speech
- ☒ New Release
- ☒ Backgrounder(s)

- ☐ Fact Sheet
- ☐ Biographies
- ☐ Talking Points
- ☒ Q&A
- ☐ MLA / Caucus Kit
- ☐ Props (describe)
- ☒ Post-Event Media (Twitter, Facebook)
- ☒ Web Content
- ☒ Photo Release
- ☐ Other (describe)
- ☐ For Information
- ☐ Comment

MEDIA PLAN

PLANNING

- ☐ Live Coverage (check if yes)
- ☐ Photographer booked (to distribute photos to media)
- ☐ Readout/transcript
- ☒ Validators
- ☐ Caucus roll-out

STRATEGY

- We want the new
- anti-bullying strategy to be a lead story of media outlets throughout B.C. and to have coverage of the event and strategy on major news channels throughout the day.

PROMOTING THE EVENT

Media Advisory

- MA will be distributed province-wide.
- *Option:* include province-wide media teleconference for announcement/speakers and media Q.A. session.

Contacting Media

- Province-wide majors
- Ethnic
- Aboriginal

FOLLOW-UP MEDIA (ONE-ON-ONES to be booked)

English Media Interviews

- Pre-booked and as requested.

Multicultural Media Interviews

- Pre-booked and as requested

Regional/Weekly Media Interviews

- As requested

Talk Radio Plan

- Pre-booked

Other:

Social Media Plan

- Tweet and Facebook post will go out with the announcement, and regular Tweets and Facebook posts will go out following the announcement on various social media channels, as pieces of the strategy are put into place in schools over the following few months.

Supportive stakeholder Op-Eds/letters

- To be developed

KEY MESSAGES

- Our ten-point strategy, ERASE Bullying, will help ensure every child feels safe, accepted and respected, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation.
- B.C. will be the first province to provide consistent training, policies and protocols across all 60 school districts, supported by strong community partnerships among social agencies, police, and schools.
- The strategy is backed by most comprehensive training program in Canada, aimed at 15,000 school district staff, teachers, police and community partners over a five-year period.

KEY MESSAGES

Top 3 Messages:

- Our ten-point strategy, ERASE Bullying, will help ensure every child feels safe, accepted and respected, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation.
- B.C. will be the first province to provide consistent training, policies and protocols across all 60 school districts, supported by strong community partnerships among social agencies, police, and schools.
- The strategy is backed by most comprehensive training program in Canada, aimed at 15,000 school district staff, teachers, police and community partners over a five-year period.

Other Key Messages:

- Every single child in B.C. deserves to feel respected and accepted, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion or sexual orientation.
- Bullying in our schools, on our playgrounds, online, in the workplace, or anywhere else for that matter is just not acceptable.
- Our strategy, ERASE Bullying, is about providing a safe school environment for our students, and ensuring school districts in B.C. have consistent approaches to addressing bullying.
- ERASE stands for Expect Respect and a Safe Education...it's a clear expression of what every child should experience at school – respect and safety.
- The comprehensive 10-point plan focuses on prevention and intervention – we must support a bully free British Columbia, and ensure the proper resources and policies are in place to do this.
- What's innovative about B.C.'s strategy is that it is truly province wide. Over the next five years, we'll deliver specialized training to over 15,000 educators and community partners.
- For the first time, we will have consistent policies and practices across all 60 school districts, backed by strong community partnerships to help prevent, identify and stop harmful behaviour.
- We recognize that success relies on strong working relationship between schools and key community partners such as local police, child care workers, and mental health professionals.
- This anti-bullying and threat assessment strategy will make B.C. a leader in anti-bullying measures for students, teachers and parents.

Questions & Answers
ERASE Bullying
B.C.'s Anti-Bullying and Threat Assessment Strategy for Schools
June 1, 2012

Q1: What are you announcing today?

- The launch of a province-wide strategy – ERASE Bullying – to reduce bullying and other harmful behaviors in our schools and communities.
- It is backed by the most comprehensive training program in Canada and will deliver consistent standards of practice, partnerships, and proactive support for teachers, students and parents.
- It will help to make our schools and communities safer for all children, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation or religion.

Q2: How much is this strategy going to cost, when will it be implemented?

- This is about a culture shift and ongoing, consistent action to erase bullying in our schools.
- The biggest specific cost item is training – we expect the cost to be about \$2 million over five years.
- We expect to have most of the elements in place for the start of the new school year.

Q3: Why are you not putting forward any anti-bullying legislation?

- We don't need new laws. We have the legislative authority to deal with bullying.
- In 2007, Bill 22, the Education Statutes Amendment Act made it clear that boards of education must establish codes of conduct and that the minister can set provincial standards to help prevent bullying and harassment.
- The School Act and Regulations require students to comply with codes of conduct, teachers must ensure students understand and comply with codes of conduct, and that the principal is responsible for administering and supervising the general conduct of students.
- The ERASE Bullying strategy focuses on putting policy into action. It builds on B.C.'s existing strong legislative framework.

Q4: Why are you not implementing anything specific to gay, lesbian, transgendered and bisexual students?

- We believe all students should feel safe and not be singled out, for any reason.

- The stronger codes of conduct will explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis sex or sexual orientation, among other factors such as age, race or gender.
- We have solid examples of school districts that have active student-led Gay-Straight Alliance groups, and we encourage all school districts to follow these leads.

Q5: What programs are currently in schools today?

- One is the Roots of Empathy program for elementary school students; it promotes respectful, kind behaviour and addresses aggressive behaviours.
- B.C. invests \$800,000 annually and the program was expanded into 360 kindergarten classrooms last year.
- The other is Seeds of Empathy, which is brought into early childhood settings. This program is also expanding this year, making its way into 22 more preschools and child-care settings.
- Another program used in many elementary schools is WITS (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help) which helps children deal with bullying and peer victimization.
- We also have innovative school districts like Surrey who have excellent programs in place to support youth, like:

- **Protecting Surrey Schools Together** – a website in partnership with the Surrey RCMP, to encourage students to discuss school safety issues anonymously.
- **Bridges** – a peer-support project to help reduce anxiety while student's transition from elementary to secondary school.
- **Wraparound Surrey** – a support project for youth at risk of gang activity.

Q6: How are schools mandated to deal with bullying right now?

- In 2007, the Province introduced legislation to require all B.C. schools have codes of conduct to address bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.
- B.C. schools monitor and assess their response to safe-school issues, including bullying, harassment and intimidation.
- We want to promote greater consistency in how school districts identify bullying and how they conduct threat assessments.
- This will help ensure all district can be effective in dealing with incidents at the local level.

Q7: So are you saying that the school's Codes of Conduct are not working, and that's why we need a new strategy?

- Absolutely not – the codes were designed to raise awareness and begin addressing the issue. This is about building on that work, strengthening it, and moving forward.
- There are great programs and efforts in place across school districts. But with additional tools and consistent training, we can make sure all students benefit from the programs and services available.

Q8: Why are you investing in an anti-bullying strategy, instead of putting more money into mental health or resources for troubled youth that arguably could be more effective?

- There is no doubt that you could invest money into any of these areas, but unless there is a real cohesive plan in place for how a school addresses the issue of bullying, we can't expect to see an effective result.
- Having an overarching strategy to guide other investments and programs will be a good starting point.
- Formal community protocols will help bring all the players together, so we can tackle this issue as a team and, hopefully, be more effective in doing so.

Q9: What kind of behaviour is considered bullying?

- Teasing and taunting of a child that is hurtful or harmful; violent action such as kicking, punching, spitting, pinching, shoving; verbal attacks or threats that again are harmful; and of course more violent actions like threats with a weapon – which is criminal, not just a case of bullying. It includes cyber-bullying through smartphone texting or other online activities that are deemed harmful or threatening.

Draft

Questions & Answers
ERASE Bullying
B.C.'s Anti-Bullying and Threat Assessment Strategy for Schools
May 30, 2012

Q1: What are you announcing today?

Today we are announcing the launch of a province-wide strategy – ERASE Bullying – to reduce bullying and effectively and consistently deal with negative or violent student behaviour in our schools.

It's a strategy that will focus on training, consistent standards of practice, partnerships, and proactive support for teachers, students and parents to help prevent incidents of bullying.

Today we're working towards erasing bullying and pledging to make our schools a safe environment for all students, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation or religion.

Q2: Why does government need to create an anti-bullying strategy?

School districts have many different approaches to address bullying and violent incidents in their schools. The Ministry of Education through consultations with our partner groups believes a consistent strategy should be implemented province-wide.

We need to be consistent in how we deal with bullying and violence in our schools, so the Ministry of Education worked with their stakeholders, partners and school districts to develop a strategy that could be applied across the province.

This is about student safety and well-being – an issue that our government takes very seriously. It was time for us to create a strategy for B.C. schools so that we could be confident that every student, no matter where they are in BC, has access to the service and supports they need.

Q3: How is this strategy going to help reduce bullying and violence in B.C.?

We know that in order to reduce incidents of bullying, there needs to be a culture shift in our province – and the best place to start to model positive behaviours and culture is within our schools.

One of the key pieces to this strategy is training of teachers, educators and parents to see the warning signs. To see the signs a child often displays, that can be a cry for help. If we can give kids at risk of becoming bullies – or victims – the support they need, early enough, maybe we can help prevent a new case.

We know that what students learn in school will be carried through to their adult lives – meaning that incidents of adult bullying could be reduced in the future, if we start teaching our children kindness and respectful behaviour while they are in school.

One of the key elements of this strategy is a focus on partnerships – in the schools, communities and school districts – and consistency across the province, in how schools address bullying and violent or threatening behaviour.

The subject of bullying and youth violence is not something we can tackle alone. It involves a community approach. And it involves an approach that is not only reactive, but proactive, so we can intervene early.

Q4: What are the key components of the strategy?

There are several components of ERASE Bullying:

1. **A five-year, multi-level training regime**, which will commence in October 2012, and will continue regularly to ensure new staff are trained and supported. By the end of the five years, it's estimated that 15,000 educators and staff will be trained. Year one training includes:
 - Level 1 anti-bullying training, initially for elementary schools.
 - Level 1 threat/risk assessment training, initially for middle and secondary schools. Also available to community partners in each region.
2. **A Smartphone app and online tools for students to report bullying anonymously.**
3. **Each district will designate a safe schools coordinator**, who would monitor the web reporting site, have direct communication with the Ministry of Education, and coordinate multi-level threat assessment training for their district.
4. **Stronger codes of conduct for schools** that must include a duty to report and respond in each district, and strengthened language consistent with the Human Rights Act. The codes of conduct must include make specific reference to "*the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of an individual's or a group's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation, or age.*"
5. **Provincial guidelines** for safe schools and a template for district level protocols.
6. **Enhanced website** run by the ministry, which includes multimedia resources aimed at parents (www.erasebullying.ca – to launch in Sept. 2012).
7. **Each district will develop a formal protocol with community partners**, including MCFD, police, and mental health workers.
8. **Creation of a provincial advisory committee**, with representatives from police, school and government partners.

9. **Focus one of the six provincial teacher professional development days on anti-bullying, starting in the 2012/13 school year.**
10. **Ensure anti-bullying and threat risk assessment training is part of universities' pre-service training for new teachers.**

Q5: How many people do you plan to train in year 1?

Nearly 4,500. We expect to train between 4,300 and 4,500 people a year in the first 3 years, tapering down to about 3,000 in year 4 and 500 in year 5.

Q6: Why are you not putting forward any anti-bullying legislation?

We already have a solid legislative framework in place. What we need to focus on is putting those policies into action.

The School Act and Regulations require students to comply with codes of conduct, teachers must ensure students understand and comply with codes of conduct, and that the principal is responsible for administering and supervising the general conduct of students.

In 2007, Bill 22, the Education Statutes Amendment Act made it clear that boards of education must establish codes of conduct and that the minister can set provincial standards to help prevent bullying and harassment.

Q7: Why are you not implementing anything specific to gay, lesbian, transgendered and bisexual students?

We believe all students should feel safe and not be singled out. Many school districts already have active student-led Gay-Straight Alliance groups, and we encourage all school districts to follow these leads.

- **Vancouver** - All secondary schools have student clubs, (often called Gay-Straight Alliances - GSA's) through which students take positive action for creating inclusive environments and supporting each other. Secondary schools host plays, films, and assemblies to promote awareness and acceptance. VSB has a part time anti-homophobia and diversity consultant who organizes "lunch and learn" sessions on homophobia and gender identity for many of the 74 elementary schools in the district, and coordinates the purchasing of diversity resources for schools.
- **Prince George** - has a gay-straight alliance that meets each Wednesday at Prince George secondary school. The group is teacher led by an openly gay teacher and a second supportive teacher at the school. All secondary schools in the Prince George area advertise the Gay-Straight Alliance both with posters and also electronically (where available) on hallway monitors. The group's

purpose is to provide support and information to those students who are gay, lesbian, transgender, questioning.

- **Sooke** – SD 62 has two active teacher-sponsored Gay-Straight Alliance clubs at Belmont Secondary and Edward Milne Community School. The Board of Education recently passed Gender Diversity Policy and Regulations ensuring that "Anti-Homophobia" harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated in the District. As a method of ensuring the implementation of this policy, the Board has initiated an advisory committee to aid in the implementation of this policy. The committee is comprised of students, parents, CUPE, teacher, principals and is chaired by the superintendent. A plan for education and implementation is expected before the end of the school year.
- **Victoria** – has had a comprehensive policy in place since 2002. All secondary schools have Gay Straight Alliances. District level anti-discrimination committee meets regularly.

Q8: Wouldn't teachers be able to provide more support and resources to students if you paid them more?

ERASE Bullying is not about job action, this is about ensuring that students, teachers, educators and parents – all over B.C. – have consistent tools and resources to effectively address bullying and incidents of student violence or threats.

We all have a role to play in shifting culture in our schools, and teachers do play an essential role. By the end of the five-year training plan, we will have trained 15,000 teachers and community partners.

Also, in BC's Education Plan, we have focused on actions like increasing mentoring opportunities for teachers and more training to make sure they stay on-top of their field.

In fact, we've just committed \$195 million for the Learning Improvement Fund which support additional teaching and support staff, provide additional teaching time, and support professional development and training to help teachers meet complex needs in their classroom.

Q9: What programs are currently in schools today?

There are a few province-wide programs that exist out there, to support students. One is the **Roots of Empathy** program, which is an anti-bullying program for elementary school students. It actively promotes respectful, kind behaviour and addresses aggressive behaviours. This program was expanded into 359 elementary classrooms in B.C. in 2011.

The other is **Seeds of Empathy**, which is brought into early childhood settings to foster social and emotional competence and early literacy skills in pre-school aged children. This program is also expanding this year, making its way into 22 more preschools and child-care settings this school year.

Another program used in many elementary schools is **WITS**. The WITS Programs (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help) bring together schools, families and communities to help elementary school children deal with bullying and peer victimization. WITS has two components: the WITS Primary Program (Kindergarten - Grade 3) and the WITS LEADS Program (Grades 4 - 6).

We also have innovative school districts like Surrey who have excellent programs in place to support youth, like:

- **Protecting Surrey Schools Together** – a website in partnership with the Surrey RCMP, to encourage students to discuss school safety issues anonymously. It also includes a "Report It" tip box for students to confidentially report incidents like bullying, drugs, vandalism, etc.
- **Bridges** – a project that focuses on reducing anxiety while student's transition from elementary to secondary school, via peer mentoring.
- **Wraparound Surrey** – a support project for youth at risk of gang activity, and includes partnerships with police officers, the community, students and staff.

Q10: How does the ERASE Bullying strategy build on the programs for elementary and pre-school children?

It puts into place consistent training and approaches to how we assess threats and deal with bullying. This moves beyond student awareness to ensuring more consistent action across all 60 districts on how we deal with and prevent harmful behaviours.

Q11: How are schools mandated to deal with bullying right now?

In 2007, the Province introduced legislation to require all B.C. schools have codes of conduct for their students that meet Ministry standards. The standards require these codes to address bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.

B.C. schools monitor and assess their environments to track issues and improvements in safe-school issues, including bullying, harassment and intimidation.

We've made great progress and want to move to the next level by ensuring we have consistent protocols and approaches to deal with bullying and high-risk student threats. This will help ensure all district across the province can deal with incidents effectively at the local level.

Q12: So are you saying that the school's Codes of Conduct are not working, and that's why we need a new strategy?

Absolutely not – the codes were designed to raise awareness and prompt action by school districts. This is about building on that work, strengthening it, and moving forward.

This strategy is about prevention, intervention and consistency across all school districts in B.C. so that our students, regardless of where they learn, can access programs and support services they need.

Q13: Can you walk us through what would happen when a student reports a bullying incident, as part of ERASE Bullying?

When a report is received through the online tool it will be directed to the appropriate district's safe schools coordinator for appropriate follow up and intervention. It might mean working with the principal of a particular school or involving police or mental health workers, depending on the situation.

The online reporting tool will provide a safe way for students to report incidents of bullying/cyber bullying anonymously or with their contact information if they require support/intervention. School and district teams will be provided with tools and skills to proactively and effectively intervene in bullying/cyber-bullying situations.

Q14: How will you know if the strategy is working or not?

We need to strengthen relationships and create school environments that are accepting and safe for everyone. It is important we support our teachers through education so they know the signs of bullying or threats and know how to intervene; and teaching students how to get help, if needed.

An obvious sign of success will be students feeling safer, and teachers to having the skills and knowledge to recognize when to intervene.

But there are other signs of improvement to consider as well, like:

- a larger number of students receiving the support services they may require (i.e. gang prevention programs, drug counselling; etc.);
- through the reporting tool, school will have greater access to information directly from students and will have greater awareness of incidents that previously may not have come to their attention; and
- the school working with community partners to ensure the appropriate supports are in place for students.

Q15: How much is this strategy going to cost?

This is about a culture shift, and moving to action to erase bullying in our schools. The initial training – over five years – is in the \$2 million range. Other elements of the strategy are still being procured.

Q16: Who are the key partners in this strategy?

School districts, teachers, RCMP and police members, and colleagues in support services like mental health workers, child and youth workers, etc. will all play a key role in helping ERASE Bullying be effective.

Of course, parents and students are also a key partner to ensuring this strategy is a success. We all have a role to play in erasing bullying, and it's through strong and effective partnerships within our schools and communities that we can achieve this.

Q17: Why are you investing in an anti-bullying strategy, instead of putting more money into mental health or resources for troubled youth that arguably could be more effective?

There is no doubt that you could invest money into any of these areas, but unless there is a real cohesive plan in place for how a school addresses the issue of bullying, we can't expect to see an effective result.

Having an overarching strategy to guide other investments and programs will be a good starting point. It just brings all of the players together, so we can tackle this issue as a team and, hopefully, be more effective in doing so.

Q18: Were students with a history of bullying or violent behaviour not tracked before? Why not?

Unfortunately, many students who had a history of violent behaviour or bullying weren't tracked as they moved to another school district, because there wasn't a solid database in place and schools didn't have a duty to report incidents.

Now, schools will have a duty to report and track incidents, so a child doesn't fall through the cracks when he or she moves to another district.

It's not just about preventing or resolving incidents – the strategy is also about intervention and supporting students *before* an incident occurs.

Q19: What is the current youth crime rate in B.C.?

B.C.'s youth crime rate was the third lowest in the country in 2010, and our violent youth crime rate was the lowest in the country. B.C.'s total per capital youth crime rate has been progressively decreasing – a 59% decline between 1991 and 2010.

Q20: How prevalent is bullying in schools?

Bullying has been around since schools have existed, but the stakes are higher today with social media, access to weapons, and the more we know about mental health issues.

Educators do a good job now, but we believe with more support we can all do better.

Q21: What grades and ages are the most vulnerable?

There isn't one set age or grade where students are most vulnerable to bullying. The type of bullying may change as a child gets older – it may start out as pushing, shoving or name-calling on the playground in their elementary years, and could escalate to physical harm or threats with a weapon when they are in high school.

We do know that it's most effective for children to learn respect and acceptance at a young age, which is why a key element of this strategy is to ensure children, teachers and parents, are supported right from elementary school.

Q22: What kind of behaviour is considered bullying?

Teasing and taunting of a child that is hurtful or harmful; violent action such as kicking, punching, spitting, pinching, shoving; verbal attacks or threats that again are harmful; and of course more violent actions like threats with a weapon – which is criminal, not just a case of bullying.

It includes cyber-bullying through smartphone texting or other online activities that are deemed harmful or threatening..

Q23: How does a parent know if their child is being bullied?

The following are some questions to ask that may help parents determine if their child is being bullied or may be bullying others:

- Is your child complaining of being poorly treated?
- Have you noticed signs of changed behaviour?
- Sleeplessness? Anxiety? Loss of appetite? Angry outbursts? Being sick in the morning?
- Being more aggressive towards siblings?

- Is your child unwilling/afraid to leave the house, wanting to change their route to school, or skipping school?
- Is your child talking about dropping out while remaining vague about the reasons?
- Is your child coming home with torn clothes, unexplained bruises, new clothes or other items, or money not accounted for?
- Is your child talking about responding to other students' behaviour in a way that may result in the school taking disciplinary action against your child?
- Have your child's grades dropped dramatically?

Q24: What role do parents play in reducing bullying?

Parents certainly have a critical role in ending bullying and youth violence.

There is no doubt that a youngsters parents can help shape their child's views and behaviours as they grow – and that means teaching your child to be accepting of others and their differences, being kind to your classmates, teaching them right from wrong...and much more.

Behaviour is learned. It's important that parents set a good example for their children. They see and hear more than we give them credit for, and often imitate these behaviours in school

Kids these days are learning a lot from their peers and from the wide variety of uncensored, explicit and sometimes violent material that is out there today – through videogames, the Internet, TV, music, social media, etc.

A parent's job is a lot harder today than it was 20 years ago, with all of this added outside influence, so part of our job is to make sure that parents have the tools and resources they need so they can work with us to erase bullying in this province.

Q25: On a related matter, what is the Province doing to address workplace bullying?

The Province is taking immediate action against bullying and harassment in the workplace. Action items include:

- WorkSafeBC will immediately begin work on a policy on Bullying and Harassment and will include stakeholder consultation.
- The definition of violence will be expanded and will require employers to have formal prevention plans.
- WorkSafeBC will also develop a prevention toolkit for employers and workers.

- Through Bill 14, workers' compensation will be expanded to include diagnosed mental disorders caused by significant work-related stressors, including bullying and harassment.

**Event Proposal – For PREM Consideration
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

Event Title:

Date: June 1, 2012	Media Market: Province-wide
Location: Surrey Family YMCA 14988 57 Ave, Surrey	English Media Spokesperson: Premier Clark, Minister Abbott
	Multicultural Media Spokesperson: Premier Clark, Minister Abbott

THE EVENT

PROACTIVE EVENT OR INVITATION

- Proactive

EVENT

- Launch of the Ministry of Education's anti-bullying and threat/risk assessment strategy for schools – ERASE Bullying – to enhance student safety, parent resources and teacher training/support. (ERASE - (Expect Respect and a Safe Education), This will be a high-level announcement of the 10-point strategy including – the training regime, online reporting tool for students, professional development day designated for anti-bullying training, and a safe schools coordinator for every district. Includes roundtable event with students.
- *Note: key elements of the plan (website, reporting tool, beginning of training, etc) will be ready for implementation in September, for back to school.*

GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FUNDING / PARTNER FUNDING (IF APPLICABLE):

- Government of B.C. funding

WHO'S ORGANIZING?

- Ministry & GCPE

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Highlights the importance of province-wide partnerships to promote safe and caring schools and community cultures to intervene and prevent bullying and harmful behaviours.
- Strong focus on anti-bullying at schools/stronger impact while schools are still in session.

VENUE DESCRIPTION

- The Surrey Family YMCA offers 72,000 square feet of services and programs to strengthen the lives of families, children, youth, adults and older adults.

KEY VALIDATORS / STAKEHOLDERS / PARTICIPANTS

- Premier Clark (speaking)
- Minister George Abbott (MC) (speaking)
- Surrey School Superintendent Mike Mackay (speaking)
- Students from four school districts (speaking)
- Past student tells own story (speaking)
- Kevin Cameron (Executive Director for Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Truama response) quoted in news release
- Other validators invited to attend:: (TBC)
- Theresa Campbell- Anti-Bullying Expert
- Principals, supers, trustees, parents, students.
- Representatives from WRAP – Gang Prevention Program & kids from the program - different age levels.
- PARENTS (BCCPAC) - Anne Whitiker
- FNESE - Tyrone McNeil or Deborah Jefferies
- PRINCIPALS (BCPVPA) - Jameel Aziz
- Superintendents (BCSSA) - Steve Cardwell
- Trustees (BCSTA) - Mike McEvoy or Melissa Hyndes or Jane Killet
- RCMP - Asst Deputy Commissioner Wayne Rideout, Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens
- VPD - On Track - Rothwell (odd squad)

LIST OF VALIDATORS FOR POST-EVENT ROLLOUT

- Kevin Cameron (Executive Director for Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Truama response) "How BC's anti-bullying strategy is the best in the nation."
- Theresa Campbell - Anti-bullying expert
- RCMP/VPD
- WRAP - Gang Prevention Program - kids from the wrap program - different age levels

- Principals, supers, trustees, parents, gang prevention officials, students
- Students (who can speak to their experience being a victim of school bullying)

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Target audience: parents, students, general public, teachers, educators across B.C.

VISUAL MESSAGE(S)

DESIRED PICTURE (STILL)

- Premier Clark making announcement, with Minister Abbott, RCMP (in uniform), anti-bullying experts, school district officials and students, others – ERASE graphics in BG.
- Premier Clark with anti-bullying roundtable students – ERASE graphics

DESIRED PICTURE (VIDEO)

- Premier Clark with anti-bullying roundtable students – ERASE graphics in BG
- Premier Clark making announcement, with Minister Abbott, RCMP (in uniform), anti-bullying experts, school district officials and students, others present various video angles of announcement. (ERASE graphics in BG)

ACTUAL SPEAKING BACKDROP

- TBD

WRITTEN MESSAGE(S)

DESIRED SOUNDBITE / KEY NEWS RELEASE SOUNDBITE

- "Our goal is to put an end to bullying and to promote safe and respectful schools and communities. Bullying is not acceptable anywhere and we can all play a role in helping all British Columbians feel safe. That's what this new anti-bullying strategy is all about."
- "What's innovative about B.C.'s strategy is that it is truly province wide. Over the next five years, we'll deliver specialized training to over 15,000 educators and community partners. For the first time, we will have consistent policies and practices across all 60 school districts, backed by strong community partnerships to help prevent, identify and stop harmful behaviour."

KEY MESSAGES

- Our ten-point strategy, ERASE Bullying, will help ensure every child feels safe, accepted and respected, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation.
- B.C. will be the first province to provide consistent training, policies and protocols across all 60 school districts, supported by strong community partnerships among social agencies, police, and schools.
- The strategy is backed by most comprehensive training program in Canada, aimed at 15,000 school district staff, teachers, police and community partners over a five-year period.

MEDIA REQUEST – FAIRCHILD TV – NOV. 2

DRAFT - MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON ANTI-BULLYING

"Student safety is a top priority for this government and every child at school in B.C. deserves to feel safe and respected. Our government, with the leadership of Premier Clark, is committed to supporting the elimination of all types of bullying in our schools.

"As outlined in the Throne Speech, important anti-bullying policies in our schools will be expanded to include a comprehensive training regime, on-line reporting tools and advanced threat assessment tools and protocols.

"Our education system is expected to abide by and promote the values expressed in the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the BC Human Rights Code and the School Act, respecting the rights of all individuals.

"As well, the Ministry of Education has established provincial standards for Codes of Conduct for all BC schools. Superintendents report these codes are in place in all 60 school districts and their schools are in full compliance.

"But this goes beyond mere technical compliance. We expect boards of education to ensure that the schools in their districts are living with, and helping to breathe life into, these Codes of Conduct in order to create and maintain learning environments that are safe, caring and orderly for all students and staff."

-George Abbott, Minister of Education

Key Messages

Anti-bullying and anti-discrimination

Nov 2, 2011

- Student safety is a top priority for this Government. Every child at school deserves to feel safe and respected.
 - Make no mistake – our government with the leadership of Premier Clark - is committed to supporting the elimination of all types of bullying in our schools.
 - As outlined in the Throne Speech, important anti-bullying policies in our schools will be expanded to include a comprehensive training regime, on-line reporting tools and advanced threat assessment tools and protocols.
 - Our education system is expected to abide by and promote the values expressed in the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the BC Human Rights Code and the School Act, respecting the rights of all individuals
 - The Ministry of Education has established provincial standards for Codes of Conduct for all BC schools. Superintendents report these codes are in place in all 60 school districts and their schools are in full compliance.
 - But this goes beyond mere technical compliance. We expect boards of education to ensure that the schools in their districts are living with, and helping to breathe life into, these Codes of Conduct in order to create and maintain learning environments that are safe, caring and orderly for all students and staff.
-

Secondary Messages

- Government supports many anti-bullying initiatives, including Anti-bullying day – which is proclaimed annually to recognize efforts to end bullying in schools and communities across the province.
- Our Government is firmly committed to recognizing and honouring the diversity of all British Columbians. Diversity among people is one of the most prominent features of BC society and our schools.

From the Attorney General's Ministry: ***- points on B.C.'s Human Rights Code and discrimination:***

- It is illegal in B.C. to discriminate against or harass someone because of their sexual orientation.
- B.C.'s Human Rights Code protects all British Columbians from discrimination based on sexual orientation, regardless of whether they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual.

- **Transgendered and transvestite people are protected from discrimination under the Code -- based on their sex or gender identity.**
 - **Examples of sexual discrimination can include denying someone a service or not hiring or promoting them because of their gender.**
 - **Examples of sexual harassment include making offensive jokes or comments or displaying sexually offensive pictures.**
-

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Education

Date: Dec. 14, 2011

Date Updated: _____

Minister Responsible: Hon. George Abbott

Anti-bullying/threat assessment RFP posted by Ministry

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- There is nothing more important than keeping our kids safe. Any type of bullying is unacceptable.
- That's why under the leadership of Premier Christy Clark, our government is committed to supporting the elimination of all types of bullying in our schools.
- As committed in Government's throne speech commitment, the Ministry of Education is supporting the development of comprehensive anti-bullying training and reporting in schools.
- Training will provide more consistency in school districts with approaches to reduce bullying, school-related threats and risks. The service provider will deliver comprehensive training, on-line reporting and advanced threat assessment tools.
- It's imperative that together: parents, youth and staff are able to create and maintain a positive school environment - one that supports the Province's ultimate goal of safer, more-inclusive schools that better focus on prevention with timely and supportive interventions.

KEY FACTS REGARDING THE ISSUE:

On Dec. 15, the Ministry is expected to post a RFP (Request for Proposals) for the successful applicant to create:

- A series of anti-Bullying and Threat/Risk Assessment training sessions/courses geared toward the education system and community partners.
- Content for a website that will help parents understand how they can help prevent Bullying and School Violence and how they can support their child in the case of an actual or potential incident.

The RFP bidding process closes on January 20, 2012 at 2 p.m. The contract will be five years with two, one-year options to extend at the sole discretion of the Ministry.

The RFP builds on government's throne speech commitment to create safer schools. The goals of the project include providing information and training on how to effectively reduce bullying and school violence by using strategies for prevention and intervention. Work completed through the RFP will be consistent with training that establishes and maintains positive, safe school

environments that support the prevention and reduction of bullying behaviours. The successful contractor will provide two deliverables that will help reduce bullying, harassment and school-related threats and risks, while building more consistency across school districts:

- Resources and tools for parents, teachers and administrator to recognize and talk to students or their child about steps they can take if they are concerned about bullying.
- Training for school and district teams on how to create positive, safe school environments. In addition, specialized training on threat and risk assessment to support teachers to recognize behaviours and help them create community teams to address situations as they arise.

Benefits and outcomes of training

The RFP will support parents, youth and staff to co-create and maintain positive school environment and also build on the Province's ultimate goal to create safer, more-inclusive schools that focus on prevention with timely and supportive interventions. Training provided by the contractor will also provide more consistency across the province in school districts with approaches to bullying and school-related threats and risks.

Codes of Conduct and Human Rights Code

B.C.'s education system is expected to abide by and promote the values expressed in the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the BC Human Rights Code and the School Act, respecting the rights of all individuals. The Ministry has established provincial standards for Codes of Conduct for all B.C. schools. Superintendents report these codes are in place in all 60 school districts and their schools are in full compliance. But this goes beyond mere technical compliance. The Ministry expects boards of education to ensure that the schools in their districts are living with, and helping to breathe life into, these Codes of Conduct in order to create and maintain learning environments that are safe, caring and orderly for all students and staff.

Premier Christy Clark, Question Period, Nov. 23, 2011

I've spent a lot of years in public life in various different roles. One of the things that I have accomplished, of which I am most proud, was bringing the Pink Shirt Day anti-bullying campaign to British Columbia. I brought it here because I was inspired by two young men in Nova Scotia who stood up for another student who was accused of being gay because he wore a pink shirt to school.

That kind of behaviour cannot be tolerated in our province. It can't be tolerated in schools. It can't be tolerated in workplaces, and it shouldn't be tolerated in people's homes. That is bullying. People get bullied for all kinds of reasons, and some people get bullied because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual. It is absolutely unacceptable, and every single parent in this province who sends their child to school has a right to know that when their child goes to school, they will be safe.

We know that children cannot learn if they don't feel like they are safe. My government remains committed to making sure that we bring in anti-bullying policies and anti-bullying actions at schools all across British Columbia that will continue to make a difference. So I appreciate the member's interest in this, because it's a legitimate and urgent issue. I'd say this to him, specifically in answer to his question.

There is more to come on this. We are going to act on this. My government is going to make sure we do more to make sure that every child, as much as possible, is protected from bullying in their school. No matter what the cause or reason of that bullying, it is unacceptable.

I'd say to the member: I welcome the opportunity to work with him and anyone else who's interested in this issue. The only way we will defeat bullying is if we stand together united and say: "No matter who you are, no matter what side of the aisle you might sit on, bullying is not acceptable."

ADVICE TO MINISTER

GCPE Contact:	Matt Silver	7-6940
Program Area Contact:	Jennifer McCrea	896-3735
File Created:	Dec. 14, 2011	
File Updated:		
File Location:	N:\Issue Notes\Anti Bullying and Gang Prevention\2011	
Minister's Office	Program Area	ADM
Lindsay Coburn	J McCrea	n/a
		Comm. Dir
		SS for BL

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Education

Date: Feb. 2, 2012

Date Updated: _____

Minister Responsible: Hon. George Abbott

Anti-bullying blank info request

Van Sun Blog

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Government supports a fair and transparent process to disclose information to the public. It's why we have an open information website.
- That being said, some documents posted are drafts with decision options. They can contain confidential information, which if disclosed, could affect financial interests of the public, and the fairness of the procurement process, or partnerships with government or cabinet confidence.

If asked why the Ministry document publicly posted was blank

- The decision to post this Ministry document on the open information website was made in the Information Access Office.
- The policy is to post all general requests for information, unless it meets exemption criteria.
- The intent was to demonstrate that while there were records, the information could not be released at this time.

If asked about government's commitment to anti-bullying

- Our government – under the leadership of Premier Clark - is committed to supporting the elimination of all types of bullying in our schools.
- To support a 2011 throne speech commitment, work is currently underway to develop new anti-bullying resources and provide anti-bullying training for schools. This work will provide better support the Province's ultimate goal of safer, more-inclusive schools that better focus on prevention with timely and supportive interventions.

KEY FACTS REGARDING THE ISSUE:

On Jan 30, 2012, a Vancouver Sun blog highlighted an information request about policies on bullying or homophobia, which was posted on government's open information website.

The Information Access Office of Shared Services BC approved the posting of four blank pages with only headers, showing no information available. An official also said as this was the case, the PDF should not have been posted at all.

According to the blog post, government says some information of the request was withheld

under Sec. 13 of FOIPPA (policy advice or recommendations) and some under Sec. 17 (disclosure harmful to the financial or economic interests of a public body).

The original request is from a political party asking the Education Ministry provide:

"A copy of any and all records, briefing material or background reports prepared for the Minister including all correspondence between the Minister or the Deputy Minister and the Premier's office or any school boards regarding policies on bullying or homophobia. Time frame is May 1, 2011 to Dec. 7, 2011."

The PDF showing blanked out pages of a Ministry briefing note, is available at http://docs.openinfo.gov.bc.ca/D3446912A_Response_Package_EDU-2011-00110.PDF

Public release of Ministry documents

Some documents posted on the open information website – or released in other ways under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act - will not always be shown in its entirety as these documents can contain confidential information that attract a mandatory or discretionary exception to disclosure under the act.

BACKGROUND:

Government supports many anti-bullying initiatives, including Anti-Bullying Day – which is proclaimed annually to recognize efforts to end bullying in schools and communities across the province.

The Ministry has established provincial standards for Codes of Conduct for all BC schools. Superintendents have reported these codes are in place in all 60 school districts and their schools are in full compliance.

As outlined in the 2011 Throne Speech, important anti-bullying policies in B.C. schools will be expanded to include a comprehensive training regime, on-line reporting tools and advanced threat assessment tools and protocols.

In Dec. 2011, the Ministry posted an RFP (Request for Proposals) for the successful applicant to create:

- Resources and tools for parents, teachers and administrator to recognize and talk to students or their child about steps they can take if they are concerned about bullying.
- Training for school and district teams on how to create positive, safe school environments. In addition, specialized training on threat and risk assessment to support teachers to recognize behaviours and help them create community teams to address situations as they arise.

GCPE Contact:	Matt Silver	7-6940
Program Area Contact:	Sherri Mohoruk	604 660 2442
File Created:	Feb. 1, 2012	
File Updated:		
File Location:	N:Issue Notes/Anti Bullying/2012	

Minister's Office	Program Area	ADM	Comm. Dir
CS Feb 2	Jennifer McCrea	Sherri Mohoruk	SS and RP

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Education

Date: Feb. 15, 2012

Date Updated: _____

Minister Responsible: Hon. George Abbott

Anti-bullying legislation re: Quebec model

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- In BC, under the leadership of Premier Clark, we are committed to supporting the elimination of all types of bullying in our schools.
- The Province is proclaiming the fifth annual Anti-Bullying Day on Feb. 29. Pink Shirt Day - as it is known - aims to raise awareness about bullying and remind everyone that bullying cannot be tolerated anywhere, anytime.
- In response to our throne speech commitment (last October), work is currently underway to develop new anti-bullying resources and provide anti-bullying training for BC schools.
- This work will provide support for the Province's ultimate goal of safer, more-inclusive schools that better focus on prevention with timely and supportive interventions.

IF ASKED IF B.C. IS CONSIDERING ANTI-BULLYING LEGISLATION

- In BC we have established a system of prevention and intervention at the district and school level.
- We continue to support anti-bullying campaigns, expanded training and programs in our schools, in addition to our mandatory codes of conduct that are in place in all 60 school districts.

KEY FACTS REGARDING THE ISSUE:

On Feb. 13, 2012, Quebec announced steps to reduce bullying through a new anti-bullying law, while also spending \$1 million annually for the next three years for a media campaign and university research.

These new initiatives expand on a \$17 million provincial anti-bullying campaign launched in 2008. Quebec's Vice-Premier and Minister of Education, Sports and Leisure Line Beauchamp (pron: LEEN BOE-SHOMP) confirmed the government will continue to contribute \$6 million in annual funds to help prevent bullying in Quebec schools.

According to media reports under Bill 56 introduced in Quebec on Feb. 15 all public and private schools will have to adopt an anti-bullying, anti-violence plan. The bill also calls for schools to establish partnerships with the police and social services in their area

In addition to school action plans against bullying, each school must designate someone

responsible for the anti-bullying effort, and must produce an annual report detailing what has been done in the past year to eliminate bullying. The school principal will be obliged to lead the effort and will have to communicate with parents

The bill empowers the minister to impose financial sanctions on school boards that do not comply with the law.

There is no new money beyond a \$75,000 contribution to a partnership with media for a \$900,000 advertising campaign.

B.C.'s commitment to Anti-Bullying

Currently, B.C. is not exploring or pursuing anti-bullying legislation. All school districts in B.C. are required to have codes of conduct in place reflecting government's commitment to reduce bullying in B.C. schools. In addition, superintendents have reported to the Ministry that all schools have codes of conduct in place.

Government support of many anti-bullying initiatives:

- Anti-bullying day – will be proclaimed for a fifth year in a row on Feb. 29, 2012 to recognize and support efforts to end bullying in schools and communities across the province. Pink Shirt Day as it is known, aims to raise awareness about bullying and remind everyone that bullying is not tolerated anywhere, anytime.
- On Dec. 15, 2011, the Ministry posted an RFP in support of its Throne Speech commitment to develop and expand anti-bullying training and programs for B.C. students. The RFP will support parents, youth and staff to co-create and maintain positive school environment and also build on the Province's ultimate goal to create safer, more-inclusive schools that focus on prevention with timely and supportive interventions. Training provided by the contractor will also provide more consistency across the province in school districts with approaches to bullying and school-related threats and risks.
- In June 2011, the Province announced the expansion of a popular anti-bullying program for children into about 360 kindergarten classrooms and 22 preschools or child care settings this school year. The Roots of Empathy and Seeds of Empathy programs focus on teaching children at a young age about empathy, trust and kindness towards others.
- The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General have invested in resources to address bullying and other aspects of student safety such as Focus on Bullying and Focus on Harassment and Intimidation which are available online.

GCPE Contact:	Matt Silver	7-6940
Program Area Contact:	Sherri Mohoruk	250 514 2543
File Created:	Feb. 15, 2012	
File Updated:		
File Location:	N:Issue Notes/anti bullying/2012	

Minister's Office	Program Area	ADM	Comm. Dir
CS Feb 15		Sherri Mohoruk	SS for RP

The successful applicant was a joint proposal from a trio of experts under the umbrella of Safer Schools Together:

Theresa Campbell- Safer Schools Together:

- A recognized national and international expert on school safety. Working with the RCMP, she has developed comprehensive, multi-disciplinary tools and programs that address substance use, violence, gangs, bullying and other issues.
- Safer Schools Together has authored the Safe and Caring School Tool to measure the climate and culture of a school. Recommendations from the assessments are aimed at ensuring positive programs and proactive measures to address bullying, drugs and fighting are implemented or enhanced to ensure students, parents and staff feel safe in schools.
- As Manager of Safe Schools for the Surrey School District, she was responsible for implementing the district's unique, evidence based, highly successful prevention and intervention partnership programs.
- In 2008 she was awarded the Frederic Milton Thrasher Award for superior service in gang prevention. In spring 2011 she facilitated a round table discussion in Surrey and Ottawa with Prime Minister Stephen Harper on youth violence and gang issues. Also in 2011 she co-chaired the 16th World Congress: International Society for Criminology in Japan.

Kevin Cameron, MSc, RSW - Canadian Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response:

- In concert with the RCMP's Behavioural Sciences Unit, he developed Canada's first comprehensive, multidisciplinary threat assessment training program and currently serves on the Canadian Threat Assessment Training Board.
- He has extensive clinical experience in Canada providing high-risk assessment and intervention with children, youth and families in both the child welfare and Young Offender systems. He is a Board Certified Expert in Traumatic Stress, trains crisis response teams nationally and internationally and acts as a consultant with schools and communities impacted by trauma.
- Kevin is a Diplomate with the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress and teaches "Crisis Intervention Counselling" in the graduate program through the Canadian campus of Loma Linda University.

Leena K. Augimeri, Ph.D., Director, Centre for Children Committing Offences & Program Development at the Child Development Institute (CDI), Toronto:

- With nearly a quarter-century of experience, this scientist-practitioner developed a comprehensive crime prevention model for young children in conflict with the law. It includes police-community referral protocols, structured professional risk/need assessment tools and gender sensitive interventions --work that is being recognized and adopted worldwide.

- Dr. Augimeri is co-founder/developer of the highly successful SNAP Program – an evidence-based intervention for children under 12 in conflict with the law. And she chaired the task force that led to the development of Canada's first police-community referral protocol for children under 12 years of age in conflict with the law. She consults to numerous national and international projects pertaining to young children in conflict with the law.

DRAFT Statement for DARPAN Magazine
May 7, 2012

"We are currently developing a comprehensive, province-wide anti-bullying strategy.

"Based on best practices this strategy is also drawing from some of the excellent anti-bullying work being done around British Columbia. This includes programs such as WITS (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help), and Roots of Empathy which is available in approximately 360 elementary schools.

"We've also looked at innovative youth programs developed in Vancouver and Surrey such as Focus on Bullying and Wraparound Surrey – a support project for youth at risk of gang activity.

"Anti-bullying policies in our schools will be expanded to include a comprehensive training regime, on-line reporting tools and advanced threat assessment tools and protocols.

"We expect to be able to provide you with full details on our new, province-wide anti-bullying strategy in the weeks ahead."
