

From: [Stewart, Terry J EDUC:EX](#) on behalf of [EDUC Independent Schools Office EDUC:EX](#)
To: [Stewart, Terry J EDUC:EX](#)
Subject: Wolf Cowichan s.19
Date: Monday, January 25, 2016 8:22:00 AM

Submitted on today's date via: <http://www.wolfcowichan.com/contact.html>

Hello.

Upon review of Wolf Cowichan's website we are concerned that the program may be contravening section 19 of the *Independent School Act* (the *ISA*).

Under section 19 of the *ISA*, a person must not provide or purport to provide schooling to 10 or more persons of school age other than in a independent school for which an independent school authority holds a subsisting certificate of group classification issued under the *Act*.

It is my understanding that Wolf Cowichan started as a wilderness recreation program. Under section 19 of the *ISA* it is not an offence when a person or organization

- solely offers a program of social or cultural activities or,
- solely offers a program of recreational or athletic activities.

The *ISA* may be viewed at:

http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/legislation-policy/legislation/schoollaw/independent_school_act_contents.pdf.

On <http://www.wolfcowichan.com/> it says Wolf's 'Teen Earth' Program is a "A Montessori Wilderness Middle School Program for homeschoolers" that offers "curriculum material in six subjects (language arts, science, social studies, physical education, math and the expressive arts) through the exploration in six traditional disciplines (survival skills, tracking, the way of the scout, nature studies and nature philosophy and natural economies). " From <http://www.wolfcowichan.com/teen-earth-12-14-program.html>, I understand you offer a four day per week program with the students staying overnight for two of those days.

The Handbook for the Teen Earth program also describes the program as a school, with students, teachers and a curriculum. According to the Handbook, the program teaches an 'academic program' or curriculum includes elements of languages, social studies, math, and entrepreneurship. As describe on the website, many aspects of the program offered by Wolf Cowichan seem to closely correspond to services and curricula offered or public or independent schools.

While there are statements on the website that the Wolf Cowichan's programs are aimed at homeschoolers, this does not negate the statements that Wolf Cowichan is operating as a school.

The Ministry of Education is requesting that Wolf Cowichan provide the following information and actions:

By February 5, 2016

1. Provide the Ministry of Education with the number of school aged children are current participating in programs at Wolf Cowichan by 4:30pm, January 19, 2016
 - a. Confirm the number of school-age children registered as Homeschooler with a public or independent school
 - b. Confirm the number of school-age children are enrolled in a public or independent school distributed-learning program, including the name of the distributed-learning program.

By February 12, 2106

2. Confirm that Wolf Cowichan has advised all parents that Wolf Cowichan is not BC certified independent school and will only offer programs that are compatible with its uncertified status.
3. Make revisions your program's website and related materials and handbooks to make it clear that Wolf Cowichan is not operating as a provincially accredited school offering any portion of the K-12 provincial educational curriculum.

If you have any questions please contact Terry Stewart, Policy Analyst, Education Sector Organizational Excellence at Terry.j.Stewart@gov.bc.ca or 778-679-2883.

Brian Jonker

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