

From: Kerri.Ralph@gov.bc.ca
To: [Ralph, Kerri GCPE:EX](#)
Subject: Education Morning Media Summary - Monday, June 29, 2020
Date: June 29, 2020 6:53:56 AM

Today's News Online - Education Morning Media Summary

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Monday, June 29, 2020

Executive Summary

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Volunteer Canada declined to work for WE over wage concerns with student grant program

Globe and Mail

Monday, June 29, 2020

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By Bill Curry

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From: s.22
To: [Minister. EDUC EDUC:EX](#)
Subject: Teachers and the We controversy
Date: July 2, 2020 1:26:18 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Minister

Is it equitable amongst a group of students to have your teacher choose who is promoted to the club of volunteers, and then to be paid to pick these students? Is this money a donation to the school or to the teacher who networks with the most parents and gets their approval to sign up a child as a volunteer?

And is this payment disclosed to the parent, the child, the school, the school board, the Ministry of Education, the tax department?

My daughter was involved in We, of her own choice. As parents, both my husband and I saw it as a cult, you drink the Kool Aid or you leave. As a thinking, independent minded person, my daughter lasted four months as her thoughtful comments were not appreciated.

Are you aware that We has a history of recruiting students for international travel and charging phenomenal amounts for this volunteer experience? Are you aware that We has many, many employees whose only job is to recruit, as in pyramid sales organizations, other "We-ers" whose financial donations get you job credits and greater employment opportunities.

Why have we unthinkingly opened our schools to this cult? Their idea of being a volunteer is too closely tied to gaining personal wealth. Please inform yourself of this organization and protect our students from being participants in a personal wealth growth industry that is a volunteerism sham.

s.22

BACKGROUND:

- The Ministry of Education (EDUC) has provided annual funding to the WE Charity since 2010/11, to support programs such as WE Schools.
 - o We Schools is a year-long, experiential service-learning program that provides schools and community groups with learning resources, outreach activities, and a full calendar of service campaign initiatives including WE Day.
- In 2019/20, EDUC shifted the focus of its funding to WE Charity, granting \$200,000 to support the organization's WE Well-being program.
 - o WE Well-being aims to serve youth, educators and families, by providing people of all ages with the tools they need to foster social, emotional, physical and mental well-being, especially through the provision of training for educators in the classroom.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry supported the launch of the virtual WE Well-being program, as part of the new WE Schools @home program.
 - o As noted in a News Release from April 17, 2020, the virtual program is accessible for grades K-12, in English and French.
 - o The program is aimed at youth experiencing anxiety and social isolation, and it places emphasis on WE Well-being online learning, including social-emotional learning and resiliency.
- The Minister of Education also attended and spoke at the WE Celebrate: Class of 2020 virtual graduation event, held on May 26, 2020.

Advice

- WE Charity is currently the subject of significant social and news media attention, including:
- A CBC news article from July 7, 2020, reports that a former WE Charity employee, Amanda Maitland, has spoken out about her experience working for the organization.
- Maitland wrote and delivered a speech about her personal experiences with racism for a 2019 WE Schools anti-racism speaking tour. However, Maitland alleges that part way through the tour, a mostly white panel of staff significantly altered her speech, without her consent, removing content about her personal experiences with racial injustice.
- Maitland's allegations have been corroborated by other former WE Charity employees and have led to the circulation of an online petition calling on the organization to take specific anti-racist measures.
- In early July, WE Charity announced that it was withdrawing from a \$19.5-million contract to administer the \$900-million federal, Canada Student Service Grant program, following criticism from the charitable sector and opposition MPs.
- Critics have expressed concern regarding the sole-source nature of the contract.
- Concerns also relate to the manner in which WE Charity was administering the program, including paying teachers to recruit and mentor students.
- The federal Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner has announced that he will investigate Prime Minister Trudeau over the selection of WE Charity for this contract.
- This is a correspondence request from a parent, expressing concern over student involvement in activities and programs affiliated with the WE Charity.
- The parent compares the program to a "cult" and likens student volunteer recruitment processes to those of "pyramid sales organizations."
- The parent also questions whether it is "equitable amongst a group of students to have your teacher choose who is promoted to the club of volunteers, and then to be paid to pick these students."
- It appears that the concerns raised in this correspondence relate to various aspects of WE Charity's

activities, some of which are unrelated to EDUC's involvement with the WE Well-being and WE Schools programs.

- As this request relates to an operational issue, it would be best dealt with by Ministry staff at the Director or Executive Director level.
- While EDUC has provided funding to support the delivery of the WE Well-being program, the Ministry does not mandate school districts/schools to participate in the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommend Director or Executive Director response.

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From:
To: [Minister. EDUC EDUC:EX](#)
Subject: We Charity
Date: July 16, 2020 9:41:10 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr Fleming,

As I am sure you are aware of the controversy with the We charity., I believe it is time for our government to dissociate totally with the We Empire to protect our vulnerable children's minds especially elementary age.

I am however more concerned for people with severe mental health issues being advised by a youth volunteer with no medical degree advising anyone on mental health.

To undermine the fact that many mental health diseases have been proven to be a chemical imbalance and need the correct medication and a good mental health team to achieve success is Imperative. To have a charity WE that thinks they can train a youth in a few hours to talk to people with mental health issues very dangerous and uneducated program .

It's hard to imagine anyone thinking that mental health is so easily fixed, This type of thinking went out 20 + years ago with mental health . One would not allow lay people to treat a broken leg . This charity believes metal health can be cured with a few words, this proves that they do not have the expertise or intelligence to be anywhere near our children.

Thank you in advance for your time.

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From a CBC news article. We suggested.

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Sent from my iPad

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From:
To: [Minister. EDUC EDUC:EX](#)
Subject: Request for review and evaluation of WE Charity in our Schools
Date: July 23, 2020 12:17:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Minister Fleming,

I am contacting you today to request that you immediately suspend all WE Charity programs, pending a full review and evaluation of programs, WE Charity and its subsidiaries. A review from a Provincial level will prevent needless time and administrative costs associated with reviewing from an individual schoolboard basis.

<https://torontosun.com/news/provincial/tdsb-planning-review-and-evaluation-of-we-charity-in-schools>

<https://www.canadalandshow.com/tag/we-charity/>

I look forward to hearing from you. Time is of the essence.

Respectfully,

s.22