



Preventing school violence aim of private member's bill

A private member's bill aimed at preventing school violence has cleared its first hurdle in the Alberta legislature.



David Coutts

Bill 206, School (Students' Code of Conduct) Amendment Act, 2000, received second reading April 5. Sponsored by Livingstone-Macleod MLA David Coutts, the bill requires every school board to develop a written policy on student conduct in consultation with parents, students, teachers and principals.

The policy must address physical violence; sexual assault; vandalism; and use or possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons, narcotics, alcohol and tobacco. Students who violate the policy must have access to counseling and/or penalty options that allow them to continue their education.

Coutts acknowledged most schools in the province provide safe and caring environments for students. At the same time, he suggested, Alberta schools are not immune to violence. He pointed to several recent incidents, including the 1999 shootings at W R Myers High School in Taber.

"Although we may not be able to predict when violence breaks out or occurs, we can take and

should take preventative actions," he said. "This means that we can first promote positive behavior in our students and make it clear that we will not tolerate negative behavior like bullying, harassment or peer pressure, which sow the seeds of extreme violence. This is where a code of conduct could be an effective tool."

Edmonton-Norwood MLA Sue Olsen credited the Alberta Teachers' Association's Safe and Caring Schools project for turning one school in her community around and convincing her to keep her son there.

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Mark your calendars!

Excellent school/district Professional Development Day opportunity!

Safe and Caring Schools and Communities Conference

November 23-25, 2000

Shaw Convention Centre

Edmonton, Alberta

Group/school district rates available.

Watch your school mailing for the conference poster. Registration form enclosed.

For more information, contact Brenda Sautner at <bsautner@epsb.edmonton.ab.ca>.

Task Force on Children at Risk releases recommendations

On April 17, Children's Services Minister Iris Evans released the recommendations of the Task Force on Children at Risk. The main recommendations appear below:

1. Start with early intervention.
2. Expand parenting education and access to information.
3. Provide support to families when a crisis occurs.
4. Ensure that children and youth have access to secure and supportive foster care when they need it.
5. Make sure schools are ready when a crisis occurs.
6. Expand mental health services for children and youth.
7. Make sure children and youth get the services they need, when they need them.
8. Start early to prevent problems and improve children's chances of success at school.
9. Take steps to prevent and protect children and youth from abuse, violence, bullying and gang activities.
10. Take steps to celebrate Alberta's children, youth and families, stress the importance of positive parenting, and reduce depictions of violence in the media.
11. Encourage communities to have coordinated plans in place for addressing the needs of children and youth.
12. Address the housing needs of families and youth.
13. Remove barriers to access to services for First Nations children, families and communities, both on and off reserves.
14. Focus on education, training and increasing the supply of qualified people to work with children and youth.

15. Reduce overlap and duplication, improve coordination, and streamline access to programs.

16. Provide more stable and secure funding for community programs.

17. Assess the impact of the task force's recommendations.

18. Expand Alberta research on effective programs and approaches.

"Young people have so much potential and so much to offer," Evans said. "All of us—including families, communities and governments—must work together to ensure our children are safe, healthy and ready for whatever their futures may hold."

Premier Ralph Klein established the task force following the tragic events in Taber last year. The next step for government is to identify responsibility for following up on the recommendations, put actions plans in place, set targets and assess the financial implications of the recommendations.

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"The first time I entered that junior high school, there was a dimly lit hallway. There were no posters on the wall. There wasn't a trophy cabinet. There was nothing in the school that would say to me, gee, this is a delightful place to go," she said.

"The next year . . . we had Safe and Caring Schools. Through this program, we have seen the level of achievement go up, we have seen fewer disciplinary problems in the school and we have kids coming out for sports teams, some of which never existed in that school. . . . I credit the parents of the community for participating and getting involved and saying, 'You know, we don't want to lose our community school. We want our kids to be able to go here, and we want to feel good about it.'"

Excerpted with permission from *The ATA News* 34, no 17 (18 April 2000).

Novel Selections for *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum—ATA Resources for Integration: Grades 1 to 6*

Novels for SACS Topic 1:

- Grade 1: *Hansel & Gretel*
Bedtime for Frances
- Grade 2: *Cinderella*
The Berenstain Bears' New Baby
- Grade 3: *Bremen Town Musicians*
- Grade 4: *Ralph S. Mouse*
- Grade 5: *Jacob's Little Giant*
- Grade 6: *Log Jam*

Novels for SACS Topic 2:

- Grade 1: *The Ugly Duckling*
- Grade 2: *The Velveteen Rabbit*
- Grade 3: *The Sandwich*
- Grade 4: *The Secret Garden*
- Grade 5: *The Hiding Place*
- Grade 6: *Song to the Sea God*

Novels for SACS Topic 3:

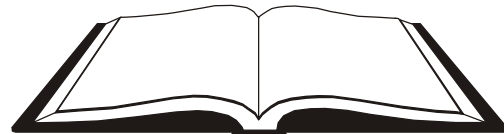
- Grade 1: *Winnie the Pooh*
- Grade 2: *The Moccasin Goalie*
The Final Game
- Grade 3: *The Sandwich*
- Grade 4: *Storm Child*
- Grade 5: *From Anna*
- Grade 6: *White Jade Tiger*

Novels for SACS Topic 4:

- Grade 1 *Berenstain Bear Stories*
- Grade 2 *Pinkly, Rex and the Bully*
Arthur's Temper Tantrum
- Grade 3 *Does Third Grade Last Forever?*
Marvin Redpost: Why Pick on Me?
- Grade 4 *Fourth Grade Is a Jinx*
Dragon's Egg
- Grade 5 *Under Emily's Sky*
100 Dresses
- Grade 6 *The Curses of Third Uncle*

Novels for SACS Topic 5:

- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3 *Good Grief, Third Grade*
- Grade 4
- Grade 5 *Shiloh*
- Grade 6 *Number the Stars*



SACS project seeks teachers to develop ECS resources

The ATA's Safe and Caring Schools project requires five ECS teachers and one program manager to assist in the development of resources to integrate safe and caring principles into the ECS curriculum.

Work is scheduled to begin in May. Release time from the classroom (so that teachers can work during school hours) and travel expenses will be covered by the project. Teachers will receive honoraria. University credit may also be arranged for teachers working on graduate programs. Preference will be given to teachers familiar with safe and caring schools programs who have an excellent understanding of curriculum and who are outstanding teachers in the classroom.

Please send your résumé and a letter of reference from an administrator who has observed you teaching to Dr Vicki Mather, ATA's SACS Project, 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5N 2R1.

Paradox of our time

This letter, originally penned by comedian George Carlin, has been attributed on the Internet to a student of Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado.

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers; wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy it less.

We have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, but less time; we have more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, but more problems; more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry too quickly, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too seldom, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values.

We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, not life to years.

We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor.

We've conquered outer space, but not inner space.

We've done larger things, but not better things.

It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stockroom; a time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

Laurels

Laurels to **William Belsey**, a teacher at Banded Peak School in Bragg Creek, for establishing <www.bullying.org>, a project of IEARN-Canada. Many of the Internet sites approved by the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools project were discovered through links set up by Mr Belsey. The Web site <www.bullying.org> was set up to provide a site for students to share experiences related

to bullying so they would not feel alone. Congratulations, Mr Belsey: you are making a huge contribution to the global anti-bullying movement.

If you have a Safe and Caring Schools and Communities laurel you would like to extend to someone, please contact the SACS office by phoning 447-9487 (in Edmonton) or 1-800-232-7208 (from elsewhere in Alberta).

Niska News is a newsletter produced by the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools (SACS) project for school and community members. The goal of the SACS project is to encourage practices that model and reinforce socially responsible and respectful behaviors so that learning and teaching can take place in a safe and caring environment. Achieving this goal requires the involvement of not just parents and teachers but also all the important adults in a young person's life. This newsletter is designed to provide timely, up-to-date information about the project. For more information, contact the SACS office by phoning 447-9487 (in Edmonton) or 1-800-232-7208 (from elsewhere in Alberta). Copying and distributing Niska News is permitted as long as the source is credited.



SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

Nov. 23, 2000 - Preconference - Westin Hotel
Nov. 24 and 25, 2000 - Conference - Shaw Conference Centre

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Pre-conference sessions:

Pre-conference sessions will be offered on Thursday, November 23, 2000 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Westin Hotel. The pre-conference fee is \$125.00 in addition to the conference registration fees (includes materials and lunch). The pre-conference sessions will provide in-depth training in the following areas:

1. *Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta* (administrators, police, trustees)
2. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum ECS - Grade 6* (elementary)
3. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum - Behavior Strategies* (secondary)
4. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum - Instructional Strategies* (secondary)
5. *Toward a Safe and Caring Community* (school councils/parents/other adults)
6. *Conflict Resolution and Mediation Training* (General)

Group rates:

Group registration rates will only be applicable if registration forms are submitted together. Teams must be from same school, district or organization. Each team member must complete a form at the time of registering. Substitutions will be permitted during the conference. No refunds will be made after November 10, 2000 for members under the group rate. One receipt will be issued to the originator of the cheque or money order.

Hotel information:

The Westin Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada is the location for the Preconference and the host hotel for the main conference which is at the Shaw Conference Centre. Delegates are responsible for their own reservations and will be accommodated on a first come, first booked basis. Please make your hotel arrangements as soon as possible by calling the Westin (780) 426-3636 and asking for the SACS conference rates.

Day care services:

Day care services will be available on-site at the Shaw Conference Centre during the conference (But not at the Preconference at the Westin Hotel). Services will be provided for \$10.00 per day. Please indicate on the registration form whether you are in need of this service and for how many children. Parents are responsible for providing their child's lunch each day.

Cancellation/refund policy:

- Refund cheques will be issued after December 1, 2000 less \$40.00 processing fee
- A \$25.00 fee will be applied on all returned cheques due to non-sufficient funds.

Registration deadline:

November 1, 2000: Receipts will be mailed on or before November 1, 2000.
November 2, 2000: \$40 late fees applied. Receipts will be available for pickup at the conference.





SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

TO RECEIVE THE GROUP RATE, REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED TOGETHER
One Registration form per person. Reproduce as Needed. Registration Form must be complete.

Name _____
 (As it should appear on the name tag: First, last)

Title: _____

School/District/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Daytime phone w/area code: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

E-mail address: _____

Do you want your e-mail address added to the SACS list server (for future announcements) yes no

Would you be interested in being a moderator for the conference? yes no

Do you require special provisions? yes - please specify _____

Do you require day care services? yes days needed _____ # of children _____

(\$10.00 per day for day care services)

Ages of child(ren) _____

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES

Please applicable fees

	Before Nov. 01/00	After Nov. 2/00
	GST included in all prices	
Pre-conference (not included in Conference fee)		
Nov 23, Thursday: (Session # _____) Indicate session attending	\$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$190.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Conference:		
Nov 23 – 25, Thursday Evening, Friday & Saturday	\$170.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$210.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
One day only: Fri _____ or Sat _____	\$110.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Group rate 6-10 delegates, per person:	\$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$190.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Group rate 11+ delegates, per person:	\$140.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$180.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Student (ID # _____)	\$ 40.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 80.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Day Care Services: \$10.00 per day X # of days: _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____		\$ _____

Please make Cheques/Money Orders Payable to: **Safe and Caring Schools Conference** (No purchase orders)

TO RECEIVE GROUP RATES, REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED TOGETHER

Complete and mail registration form(s) and payment(s) together to:
 SACS Conference, Suite 246, 11215 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta. T5K 0L5
 G.S.T. # 106694425RT

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION – NOVEMBER 10, 2000

Any questions contact Brenda Sautner: e-mail: bsautner@netcom.ca

For Office Use Only:

Date received: _____ Cheque/Money Order #: _____ Amount Received: _____

Daycare: (# of Children:): _____ Days Needed: _____

Preconference

1P 2P 3P 4P 5P 6P

Conference

Fri & Sat

One day Only

Fri or Sat

Receipt #: _____ Sent on: _____ Group Rate: Yes No

Cancellation: _____ Date Refunded: _____ Cheque # or Returned Original Cheque: _____