



NEWS RELEASE



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FEDERATION URGES PARTNERS TO EMBRACE AND CELEBRATE PRIDE MONTH

SASKATOON – The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the Saskatoon Teachers' Association are urging all education partners to celebrate June as Pride month and ensure schools are accepting of all students. According to Statistics Canada data from 2018, almost 30 percent of those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ are youth aged 15 to 24.

“Policies and directives in schools that are not inclusive, or are even discriminatory, directly impact a significant number of students and their families. This alienates them and removes their ability to feel safe and accepted for who they are,” said STF President Samantha Becotte. “Regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation all students and school staff have the right to feel safe, respected and accepted in their learning and work environments.”

Wayne Clements is past president of the STF, a long-time 2SLGBTQIA+ activist and recent Arbos award winner. He is calling for those in the education sector to be sure actions match words: “Simply saying you are open and welcoming to all students isn’t enough. For those marginalized students, actions like banning attendance at the Rainbow Tent reinforces that they are not accepted and who they are is wrong. While we have come far in the last 30 years, this makes it clear there is still much work to do.”

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The Federation's policy on Gender and Sexual Diversity, which was created and approved by teachers, demonstrates teachers' beliefs that all students, teachers and non-teaching personnel have the right to feel safe within their learning and working environments and see their realities and family situations positively reflected in curricula and learning resources.

"I hope that every student who attends this week's Nutrien Children's Festival will have the opportunity to take part in all of the activities on site and that an environment of acceptance and inclusion extends to all classrooms," said STA President John McGettigan.

In the 2023 STF Member Survey approximately 90 percent of teachers who responded felt that the acceptance of diversity in gender identity and expression among students in the school environment was important or very important in supporting positive outcomes in their schools.

"Without community support and acceptance, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth are exposed to an increased risk of mental health challenges, including a higher probability of self-harm," said Becotte. "Students spend a significant amount of time at school and have a right to an environment that accepts and supports them. As educators, we all have a duty to do all we can to provide learning environments free of discrimination."

The Federation has resources on [Queer Identity](#) available for teachers on its website. The Federation is also proud to again be sponsoring Pride festivals in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert and invites all members in those communities to join the Federation in the parades.

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