

I am a quiet working mom, enjoying my quiet life until three weeks ago. I learnt about this draft Policy 5.45. It bothers me so much that I have to express my concern before you. I agree that schools should protect all our youth from discrimination and harm but there is no need to single out certain groups by setting up “**administrative regulations**” and “**strategy**” for the sake of promotion. By implementing the “administrative regulations” and strategy, you are putting labels of “*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer (LGBTQ+)*” on the children you “**assume**” them to be. It even suggests the children to **question their “sexual orientation” and sexual identity**”, *“irrespective of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity”*

It makes me wonder what is the hidden agenda behind this policy. Why single out certain groups and certain lifestyles in the name of promoting “human rights”, supporting “diversity” and addressing to “discrimination”? Why putting all these names and labels on the school children to segregate them? Just as you put it in your draft, **all these made up new definitions are still evolving.** How many more labels do you intent to invent to put on the school children of Burnaby and let these labels spread out to other school district in British Columbia?

I learned something very disturbing happened last Wednesday. It happened during lunch hour. There was a conflict between a Pilipino cross-dressed boy and an Afro-American girl. While the two kids were arguing, the sponsor teacher of the Gay/Straight Alliance Club took side of the boy. She confronted the girl while other students were watching. What happened in the next while was really sad and truly disturbing. Succumbed to the humiliation from the teacher, the black girl quietly walked away. Adding salt to the wound, the sponsor teacher yelled across the hall, "Do you know you are woman and you are black?"

The conflict between the kids left unresolved. The girl was humiliated in front of the all students in the hall. She had to take all of it under the pressure of a school authority.

How do you feel if you were the little girl? How much time does it take for her to be healed from this pain?

By segregating the children into different groups and by putting labels on different children creates a very poisonous atmosphere in schools, not an atmosphere of safety or respect, not an atmosphere free from harassment! But just the opposite of what your policy claim to ensure! Leave these innocent children alone! Train the teachers to teach the children respect and fairness by setting a good example to the kids!

There are at least three serious problems with this draft.

First, this policy places far too much importance and emphasis on an issue that impacts a few. Protection of our youth from discrimination and harm should be a part of an overall strategy to reduce and prevent bullying. Not by singling certain groups and make other children to endorse or accept certain lifestyles against their personal beliefs.

Second, what is being recommended in this draft is a deliberate and systematic strategy to indoctrinate our children with a controversial moral teaching that should be left for families to decide on and wrestle through. Children should be able to learn and thrive in an educational environment that is free of these controversial issues pertaining to sexual preference and orientation.

Third, This policy undermines the parent/child relationship. The approach of its ideology contradicts the teaching of many families. Article 26.3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children." The Burnaby School Board must respect the right of the parents to the education of their own children and honor this Universal Declaration of Human Rights. No school board or teachers should trample over the rights of parents.

Again, I wonder what and why is the secrecy of this policy that most parents are not made aware? This policy draft has not been circulated and well understood among all Burnaby parents. We want complete transparency and democracy from the Burnaby School Board.

On behalf of more than 100 parents behind me and other thousands of new immigrant families,

1. We demand a public hearing provide with translators among all the Burnaby parents, not just PACs or DPAC.
2. Policy draft and public hearing minutes must be translated into different languages.
3. Parents need to know and ought to have input into this important issue.

Let all the Burnaby parents vote

The school board must not haste into making a decision on this policy without consultation and consent from the parents. Thank you.