

E-Alert

Thursday, April 4, 2002

BREAKING EDUCATION NEWS FOR BC SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Issue**BC Treaty Referendum****Distribute to****Board Chairs, BCSTA Provincial Councillors, Superintendents****BCSTA contact****Jean Ciriani, Communications Director**

The provincial referendum on treaty negotiations and implications for schools

The provincial government has distributed a referendum on treaty negotiations to all BC households. Treaty negotiation between government and BC's Aboriginal communities is a contentious issue.

As leaders in our communities, school boards have an opportunity and a responsibility to ensure that discussions on all issues in the schools are respectful of a full range of views, and are not hostile or intimidating to any student or groups of students.

To support boards in communicating about the implications of the referendum process for schools, BCSTA has prepared the attached draft message. This can be adapted, as appropriate in your district, as a letter to employees and/or parents, a radio public service announcement, a media release or a letter to the editor.

Draft Message

The provincial referendum on treaty negotiations and implications for schools

Recently, the provincial government distributed a referendum on treaty negotiations to all BC households.

The potentially contentious nature of the government referendum process on treaty negotiations could raise issues resulting in incidents of intolerance, racism, and even bullying in schools. None of these behaviours are acceptable in schools.

As your school board, our job is to ensure that discussions in schools on every subject are respectful of all students.

“School District [Community Name] has a number of anti-bullying programs in place,” Board Chair [name] said. “[Board chair makes a statement that illustrates local commitment to, and action on, anti-racism, anti-bullying.....]”

School boards, teachers, and all district employees are committed to providing safe and welcoming educational environments for our students. We ask all members of the community to support us in protecting children, particularly in times when adult discussions become contentious.