



Dear colleagues,

As teachers, we agree that students deserve to feel safe, welcomed, and included in all learning spaces. The Ministry of Education and several related education partners recently released a [statement in support of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity \(SOGI\) education and resources](#) in BC public schools. The statement reiterates, “No student should be excluded or bullied because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.”

Municipal elections will take place on October 15. There is an increase in school trustee campaigns supporting hateful and discriminatory rhetoric that stands in stark contrast to the values upheld by teachers and educators across the province. These candidates want to take BC backwards, and some even openly talk about banning books from libraries. These regressive positions go against BC’s Human Rights Code and would cause harm to students, families, and staff who are part of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

School trustees, along with the provincial government, play an important role in managing the public education system and making decisions about funding allocations. As such, school trustees can empower or disempower meaningful initiatives that support equity and inclusion in public schools. It is vital to elect progressive school trustees who will support and uphold the rights and freedoms of students and teachers.

Your local union office or labour council has information about the candidates in your community who support SOGI and other initiatives important to BC teachers. Please keep an eye out for those lists of endorsed candidates. It’s important to know who is on the ballot in your community and push back against attempts to take BC’s public education system backwards.

Let’s make our votes count on October 15.

In solidarity,

