

MAPC Position Statement
A Response to Proposed Bill 18 –Safe and Inclusive Schools

MAPC believes all schools in Manitoba have a responsibility to foster an environment which supports the physical, social, emotional, and mental wellbeing of all students.

MAPC understands that bullying takes place in many different ways within school communities and that all students may be at potential risk during their school journey.

MAPC recognizes that while addressing and identifying bullying behavior can be complex, certain characteristics reflecting the need for respectful human diversity policies are understood to be universally true. These characteristics include:

- That some actions are intended to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress, or other forms of harm to another person's body, feeling, self-esteem, reputation, or property
- That some actions are intended to create, or should be known to create, a negative school environment for another person

MAPC supports the need for school administration teams to have the professional autonomy to make the distinction between bullying behavior and poor choices within a school environment that impact another individual. MAPC encourages all educators to include parents in these conversations to further increase understanding of and support for respectful, safe, and inclusive school communities.

MAPC recognizes that every child needs to feel safe and free from harassing, tormenting, or ridiculing behavior in a school community. All adults in a school community have a responsibility to contribute to and create a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment, which provides a rich and meaningful experience for all students.

MAPC believes that in order to create and support a truly inclusive school environment, the most vulnerable populations of students must be offered supports. This will help ensure that their experiences in school communities are inclusive, safe, and respectful - as well as meaningful.

MAPC believes that it is the right of every child - as well as the expectation of every parent – that they be respected and safe regardless of race, colour, family or socio-economic status, language spoken, culture, religion, gender, mobility, physical or mental characteristics, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. This belief is embedded in the guiding principles found within the Canadian Charter for Rights and Freedoms as well as the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Rationale:

MAPC would like to be able to share this position, as representative of its membership, with our education partners (including the Minister of Education), and the media.