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Sent: 31 January 2025 12:18

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Subject: Indigenous studies

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A letter to the Board,

Regards,
Rhianda

Rhianda Linsdell

Subject: Improving and or limiting Indigenous Studies Curriculum for a More Meaningful Impact

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to express my concerns about the current approach to Indigenous studies in our schools. As someone with deep personal connections to Indigenous history—my step-grandmother is a residential school survivor, and my stepmother, sisters, and stepdaughter are all status Indigenous—I fully support the need for comprehensive education on Indigenous history, culture, and perspectives. However, I am increasingly frustrated with hearing about the repetitive nature of the curriculum, as reported by my children, ages 15 and 13. This is inadvertently leading to disengagement and resentment rather than deeper understanding. Cue the eye rolling.

While the intent behind this education is crucial, many students are encountering the same material year after year. The result is unintended resentment and boredom, rather than fostering the respect and empathy that this education is meant to instill. When students feel they are merely repeating lessons without building upon their knowledge, they may disengage entirely, diminishing the impact of these important lessons. Understandably students feel this way about many lessons, but this one I believe, is one we ought to tread more carefully with.

I urge the school board and curriculum developers to investigate how students are feeling about this curriculum. If my children are not an anomaly, and perhaps they are, there is a problem.

I strongly believe that if these studies are presented in a way that continues to challenge and inspire students, we will see more genuine understanding and appreciation rather than frustration. It is my hope that these concerns can be taken into consideration so that Indigenous education can have the meaningful and lasting impact it deserves.

I do write this with the understanding that I do not fully know the curriculum being offered and can only judge by the reaction of my children, which saddens me a great deal and has prompted me to write this letter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue. I appreciate the opportunity to present this perspective to you.

Sincerely,
Rhianda Linsdell