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Report to UNESCO and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Human Rights Education

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Executive Summary

Context of the Report: In 2004, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (“World Programme”) as a global initiative, structured in consecutive phases, to advance the implementation of human rights education in all sectors. The first phase of the World Programme covers the period from 2005 to 2009 and focuses on integrating human rights education into elementary and secondary school systems. UNESCO has forwarded to its member states, including Canada, the letter and questionnaire from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights requesting national reports on the implementation of the first phase of the World Programme. In response to that request, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO collaborated on this report.

Key Themes of the Report: The *Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education* and the questionnaire propose that human rights education in the elementary and secondary school systems include: policies and policy implementation; learning environments; teaching and learning processes and resources; and the training of school personnel. These elements are the main section headings of this report.

Responsibility for Education: In Canada, exclusive legislative responsibility for education is granted to the provinces in Canada’s *Constitution Act* of 1867; similar responsibilities are delegated to the territories by the federal government. In the 13 jurisdictions — 10 provinces and 3 territories — departments or ministries of education are responsible for the organization, delivery, and assessment of education at the elementary and secondary levels. The institutions in the postsecondary systems have varying degrees of autonomy from provincial or territorial government control. The ministers responsible for education in the provinces and territories come together at the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, to discuss matters of mutual interest, undertake educational initiatives cooperatively, and represent the interests of the provinces and territories nationally and internationally.

Policies and Policy Implementation

Legislation and Policies: Legislation that guarantees human rights is pervasive in Canada, and education is included in each piece of legislation as a service that is subject to its provisions. The Canadian Human Rights Commission and human rights commissions (or equivalent) in each jurisdiction promote and educate about human rights, as well as work to settle claims of discrimination. The school systems in the provinces and territories are subject to the provisions of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, as well as other federal legislation regarding human rights issues. The provinces and territories have also developed their own human rights legislation with direct application to education. Education acts, statements of principle, codes of conduct, and other documents also outline precise commitments to and expectations for human rights, diversity, equity, and respectful behaviours in schools.

Curricula and Education Standards: The inclusion of human rights education in curricula and standards is accomplished through broad curricular approaches, integration in long-term plans, and specific initiatives that address the many students who may be excluded from or failing to thrive in schools. The commitment is to quality education for all, and the development of graduates who respect and value equal rights and diversity.

School Governance and Practice: Through inclusive education and safe and caring initiatives, many of the governance issues related to human rights-based education are addressed in the education systems of Canada. The rights of all students to learn and be supported in that learning are respected. Schools are managed as environments that welcome diversity, embrace equity, and protect their community members from discrimination, harassment, violence, and fear.

Learning Environments

Integration in Learning Environments: Education that incorporates the principles of human rights into the school environment incorporates policies and programs that reach out to all learners. Educators in Canada recognize that certain groups may require additional support to achieve, and this section of the report presents some examples of initiatives designed for special education, Aboriginal learners, at-risk and immigrant students, as well as the Charter-protected minority-language education rights.

Related Education: Closely associated with human rights education are concepts such as peace, citizenship, multicultural education, and education for sustainable development (ESD). In many jurisdictions in Canada, ESD is a collective term that is used to encompass peace, democracy, citizenship, environmental issues, economics, health, human rights, justice, ethics, responsibility in a global context, and many other aspects of education.

Student Expression and Participation: Many provinces and territories have created specific pathways for student voices to be part of educational planning and delivery, including Web sites and blogs with education officials, student forums and conferences, involvement on school councils, and student advisory councils to ministers.

Civil Society and Human Rights Education: In addition to the human rights education in the education systems across Canada, nongovernmental organizations, the federal and municipal governments, the private sector, and human rights commissions contribute to this essential learning. Among these contributions are a new Canadian Museum for Human Rights, student resources and workshops, and teacher professional-development and teaching tools.

Monitoring Systems: In the provinces and territories, the content and competencies of human rights education are monitored through the various assessments of student learning. The integration of the principles and values of human rights education in the governance and implementation of education is monitored through processes that consider the delivery of services and programs based on those values.

Teaching and Learning Processes and Resources

Human Rights in the Curriculum: The ministries and departments of education have developed curricula that include human rights education as a cross-curricular theme, as a consistent learning outcome in programs such as social studies, and as a core component of specific courses such as physical and health education and English language arts.

Teaching and Learning Methodologies: Educators have recognized that student-centred and participatory learning engages learners more actively and can lead to enhanced learning and achievement. As human rights education is aimed at creating active, open, and respectful citizens, the teaching and learning strategies reflect and support this goal.

Teaching and Learning Resources: The ministries and departments of education have processes and criteria used to evaluate and select learning resources, and all of these incorporate social considerations. Resources may be developed and made available by ministries and departments of education, publishers, universities, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

Training of School Personnel

Training and resources for teachers and other school staff are provided to support educational policies, curriculum revisions, and school initiatives that incorporate human rights principles and content. As well, programs and resources are available to address specific aspects of human rights issues.

Challenges and General Comments

The final section of the questionnaire raises questions about the implementation of the *Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education*. While this report indicates that human rights education plays an important role in the education systems of Canada, it is difficult to track the implementation of the action plan and its impact on educators and planners. However, what this report demonstrates is that human rights education in the elementary and secondary school systems of Canada is congruent with the principles, strategies, and components of human rights education as outlined in the plan of action.

Concluding Remarks

The report clearly indicates that the legislative and policy underpinnings for human rights in education have existed in Canada for many years, as have content and pedagogical approaches reflective of human rights education. The expansion of human rights in education can also be seen, as more programs and supports for inclusive education are introduced, safe-school initiatives are expanded, and program and policy revisions stress concepts of active citizenship and mutual respect.

Introduction

Context of the Report

1. In 2004, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (“World Programme”) as a global initiative, structured in consecutive phases, to advance the implementation of human rights education in all sectors. The first phase of the World Programme covers the period from 2005 to 2009 and focuses on integrating human rights education into elementary and secondary school systems.
2. The UN General Assembly adopted the *Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education, First Phase*, which defines human rights education and outlines key actions to be undertaken by ministries of education and other school and civil society actors working in partnership to integrate human rights education effectively in the elementary and secondary school systems. It was also determined that an evaluation of this first phase, from 2005 to 2009, would be undertaken by the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System, composed of 12 UN entities and affiliate organizations, including UNESCO. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights provides the Secretariat for the coordinating committee.
3. UNESCO has forwarded to its member states, including Canada, the letter and questionnaire from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights requesting national reports on the implementation of the first phase of the World Programme. In response to that request, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO collaborated on this report.
4. The plan of action, mentioned above, references numerous international instruments that have incorporated human rights education, such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. These documents provide the basis of a definition of human rights education as education, training, and information aimed at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills, and moulding of attitudes directed to:
 - the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
 - the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
 - the promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality, and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples, and racial, national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups;
 - the enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law;
 - the building and maintenance of peace; and

- the promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice.
5. The plan of action and the questionnaire propose that human rights education in the elementary and secondary school systems include:
- policies and policy implementation;
 - learning environments;
 - teaching and learning processes and resources; and
 - the training of school personnel.

These elements are the main section headings of this report.

6. The questionnaire provided by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has guided the preparation of this paper. Given the 13 educational jurisdictions in Canada, the questions have been responded to through description of policies and practices in the various provinces and territories. The report is not comprehensive or exhaustive; it provides limited examples that demonstrate the diversity, quality, and range of human rights education in the school systems across Canada from 2005 to 2009. The key elements of human rights education presented in this paper are those outlined in paragraph 4 above.

Responsibility for Education

7. In Canada, exclusive legislative responsibility for education is granted to the provinces in Canada's *Constitution Act of 1867*; similar responsibilities are delegated to the territories by the federal government. In the 13 jurisdictions — 10 provinces and 3 territories — departments or ministries of education are responsible for the organization, delivery, and assessment of education at the elementary and secondary levels. The institutions in the postsecondary system have varying degrees of autonomy from provincial or territorial government control. In some jurisdictions, one department or ministry is responsible for elementary-secondary education and another for postsecondary education and skills training. The ministers responsible for education in the provinces and territories come together at the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, to discuss matters of mutual interest, undertake educational initiatives cooperatively, and represent the interests of the provinces and territories nationally and internationally. More detailed information about the structure, funding, and functioning of education in Canada can be found on the Web site of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.
8. The federal government shares responsibility with First Nations for the provision of elementary and secondary education to children ordinarily resident on reserves and attending provincial, federal, or band-operated schools. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada supports the education of 120,000 First Nations K–12 students living on reserves

across Canada. Band-operated schools located on reserves educate approximately 60 per cent of the students living on reserves, while 40 per cent go off reserve to schools under provincial authority, usually for secondary school. First Nations have been taking over more control of their elementary and secondary education, through negotiation with the federal and provincial authorities. First Nations children living off reserve are educated in the public elementary and secondary schools in their cities, towns, and communities, with the provinces and territories providing the majority of educational services for Aboriginal students.

Policies and Policy Implementation

9. Three key themes are found in the questions from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that explore policy and policy implementation:
 - the legislation and policies that address human rights, the right to education, and a rights-based approach to education;
 - human rights education as part of the curriculum and of educational standards at a policy level; and
 - policies and practices of school governance, such as inclusive schooling and safe and caring schools.

Legislation and Policies

Human Rights Legislation, Codes, and Commissions

10. Governments in Canada have established a solid legal framework that integrates a collection of laws and policies that support human rights. The *Canadian Human Rights Act* was put in place to give effect to the principle that all individuals should have equal opportunities. In this act, discrimination is prohibited on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, and conviction for which a pardon has been granted. In defining the discriminatory practices in the provision of goods, services, facilities, or accommodation, the act states that it is illegal to deny, or deny access to, any such good, service, facility, or accommodation to any individual or to differentiate adversely in relation to any individual. Access to education is included in this prohibition.
11. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* clearly states that “[e]very individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.” It further ensures that this guarantee of rights “does not preclude any law, program, or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals

or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.”

12. The *Citizenship Act* provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, are entitled to the same rights, powers, and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties, and liabilities.
13. The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* provides that the “Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour, and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural, and political life of Canada.”
14. Recently, the Government of Canada, with the support of all the provinces and territories, ratified the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, an international human rights instrument of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. The core obligations relate to non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation, with specific provisions for education.
15. Every Canadian jurisdiction has its own human rights legislation and procedures, as well as a human rights commission or equivalent. For example, in Prince Edward Island, the *Human Rights Act* defines the areas in which discrimination is prohibited as being age, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, criminal conviction, having laid a complaint or given evidence/assistance under the *Human Rights Act*, political belief, sexual orientation, association, creed or religion, family and marital status, physical and mental disability including addiction, sex including sexual harassment and pregnancy, and source of income.
16. The *Alberta Human Rights Act* provides protection from discrimination or denial of service due to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, or sexual orientation in the area of goods, services, accommodation, and facilities that are customarily available to the public. Elementary and secondary school systems are considered a service that is customarily available to the public.
17. Quebec’s *Charte des droits et libertés de la personne (Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms)* recognizes not only the rights of all those living in Quebec, but also explicitly refers to the rights of children and adolescents, including the right to education. It states that every child has the right to free public education. The *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* [commission for human rights and youth protection] is also responsible for the *Loi sur le système de justice pénale pour les adolescents (Youth Criminal Justice Act)*, which guarantees that youth who are accused of committing a crime are entitled to adequate educational, health, and social services.

18. Under the Quebec charter, all individuals have equal value and equal dignity, and must exercise their rights in a spirit of mutual respect and reciprocity. No individual or organization under provincial jurisdiction may be exempted from the provisions of the charter, which applies to:

- all groups and organizations;
- all private businesses;
- all services, whether private or public;
- all government authorities (provincial, municipal, educational, etc.); and
- the government of Quebec and its institutions at all levels.

The only organizations not governed by the Quebec charter are institutions operating in Quebec under federal jurisdiction, such as the federal civil service, banks, and telecommunication, air, and rail services. All of these are subject to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

19. The *Human Rights Act* of Northwest Territories lists five areas in which it is against the act to discriminate:

- work and looking for work;
- renting a home or a business space;
- membership in a trade union or a professional group;
- public services such as health, education, and social services; and
- published materials such as newspapers, pamphlets, magazines, and signs.

20. Although each human rights commission across the country is structured to respond to regional needs, there are some similarities in mandates and responsibilities, with variations in structures and practices that reflect the regional differences. For example, the Yukon Human Rights Commission is an independent commission created by the Yukon Legislative Assembly. The Yukon *Human Rights Act* lays out its mandate:

- promote the principles of human rights that every individual is free and equal in dignity and rights and that cultural diversity is a fundamental human value and a basic human right;
- promote education and research designed to eliminate discrimination;
- promote settlement of complaints or cause complaints that are not settled to by agreement to be adjudicated;
- conduct education and research on the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in the private sector.

21. Human rights legislation applies directly to education. The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission develops guidelines as part of its mandate to prevent discrimination and, in 2007, issued *Guideline on Accommodating Students with a Disability*. The guideline

specifies the wording of the *Human Rights Code*, the meaning of disability, and the concept and limits of reasonable accommodation, as well as the responsibilities of education providers, unions, professional associations, third-party education service providers, students, and parents.

22. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has re-issued its guidelines on accessible education to match changes to the *Human Rights Code*, which came into effect in 2008. According to the Ontario document, education is a service under the code and the scope of educational services covered includes the mastery of knowledge, academic standards, evaluation, and accreditation. It may also encompass the development of the student's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, as well as instructional activities such as school-related sports, arts, and cultural activities, and school functions and field trips.
23. The Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) is the national association of the government agencies in Canada charged with administering provincial and territorial human rights legislation. CASHRA's goals include fostering collaboration among its members and serving as a national voice on human rights issues of common concern. Web sites for the provincial and territorial human rights bodies can be found in the appendix.
24. Legislation that guarantees human rights is pervasive in Canada, and education is included in each piece of legislation as a service that is subject to its provisions. The Canadian Human Rights Commission and human rights commissions (or equivalent) in each jurisdiction promote and educate about human rights, as well as work to settle claims of discrimination.

Education Legislation and Principles

25. Education is recognized as a significant human right both in Canada and under international human rights law, a right not to be reasonably denied because of (among other things) one's gender, ethnic origin, disability, or age. For example, in Manitoba, publicly funded elementary and secondary schools are governed by *The Public Schools Act* and *The Education Administration Act*. This educational context is subject to and informed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which, as part of the Canadian Constitution, is the supreme law of Canada and applies to all aspects of provincial laws, programs, policies, and services, including the two laws governing education in Manitoba. Manitoba's *Human Rights Code* provides similar equality requirements, not only on the province, but also on private educational bodies. Manitoba's provisions relating to appropriate education were a response to these requirements.
26. The education act or school act in each jurisdiction specifies who is entitled to attend school. Although each act differs in specifics, the overall principles are consistent

throughout the country. The *Education Act* for Yukon provides an example. It affirms that all Yukon residents are entitled to receive an elementary and secondary school education program free of charge that is appropriate to their needs in accordance with the provision of this act, provided they meet the age requirements of being between 5 years 8 months old and 18 years as of September 1 of a specific year and that they meet residency requirements. Under the act, the minister may make provision for a Kindergarten-to-Grade-4 program that provides for early educational programming. Students who, because of intellectual, behavioural, communicative, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are in need of special education programs, are entitled to receive an Individualized Education Plan. For a student who is entitled to an Individualized Education Plan, the program is delivered in the least restrictive and most enabling environment to the extent that it is considered practicable. This applies to Canadian citizens, those lawfully admitted to Canada for temporary or permanent residence, a child of a Canadian citizen, or a child of an individual who is lawfully admitted to Canada for permanent or temporary status. It is required that school boards provide every school-age person who resides in its education area with an educational program consistent with the requirements of the *Education Act* and its regulations. No tuition fees are to be charged to the student or the parent for this education.

27. In Nova Scotia, all children have the right to attend a public school and parents have a duty to ensure that they attend or have some other acceptable method of schooling. A parent need only provide a child's birth certificate and proof of residence, such as a utility bill or driver's licence, to enrol the child in a public school. Saskatchewan's legislation for pupils with intensive needs is articulated within the *Education Act and Regulations*. The legislation has formalized a move away from describing students as disabled or having special needs to the more inclusive term of students with intensive needs. The regulations specifically require the provision of services in an inclusive educational environment.
28. The document *Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework* from the ministry of education in British Columbia (BC) states that the school system is expected to promote values expressed in the *Constitution Act*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Official Languages Act*, the *Multiculturalism Act*, the *BC Human Rights Code*, the *Employment Equity Act*, and the *School Act*, respecting the rights of all individuals. The school system is described as creating and maintaining conditions that foster success for all students and promoting fair and equitable treatment for all. These conditions include:
 - equitable access to and equitable participation in quality education for all students;
 - school cultures that value diversity and respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities they serve;
 - school cultures that promote understanding of others and respect for all;

- learning and work environments that are safe and welcoming and free from discrimination, harassment, and violence;
- decision-making processes that give a voice to all members of the school community; and
- policies and practices that promote fair and equitable treatment.

29. In Nunavut, the *Education Act* specifies that the public education system is based on Inuit societal values and the principles and concepts of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (which translates as “that which has long been known by Inuit”):

- respecting others, relationships, and caring for people;
- fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive;
- serving and providing for family or community, or both;
- decision making through discussion and consensus;
- development of skills through practice, effort, and action;
- working together for a common cause;
- being innovative and resourceful; and
- respecting and caring for the land, animals, and environment.

The act also addresses inclusive education, stating that students are entitled to such reasonable necessary adjustments to the education program and to such reasonable necessary supports as are required to meet their learning needs and to achieve appropriate curriculum outcomes.

30. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Prince Edward Island (PE) has outlined a statement of basic principles as the framework for public education. Many of these principles relate to human rights in education:

- Public education in PE is based on a quality program that respects the intrinsic value of the individual and centres on the development of each child.
- Respect for the individual is exemplified through promoting educational practices that reflect a variety of learning styles, present intellectual challenges appropriate to each student, and permit flexibility for students’ interests and imaginations.
- The public education system demonstrates respect and support for fundamental human rights as identified in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *PE Human Rights Act*.
- The fundamental rights of citizens involve a number of areas that have either specific or broad application to education. These include support for the principles of gender equity, recognition of the bilingual nature of Canada, and the need to ensure access for individuals with mental or physical disabilities.
- Respect and support for fundamental human rights require the application of the provisions of the charter and of the *Human Rights Act*, as well as the promotion

of the principles they embody by example and through the programs and services provided in schools.

- The public education system reflects the character, cultural heritage, and democratic institutions it serves.
- The public education system is based on recognition of the beliefs and values shared by the PE community and the wider Canadian society, including respect for the individual, for heritage, for multiculturalism, and for democratic principles.

31. New Brunswick's *Education Act* contains sections that describe the duties of students, teachers, and principals — all of which reflect schools that respect and uphold human rights. For students, duties include contributing to a safe and positive learning environment and respecting the rights of others. Teachers are expected to exemplify and encourage in each pupil the values of truth, justice, compassion, and respect for all persons. The duties of principals include ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to create and maintain a safe, positive, and effective learning environment.

32. There is a code of conduct for Ontario schools. The code details standards of behaviour that are expected from all members of the school community related to respect, civility, and responsible citizenship:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is a disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
- respect the rights of others;
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority; and
- respect the needs of others to work in an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

33. The code of conduct for schools in Newfoundland and Labrador includes many of the same principles and values. All members of the school community are expected to promote safe, caring, and inclusive practice by doing their best to:

- effect an orderly, productive work and learning environment free from aggression or disrespectful behaviour;
- engage in activities and behaviour that promote health and personal well-being;

- relate to one another in a positive and supportive manner, with dignity and respect;
 - embrace the diversity of all peoples, regardless of economic status, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, language group, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or ability; and
 - support non-violent conflict resolution.
34. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), has issued a framework for the enhancement of Canada's education systems, *Learn Canada 2020*, which includes as key activity areas such essential aspects of human rights education as literacy, Aboriginal education, and education for sustainable development. An example of related activity is the 2009 CMEC Summit on Aboriginal Education. At this event, ministers of education and of Aboriginal affairs, federal government officials, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leaders came together to discuss eliminating the gaps between the educational achievement of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in Canada.
35. The school systems in the provinces and territories are subject to the provisions of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, as well as other federal legislation regarding human rights issues. The provinces and territories have also developed their own human rights legislations with direct application to education. Education acts, statements of principle, codes of conduct, and other documents outline precise commitments to and expectations for human rights, diversity, equity, and respectful behaviours in schools.

Curricula and Education Standards

36. The principles and values of human rights education are integrated into curricula and education standards through policies and programs of elementary and secondary education. This section begins with examples of how human rights education has been integrated into the broad areas of learning. (Later in this report, subject-specific human rights content is presented.) Education standards that foster and support human rights and rights-based education are also presented, using jurisdictional plans for the school systems to exemplify the standards established and implemented.

Curricula

37. The province of Alberta has a centralized curriculum that outlines what students are expected to learn and be able to do in all subjects and grade levels. The K–12 curriculum is outlined in legal documents called programs of study, which are posted on the Alberta Education Web site. School authorities use the programs of study to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement, but they also have flexibility in determining the best ways to provide students with learning opportunities. Among the

overall statements of what students should learn are some that convey the essential aspects of human rights education:

- Anticipate and plan for the needs of the future by considering changes and developments in society, such as trends in employment, globalization, advances in technology, and stewardship of the environment.
- Provide learners with attitudes, skills, and knowledge that will enable them to become engaged, active, informed, and responsible citizens.
- Promote the recognition and respect for individuals and collective identity that is essential in a pluralistic and democratic society.

38. Within the core curriculum in Saskatchewan, the six Common Essential Learnings are crucial to all areas of study from Kindergarten to Grade 12. One of the Common Essential Learnings focuses on the development of knowledge, values, skills, and abilities related to personal and social development. To achieve this, the ministry of education supports schools in helping children and youth to:

- develop a positive sense of identity that is based in self-understanding, a sense of purpose, and a commitment to personal growth;
- develop a caring disposition, strength of character, and the understanding and abilities related to moral development;
- value and respect human and biological diversity, develop understanding of our social and environmental interdependence, and the abilities and values related to sustaining life;
- acquire the skills and develop the abilities needed to participate effectively and respectfully in social interactions; and
- develop the commitment and abilities necessary to contribute to the well-being of others and the natural world, and participate in social interaction.

39. Quebec's education program presents a number of broad areas of learning that deal with major contemporary issues that young people will have to confront, both individually and collectively, in different areas of their lives. The five broad areas of learning are health and well-being; career planning and entrepreneurship; environmental awareness and consumer rights and responsibilities; media literacy; and citizenship and community life. Although each of these has links to human rights education, the last theme is the most closely related. The educational aim of citizenship and community life is to enable students to take part in the democratic life of the class or the school and to develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity. Among the focuses of development are:

- promotion of the rules of social conduct and democratic institutions, including respect for the democratic process and knowledge of the rights and

responsibilities associated with democracy and of the mechanisms for the protection of citizens' rights;

- participation, cooperation, and solidarity, including respect for decision making based on compromise and consensus, establishment of egalitarian relationships, and mutual help;
- adoption of a culture of peace, including reflection on the concept of power, awareness of the interdependence of individuals, generations, and peoples, and application of the principle of equal rights.

40. Manitoba's ministry of education has developed curriculum documents that integrate numerous elements that resonate with human rights education:

- In foundational skill areas, human relations is one of the skill areas, along with literacy and communication, problem solving, and technology.
- Differentiated instruction stresses success for all learners and the establishment of a supportive learning environment.
- Aboriginal perspectives enable all students in Manitoba to learn the history of Manitoba and Canada before European settlement and provide the perspectives and accomplishments of Aboriginal peoples.
- Gender fairness ensures that all students have opportunities to learn regardless of gender, through curriculum documents, learning resources, and classroom practice.
- Age-appropriate portrayals acknowledge the accomplishments of all age groups and avoid stereotyping by age.
- Human diversity is central to the creation of classrooms that provide students with opportunities for cultural and linguistic development and encourage intercultural exchange and harmony.
- An anti-racism/anti-bias educational approach to curriculum documents and school operations ensures that students can experience learning in a safe environment.
- Education for sustainable development integrates the three key elements of economy, society, and the environment into curriculum to promote a sustainable future.

Curriculum guides, teaching and learning resources, and policies and practices in schools are all structured to further each of these elements.

Education Standards

41. Education standards that demonstrate the inclusion of human rights education and rights-based education can be found in the plans that departments and ministries of education have prepared to guide elementary and secondary education. For example, in Nova Scotia, the department of education has listed a number of goals for the 2009-10

fiscal year, one of them being to foster access, equity, and diversity through and within education and training. Among the specific activities to be undertaken in elementary and secondary education are providing more support for African Nova Scotian learners; increasing programs and services for Mi'kmaw (Aboriginal) learners and increasing knowledge about Mi'kmaw culture for all learners; supporting Gaelic programming in Grades 3 to 9; and assessing the progress of the *Racial Equity Policy* implementation. *Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together*, the plan for the public education system, has a major theme of closing the gap, which recognizes that some student are not succeeding in the regular school system and, through the work of many stakeholders, proposes programs, supports, and special education initiatives to address their needs.

42. Ontario's ministry of education has established the reduction of gaps in student achievement as a core priority in its document *Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education*. Based on a belief that equity and excellence go hand in hand, the goal is to foster social cohesion through a publicly funded education system that respects diversity and brings all students together to learn through a set of shared experiences. To reach every student, strategies and programs have been designed for Aboriginal students, recent immigrants, children from low-income families, French-language students, boys with lower literacy levels, and students with special needs. Factors such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status do not have to impede student achievement and, consequently, a number of supporting conditions have been put in place. For example, a focus on character development integrates respect for diversity, citizenship development, personal and emotional intelligence, ethical behaviour, and academic achievement. School staff, parents, governments, and community partners all have roles in this initiative.
43. In New Brunswick, citizenship education is embedded throughout the curriculum, particularly in social studies (anglophone and francophone sectors) and in personal and social development (francophone sector only). The goal is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become active citizens. This reflects the belief that with rights come responsibilities and that active citizens are individuals who will, in an informed way, be engaged and make a difference in their community and/or world. Among the specific actions linked to fostering citizenship education, a Ministerial Task Force on Citizenship Education was established to explore ways to further enhance citizenship education. In addition, the francophone sector has established an agreement with UNESCO under which New Brunswick shares its expertise with countries and schools interested in introducing the idea of the active community school. The aim of this concept is the development, in very young children, of a culture of independent and consciously-engaged learning so that each child is active and ready to be part of the learning community.
44. Saskatchewan's ministry of education provides leadership for schools and school divisions through the articulation of *Intensive Needs Pupil Guidelines* (2009-10) and *School Division Student Support Services: Service Delivery Model Rubrics* (2009-10). This

latter monitoring tool is used by school divisions to describe their level of progress in the various aspects of student services and inclusion and to report back to the ministry on an annual basis.

45. As outlined above, education in Nunavut is structured around the principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. The program of studies for every area of education has been embedded in Inuuqatigiit, the curriculum from the Inuit perspective, which describes the relationships between people and the environment, through the cycles of belonging, of the seasons, and of life. In this framework, inclusive education is outlined in a way that is consistent with the languages, contexts, and cultures of students, parents, school staff, and communities:
- Inclusive education means working together to support the healthy and resilient development of every child.
 - Inclusive education authorizes members of the learning community to ensure a safe environment for children.
 - Inclusive education relates to skills and knowledge acquisition that is required to promote the various strengths and needs of students.
 - Inclusive education promotes consensus for decisions required about students and involves everyone who needs to be included.
 - Inclusive education requires that the learning community be resourceful and innovative in planning and providing the resources needed to support students, staff, and community.
46. The inclusion of human rights education in curricula and education standards is accomplished through broad curricular approaches, integration in long-term plans, and specific initiatives that address the many students who may be excluded from or failing to thrive in schools. The commitment is to quality education for all and to the development of graduates who respect and value equal rights and diversity.

School Governance and Practice

47. The questionnaire asks about policies that promote a human rights-based approach to school governance, management, discipline procedures, inclusion policies, and other regulations and practices affecting school culture and access to education. The educational jurisdictions in Canada address these issues through many policy and strategy approaches. The two featured in this report are inclusive education and safe schools. The following are examples only, as each province and territory has its own legislations, policies, and practices to address these issues.

Inclusive Education

48. Each jurisdiction in Canada is committed to inclusive education, based on a belief that every child can learn. In New Brunswick, the vision articulated in 2009 is for an evolving and systematic model of inclusive education whereby all children reach their full learning potential and decisions are based on the individual needs of the student and founded on evidence. The definition of inclusive education expresses values and beliefs that are congruent with the principles of human rights education, as it is based on a system of values and beliefs centred on the best interests of the student, which promotes social cohesion, belonging, active participation in learning, a complete school experience, and positive interactions with peers and others in the school community.
49. In New Brunswick, when the principle of universal design of programs, services, practices, and learning environments is insufficient to meet the needs of an individual student or group of students, accommodations are required. Reasonable accommodation of a student's special needs is provided, unless the accommodation demonstrably gives rise to undue hardship due to cost, risk to safety, or impact on others, particularly on other students. In cases of conflict, provision is made for mediation, advocacy, and/or the provision of external expertise to find solutions that respect the best interests of all students involved.
50. The *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Education* issued in 2006 by the minister of education of Northwest Territories (NT) is based on and consistent with the following principles:
 - Inclusive schooling shall be characterized by equal access to educational opportunities.
 - Inclusive schooling shall be characterized by an approach to schooling which builds on student strengths and responds to student challenges.
 - Inclusive schooling shall be community based.
 - Inclusive schooling shall promote the involvement of parents/guardians in their children's education.
 - Inclusive schooling shall be characterized by collaboration among teachers, parents, administrators, and other professionals.
51. The NT directive also stipulates that inclusive schooling is not a synonym for special education or only about disabilities, but rather, it is an expression of the belief that students learn in different ways, at different rates, and in different places and that they want their differences to be respected.
52. The programs facilitated by the Child and Student Services Division of Prince Edward Island's department of education demonstrate how aspects of human rights education are supported in school management and practice. Among the services provided are:

- special education programs;
 - resource teachers and educational assistants for students who require additional help in the school system;
 - the development of a learning disabilities strategy in collaboration with government and education partners;
 - specialized supports for those with autism spectrum disorders;
 - alternative curriculum materials for those whose educational needs cannot be met with the regular materials;
 - hearing education and auditory resources;
 - services for the blind and visually impaired;
 - school programs for students in the provincial adolescent group home;
 - school counselling services to facilitate the educational, personal, social, emotional, and career development of students in schools and in the community;
 - youth programs in the areas of transitions, family violence, safe schools, youth at risk, student health, diversity, and Aboriginal education;
 - school health promotion, including healthy eating, active living, tobacco-use reduction, mental fitness, and alcohol and drug education;
 - diversity and equity education, including working with Aboriginal groups to identify educational priorities for Aboriginal students; and
 - a community access facilitator who works with partners to ensure that effective transition planning is in place from the school system to the community for students in Grades 8 to 12 with special needs.
53. In Nunavut, the regulations related to the sections of the *Education Act* that cover inclusive education are under public review. A chart displaying the relevant sections of the act, the proposed regulations, explanations, notes, and questions has been distributed for comment. The discussion document covers such topics as the identification of needs by teachers, individual student-support plans, duties of the school team pertaining to inclusive education, and annual and specialized assessments.
54. Saskatchewan’s ministry of education’s philosophy of inclusion is articulated in the *Children’s Services Policy Framework* and further described in a conceptual framework, *Caring and Respectful Schools*. Inclusion is defined as an attitude or belief system that supports an unconditional commitment to help every child and young person succeed in school, at home, and in the community. Once it has been adopted, the practice of inclusion is seen as driving all decisions and actions at the division, school, and classroom level. The implementation of the practice of inclusion is characterized as requiring strong leadership in all schools in Saskatchewan.
55. In Ontario, the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy was introduced in 2009. The strategy provides a framework to help the education community identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to student achievement. These barriers can

include racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination. Designed to uphold the fundamental human rights described in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and other relevant legislation, the strategy sets out a phased, four-year action plan with concrete action items for the ministry of education, school boards, and schools. All school boards are expected to have equity and inclusive education policy in place, including a guideline on religious accommodation. Furthermore, school boards are to undertake cyclical reviews of all policies and practices to embed the principles of equity and inclusive education into all aspects of each board's operations. The Ontario Human Rights Commission actively supports the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and has worked with the ministry to provide training on the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, anti-racism, and religious accommodation. To further assist the effective implementation of the strategy, the ministry has established and funded Equity and Inclusive Education implementation networks across the province to share challenges, strategies, and best practices. In May 2010, the strategy was awarded the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's Award of Excellence for 2010. This prestigious national award acknowledges exemplary practices in anti-racism, anti-discrimination, and commitment to building a harmonious society.

Safe Schools

56. The provinces and territories have developed policies, guides, strategies, and initiatives to address the need for learning environments in which all are accorded respect and dignity and in which all are safe and free from the fear of physical and emotional harm. For example, the essence of the Yukon policy, passed in 2008, for safe and caring schools is that incidents of bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, or any unwelcome behaviour that degrades a person on the basis of personal characteristics, gender, sexual orientation, race, or disability will be addressed in a timely, effective, and consistent manner in order to maintain a safe and caring school environment. The policy includes a statement of principles, the resources available, definitions of key terms, roles and responsibilities, and standards and procedures for addressing any incidents.
57. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* includes its purpose, principles, and the code of conduct referred to above. In addition, there are statements on the roles of all in the school community:
 - School districts will establish a Safe and Caring School Team that will provide district-level leadership with respect to the safe-schools initiative.
 - School communities, under the leadership of the principal, will identify a school team responsible for facilitating the initiative.
 - Teachers and school staff will do their best to facilitate and promote a safe and caring learning environment.
 - Students will do their best to demonstrate respect for themselves and others.
 - Parents and/or guardians will do their best to support the effort of the school community in maintaining a safe and caring learning environment for all.

Under each of these headings, specific actions are outlined.

58. In 2008, British Columbia's ministry of education updated its *Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide*. The guide presents the vision for and attributes of safe and caring schools in BC. The revised guide incorporates, through an amendment to the *School Act* and a new ministerial order enacted in 2007, government expectations that all boards of education have school codes of conduct in place that meet provincial standards, including the requirement that all codes reference the prohibited grounds for discrimination outlined in the *BC Human Rights Code*. The guide is provided as part of a larger provincial strategy that includes accountability mechanisms designed to improve safety in schools. The ministry of education's Web site has links to multilingual resources, including resources for parents.
59. In 2008, Quebec's ministry of education, recreation and sports issued new measures in an action plan to prevent and address violence in schools. The action plan, *Violence in the Schools: Let's Work on It Together*, revolves around four pillars:
- Prevent and deal with violence through consolidating and reinforcing actions by schools and school boards, intervening effectively, and ensuring safety during exceptional situations in schools.
 - Focus on joint action and training through increased collaboration among the various bodies concerned at the provincial level and providing better preparation for school personnel to deal with the problem of violence in schools.
 - Focus on research and documentation by ensuring that schools, school boards, and the ministry have a better understanding of violence in Quebec schools and that schools and school boards are familiar with the programs and activities for preventing and dealing with violence in schools.
 - Focus on follow-up and evaluation by ensuring that the measures in the action plan are properly implemented and evaluating their repercussions on young people and schools.
60. Alberta's ministry of education's bullying-prevention strategy was developed in 2005 to combat verbal, social, physical, and cyber bullying. Three Web sites were set up — one for children aged 3 to 11, another for those 12–17 years of age, and a third for parents and other adults looking for information. Ontario has a safe-schools strategy that includes the *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act*, which requires all board employees to report serious student incidents, including bullying, to principals. The principal is required to notify the parents (or guardians) of the victim.
61. In New Brunswick, *Policy 703: Positive Learning and Working Environment* provides the framework for managing inappropriate behaviours in schools through the creation of a positive and safe school environment. The policy outlines examples of serious misconduct and behaviour not tolerated in schools and of positive discipline, as well as emphasizing the importance of clearly communicating appropriate behaviour. The

policy applies to all parties in the school system, including school personnel and students, in addition to visitors to the school. New Brunswick has also trained school personnel in a strategy for violent risk and threat assessment.

62. Saskatchewan's ministry of education implemented an anti-bullying strategy in 2005 that built on existing programs and provided policy direction on developing and implementing school codes of conduct, anti-bullying policies, and crisis-response plans. The strategy consists of three key actions:
- the implementation of new policy directives that require all school divisions to ensure that every school in every community has a program in place to address bullying, including improved awareness of the anti-bullying initiatives and the roles and responsibilities of members of the school community;
 - the seeking of changes to the *Criminal Code of Canada* and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* to specifically deal with systemic bullying; and
 - the development of enhanced anti-bullying and suicide prevention and intervention services for young people by working with mental-health service providers.

To support this effort, the document *Bullying Prevention: A Model Policy* was published in 2006 to outline the key components of a policy and provide tools for its development.

63. The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) has a list of key issues that affect education — a number of which are directly linked to human rights education. One is cyber bullying, with which CTF has been actively involved in providing resources for teachers and lobbying for legislation. As well, CTF promotes diversity and equity in public education, including social-justice issues of children, as well as poverty, gender issues, racism, violence prevention, homophobia and heterosexism, and environmental sustainability.
64. Through inclusive education and safe and caring initiatives, many of the governance issues related to human rights-based education are addressed in the education systems across Canada. The rights of all students to learn and be supported in that learning are respected. Schools are managed as environments that welcome diversity, embrace equity, and protect their community members from discrimination, harassment, violence, and fear.

Learning Environments

65. The questions related to learning environments explore the integration of human rights into schools; the inclusion of closely-related content such as education for sustainable development and peace education; the opportunities for students to express

themselves and participate; the interaction with civil society in human rights education; and monitoring systems in place to monitor human rights practices.

Integration in Learning Environments

66. A focus on the programs and opportunities created to facilitate school access and success by vulnerable populations exemplifies how schools welcome diversity and support equity. Some school policies and practices that support equitable education are presented, followed by examples of education for special-needs learners, as well as Aboriginal, at-risk, and immigrant students. The support for minority-language education is also described.
67. Yukon's department of education provides an example of the wide-ranging initiatives in school systems that support success by all learners. The values of respect, equity, fairness, inclusion, integrity, responsibility, and compassion are the basis of programs such as:
 - individual learning centres: a safe and flexible learning environment for high-school-aged youth who have dropped out of school so they can complete secondary education;
 - Elders in the school: local Elders share their culture and knowledge with staff and students, helping teachers to connect curriculum areas with valid and authentic Aboriginal content and experience;
 - experiential education: practical, hands-on experience is integrated into the learning process to expand the ways of learning for all students;
 - teen-parent program: provides flexible education and support to pregnant teens and teen parents so they can finish secondary school, offering parenting education, daycare, money and household management skills, counselling, and health guidance in addition to the curriculum;
 - youth offenders: ensures that incarcerated youth have access to an educational program;
 - Yukon First nation languages and second languages: in cooperation with First Nations, teachers and programs are provided for the teaching of First Nation languages, in addition to the development of community-specific comprehensive language curriculum;
 - special programs: students who need additional support and/or programming are supported by their classroom teachers and school-based resources.

School Protocols

68. The New Brunswick *Provincial Student Code of Conduct Guidelines*, prepared with student input, applies to all students in all ways that are connected to the school. The

essence of the code is expressed in the statements, “I will respect myself; I will respect others; I will respect my environment.” Among the premises of the code are:

- I will respect others’ differences, ideas, and opinions and treat everyone fairly.
 - I will not tolerate bullying of any kind and I will report bullying when I have knowledge of it.
 - I will behave in a manner that is empathetic, responsible, and civil to those around me.
 - I will resolve my conflicts in a constructive manner.
69. In Nunavut, the teachers’ association has developed a code of conduct for its members, with explicit reference to the teacher-student relationship. The code states that a member should at all times respect the individual rights, the ethnic traditions, and religious beliefs of his or her pupils and of their parents.
70. The standards and guidelines for school counselling services of Prince Edward Island provide a final example of how an understanding of and respect for human rights, including those of the individual student, are valued as part of the learning environment. The counselling services are to provide social and emotional, as well as academic, support for students, responding to the increased challenges in students’ lives. Counsellors help students to understand their personal uniqueness and grow in self-esteem, individual responsibility, and social relationships.

Special Education

71. British Columbia’s ministry of education maintains a current edition of *Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines* as a single point of reference regarding legislation, ministry policy, and guidelines to assist school boards in developing programs and services that enable students with special needs to meet the goals of education. A student with special needs is defined as one with a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional, or behavioural nature, has a learning disability, or has special gifts and talents. The manual describes the roles and responsibilities of the ministry, school boards, district- and school-based personnel, parents, and students in the development and implementation of special-education services. The categories of special needs are outlined, as well as the essential elements of the programs. The criteria for reporting students with special needs in each of the 12 funding categories are also described.
72. In 2008, Alberta’s ministry of education launched an examination of how the education system can best meet the educational needs of students with disabilities, as well as those who are gifted and talented. More than 6,000 Albertans were consulted, and a new framework was proposed that included directions for building an inclusive education system to meet the needs of all students. The government of Alberta responded to the vision, mission, principles, and strategic directions set out in the

document *Setting the Direction Framework*. The principles lay out what the government of Alberta and its partners and stakeholders believe, value, and commit to, including:

- believe that all students can learn and be successful;
 - value an education that is fair, appropriately resourced, highly accountable, and provides equitable learning opportunities for all students;
 - commit to working together for the success of each student in an inclusive education system; and
 - commit to ensuring that students and families are welcomed, respected, and supported so they can be successful.
73. In Nova Scotia, the term “assistive technology” describes a range of strategies, services, and low- to high-tech tools used to enable, improve, increase, and maintain students’ ability to meet their learning outcomes. Among the categories of the tools that are made available to increase students’ control over objects, daily activities, age-appropriate experiences, and subsequent learning are augmentative or alternative communication; computer access; aids for vision and hearing; mobility aids; and environmental control. A program-planning process is required to identify and make use of appropriate assistive technology for the achievement of learning outcomes and maximum student participation. Resources are provided so that school administrators and teachers can consider each student’s needs and strengths and develop the least complex and the most efficient intervention.

Aboriginal Learners

74. For historical and social reasons, including racism and discrimination, Aboriginal students have not been achieving the same educational performance levels as non-Aboriginal students. Every jurisdiction has introduced policies and practices to address this achievement gap. In Northwest Territories, the Dene Kede curriculum was developed as a set of learning expectations intended to help Dene students in the process of becoming capable Dene (a First Nation). The expectations relate to the students’ relationships with the spiritual world, the land, other people, and themselves. When these relationships become the focus of education within a classroom, the classroom takes on a Dene perspective or world view. The content, pedagogy, implementation, assessment, and strategies of the Dene curriculum are outlined by the department of education, culture and youth, but each school implements the curriculum according to local needs.
75. Saskatchewan’s ministry of education has implemented First Nation, Métis, and Inuit content, perspectives, and ways of knowing into the provincial education system. First Nation, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing, as well as the historical, contemporary, and future contributions of First Nation and Métis peoples, are integrated to create a culturally responsive education system that benefits all learners. The First Nation, Métis, and Inuit content, perspectives, and ways of knowing are made foundational in the

curriculum by being reflected in the broad educational aims and curricula framework, the subject-area outcomes, instructional methods, and resources. In addition, the government of Saskatchewan has mandated that education of the treaties (“Treaty Education”) be foundationally integrated throughout all grade levels and subject areas of the approved provincial curriculum. Treaty learnings have been developed and inform a developmental continuum, with outcomes and indicators in support of Treaty Education. A key message is, “We are ALL treaty people.”

76. Ontario’s ministry of education has identified Aboriginal education as one of its key priorities, with two primary challenges to be met by 2016 — to improve achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates, and advancement to postsecondary studies. To outline the strategies necessary to achieve these goals, the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* was issued in 2007. The framework recognizes that student success can be improved with teaching strategies that are appropriate to Aboriginal learners’ needs, curriculum that reflects First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures and perspectives, effective counselling and outreach, and a school environment that encourages Aboriginal parent and student engagement. Policies, programs, and funding to support these approaches are detailed in the framework.
77. The Aboriginal Compilation Project is a partnership between the department of education of Newfoundland and Labrador and provincial Aboriginal communities. The Aboriginal communities chose visual-art and music samples and provincial teachers worked to create resource-based lessons to encourage the use of these samples in current provincial curricula. This project is relevant for teachers and students in social studies, music, and fine arts. In addition, the Labrador Innu community has worked with the department of education to create social-studies resources in the Innu-Aimun language for the Kindergarten curriculum. These resources have been translated into English and French for use in classrooms throughout the province to enhance cross-cultural awareness.
78. In 2005, New Brunswick’s department of education facilitated the creation of a Provincial Aboriginal Education Committee (PAEC) mandated to provide guidance and direction to the department regarding the education of First Nation students in provincial and band-operated schools. PAEC identified six areas for priority action:
 - cultural and historical awareness and sensitivity among educators;
 - student outcomes and addressing the achievement gap;
 - a culturally relevant educational experience;
 - cultural diversity and an inclusive learning environment;
 - a community philosophy of lifelong learning; and

- continuous communication and collaboration between the department of education and the First Nations.
79. In 2008, a memorandum of understanding was signed with 14 of the 15 First Nation communities in New Brunswick to signify the collective desire of all parties to work collaboratively, collegially, and as expeditiously as possible toward improving the educational outcomes of First Nation students, in pre-Kindergarten and school readiness, elementary and secondary education, and transition to postsecondary opportunities. Further to these priorities, the First Nation communities, the province, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) signed tri-partite Tuition Enhancement Agreements to ensure that 50 per cent of the tuition that INAC pays to the province for First Nation students who attend provincial schools is reinvested into the provincial school system for the enhancement of programs and services for First Nation students.
 80. The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre provides expertise, resources, and training in issues related to Aboriginal education. Over the past few years, the centre has been bringing a program called Roots of Empathy to classrooms in First Nation communities. This program has demonstrated a dramatic effect in reducing levels of aggression, violence, and bullying among children in Grades 1 through 8, while raising social and emotional competencies and increasing empathy. With funding from INAC, the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre is partnering with the Healthy Child Manitoba office to launch a Seeds of Empathy program in First Nation communities. This program is especially designed for children aged three to five and delivered in early-childhood education settings.
 81. In British Columbia, the First Nations Education Steering Committee worked in partnership with BC Aboriginal-education partners to address the racism experienced by Aboriginal people in the education system. An anti-racism workshop provides participants with the knowledge and tools to prevent discrimination and create education systems that value diversity. The committee has developed an anti-racism toolkit, provided anti-racism awareness and intervention workshops across the province, trained youth in anti-racism leadership, and established a network of anti-racism leaders.
 82. The curriculum department at the Indigenous Education Coalition in Ontario develops materials for First Nation and public school systems that highlight the contributions of the First Nation community's teachings and histories to enhance students' self-determination and awareness of their cultural identity. The curriculum provides an opportunity for a First Nation voice to be represented in the Ontario curriculum guidelines. A recent project focussed on building understanding of and relations regarding First Nation treaty education, in response to a violent confrontation over land rights.

At-Risk Students

83. Schools in Quebec that serve concentrated numbers of students from disadvantaged areas benefit from financial measures introduced by the ministry of education, recreation and sports that allow them to implement or strengthen intervention strategies. The New Approaches, New Solutions (NANS) initiative aims to adapt practices at both the school and classroom levels to ensure greater success for students from disadvantaged areas and to decrease the academic gap that these students often experience. In 2007-08, NANS was extended to elementary schools so that the intervention can be supported from the beginning of a student's school life.
84. In Alberta, provincial funding is available for outreach programs to provide options for students who are at risk of leaving school early, such as working students and teen parents. The outreach programs are designed by schools to respond to their particular students' needs and many are linked to community and social agencies.
85. The department of education of Newfoundland and Labrador is conducting a review of youth who are disadvantaged or at risk of disengaging from a formal learning process. During phase two of the review, pilot schools will implement school-based interventions for those at risk of dropping out and those who have left school prematurely in the last two years.
86. A booklet prepared for parents and students by Ontario's ministry of education, *More Ways to Succeed in High School*, outlines programs that help students to earn credits and learn outside of the regular classroom. Among the possibilities outlined are specialist high-school majors, an expanded cooperative-education program, projects for struggling students and those who have dropped out, e-learning and correspondence courses, individualized attention initiatives, student success teams to help those who need help, and programs for students who are having difficulties adjusting to high school.
87. In New Brunswick, tremendous effort, expertise, and resources are dedicated to making each classroom and school as effective and inclusive as possible in meeting the needs of the diverse student population. However, there are situations in which students who are at high risk for school failure, dropping out, and/or societal failure require intensive programming and services that are not feasible or cannot be provided in traditional classrooms or school settings. In such cases, school districts offer alternative education programs and services.

Immigrant Students

88. The department of education of Newfoundland and Labrador has designed and implemented an academic bridging program to address achievement gaps for immigrant students with limited or no prior schooling. The Literacy Enrichment and Academic

Readiness for Newcomers (LEARN) program targets government-assisted refugees and offers upgrading in literacy, numeracy, science, and social studies. At the senior-secondary level, students may obtain alternate credits for LEARN courses. The department also encourages the practice of whole-school inclusion of immigrant students through guidelines for celebrating diversity in schools and making schools welcoming environments.

89. Immigrants and refugees who arrive in Canada as older teenagers and young adults face numerous challenges, as the time it takes to complete secondary school and learn one or both official languages (English and French) may be too long. Manitoba's department of education has created several options for secondary school and young adult education for language learning, secondary-school completion, and career training. A publication, *Promising Pathways: High School and Adult Programming Options for English as an Additional Language (EAL) Youth*, outlines the possibilities, such as special language credits, specialized programming for students with significantly interrupted education/war-affected backgrounds, adult high school, community-based literacy programs, workplace-preparation options, general education development (GED) services, and English- and French-as-additional-language programs.
90. Saskatchewan's ministry of education has outlined steps for school divisions to set up procedures so that newcomer students, their families, educators, and communities are prepared for the reception, orientation, identification, assessment, programming, and monitoring of newcomer students to ensure successful outcomes for them.

Official Languages

91. Canada has two official languages — English and French — and they have equal status, rights, and privileges in their usage in the institutions of parliament and the government of Canada. Legal protection for national minority education rights are constructed along linguistic lines and apply to the English-speaking minority in Quebec and the French-speaking minorities in the other 12 provinces and territories. Subject to specific requirements, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees Canadian citizens in the French and English linguistic minority populations in each jurisdiction the right to have their children educated in their own language in elementary and secondary school and to have the education supported by public funds where numbers warrant this.
92. As education is a provincial responsibility, each jurisdiction provides for minority language education rights within its public education system. The federal government also provides partial funding for minority-language education (as well as for second-language instruction). The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), has been responsible for the coordination and administration of the federal government's activities at the pan-Canadian level. The federal government's contributions to the costs incurred by the provinces and territories in the delivery of minority-language education

and second-language instruction have been provided through protocol agreements negotiated through CMEC. Each province and territory then negotiates a separate cost-shared bilateral agreement.

93. In response to tests that showed that students studying in French-language schools outside Quebec were not performing as well as their English-language counterparts, the Pan-Canadian French as a First Language Project was launched at CMEC. Phases I and II of the project have resulted in a detailed analysis of the context and performance of minority-language students and the preparation of tools to assist teachers.
94. Education that incorporates the principles of human rights into the school environment incorporates policies and programs that reach out to all learners. Through dedicated initiatives, funding, and resources, the right of every child to learn is respected. Educators in Canada recognize that certain groups may require additional support to achieve, and this section of the report has presented a few examples of initiatives designed for special education, Aboriginal learners, at-risk and immigrant students, as well as the Charter-protected minority-language education rights.

Related Education

95. Closely associated with human rights education are concepts such as peace, citizenship, multicultural education, and education for sustainable development (ESD). In many jurisdictions in Canada, ESD is a collective term used to encompass peace, democracy, citizenship, environmental issues, economics, health, human rights, justice, ethics, responsibility in a global context, and many other aspects of education. Activity at the elementary and secondary school levels has been at both the pan-Canadian and provincial/territorial level.
96. In June 2008, CMEC's Advisory Committee of Deputy Ministers of Education established the Education for Sustainable Development Working Group so that, through CMEC, the provinces and territories could show leadership in the development and promotion of ESD in educational institutions across Canada. With representatives from the departments/ministries of education of almost all jurisdictions, the development of a framework for collaboration and action is under way for the elementary and secondary school levels, with four priority areas:
 - infusing ESD competencies into the provincial/territorial curriculum;
 - building ESD capacity through professional development and research;
 - identifying and promoting learning resources to support ESD competencies; and
 - implementing ESD system-wide.

Goals, principles, strategies, and general outcomes are being established for each of the priorities — as well as measures of progress, partnerships, and communications strategies.

97. In the provinces and territories, the principles of ESD may be integrated throughout the curriculum as a key component of all learning — starting with the broad learning areas or broadest outcomes and then being translated through the other levels of curriculum planning and content to appear in subject-specific learning outcomes. The concepts of ESD can appear in core courses, stand-alone courses, and strategies, as well as in content that can be introduced in any subject and at any level, in learning outcomes that are further developed as the students move through the grades, in cross-curricular content, and in content and pedagogy that are infused throughout the curriculum, teaching, and learning.
98. CMEC, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and Environment Canada have collaborated on two reports that detail how ESD, in its most inclusive definition, is part of the education systems, as well as informal learning, in Canada. The reports were prepared as part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development; the first one, *Report to UNECE and UNESCO on Indicators of Education for Sustainable Development: Report for Canada*, was released in 2007 and is available on the CMEC Web site (<http://www.cmec.ca>). The second report, *Report to UNECE and UNESCO on Indicators of Education for Sustainable Development: Report for Canada 2007–2010*, will be available in early 2011.

Student Expression and Participation

99. Many provinces and territories have created specific pathways for students' voices to be part of educational planning and delivery. In 2008, Alberta's ministry of education established Speak Out: Alberta Student Engagement Initiative to give students a voice in the decisions that affect their learning and their future. Speak Out has a Web site on which students share their thoughts and opinions with their peers and the ministry of education. Speak Out forums are small-group discussions held all over the province in the spring and fall for students in Grades 9 to 12 to talk about their educational experiences, their learning styles, what is working for them, and what they would like to see happen in schools. An annual student conference continues the on-line and forum conversations, and the ministry is integrating the Speak Out initiative into the conferences and events of nongovernmental partner organizations to solicit a broader range of feedback. A Minister's Student Advisory Council brings together 24 students who meet with the minister of education and other government officials three times a year to offer their perspectives and suggestions.
100. In Ontario, an initiative called Student Voice provides students with three ways to become more involved with their education:

- The Minister’s Student Advisory Council brings together 60 students to meet with the minister twice a year. The students on the advisory council are in Grades 7 to 12 and come from all parts of the education system — English, French, public, Catholic — and regions of the province.
 - Student projects are funded through the ministry of education for students and student councils that have projects to make a difference in their schools, classrooms, and communities.
 - Student forums provide students with an opportunity to talk with education officials about what they want from education and how to get more students excited about learning and going to school.
101. Newfoundland and Labrador’s department of education prepared *Building Learning Communities: A Handbook for School Councils*. A school council, according to the *Schools Act*, is to represent the educational interests of the school; advise on the quality of teaching and learning in the school; facilitate parent and community involvement; and provide advice to the board on matters of concern to the school and community. In a school that offers secondary school courses, at least one student must be elected to the school council. The student representatives are to:
- express the viewpoints of the students they represent;
 - communicate the activities of the council to their stakeholders;
 - work collectively toward the common goal of improving teaching, learning, and student achievement;
 - participate in the school-development process;
 - participate in, and be prepared for, council meetings and discussions.
102. In a presentation on the key elements of the renewed curriculum in Saskatchewan, the role of the student was very widely defined. Students were depicted as generators of knowledge for both themselves and for others. Among the verbs used to describe the role of students were: lead; ensure accountability; collaborate; advocate; monitor; plan; evaluate; and inquire — all of which imply students’ active participation in their education.
103. Nova Scotia’s department of education has created a model for developing and implementing respect for and understanding of diversity within public schools. The resource, *Respect for Diversity: Action, Awareness, Advancement — A Planning Resource*, was prepared for student use so that they can actively promote and advance diversity.
104. In 2009, New Brunswick became the first province to appoint a student member with full voting rights (with exceptions for conflicts of interest and some human resource issues) to each of its 14 district education councils (DEC). There is one DEC for each of the 14 school districts. These councils oversee the work of the superintendent, provide

the educational and strategic direction for the district, and manage its finances, within the provincial framework. A student can now be appointed by the minister to each DEC with the mandate of representing the views of all students in the school district at the DEC meetings.

105. These few examples indicate the variety of strategies that jurisdictions use to encourage students' participation in their education — whether at the provincial, school, or classroom level. This participation is consistent with many of the principles in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, including that of freedom of expression. Through such involvement in governance, students develop the skills for active citizenship.

Civil Society and Human Rights Education

106. In addition to the human rights education in the education systems across Canada, nongovernmental organizations, the federal and municipal governments, the private sector, and human rights commissions contribute to this essential learning.
107. Established by Parliament in 2008, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights is to open in 2012 as a centre of learning where Canadians and people from around the world can engage in discussion and commit to taking action against hate and oppression. The museum will offer programs for students and adults. It is funded by the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba, the City of Winnipeg, the Forks North Portage Partnership, and partners in the private sector.
108. The John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights in Edmonton, Alberta, was named after the Canadian who was one of the principal drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As part of its role of educating the public about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the centre develops tools, such as youth guides on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and teacher resources on building human rights communities, interfaith dialogue, and local and global citizenship, as well as providing over 200 interactive human rights games and activities for children and youth aged 5 to 25. The centre also develops resources for the professional development of teachers on specific issues, such as eliminating prejudice between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth and addressing the unique needs of immigrant parents and students. In addition, the centre delivers, in partnership with the Alberta Teachers' Association, professional development for teachers using experiential methods to enable teachers to integrate human rights and citizenship into the classroom.
109. The Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) developed an initiative in collaboration with the youth-interest organization TakingITGlobal, which operates an on-line youth forum, and the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights to mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For this project, educators from human rights commissions across Canada and their

partners developed an interactive Web site to engage young Canadians in learning and dialogue about human rights. The Web site includes information about contemporary human rights issues, the work of human rights commissions, the legislative frameworks underlying human rights, practical ideas for youth wanting to protect and promote human rights, and interactive features such as discussion boards, an on-line art gallery, and calls to action.

110. The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children (CCRC) is a network of Canadian organizations and individuals who promote respect for the rights of children. Its purpose is to: exchange information; provide public education materials about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; monitor implementation of the convention in Canada; and engage in dialogue with government officials on children's rights issues. CCRC has developed a series of booklets for those who work with and for children to explain children's rights in relation to child care, health care, justice, protection, and education. The booklet on education explains the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in terms of the right to education, participation in school, discipline, education for children from minority groups and with disabilities, and school bullying.
111. UNICEF Canada's mission is to mobilize and empower Canadians to invest in the positive transformation of every child's future. Partnering with faculties of education, teachers, and students to inspire, educate, and promote action on social justice, humanitarian issues, and human rights — especially the rights of all children — UNICEF's Global Classroom program provides educators with classroom-ready resources and engagement tools. Designed to foster global citizenship and understanding, UNICEF will work with schools across Canada beginning in January 2011 in a comprehensive and transformative manner through its Rights Respecting Schools initiative.
112. Green Street is a nongovernmental organization with a particular role in engaging youth in environmental stewardship. It has recently expanded its program themes to include broader issues related to the environment and sustainability — including peace, human rights, governance, and citizenship. Green Street provides access to high-quality programs, funding opportunities, a network of experts, and a Web platform to link to other schools. Green Street is supported by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec*.
113. The Canadian Centres for Teaching Peace is an organization dedicated to fulfilling UNESCO's commitment in its *Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy*. In 2009, the organization launched its school peace program at its annual conference. The pre-conference workshops focused on indigenous education, youth, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queisting students.
114. The non-profit, youth-led organization YOUCAN has developed a peace-builder program for schools and communities, with courses for children aged 8 to 13, youth from 14 to

25, and teachers. The modules include cross-cultural conflict resolution, negotiation, peer helping, peer mediation, facilitation, dialogue, peace circles, and taking action.

115. Equitas — International Centre for Human Rights Education has undertaken research and developed educational materials to promote intercultural harmony by combatting elements of racial, ethnic, cultural, sexist, and homophobic discrimination through community-based endeavours that focus on children and youth. In one project, Equitas assessed the human rights education needs of Montreal day camp programs and developed the *Play It Fair!* toolkit to be integrated into the program for children and youth attending these day camps. *Play It Fair!* is currently being implemented in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Fredericton, Moncton, and Dieppe. A second project, *Speaking Rights*, grew out of an extensive needs assessment in Montreal in 2008 with youth and youth-program workers. *Speaking Rights* engages youth 13 to 17 years of age in exploring human rights issues and identifying strategies to combat discrimination and exclusion, while promoting respect for diversity in communities.
116. The Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission launched the Respect Everyone Everywhere project to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this project, students in Grades 7 to 12 are asked to identify human rights leaders in their schools. The goals of the project are to have students become more aware of human rights values, reflect on their own actions and attitudes, and be encouraged to take part in human rights activities.
117. New Brunswick's human rights commission also sponsored school activities to celebrate the anniversary of the declaration. The commission worked with CASHRA to organize a national forum on the theme of "Defining a Rights-Based Framework: Advancing Inclusion of Students with Disabilities." A one-day forum was also organized for students in Grades 11 and 12.
118. Events, resources, facilities, and programs for human rights education for elementary and secondary school students are offered through civil society organizations, human rights organization, governments, and foundations.

Monitoring Systems

119. In all provinces and territories, the content and competencies of human rights education are monitored through the processes that assess student learning. The integration of the principles and values of human rights education in the governance and implementation of education is monitored through processes that consider the delivery of services and programs based on those values.
120. The core business areas and functions for the department of education of Nova Scotia comprise many services that have been presented in this report as integral to human rights education. These include special education and the integration and advocacy of

diversity, equity, and anti-bias. In the department's business plan for each fiscal year, specific targets are set out in these categories. For example, in 2009-10, one of the goals is the broader distribution of the *Racial Equity Policy – Innovative Configuration Map*. The map is a tool for planning, professional development, and assessment. In the following year, the actions taken toward this goal are assessed.

121. British Columbia's ministry of education has issued a publication, *Developing and Reviewing Codes of Conduct: A Companion*, to assist boards of education in meeting their obligations to ensure that codes of conduct in their districts meet the provincial standards and comply with relevant legislation. The role that codes of conduct can play in establishing human rights in schools has been described in previous sections of this report.
122. Saskatchewan's ministry of education has developed principles to be used in the development of a service-delivery model for student-support services. Each school division describes the level of development of various aspects of student services and uses this, along with other monitoring tools, to choose priority areas of development for the following year. The 18 principles to be assessed are divided into three categories:
 - Inclusionary philosophy and beliefs, including inclusive practice, differentiated instruction, fostering independence, and assistive technology;
 - Intervention plan, including personal program plans, transition planning, and service coordination;
 - Staffing profile, including provision and engagement of supporting professionals, supportive in-service, and engagement of supporting agencies.
123. As human rights education and practices are integrated into the broader school programs, including programs such as safe schools and education for sustainable development, much of the assessment serves as part of the monitoring of the systems rather than of specific initiatives.

Teaching and Learning Processes and Resources

124. In this section, the questionnaire probes which subject areas in elementary and secondary education include human rights education; how teaching and learning methodologies reflect the more participatory, learner-centred strategies inherent in human rights education; and the availability of teachers' guides and other resources to support human rights education.

Human Rights in the Curriculum

125. Canada's ministries and departments of education have developed curricula that include human rights education as a cross-curricular theme, as a consistent learning outcome in a program such as social studies, and as a core component of specific courses such as physical and health education or English language arts.
126. British Columbia's ministry of education has developed a detailed guide, *Making Space: Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice Throughout the K–12 Curriculum*, to promote awareness and understanding of the diversity that exists in society and to support the achievement of social justice for all peoples and groups. The guide is for use by classroom teachers and focuses on instructional and assessment activities; teachers are given ideas and support for teaching and modelling understanding and respect for all persons. Connections to social justice content and teaching strategies are offered for every grade level and every subject area in BC's provincially prescribed curriculum.
127. The Atlantic provinces — New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island — share common curriculum outcomes for social studies, organized around six conceptual strands. A number of these strands express ideas congruent with human rights education:
- Citizenship, power, and governance: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the origins, functions, and sources of power, authority, and governance.
 - Culture and diversity: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of culture, diversity, and world view, while recognizing the similarities and differences reflected in various personal, cultural, racial, and ethnic perspectives.
 - Interdependence: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interdependent relationships among individuals, societies, and the environment — locally, nationally, and globally — and the implications for a sustainable future.

The conceptual strands are translated into specific content and detailed learning expectations are articulated for each grade level.

128. The process skills acquired through social studies are also clearly defined and reflective of the principles of human rights education. The essential processes are:
- Communication: read critically, respect other points of view, and use various forms of group and interpersonal communications;
 - Inquiry: recognize various perspectives, recognize bias, and appreciate the value of critical and creative thinking;

- Participation: take responsibility for individual and group work, respond to class, school, community, or national public issues, and value the importance of taking action to support active citizenship.

129. The document *Program Rationale and Philosophy* for the social studies curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12 in Alberta describes the role of social studies as developing the key values, attitudes, knowledge and understanding, and skills and processes necessary for students to become active and responsible citizens, engaged in the democratic process, and aware of their capacity to effect change in communities, society, and the world. Among the values, skills, and knowledge to be imparted by social studies are:

- Value the diversity, respect the dignity, and support the equality of all human beings.
- Demonstrate social compassion, fairness, and justice.
- Appreciate and respect how multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and francophone, shape Canada's political, socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural realities.
- Understand their rights and responsibilities in order to make informed decisions and participate fully in society.
- Engage in active inquiry and critical and creative thinking.
- Engage in problem-solving and conflict resolution with an awareness of the ethical consequences of decision making.

130. In 2007, Quebec's ministry of education, recreation and sports introduced an ethics and religious culture program for all elementary and secondary students, so that the learners would:

- acquire or consolidate, if applicable, an understanding of how individuals are equal in terms of rights and dignity;
- learn to reflect on issues;
- explore, depending on his/her age, different ways in which Quebec's religious heritage is present in his/her immediate or broader environment;
- learn about elements of other religious traditions resident in Quebec;
- grow and develop in a society in which different values and beliefs coexist.

Central to this new program is the practice of dialogue as part of teaching and learning to help students develop the aptitudes and dispositions needed for thinking and acting responsibly in relation to themselves and others, while taking into account the impact their actions may have on community life.

131. The curriculum connections prepared for Saskatchewan teachers by the province's ministry of education provide an example of a specific aspect of human rights education

and its infusion throughout the curriculum. As part of the school/community bullying-prevention strategy, documents for teachers at all grade levels provide guidance on how to address bullying in the curricula for English language arts, health education, social studies, and personal and social development. In the English language arts resource, for example, elementary teachers are provided with ways to explore appropriate language usage and behaviour in looking at issues like friendship, humour, and fairy tales; themes and sub-themes are recommended for secondary school teachers to bring bullying issues into language learning.

132. In a senior-secondary course in physical and health education, Manitoba's department of education introduces the idea of rights and responsibilities in healthy relationships. The course module looks at human rights legislation, cultural diversity, consent to sexual activity, and other concepts. The suggestions for instruction include having students work in groups to develop bills of rights and responsibilities for social roles such as friend, student, child, and potential parent.
133. In the 2010 Canadian Teachers' Federation National Issues Poll, Canadians overwhelmingly agreed that public elementary and secondary schools should teach their children about values and ethical behaviour (96%), human rights (96%), peacemaking (95%), environmental protection (95%), and participatory democracy (91%).

Teaching and Learning Methodologies

134. The best ways for students to learn about human rights reflect the content they are absorbing. Through active participation, questioning, critical thinking, dialogue, and reconciliation of alternative viewpoints, students experience and hear about rights and responsibilities. The previous section provides some examples of how human rights principles and values are taught. The examples in this section illustrate a few more approaches among the many used through elementary and secondary education across Canada.
135. The Quebec Education Program has been referred to above; among its broad areas of learning is citizenship and community life. The learning approach at the senior level is structured to provide activities that allow students to explore different aspects of citizenship in the classroom, in practicum, and in the school as a whole. It is believed that by participating actively in decisions that concern them, becoming aware of organizations that help citizens and workers, solving problems collectively by means of discussion and negotiation, debating various issues of importance to them, and making decisions collectively with respect for individual and collective rights, students acquire hands-on experience in exercising citizenship.
136. Newfoundland and Labrador's department of education has provided teachers with *Focus on Harassment and Intimidation: Responding to Bullying in Secondary Schools*

(adapted from British Columbia) as a guide to bringing these issues into the classroom. One unit specific to Newfoundland and Labrador looks at the legal issues involved. The pedagogical strategies recommend active discussion about the idea of “Canadian” and of rights, protection of rights, and conflict that can arise between rights of different individuals. Legislation is examined and analyzed, possible ways of violating rights are listed, and court cases regarding alleged rights violations are researched. Students have an active role in exploring the meaning and reality of rights.

137. In Yukon, École Whitehorse Elementary School used project-based learning as a way to explore human rights issues as part of the social studies curriculum. Project-based learning is described as emphasizing learning activities that are long-term, across subjects, student-centred, and integrated with real-world issues and practice. In this project, students began by gathering information about child soldiers, hunger and famine, racism, and peace from Web sites. Next, they chose a song about peace to analyze for meaning and selected images related to human rights issues from a variety of sources. All of this information was then compiled into multimedia presentations on human rights.
138. Educators have recognized that student-centred and participatory learning engages learners more actively and can lead to enhanced learning and achievement. Human rights education is aimed at creating active, open, and respectful citizens, and the teaching and learning strategies support this goal.

Teaching and Learning Resources

139. The ministries and departments of education have processes and criteria to evaluate and select learning resources, and all of these incorporate social considerations. Resources may be developed and made available by education departments/ministries, publishers, universities, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations.
140. Prince Edward Island’s department of education has published a guide to the evaluation and selection of learning resources that can be used by department officials, school board personnel, and teachers. The criteria related to social considerations pay special attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, and Aboriginal education. Overall, it is stated that learning resources should:
 - reflect sensitivity to gender and sexual orientation, the perspective of Aboriginal people, and cultural and ethnic heritage;
 - promote equality by enhancing students’ understanding of a multicultural and diverse society;
 - be chosen to help students understand the many important contributions made to civilization by minority groups and peoples/groups from a variety of ethnic backgrounds;

- be designed to motivate students and staff to examine their attitudes and behaviour, and to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as participating citizens in society.
141. As a part of its publication *Instructional Design, Technical Design, Social Considerations for All Subjects*, Manitoba's department of education has included an extensive checklist of social considerations to be applied to resources. Among the factors to be assessed are:
- inclusive language;
 - gender equity, role portrayal of the sexes, age portrayals;
 - portrayal of diverse beliefs, customs, language use;
 - socioeconomic references, situations, bias;
 - diversity of western and northern Canadian society;
 - multiculturalism and anti-racism content;
 - diversity of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis cultures and roles;
 - portrayal of special needs;
 - portrayal of violence.
142. Many of the resources related to human rights education are offered as part of safe-school initiatives in jurisdictions. For example, in British Columbia, tools such as a guide to safe, caring, and orderly schools; parent and educator guides for preventing and responding to bullying, harassment, and intimidation in elementary and secondary schools; and a diversity framework that explains the key implications of legislation for policies and initiatives in schools are readily available.
143. Manitoba's ministry of education also provides on-line access to print documents for families, communities, and schools related to safe and caring schools. Among these are:
- *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying*
 - *When Words Are Not Enough: Precursors to Threat — An Early Warning System for School Counsellors*
 - *Towards Inclusion: From Challenges to Possibilities — Planning for Behaviour*
 - *Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem-Solving for Schools, Families, and Communities*

Other publications address issues such as drug use, child protection/child abuse, gangs, and sexual exploitation.

144. Under the heading of "Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding, and Human Rights" of its web page for teaching resources, Nova Scotia's department of education provides

links to resources and Web sites such as Amnesty International, the Canadian Heritage Human Rights Program, the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, and Tolerance.org.

145. An example of a dedicated teacher's guide comes from Alberta. *The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools* is a 275-page resource that provides an overview of character and citizenship education and sample strategies for fostering a positive school culture, infusing character and citizenship education across the curriculum, choosing resources, linking with extracurricular activities, and involving parents and communities.
146. Resources are also offered through organizations outside the school systems. With funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Cape Breton University Children's Rights Centre has prepared the *Color It Rights!* colouring book. Each picture in the book represents an article of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. For use with young children, the book uses simplified language for teachers to read aloud.
147. The Manitoba Human Rights Commission has launched a Web site entitled "Class Action: A Student's Guide to Human Rights." Through the site, students can learn about human rights, work on a project for school, connect with other students concerned with the same issues, and get involved to improve the human rights of people in Manitoba and around the world. Every week, a different event in the history of human rights is featured. In Yukon and Northwest Territories, the human rights commissions have recently collaborated on a plain-language publication entitled *Know Your Rights* that clearly explains human rights legislation and the protected rights.
148. An important source of visual materials on human rights is the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), the public film producer and distributor. Using its extensive inventory, NFB has created playlists of materials covering many themes, including anti-racism, Canada's diverse cultures, peace, nationhood, and racism in the workplace. Teachers' guides are published providing links to the curricula in each province, assessment options, and pedagogical strategies.
149. In a recent NFB initiative in partnership with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, a playlist was devised to celebrate the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures in 2010. The films can be downloaded from the NFB Web site, shared in electronic newsletters or e-mails, embedded in blogs, and shared through Facebook and Twitter. NFB also provides a platform for discussing the films and the issues they raise.
150. The resources available for the teaching and learning of human rights include teacher's guides, student resources, and tools for parents. All of the resources cited here, and many more, are available through the Web, and some are also accessible in print and video formats.

Training of School Personnel

151. The questionnaire looks at the in-service training and resources offered to teachers and educational leaders in the areas of human rights education. As in the preceding sections of this report, a very few examples are presented; they illustrate the stakeholders, the content, and the goals of the training provided.
152. In-service training and professional-development resources for teachers, principals, and other school staff are provided by the departments and ministries of education, educator organizations, educational institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. Most of the training events and resources described below relate to specific aspects within the framework of human rights, such as special education, racism, and inclusive education.
153. The Atlantic provinces — New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island — have developed a teacher resource and a staff professional-development resource to address behavioural challenges. The teacher resource was developed to provide the theory and understanding of behavioural challenges, while the staff professional-development resource, in the form of a workbook, was created to facilitate the whole-school planning required for the implementation of a safe and caring learning environment and a system of school-wide positive behavioural interventions and supports.
154. New Brunswick's department of education provides a professional-development tool for those teaching students with autism spectrum disorder so that they can plan and implement effective educational programs. In Yukon, a manual has been prepared for those working with students with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, an area in which, according to the department of education, few educators have received much training.
155. Newfoundland and Labrador has begun a multi-year implementation of the philosophy of inclusive education, focused on celebrating the diversity of school communities and addressing the strengths and needs of all students. It involves extensive teacher training on inclusive practices, such as differentiated instruction, so that teachers are better able to engage students of various experiences, interests, learning styles, and readiness stages.
156. Nova Scotia's department of education offers a Summer Institute program in cultural proficiency so that teachers can experience and learn about research-based instructional and assessment practices. This training, part of the implementation plan for the Racial Equity Policy, assists educators in programming to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners. Ontario's ministry of education partnered with three Ontario principals' associations to provide province-wide training to all principals and vice-principals on bullying prevention. The ministry also supported the Ontario Teachers'

Federation in the development of an on-line bullying-prevention program designed to assist teachers with all aspects of bullying prevention and to bring about systemic change to benefit teachers, students, and the education system.

157. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation describes itself as a social justice union with initiatives that focus on Aboriginal education, poverty, child and youth issues, race relations, gender equity, homophobia and heterosexism, bullying, environmental issues, globalization, and violence prevention. Among the workshops and programs that the federation offers for professional development are:
- Beyond words — creating racism-free schools for Aboriginal learners
 - Antidiscrimination response training
 - Breaking the silence — talking about lesbian and gay issues in schools
 - Poverty as a classroom issue
 - Social justice in every classroom
158. The Alberta Teachers' Association also offers a wide variety of training related to human rights, including:
- Here comes everyone — responding to cultural diversity in Alberta's schools
 - Building inclusive schools — focus on racism, sexism, or homophobia
 - Building human rights communities
 - Character and citizenship education in Alberta schools
 - Preventing and dealing with bullying
 - Sexual orientation and gender identity — a three-part series on exploring the issues; examining prejudice, power, and privilege; and taking action to create safe schools
159. In 2007, Equitas — the International Centre for Human Rights Education — and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights co-organized the International Human Rights Education Evaluation Symposium in Montreal, Quebec. A focus on the formal education sector included elementary and secondary schools, with discussions on approaches to the evaluation of human rights education in schools and some of the challenges and limitations.
160. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation offers training for educators across Canada, such as a course in Integrating Anti-Racism with Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution as part of the Equity and Leadership Institute. A six-session course for educators provides an overview of racism, as well as sessions on seeing people for who they really are; multicultural, anti-racist education across the curriculum; toward acceptance and dignity; human rights/human wrongs; and honouring and respecting diversity.

161. A core area of the work of the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights is professional development for teachers. In cooperation with the Alberta Teachers' Association, an annual forum addresses issues of citizenship. During the centre's Global Youth Assembly, an educator day focusses solely on integrating the lessons and themes of citizenship and human rights education into the classroom and the curriculum.
162. Throughout this report, human rights education has been presented as integral to legislation and policy, system-wide educational programs, curriculum offerings, initiatives such as safe and caring schools, and the programs offered to support vulnerable learners. Training and resources for teachers and other school staff are provided to support these educational goals and developments, thereby furthering the integration of human rights education.

Challenges and General Comments

163. The final section of the questionnaire raises questions about the implementation of the *Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education*. While this report has indicated that human rights education plays an important role in the education systems across Canada, it is difficult to track the implementation of the action plan and its impact on educators and planners. With 13 educational jurisdictions, hundreds of school boards, and many partners in civil society, an accurate assessment cannot be made of the awareness of the world program or the usefulness of the associated documents. Information about the program is widely available in Canada and may be used by researchers, policy-makers, and educators to shape their plans and directions. This report has demonstrated that human rights education in the elementary and secondary school systems in Canada is congruent with the principles, strategies, and components of human rights education as outlined in the *Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education*.

Concluding Remarks

164. Human rights education, its principles, values, content, and pedagogical approaches can be found in the education systems of all of Canada's provinces and territories. Rather than simply being labelled "human rights education," the policies, curricula, and initiatives are often placed within the context of educational visions or of common or broad learning outcomes, or within system-wide initiatives such as inclusive education and anti-bullying programs. In curricula, the topics related to human rights are found most often in social studies but may also be part of health education, language arts, and other subjects. Resources and teacher training, as well as other supports, are widely available to complement the teaching and learning of human rights issues.

165. Certain aspects of human rights education are particularly evident in the examples provided in this report. One is the active involvement of students in the consideration of and action on human rights, often supported by the use of technologies. In addition, policies, plans, strategies, curricula, training, and resources have been developed so that the learning environments in classrooms, schools, and schools boards are welcoming and supportive for all students, especially the traditionally vulnerable populations.
166. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO have collaborated on two previous reports that have explored aspects of human rights education:
- *UNESCO Seventh Consultation of Member States on the Implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education: Report for Canada (2007);*
 - *Education for Peace, Human Rights, Democracy, International Understanding and Tolerance: Report of Canada (2001).*
167. Looking at the three reports, it is clear that the legislative and policy underpinnings for human rights education have existed in Canada for many years, as have content and pedagogical approaches reflective of human rights education. The expansion of human rights in education can also be seen, as more programs and supports for inclusive education are introduced, safe-school initiatives are expanded, and program and policy revisions stress concepts of active citizenship and mutual respect.

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Alberta Education

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British Columbia Ministry of Education

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/bced>

British Columbia Ministry of Science and Universities

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/su>

Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ael>

Manitoba Education

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/edu>

New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

<http://www.gnb.ca/000/index-e.asp>

New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

<http://www.gnb.ca/0105/index-e.asp>

Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu>

Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment

<http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca>

Nova Scotia Department of Education

<http://www.ednet.ns.ca>

Nunavut Department of Education

<http://www.edu.gov.nu.ca>

Ontario Ministry of Education

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>

Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng>

Prince Edward Island Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/eecd>

Prince Edward Island Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/ial>

Quebec — *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* [ministry of education, recreation and sports]

<http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca>

Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration

<http://www.aeei.gov.sk.ca>

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education

<http://www.education.gov.sk.ca>

Yukon Department of Education

<http://www.education.gov.yk.ca>

Pan-Canadian Governmental Educational Organizations

Canadian Commission for UNESCO

<http://www.unesco.ca>

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

<http://www.cmec.ca>

Statutory Human Rights Agencies

Alberta Human Rights Commission

<http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca>

British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal

<http://www.bchrt.bc.ca>

Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies

<http://www.cashra.ca>

Canadian Human Rights Commission
<http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca>

Manitoba Human Rights Commission
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/hrc>

New Brunswick Human Rights Commission
<http://www.gnb.ca/hrc-cdp>

Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission
<http://www.justice.gov.nl.ca/hrc>

Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission
<http://nwthumanrights.ca>

Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
<http://gov.ns.ca/humanrights>

Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal
<http://www.nhrt.ca>

Ontario Human Rights Commission
<http://www.ohrc.on.ca>

Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission
<http://www.gov.pe.ca/humanrights>

Quebec — *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* [youth and human rights commission]
<http://www.cdcdj.qc.ca>

Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission
<http://www.shrc.gov.sk.ca>

Yukon Human Rights Commission
<http://www.yhrc.yk.ca>

Nongovernmental Organizations

Alberta Teachers' Association
<http://www.teachers.ab.ca>

British Columbia Teachers' Federation
<http://www.bctf.ca>

Canadian Centres for Teaching Peace
<http://www.peace.ca>

Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children
<http://www.rightsofchildren.ca>

Canadian Museum for Human Rights
<http://www.humanrightsmuseum.ca>

Canadian Teachers' Federation
<http://www.ctf-fce.ca>

Canadian Race Relations Foundation
<http://www.crr.ca>

Children's Rights Centre: Cape Breton University
<http://www.discovery.uccb.ns.ca/children>

Equitas — International Centre for Human Rights Education
<http://www.equitas.org>

First Nations Education Steering Committee
<http://www.fnesc.ca>

Green Street
<http://www.green-street.ca>

John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights
<http://www.jhcentre.org>

Indigenous Education Coalition
<http://ieceducation.com>

Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre
<http://www.mfnerc.org>

National Film Board of Canada
<http://www.nfb.ca>

Ontario Principals' Council
<http://www.principals.on.ca>

UNICEF Canada
<http://www.unicef.ca>

YOU CAN
<http://www.youcan.ca>

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