



MEDIA STATEMENT

August 19, 2022

Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth Troubled by Allegations of Abuse in the Legacy Christian Schools

SASKATOON – The Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth, Dr. Lisa Broda is deeply concerned about the recent allegations pertaining to historical abuse of children while attending Legacy Christian Academy (formerly Christian Centre Academy).

“The magnitude of the allegations of abuse that have surfaced over the past few weeks is very troubling and, though these matters will be worked out through the police investigation and court processes, it is critical to ensure that while the investigation is ongoing, children returning to school in the fall are doing so in a safe environment,” said Broda.

The Advocate’s office has been monitoring this situation since these allegations were made and has been in communication with officials from the Ministry of Education to request preliminary information and will be carefully considering next steps.

“While the Official Opposition Leader has publicly requested an investigation, we will be making this determination independent of that request. With the upcoming school year approaching, my immediate concern is to ensure that, in the current context, young people are safe and protected in all three independent schools impacted,” said Broda.

“Broda states that, “all young people have the right to be protected from harm and all schools should be a place where children and youth can safely and fully realize their rights to education and optimal development. There is a high onus for accountability on institutions, such as schools, that hold significant authority over children and youth for such a substantial portion of their lives. When those institutions receive public funding and/or provide a public service, the need for transparency and oversight is paramount.”

Although the legal issues raised in the Plaintiff’s statement of claim will be processed through the justice system, the Ministry of Education is also expected to exercise due diligence in its responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and youth receiving services pursuant to *The Education Act* and its *Regulations*.

Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states it is the right of children and youth for the institutions responsible for their care to “conform with standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health [...] and suitability of their staff”. This is a critical area which the Advocate will consider in her assessment of this situation.

While the increased oversight of independent schools established by recent amendments to *The Registered Independent Schools Regulations* is a step in the right direction, it remains to be seen

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whether these changes will be sufficient to ensure the rights of children and youth in all schools in Saskatchewan are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

“It is under my authority and mandate to ensure services to children are in accordance with the legislation, regulations, and policy through which these services are provided and to ensure the rights of young people are protected. My office will be assessing all information provided to me and, again, will methodically consider the next steps in our review,” said Broda.

Any child or youth can call our office confidentially if they have concerns with public services inclusive of education at 1-800-322-7221.

The Advocate will not be commenting further at this time.

The Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The Advocate leads a team of professionals who work on behalf of the province’s young people to ensure accountability of the entities that serve them. Our vision is that the rights, well-being, and voices of children and youth are respected, valued, and supported to assist young people to reach their full potential. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook @saskadvocate.ca

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