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Advisory Council on the
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**SUBMISSION FROM THE PEI ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN :
Independent Review of Education Authorities**

September 26, 2025

The Prince Edward Island Advisory Council on the Status of Women (PEIACSW) is a nine-member, government-appointed arms-length government agency with a mandate to advise government and educate the public on matters that relate to the status of Prince Edward Island women.

The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women acknowledges all women-identifying people in our understanding of “women,” including cis women, trans women, and gender minorities.

We acknowledge that the work of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women takes place on the island district of Epekwitk in Mi’kma’ki, the traditional territory of the Mi’kmaq and their home today and since time immemorial. Epekwitk is covered by the historic treaties of Peace and Friendship.

The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Independent Review of Education Authorities. The safety and well-being of all students is paramount. We share our experiences and concerns as a council that includes teachers, education assistants, former students, mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and engaged community members. Recommendations for this Inquiry and quotations from representatives come from the Council based on a roundtable discussion on September 12, 2025.

“The most important thing is to believe the child, believe the parent. They didn't believe the child and parent. They made the decision to protect the school and school board. Her father believed her and brought it to the school board. You believe people. Nine-year-olds don't make this up. We don't trust the system that doesn't believe kids and parents.”
PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women representative

When parents or students come forward with concerns about, or have experienced physical, sexual, or verbal abuse from a staff member, these concerns and experiences must be taken seriously and addressed immediately. Students should be encouraged to share concerns and be protected from any harm or negative impacts as a result.

Policies for responding to and addressing student concerns about staff must be clearly outlined and standardized for each school and education authorities. While public policies exist requiring Prince Edward Island (PEI) education authorities to issue annual reports that include the number of complaints related to misconduct, harassment, or sexual misconduct, we have not found provisions establishing specific timelines for each stage of the process for addressing and resolving complaints of harassment or violence.

“Principals have to listen to parents and kids. My daughter has a bully, she does well in school, but she doesn't want to go to school now.”
PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women representative

There must be clear and standardized policies for how to identify and address all forms of bullying, harassment, and discrimination occurring within schools. Current Safe and Caring Learning Environments policies do not go far enough to ensure student safety and protect marginalized students. This includes specific policies and practices that recognize human rights and protect and support marginalized communities from hate speech and other forms of harm.

“My kid can't be quiet if he sees something. If he tries to call out racism or homophobia, there's more consequence for him than the person being racist or homophobic.”
PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women representative

Clear and accessible policies must also be in place for teachers and staff to be able to share concerns about other teachers and staff with administrators in a way that is confidential and with clear guidelines for how these concerns will

be addressed. School authorities must implement clear protocols to ensure the safety of staff when working with youth who exhibit violent behaviours. All policies within the Public Schools Branch (PSB) and La Commission Scolaire de Langue Française should be made public and easily accessible online, and in hardcopy at schools and at PSB and CSLF locations.

All those working with children and youth in our schools should be required to take part in professional development learning opportunities focused on identifying and addressing bullying, harassment, and discrimination. These sessions should clearly outline the policies in place and responsibilities for all staff and administrators, and provide

“There's so much pressure on teachers with outcomes, and not enough time on empathy. The school system has not evolved. Everything else has changed, but why do they still want all those kids at their desk all day? Of course they're going to act out.”
PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women representative

practice resources and tools that staff can use in their daily work.

All students would benefit from increased integration of social and emotional learning, project-based learning, physical activity, and activities that recognize and uplift student well-being and self-esteem. Sufficient supports must be in place to support all students to thrive within the education system, including a range of alternative education options geared to meet student needs. Additionally, student wellbeing teams should continue to be supported with additional training and resources provided to help support students who experience harm in schools. Staff teams should be as diverse as possible to support effective learning and engagement for all students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hsiao Yu, Kate, Liu".

Hsiao Yu Kate Liu , Chair of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women

cc: Hon. Jenn Redmond, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Michelle Harris-Genge, Director of the PEI Interministerial Women's Secretariat
Members and staff of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women