**Sample letter on the proposed Alberta social studies curriculum concerns**

Your MLA’s name and address
([Find that information here.)](https://streetkey.elections.ab.ca/)

Dear Hon. **your MLA’s name**

I am writing with concerns about the draft K-6 Social Studies curriculum, which is in direct violation of a promise Alberta made on March 27, 2014, at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) event in Edmonton. That promise included:

1. Mandatory content for all Alberta students on residential schools and treaties,

2. Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum development standards and

3. Support for professional learning opportunities for teachers.

In June 2016, the Joint Commitment to Action was signed by representatives of the Government of Alberta, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and five Alberta education stakeholder organizations. It incorporated that promise as part of an enduring commitment to respond to the Calls to Action from the TRC, particularly Calls #62, 63, and 64 regarding Education for Reconciliation.

I write as …. *(Your personal perspective e.g. member of United Church, grandparent, teacher, parent. Share any experience of teaching and learning, changes you’ve seen in what is taught and the impact, related to residential schools, treaties, and Indigenous history and current concerns and contributions).*

The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the TRC, points to education as the key to reconciliation, stating, “Education got us into this mess and education will get us out of it”. Unfortunately, it seems a further mess is in development.

I take particular note of the following deep concerns with the Social Studies draft curriculum:

1. Indigenous peoples’ contributions are taught only in an historical context. There is no mention of Métis, Inuit or First Nations in any contemporary context.
2. Treaties are introduced in grade 4 and Indian Residential schools are taught in grade 5, with some reference to them in grade 6. This is too little too late.
3. Strong Eurocentric, American and Christian-centric colonial attitudes, including sympathy for white supremacy (Examples include: in Grade 6, the assumption is that the majority of the students are Christian who will “study other faith traditions so that unfamiliar practices become respected and understood in a pluralistic society.” Indigenous traditions are not included in the investigation of ethnic and religious diversity. Support for the KKK is explored, rather than opposition.)
4. Parts of the curriculum fail to reference specific First Nations, but instead usually lump Métis, Inuit and First Nations all together.
5. The Métis resistance is inappropriately called an uprising. The tragic battle involving Métis at Duck Lake, Saskatchewan is minimized into a map skills outcome. (Grade 4)

This draft Social Studies curriculum must not serve as a basis of education in this province.

Schools have such an important role to play in reconciliation and becoming an anti-racist society. It is through age appropriate curriculum that students are given the tools and knowledge to understand our collective history and current identity.

**I ask the Alberta Government to:**

1. **reject this draft Social Studies K-6 curriculum and return to what was already in progress before the Curriculum Review panel was appointed, and was being developed in a non-partisan way.**

**2) live up to the Joint Commitment to Action, and fully responding to the TRC Calls to Action.**

 **3) listen in good faith to current educational expertise, and to First Nations, Métis, and**

 **Inuit peoples; and involve them in the development of all aspects of the curriculum in**

 **true collaboration.**

I call upon you to maintain a strong and transparent commitment to Education for Reconciliation. I eagerly await the Alberta Government’s decision to take the right and honorable action to withdraw the entire March 2021-released draft K-6 Social Studies curriculum, and I look forward to receiving your response to this letter.

With prayers for all Creator’s children and reconciliation,

Cc:

**Your local school board**

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