

2SLGBTQI organizations taking legal action against Saskatchewan government over “Use of Preferred First Name and Pronouns by Students” Policy

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REGINA, SK — For trans and gender diverse students in Saskatchewan, Tuesday will be the first day of school. For their supporters at UR Pride Centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity, represented by Egale Canada and McCarthy Tétrault LLP as co-legal counsel, it will be the first day of a court challenge to the province's ban on using gender diverse students' correct names and pronouns without parental consent.


Lawyers have been directed to attend an initial conference before a judge of the Court of King's Bench on the morning of Tuesday, September 5 at 11 AM C.S.T, as students and teachers across Saskatchewan return to the classroom.

Under a policy announced by the Saskatchewan government on August 22, school personnel are prohibited from using gender diverse students' correct names and pronouns without consent from a parent or guardian. The ban applies to students under 16; students 16 and older may provide consent themselves.

On Thursday, after the provincial government refused demands to delay the implementation of the ban, UR Pride Centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity, a community organization in Regina, launched a legal proceeding to have the ban declared unconstitutional and to stop it from being implemented. UR Pride is represented by Egale Canada — the leading national 2SLGBTQI human rights organization — and McCarthy Tétrault LLP.

“The province is playing politics with trans kids' lives. That's outrageous and dangerous,” said Ariana Giroux (she, her), UR Pride's Executive Director. “Of course parents should be involved in the lives of their children, but it is also important to ensure the rights and safety of children and youth. The reality is that some 2SLGBTQI youth might not be safe to be themselves at home — making it even more crucial to ensure that school environments are safe and inclusive places.”

“This is a blatantly discriminatory policy that will put gender diverse students at risk. It violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It will harm young people each day it is in force,” said Adam Goldenberg (he, him), lead counsel for UR Pride and a partner at McCarthy Tétrault LLP. “We are bringing this case to court quickly so that trans and gender non-binary and non-conforming students can get back to growing up with the support at school they deserve.”



Bennett Jensen (he, him), Director, Legal, of Egale Canada and co-counsel for UR Pride, added: “When 2SLGBTQI+ people are under attack around the world, the last thing anyone needs is misguided government policy that makes life more difficult for some of the most vulnerable young people in our communities. Our message to gender diverse students in Saskatchewan is: stay strong; help is on the way, and soon. Saskatchewan's provincial government won't leave trans kids alone, and so we'll see them in court.”

Tuesday's conference is not a formal court hearing and is not open to the media or the public. UR Pride's lawyers will ask the court to schedule a public hearing of the injunction motion on an expedited basis.

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