**Child and Youth Advocate releases report on Policy 713 as requested by the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick.**

August 15, 2023

**FREDERICTON, N.B. –** Kelly Lamrock, the Child, and Youth Advocate of New Brunswick, has released his report on Education Policy 713. In his report, the Advocate makes a total of twenty-four recommendations as well as proposing an amended version of Policy 713.

The Advocate’s office heard from hundreds of individual New Brunswickers and dozens of organizations. The office held numerous meetings with key stakeholders as well as experts in the fields of law, medicine, psychology, education, and social work. Without this vital input the Advocate could not have completed this important work.

“We need to take the debate on Policy 713 away from soundbites and divisive language. It is not bigoted for a parent to want to know more about their child’s major decisions. It is not extreme to want children to have privacy and autonomy when they are old and mature enough to exercise it. Lamrock writes in his report

“The finding for the purposes of this review is that the changes to Policy 713 place limits on a child’s legal rights to equality, privacy and accommodation and constitute a *prima facie* violation of not only the statutory conditions of the *Human Rights Act*, the *Education Act*, and the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, but also the child’s rights under Sections 7 and 15 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms”,* states Lamrock.

There has been confusion created by the vagueness in drafting Policy 713. The Department of Education has very apparently not seriously and comprehensively considered the legal ramifications of its policy changes. This has left the Department, teachers, and administrators legally vulnerable.

The Advocate wishes to be clear on this point: disclosing the names of students on the official register, and/or ‘deadnaming’ students who are mature minors or who have the capacity and maturity to request that preferred name and pronouns be used and respected is a violation of their protected rights under the *Human Rights Act* and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms.*

The Advocate suggests that if the Department does not change its Policy 713 to conform to legal obligations, the District Education Councils could and should make use of the Advocate’s suggested policy.

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