

June 22, 2017

Providing clarification regarding Cornerstone Christian Academy Society

There has been a great deal of public feedback regarding a perceived conflict between Battle River School Division and the Cornerstone Christian Academy Society Board.

The Battle River School Division Board of Trustees, as a group, wants to emphasize that we stand together on this issue. Many people have received inaccurate information, resulting in a multitude of highly inappropriate and hateful comments addressed to Board Chair Laurie Skori and Community Relations Advisor Diane Hutchinson.

Battle River School Division welcomes feedback from parents and school communities on all issues. However, the school division will not tolerate personal targeting of anyone in our Division. We are receiving advice on how to best legally address some of the specific slanderous comments that have been received.

In addition, the BRSD Board of Trustees would like to clarify what appear to be the most common misconceptions that exist, by reiterating statements that were made at the June 15 meeting of the BRSD Board.

- Cornerstone Christian is an alternative school offered by our public school division. As an alternative program within the public school division, Cornerstone is a public school subject to the same rules and regulations as every other school and program within the division, such as the Alberta School Act and Alberta Human Rights Legislation.
- There has been a positive working relationship in place since Cornerstone was welcomed into the public school division in 2009.
- At no time in the eight year shared history have members of the Board of Trustees entered the school's classrooms to direct any part of the educational program, including the Christian focus. It has never been the role of the Board to do this and it is not their intention to do this in the future.
- Battle River School Division was never suggesting or advocating that this Board would review scripture and decide which are appropriate or not. We do not consider it to be our place to determine what is offensive or not offensive. We do expect staff of the Christian School, as we do the staff of every school, to follow the obligations of the law and to present a broad perspective on all issues. We feel that staff at Cornerstone school ensure this is happening now. We do expect that to continue.

Representatives of the BRSD Board met with members of the CCA Society Board earlier this week. It was a positive discussion and both groups are hopeful that we can reach a place of understanding. While our organizations are engaged in this conversation we both feel it would be best not to make additional comment to the media.

Lorrie Sitler, Vice Chair

Battle River School Division Board of Trustees