

7 March, 2025

Hon. Lisa Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care
Ministry of Education and Child Care
Via email: ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Subject: Request for Modernization of Gender Data Input in MyEducation BC

Dear Minister Beare,

We are writing to request the modernization of MyEducation BC (MyEdBC) to better reflect the Ministry of Education and Child Care's (MECC's) commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and reflect the MECC's support for SOGI-123. As it stands, the MyEdBC system requires gender to be entered for every student and staff profile, yet provides only two options: male or female. This rigid framework fails to recognize the lived realities of many individuals and is not in alignment with the BC Human Rights Code, nor in alignment with other provincial bodies that collect and store gender information such as ICBC, and the BC Vital Statistics Agency. Allowing students and staff to have pronouns that reflect their identity listed in MyEDBC is an important part of making everyone feel welcome, safe, and included in BC schools.

The two options of male or female do not reflect the diversity of gender identity that exists within our community, as recognized by the Ministry of Education and Child Care¹. Further, the way this is structured can feel invalidating because it implies a distinction between gender and gender identity that doesn't align with how most people understand and experience gender. The optional gender identity seems to suggest that gender identity is something separate or secondary to a primary gender. The end result is that it seems to suggest that sex (often assigned at birth) is the primary or more important factor, while gender identity is an "add-on" rather than the actual way a person understands and expresses their gender.

We ask that your ministry update MyEdBC to include a modernized list of gender options, with only one place to denote gender, and include the following options:

- **Girl or Woman**
- **Boy or Man**
- **Non-Binary**
- **Two-Spirit**
- **Self Described**
- **Not Disclosed**

This change would not only bring MyEdBC into alignment with human rights and inclusion principles but would also create a more supportive and affirming environment for students and staff, and allow for anyone to not disclose their gender identity for any reason.

¹ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase/diversity-and-inclusion/gender-diversity>

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Additionally, we are concerned about how gender data is stored, accessed, and used within the education system. As we have witnessed in the United States, the improper collection and handling of gender data can have serious consequences, including potential misuse or unintended exposure of sensitive information. If gender data must continue to be collected in MyEdBC, we strongly recommend that the Ministry implement robust safeguards to ensure:

- **Strict access controls** to gender-related data, limiting its availability only to those with a clear and necessary purpose.
- **Transparency on how gender data is used** to ensure it does not contribute to discrimination or harm.
- **The option for individuals to amend or remove gender data** should they wish to do so.

Modernizing MyEdBC to reflect the diversity of gender identities is a necessary step toward ensuring that all students and staff in BC's education system feel seen, respected, and safe, reflecting the values upheld by your Ministry and school districts across BC. We appreciate your attention to this issue and thank you for your work to ensure BC schools are inclusive, safe, and welcoming.

Sincerely,

Laura Kwong, Chair
SD40 DPAC

Nicky Dunlop, Past President
SD22 DPAC

CC Kathryn Krishna, Deputy Minister for Education
Jennifer McCrae, Associate Deputy Minister for Education
Renee Jordan, Director Student Information and Education Insights