



LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY AND SERVICE FOR MANITOBA'S PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS

January 8, 2021

Honourable Cliff Cullen  
Minister of Education  
450 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Cullen:

Every year, school boards across Manitoba meet during the Manitoba School Boards Association fall regional meetings to review resolutions put forward by the membership that speak to significant public policy interests in all matters of education. From time to time, a region will deem one of these resolutions to be of such import that it is to be sent to the relevant public authority as a call for action. In November, 2020, our membership made such a request in context of the establishment of an e-repository to support the learning and teaching needs of all Manitoba students. In the 2019/20 Budget Year, a decision was made by Manitoba Education to reallocate funding from the former Manitoba Learning Resource Centre (MLRC) towards the establishment of greater virtual and online resources.

We understand that this decision was aligned with an internal review by the Department of user rates of the MLRC's resources. It was concluded that demand for in-person services through MLRC had diminished over time due to preference among instructional professionals for access to electronic materials. The physical inventory and assets of the MLRC were subsequently distributed across all school divisions on a first come, first served basis. Manitoba Education had further indicated that an e-repository was to be established to replace the MLRC, and to better support the needs of educators across Manitoba.

On behalf of school divisions province-wide, MSBA therefore reminds Manitoba Education of the commitment to establish such an e-repository. We formally request that Manitoba education take appropriate measures to establish such an e-resources repository in time for the 2021/22 school year.

In contrast to the e-repository that has been established as of January, 2021 to respond to immediate virtual and remote learning needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, the earlier need for an e-resources repository had been focused on promoting access to a variety of virtual library resources and materials under common provincial license. Just as the former MLRC had achieved significant cost efficiencies by providing a "one stop shop" for educators to access a variety of print and physical teaching/curricular aides, so the e-resources repository would serve as an environmentally friendly and sustainable collection of curricular and instructional resources to meet needs, and help avoid expenditures on acquiring the same set of resources by each division.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of this request and look forward to hearing from you in due time concerning the Department's plans for establishment of the e-resources repository.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan M. Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alan M. Campbell  
President