

# letter to the editor

The best chance for a new initiative to succeed is through careful and thorough planning, getting advice from experts, and communicating clearly.

Bill 64 was introduced on Mar. 15, and now, in July, the government is striking Parent and Student Advisory Councils (interestingly, four of the 29 students selected are from private schools), and are demanding the job descriptions and procedural information from Senior Administration to see how to implement what they have included in the Bill. In 2019, at a cost of close to \$1 million, this same government struck a commission to look at education reform, but the 75 recommendations made by the commission are not included in Bill

64. Read the first paragraph again.

In the June 24 edition of the Selkirk Record, the government submitted an article in response to dispel "misinformation" around Bill 64, and most of the responses centre on the best strategy. Just to be clear, "strategy" is not legislation, and that is an important distinction. It should be pointed out that there are omissions in the article: for instance, it is true that the criteria for closing a school is the same as in the current Public Schools Act, but in Bill 64, it states that only one criteria needs to be met to close a school.

The article goes on to say that the best strategy accepts 60 recommendations of the K – 12 Review and accepts the remaining 15 in principle,

but there is no evidence of this in the Bill, nor are they articulated.

Parent Engagement Officers will be hired in each of Manitoba's 690 schools at a cost of about \$12,000,000 per year. They will be tasked with increasing marginalized, visible minority and Indigenous voices. It's not clear how they will accomplish this task or how \$40 million will be saved.

The article indicates that directors will be "hired through a competitive process" but 69.1 of Bill 64 states that the directors are "appointed...subject to the Minister's approval".

"Fact vs. Fiction", or "Smoke & Mirrors?"

- Lena Kublick  
Selkirk resident