



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

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Re: Passage of Bill 225 Marks a Milestone for Early Literacy in Manitoba**

Winnipeg, MB — The Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA) recognizes the passage of Bill 225 – *The Early Reading Screening Act*, significant legislation that will enhance early literacy outcomes for students across the province.

MSBA President Alan M. Campbell acknowledged the revised bill as a collaborative success, stating:

“The passage of an amended Bill 225 is a win-win-win, for school boards and our staff, for parents, caregivers and advocates, and most of all for our students.”

Through careful deliberation and consideration of the feedback received during committee hearings, the final version of Bill 225 now better aligns with the capacity of Manitoba’s public education system. It reflects a shared commitment to the academic success of every child. Successful implementation of the bill will depend upon addressing constraints upon resources and expertise currently available in schools to meet diverse learning needs.

“Every child matters and we look forward to engaging in sustained advocacy with the government to ensure every student has what they need to succeed. Changes such as those brought forward under *The Early Reading Screening Act* can bring positive change and we are hopeful that the government will also provide much needed capacity and resources to fully meet its requirements” noted President Campbell.

Revisions made to the *Act* now mandate twice-annual universal reading screenings for students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 in three of those four years, using tools approved by the Minister of Education. These screenings will enable earlier identification of students requiring additional support and will optimize how educators conduct assessments for enhanced interventions.

The MSBA acknowledges the leadership of MLA Cindy Lamoureux, who drafted and introduced the bill. Her dedication to equity and inclusion in education, and her willingness to work with partners across sectors have been instrumental in responding to a clearly identified need.

The Association also extends its appreciation to Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning Tracy Schmidt and her colleagues in government for their cross-party collaboration. Their efforts have ensured that *The Early Reading Screening Act* reflects what is possible and practical for public education in Manitoba.

The amended bill’s passage comes just days after the release of the “Right to Read” report by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. The report highlights systemic barriers to literacy and calls for urgent reforms, including universal screening and improved instructional practices.

President Campbell added:

“Manitoba educators have received the Commission’s report with great interest, and the passage of *the Early Reading Screening Act* will place emphasis on the critical findings raised by the Commissioner, including those brought forward by the Manitoba School Boards Association on behalf of its members.”

The MSBA remains committed to working with all partners to ensure that every child in Manitoba has the opportunity to develop strong literacy skills and thrive in their educational journey. The Association believes that the requirements provided under Bill 225 as amended are a constructive development for meeting these needs and looks forward to future discussions with government to ensure funding and resources remain aligned with the promise and potential of all that the bill seeks to achieve.

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