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May 21, 2013

To: Liz Sandals
Ontario Minister of Education
minister.edu@ontario.ca

Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario
premier@ontario.ca

cc: Mainstream LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ Media
Members of the Public by way of our website

Dear Hons. Liz Sandals and Kathleen Wynne,

Given That

Following the 2012 enactment of Bill 13, the *Accepting Schools Act*, the Ontario Education Act now states that:

- 303.1(1) Every school board shall support pupils who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that promote a safe and inclusive learning environment, the acceptance of and respect for others and the creation of a positive school climate, including...
- (d) activities or organizations that promote the awareness and understanding of, and respect for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, including organizations with the name gay-straight alliance or another name.

And That

Following the enactment of Bill 13, the Ontario Education Act now states that:

- 303.1(2) For greater certainty, neither the board nor the principal shall refuse to allow a pupil to use the name gay-straight alliance or a similar name for an organization described in clause (1)(d).

And That

Following the enactment of Bill 13, the Ontario Education Act now states that:

- 303.1(5) A board shall comply with this section in a way that does not adversely affect any right of a pupil guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.



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The latter of which includes, among other things:

- freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression
- freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- freedom of association

And That

Bill 13 was, according to the Preamble, enacted because the People of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario believe that:

[A]ll students should feel safe at school and deserve a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability;

and that

[S]tudents need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitude and values to engage the world and others critically, which means developing a critical consciousness that allows them to take action on making their schools and communities more equitable and inclusive for all people, including LGBTTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirited, intersex, queer and questioning) people;

WE QUESTION...

What is the Ministry of Education and the Government of Ontario prepared to do if, as the Toronto Catholic District School Board might do at their May 23 Board Meeting:* a school board passes a motion that specifically bans LGBTTIQ-affirming student groups?

We request a response at your earliest convenience,

Nick Mulé

Queer Ontario Chair

On behalf of the Queer Ontario Steering Committee

* See Item 10(a) of the TCDSB's May 23rd, 2013 Meeting Agenda, available on the TCDSB website at: <http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/TrusteesoftheBoard/boardmeeting/Pages/Board,-May-23,-2013.aspx>