

Human rights settlement results in inclusive Gender Identity Guidelines for RETSD students, staff

(March 11, 2016) Elizabeth Burgos and the River East Transcona School Division have reached a voluntary resolution of her complaint filed with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission in October 2014. Ms. Burgos's complaint alleged that RETSD discriminated against her transgender, elementary school-aged daughter when she was refused access to the girls' washroom in her school.

RETSD became the first school division in Manitoba to publish Gender Identity Guidelines earlier this year. Now, as a result of this settlement, it has made further revisions to the guidelines that provide greater clarity and emphasis on the rights of transgender students and employees. Utilizing a rights-based approach to gender inclusion, the Guidelines show RETSD acknowledges that transgender persons have equal rights.

"This has been a very enlightening journey and we would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of divisional staff and the guidance and input from the Human Rights Commission and Ms. Burgos. We are extremely proud of what has been accomplished collaboratively," says Kelly Barkman, superintendent of RETSD.

Ms. Burgos's complaint was scheduled to be heard before an independent human rights adjudicator this summer; however, as the parties have reached a resolution, the hearing has been cancelled. The parties have agreed to keep the details of the settlement confidential.

RETSD's new gender identity guidelines are available on its website.

"This complaint has been followed closely by many across the country who were anxious to learn how the Division would respond to this issue. Our goal was to ensure that there was better education around the rights of transgender individuals. We are pleased that our ongoing discussions with RETSD through the Commission have resulted in a tool that others can adopt so transgender students and staff feel protected and welcomed in their communities," says Ms. Burgos.

[Gender Identity Guidelines for Students](#)

[Gender Identity Guidelines for Employees](#)

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