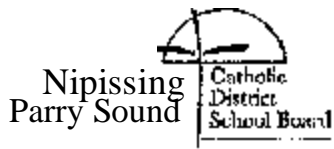


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March 10, 2008

Ms. Brenda Robertson
Canadian Federation of University Women
24 Canterbury Crescent
North Bay ON P1C 1K7

Dear Ms. Robertson

On behalf of the directors of education for the four district school boards in Nipissing and Parry Sound - Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord, Conseil scolaire de district public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario, Near North District School Board, Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board - I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your recent presentation on the HIV/AIDS Education initiatives currently being undertaken by the Canadian Federation of University Women.

As you know, our local district school boards have participated in various K-12 education activities in support of HIV/AIDS education, particularly over the last two years. It is our belief that a good HIV/AIDS education program must not only present the facts, but must go beyond the facts by striving to develop related attitudes, values and skills through a planned sequence of learning opportunities.

In support of this belief, all four district school boards share a partnership with the Patrick4Life Organization and are represented on the Board of Directors. As an extension of our involvement with Patrick4Life, 2000 students from across our 4 Boards have participated and will continue to participate in the ten-week Partici-Patrick HIV/AIDS awareness program, which involves students learning about HIV/AIDS, setting personal fitness goals, participating in leadership roles and sharing their learning with their families, the school and larger community.

In addition, in September 2007, a group of teachers from each Board were provided with a professional development opportunity on HIV/AIDS. The result and feedback from this teacher education session indicate that more is needed to assist us with the implementation of education initiatives related to HIV/AIDS, and, of course, healthy living and character development as a whole. Both of these areas are gaining momentum not only at our local level, but provincially as well.

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Below is a list of specific initiatives/activities undertaken in each of our district school boards:

Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord

On September 18th a teacher representing each of our fourteen elementary schools was provided with a professional development opportunity on HIV/AIDS. The teachers had the opportunity to experience a simulated activity aimed at increasing teacher awareness of HIV transmission. During this activity, several of them "came into contact" with the HIV virus but did not become infected because they had made wise lifestyle decisions. Others became "infected" with the HIV virus and were given the opportunity to express their feelings and fears.

Several teaching resources as well as a teacher's guide: *VIH/SIDA. une demarche pedagogique pour les ecoles catholiques de langue francaise de l'Ontario.* were offered to each participant.

This guide, produced by the Institute for Catholic Education, contains three lessons per grade level:

- Christian attitudes and values
- Basic facts
- Prevention

Our three secondary schools also received this teacher's guide. The feedback from this teacher education session indicated an increased understanding of HIV/AIDS and a willingness to use the resources.

Conseil scolaire public de district du Nord-Est de l'Ontario

Parallel and in addition to the North Bay Partici-Patrick initiative, a Superintendent's committee is currently developing the extension of the prior mentioned AIDS awareness program. to all grade 4 to 8 students in our 6 elementary schools and to all phys ed classes in our 5 secondary schools. This program will be initiated this spring.

Near North District School Board

- Revision of elementary healthy life styles curriculum resource for Grades 4 to 8 to highlight HIV/AIDS education
- In-service and implementation of the healthy life styles curriculum resource for Grades 4 -8
- Awareness of HIV/Aids through Patrick4Life initiatives, such as the HIV/AIDS Log Book for students in the junior division and the Partici-Patrick Events

Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board

- Junior-level teacher in-service and training on HIV/Aids Education
- Implementation and integration of Curriculum Support Document: *Aids - A Catholic Education approach to HIV (Institute for Catholic Education)*

- Planned extension for targeted teacher In-service at secondary level and increased secondary involvement in the Partici-Partlck Event

It is our hope that these activities will pave the way for other learning opportunities, will create greater teacher comfort with content delivery and will extend knowledge and awareness among youth, their parents and the greater community surrounding and supporting them

We congratulate the Canadian Federation of University Women on their promotion of HIV/AIDS education and extend our best wishes for much success in this endeavour.

Sincerely



Anna Marie Bitonti
Director of Education

AMB:jb

- c. Raymond Lessard, Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord
Michel Robineau, Consell scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario
Heli Vail, Near North District School Board