



Re. The One Million March for Children September 2023

The One Million March for Children, an action being held by several groups claiming to be protecting children, is being held tomorrow (Wednesday, September 20, 2023) across the province and country. To be very clear, these marches/protests are not for the children, nor are they about keeping children safe. They are about propagating a transphobic and homophobic agenda that will most certainly harm children.

The Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators believes firmly in inclusive pedagogy and practices. We do not condone movements or policies that hinder us from creating safe spaces for everyone in classrooms across Ontario.

This is increasingly poignant following Saskatchewan and New Brunswick enacting gender and pronoun policies, and comments by Ontario Education Minister, Stephen Lecce, in support of informing parents if children wish to go by another name or change their pronouns, which could needlessly put them in stressful or dangerous situations.

CODE condemns actions against policies that help educators protect marginalized and vulnerable students unequivocally. We must work together to provide safe spaces for children to be their true selves and to feel free to flourish and develop. Tomorrow's march does not protect children. It is a movement to roll back 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion in sexual education and representation across the curriculum.

CODE calls on all educators, in drama and dance and beyond, to stand together against groups and movements that would have us create unsafe spaces for students. We strive for inclusion, acceptance and representation for everyone. We will not roll back the clock on human rights.

We must counteract hate with love, and exclusion with inclusion. If you wish to get involved, please write to your MPs, MPPs, and school board trustees. Encourage them to work for the safety of all children at all times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Sheahan".

Matthew Sheahan
President