

Manitoba News Release

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February 23, 2012

PROVINCE TO PROVIDE \$300,000 IN NEW FUNDING FOR RESPECT IN SCHOOL PROGRAM: ALLAN

The province will dedicate \$300,000 in new funding over three years to partner with former National Hockey League player Sheldon Kennedy to promote safer, more respectful schools through the new, online Respect in School program, Education Minister Nancy Allan announced today.

"Respect in School is part of creating learning environments that make students and their families feel safe, valued and respected. Such environments are essential for promoting student engagement and enhancing academic achievement and overall student well-being," said Allan.

Respect in School is a bilingual, online program that helps support all adults working with students in a school environment to better understand and respond to incidents of bullying, abuse, harassment and neglect. Participants receive a certificate upon completion of the program and users can continue to access the application to review course content, including curriculum updates, for up to five years.

The program builds on the Respect in Sport program co-founded by Sheldon Kennedy, the former Calgary Flames player, and Wayne McNeil, co-founder of Respect Group Inc. Respect in Sport assists coaches in responding effectively to incidents of abuse and bullying in sport.

"We all play a role in ensuring safe, respectful environments for children and youth," said Kennedy. "I applaud the Province of Manitoba for adopting a proactive approach to protecting students by giving school leaders the tools they need to take action to prevent bullying or abuse of any kind."

"Respect in School is an important tool in creating safe environments for students," said Allan. "I am very pleased Sheldon Kennedy will be the spokesperson for Respect in School, as he is already a champion of protecting kids in sport across Canada."

This is the first year of the province wide implementation of Respect in School. The program has already been piloted in one rural and two northern school divisions. It is currently available to all school divisions that would like their administrators, teachers and support staff, including school bus drivers, educational assistants and parent volunteers, to take advantage of the online curriculum.

"Through its support for Respect in School, the government has underlined its commitment - a commitment that is shared by school boards - to ensure that our schools are safe and welcoming places for everyone," said Robert Rivard, president of the Manitoba School Boards Association.