

From: EDUC Learning Division EDUC:EX [<mailto:EDUC.learningdivision@gov.bc.ca>]
Sent: Thursday, June 12, 2014 9:50 AM
To: 'manager@bcnature.ca'
Subject: #174567 - BC Nature Correspondence on "Big Ideas" education program

CLIFF: 174567

Dear Mr. Visser,

Thank you for your email of May 12, 2014, to the Honourable Peter Fassbender regarding ecological literacy. Your message has been forwarded to me for response as I am the Superintendent of Learning with the Learning Division and am responsible for curriculum. I am pleased to respond on the Minister's behalf.

I appreciate your organization's thoughtful analysis of the draft curricula and feedback. The review and feedback processes for draft curriculum are currently underway. As feedback has been received, we have been compiling comments and suggestions for further consideration and analysis.

With respect to your comments, ecological literacy was seen as important by the members of many of the curriculum development teams and there was no intention to minimize content on ecology. The science rationale highlights the importance of a place-based approach to science and encourages supporting students to develop a connection to the natural world and the ecosystems in their community. The rationale states: *"The Science curriculum takes a place-based approach to science learning. Students will develop place-based knowledge about the area in which they live, learning about and building on Aboriginal knowledge and other traditional knowledge of the area. This provides a basis for an intuitive relationship with and respect for the natural world; connections to their ecosystem and community; and a sense of relatedness that encourages lifelong harmony with nature...Students have opportunities to develop personal and social awareness of their roles and responsibilities with respect to the environment...The curriculum's intent is to develop scientifically literate citizens who have a critical awareness of the role of science in society, combined with a caring and responsible disposition, and an understanding of the social, ethical, and environmental dimensions of issues. Scientifically literate citizens are able to use scientific evidence, as well as their knowledge from other areas of learning, to develop their own views, discuss and debate, and make informed decisions in their daily lives and about broader issues while maintaining their curiosity and wonder about the natural world."* For your reference, the draft rationale can be accessed at: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/goals-rationale/Science>

In addition to learning standards and big ideas related to the connections between humans and the natural environment throughout the grades in the Social Studies drafts, one of the Social Studies draft goals states: *develop an understanding of the interaction between humans and the environment, the impact of the physical environment on the development of human societies and cultures, and the impact of human activities on the environment.* For your reference, the draft goals can be accessed at: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/goals-rationale/Social%20Studies>

I will also note that one of the major goals of curriculum transformation is to highlight interdisciplinary connections between different areas of learning. The environment, climate change, and sustainability are natural interdisciplinary topics because of the interconnections between science, technology, and society, and will likely be featured prominently as suggested interdisciplinary topics. That said, it is apparent from the feedback that we have received thus far on science drafts, that more explicit focus on ecology and the natural world is important and we plan to act upon this feedback. We hope to be able to better address this important area both through revisions to the current drafts and by adding further elaborations/clarifications and inquiry questions to the concepts/content or big ideas.

I will emphasize that the curriculum documents on the web are not a finished product; they are draft documents and we are actively seeking feedback and suggestions for improvement. We appreciate BC Nature's feedback.

Thank you for taking the time to share your perspective.

Best regards,

Rod Allen
Chief Superintendent of Learning
Ministry of Education