complaint brought forward at Glen Stewart Primary in April 2024, which has been reported in the court proceedings and media.

In April 2024, when it was brought to the school's attention, statements were gathered from students, parents, and staff. Based on the information available at the time, it was determined that the incident was non-sexual in nature. At the time, it was believed the accused lacked training and experience in teaching young children. With the information available, given the incident was deemed non-sexual in nature, it would not have been escalated to law enforcement.

Again, when the charges were laid, we proactively contacted Glen Stewart Primary School regarding the April 2024 incident. Together, with the new context about the charges, the family and Public Schools Branch chose to report the incident to law enforcement. This contributed to the criminal investigation and ultimate prosecution of Matthew Craswell.

On how investigations are conducted:
Investigations of all types of complaints in schools involve gathering statements from the student, parents, teachers, and staff. Teachers' representatives and the Public Schools Branch can be involved in some instances. Together, the gathered information is evaluated and a collective determination is made. If there are concerns about criminal activity, child safety, or predatory behaviour, these are escalated to the relevant authority such as Child Protective Services or the RCMP. Families would also be informed and offered support if there were concerns that their children were somehow impacted.

We are actively evaluating these processes and understand they will also be assessed through the provincial review.

On what has changed:
Previously, there was no way for the Public Schools Branch to track reports over time on individual staff. Through this school year, we have begun tracking complaints, reports, and disciplinary actions centrally. This will also be retroactive. That way, we can monitor more closely what is happening and step in proactively to protect students if there are disturbing trends.

With the Department of Education, we have implemented expanded and enhanced training for all staff, from bus drivers to principals to identify and report suspicions of predatory behaviour. We have also trained human resources staff in workplace investigation protocols.

We will continue to advocate that the scope of vulnerable sector checks include interprovincial and international elements such as extradition orders.

We are also pursuing ongoing conversations with Child Protection Services and law enforcement to ensure our processes for reporting complaints are clear and robust.

On supports for students, parents, and staff:
The Public Schools Branch will be circulating a resource handout to help families who may need guidance supporting their children in these upsetting times. The handout references attentive listening, age-appropriate conversations about boundaries, and approaching the matter with calmness and kindness as there are people in our community who are deeply and personally affected by this situation.