education training. With the new information revealed during the court proceedings, it is now clear that the incidents were sexual in nature, contrary to what was initially believed.

Upon Craswell's arrest in August 2024, we contacted the schools where Craswell worked to determine if there were any other reports. At this time, we are not aware of any other incidents.

Schools are meant to be safe spaces for all students to learn, and this situation has shaken the faith of many in our communities that we can deliver on that promise. Every student has the right to a safe environment while they learn at our schools. And the fact that even one student was placed in a situation that made them uncomfortable and that was inappropriate, breaks our hearts.

We are taking these incidents as a call to action. We have started a province-wide tracking system of incidents and reports of misconduct at our schools. Previously, there had been no centralized monitoring of reporting of incidents, so the Public Schools Branch could not readily identify trends.

This spring, staff participated in Commit to Kids training and the Human Resource team at the Public Schools Branch completed Workplace Investigation training. We will continue to facilitate professional development opportunities for all staff to equip them to recognize and report predatory behaviour or warning signs.

We will also advocate that the RCMP and policing services expand their background checks, especially regarding vulnerable sector checks, to include inter-provincial and international records including, but not limited to, extradition orders. Based on what we know now, Matthew Craswell should never have passed his background check.

Our staff pride themselves on working with students to help them become well-equipped for a successful future in our communities. Changing the system takes time but we will work tirelessly to rebuild your trust in us to protect, teach, and guide your children.

If you have questions, we ask that you direct your questions to the Director's office of the Public Schools Branch.

Thank you,

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Public Schools Branch