International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Coming in March 2008!

Make A Case Against Racism ... an innovative youth-focused initiative designed to:

- engage students in an exciting learning project
- reaffirm diversity and multicultural ideals
- help make British Columbia and our world a better place

British Columbia’s Ministry of Attorney General is emphasizing the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21, 2008, by providing support and encouragement to schools — especially students — to participate. Our public schools remain one of the most important points of interaction for people of diverse backgrounds and origins.

The launch of Make A Case Against Racism — a unique, youth-focused initiative that takes a proactive and fun approach to addressing racism and encouraging personal responsibility — provides schools with the opportunity to plan to participate in advance of the March 21st observance date.

Here’s what’s planned...

Recognizing that March 21, 2008, is a statutory holiday (Good Friday) in British Columbia and occurs during the spring break for schools, the launch for the Make A Case Against Racism initiative is March 14, 2008.

As part of the initiative, the following resources will be provided to schools:

1. Resources for Teachers (Grades 4 to 7)

Beginning on Mar. 3, 2008, teachers may go to: www.WelcomeBC.ca to download a user-friendly teacher’s guide to Make A Case Against Racism!

The guide provides activities to engage students in understanding racism and how to deal with racial discrimination. The Make A Case Against Racism support materials complement B.C.’s provincial curriculum and the B.C. Performance Standards for Social Responsibility.
The teacher’s guide will:

- enable teachers to link the featured Make A Case Against Racism activities to learning in one or more subjects, such as Music, Visual Arts or Social Studies;

- propose other possible instructional activities that can be undertaken to address anti-racism themes in the context of the provincially prescribed curriculum. Activities will be relevant to various subjects, including Social Studies, Health and Career Education, Music, Visual Arts and English Language Arts;

- suggest ways of connecting observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with existing, school-wide initiatives you may be undertaking already. Activities might include a code of conduct for your school or taking steps to make the school a safe and welcoming place for all students by eliminating bullying and harassment; and

- identify various other resources (e.g. the B.C. Performance Standards for Social Responsibility) available to support school-based efforts to eliminate racism and foster positive citizenship among young people.

2. Resources for Students (Grades 4 to 7)

In the weeks ahead, your school will receive additional materials supporting the Make A Case Against Racism initiative. These materials will be provided in class sets of 25. These resources include:

- poster-brochures designed to appeal and speak to young people aged nine to 12, and are being mailed to your school for direct distribution to students. They are most effectively used to support classroom discussions and other learning activities, however, they can also be distributed immediately to engage student interest in the Make A Case Against Racism initiative;

- Youth Against Violence wallet cards that provide valuable contact information to help students get help when they or someone they know needs help; and

- arrangements through Music B.C. Industry Association, to give students online access to songs by B.C. musicians focusing on world music and other genres with anti-racism themes. Students may listen to, but not download, musical selections.

By taking part in the initiative, students will be able to:

- represent their understanding of the connection between music and cultural diversity through the creation of artwork for a CD case insert that affirms their opposition to racism and allows them to literally Make A Case Against Racism;

- enter their CD artwork by April 30, 2008, in a provincewide contest in which a jury of youth will select the student submissions to be featured in a professionally produced CD; and

- select their favourite songs by April 30, 2008, via online voting that will result in the playlist for the professionally produced CD.

Please plan to join in and Make A Case Against Racism!