



Atheist Freethinkers

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

***Atheist Freethinkers* welcomes the new CCQ program announced by Minister Roberge**

Montreal, 25th October 2021 – *Atheist Freethinkers* (LPA-AFT), an association which promotes secularism and supports the rights of atheists, welcomes with enthusiasm and relief yesterday’s announcement by Minister Jean-François Roberge of the new Culture and Citizenship Quebec (CCQ) program which will replace the current Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program in Quebec schools.

We are very pleased that Minister Roberge has clarified that religious affiliation will no longer be presented as the most important aspect of the identity of each individual, as is the case in the current ERC, and that citizenship instead will be emphasized.

We at LPA-AFT, like many others, have severely criticized the ERC program for its overly religious orientation. In fact, the image of believers in the ERC course is a caricature of reality, presenting them all as pious, even fundamentalist. Furthermore, the course neglects unbelievers. Worse yet, ERC teaches children that criticism of religion is intolerance or worse. In this respect, the ERC course advocates cultural relativism and thus constitutes pro-religious propaganda.

In [our brief “Teaching Critical Thinking Skills in Schools with Civic Values,”](#) submitted in February 2020 as part of the Consultations on the ERC program, we recommended that the “religious culture” component be completely removed. We also recommended, among other things, the addition of new “secularism” and “civics and citizenship” components. We are happy that these three recommendations have been retained by the ministry and we look forward to consulting the detailed contents of the new CCQ program that Minister Roberge has announced for spring 2022.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

David Rand

Pierre Marchand

bulletin at atheology.ca

pimar5 at me.com

Web site: www.atheology.ca