



WRITE TO THE REVIEW

Powerful Writing Tips

Who am I writing to?

Take time to *generously* consider the perspective of the commission before you begin your own writing.

- Ask yourself: why does the commission believe their work is important? What do they hope will come out of a review to Manitoba's educational system?
- For any government, education is a significant investment and is viewed as such. If thinking from this perspective, what "returns" might the government hope for from this investment? In what ways does cost-efficiency become a factor in their thinking?
- Why might it be important for the government to have Manitoba become the "most improved" province? What kinds of measures of improvement in education should the government consider?

Readers from the commission are more likely to consider the arguments of writers who acknowledge and show understanding of the commission's purpose and perspectives.

Sentence starters

Thank you for inviting Manitobans to participate in the K-12 commission

I believe education will be improved in Manitoba by . . .

The province will gain the highest returns on their investment in education by . . .

Am I mapping my persuasive argument onto the commission's priorities and language?

Connect your argument to the commission's six areas of focus and consider using similar language to what they have used in their public discussion papers or surveys.

- The commission will likely receive thousands of written submissions. From a practical point of view, that is a lot of data to sort through! Your job as a writer is to make it as easy as possible for the commission to see how your argument fits into their focus areas.
- The commission will likely look for key words or phrases as they read through the responses. Indicate how certain concepts could be understood or put into action.

Take your own ideas and connect the dots to the commission's goals to improved education.

Sentence starters

Like you, I want to ignite change and inspire excellence in education by . . .

My suggestions will focus on Goal 2: Student Learning . . .

I believe teachers can be most effective when . . .

Am I putting students at the heart of my suggestions?

Focus on how to support the learning, achievement, and well-being of students in the K-12 system.

- Avoid taking a stance that could be perceived as “protectionism”. Anything that is worth saving or anything that is worth changing must be justified in terms of how it will improve students’ experiences and increase their success both in school and beyond.
- Give the commission other ways to imagine how students can demonstrate success, achievement, and improvement, beyond standardized scores that rank Manitoban students to students in other provinces or other parts of the world.
- Be clear, but don’t water down an idea. Back up big ideas with evidence and/or research if possible.

Big ideas are welcome, but make sure to connect your big ideas to achievable actions and measurable outcomes.

Sentence starters

The students in my class thrive when . . . Some of the students in my class need . . .

Students who have experienced _____ are most likely to _____ because . . .

Through pedagogical documentation/class profiles/project based learning/ _____ . . .

Am I being concise and action-oriented?

Keep your response to 1-2 pages of clear, focused, purpose-driven writing.

- Less is often more. Clearly articulating one or two points is more effective than trying to fit everything you want to say about education into a single response.
- Write like a reader. Specifically, write like a reader who might have to read thousands of these responses. Make it easy for the reader to find your main points and follow your argument.
- Bullet points can be effective.
- Edit. Let go of unnecessary words. Read your work aloud.
- Suggest concrete actions and achievable solutions. Look for what we can *do* to improve education.

Animate your suggestions with achievable and aspirational actions. Think: What could we do right now? What could we do in the near future? Why would those actions make a difference? How would we know they made a difference?

Sentence starters

To put this suggestion into action, we need to . . .

Consider the following points . . .

Taking this action would likely result in _____. We could measure this by _____ . . .

WEBSITES WITH PERSUASIVE WRITING IDEAS:

http://digitallyspeaking.pbworks.com/f/Handout_PersuasiveLetterOrganizingTemplate.pdf

https://www.wikihow.com/Write-Persuasive-Letters#Sample_Letters_sub

<https://penlighten.com/persuasive-letter-format>

https://www.cengage.com/bcomm/book_content/0324375530_lehman/model_documents/persuasive_request.pdf

http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/persuasiveletter_camping.pdf