



March 7, 2018

Ref: 197389

Lisa Lapointe, Chief Coroner  
BC Coroners Service and  
First Nations Health Authority  
**Email: ChiefCoronerCorrespondence@gov.bc.ca**

Dear Ms. Lapointe:

Thank you for providing an embargoed copy of *BC Coroners Service and First Nations Health Authority: A Review of First Nation Youth and Young Adult Injury Deaths: 2010-2015* (Report). The Ministry was grateful for the opportunity to review the report prior to the November 15, 2017 release date.

The Ministry of Education has reviewed the recommendations outlined within the report and agrees that actions need to be taken to reduce the number of injuries and deaths of First Nations youth and young adults.

The Ministry is undertaking a number of actions to support vulnerable youth that respond to the recommendations outlined in the report.

- The ERASE strategy includes training for school and district staff to create positive school cultures and climates, and enhance students' connectedness to school – a strong predictor of emotional well-being. The Ministry also piloted mental health and trauma informed classroom training sessions last year.
- The Ministry funded \$4.2 million in 2017/18 to support Provincial Resource Programs that provide direct support to students with mental health needs. Four of these programs are specifically for First Nations Youth that help build a cultural connection while in program attendance.
- \$63 million annual funding is provided to school districts, through CommunityLINK (Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge) and the Vulnerable Student Supplement, to deliver programs and services to over 60,000 vulnerable students. Over 43 percent of spending is directed to child and youth workers, counsellor- or social worker-led programs.
- \$9,610 in supplementary funding per student is provided to those reported with Significant Behavioural of Mental Health Needs. This funding enables boards of education to provide supports and services for students with intensive behaviour intervention/serious mental health needs.

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- The Ministry is currently developing a school mental health and addictions framework to better support students and staff in alignment with the cross-government work being led by the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions. The framework will include a focus on trauma-informed practice and resiliency.

In addition to each of these initiatives, the Ministry acknowledges that more needs to be done to reduce barriers, increase access to services, promote cultural safety and humility, and to ensure trauma-informed care for First Nations youth and young adults. The Ministry of Education will continue to work with other ministries and educational partners to reduce the number of injuries and deaths of First Nations youth and young adults.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review the Report and for the recommendations outlined for the Ministry of Education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Fleming".

Rob Fleming  
Minister

pc: Patricia Kovacs, Director, Inclusive Education Branch