



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

November 21, 2023

The Honourable Rachna Singh
Minister of Education and Child Care
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2
ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Singh,

Subject: Support for Youth Mental Health

During the British Columbia School Trustees Association's October 2023 Provincial Council meeting, our membership, which represents all 60 boards of education in B.C., passed the following resolution:

"That BCSTA request that Government supports the creation of a working group consisting of BCSTA, applicable Ministries, Rights Holders, and Partner Groups to prepare a recommendation to the Ministry of Finance that will provide incentives for Child and Youth Mental Health Clinicians, as well as Indigenous Practitioners, to locate in rural and remote Communities to meet the needs of Children and Youth in said communities. The work is desired to be completed prior to the tabling of the Provincial Budget in 2024."

Our membership has raised specific concerns regarding access to mental health support for young people in B.C., specifically regarding the availability of services in rural and remote areas. The enclosed rationale contains an example that indicates Princeton has not had a dedicated youth mental health clinician for seven years.

Dedicated clinicians, Indigenous practitioners and related services are required to meet the growing needs of students. While school staff have done their best to rise to the occasion, we must consciously address these needs to serve vulnerable students better.

The enclosed rationale also outlines several examples of how to incentivize youth mental health professionals to take positions in rural and remote areas of our province. These strategies include loan forgiveness, labour market adjustment to wages, wage top-ups, subsidized housing, income tax credits and, in the absence of filling permanent positions, increased funding for travel allocations to bring in professionals at a more consistent rate than is currently experienced.



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Our membership has requested that a working group be created to facilitate these requests prior to Budget 2024, as the budget would need to include support related to actions tied to this work. We are committed to supporting this work at your earliest convenience, and as this timeline is short, perhaps pre-existing structures could be leveraged to align our combined efforts. Given the limited window of opportunity, we are also receptive to your recommendations on addressing this concern raised by boards of education from across the province. We thank you for considering this request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Broady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Broady

President

British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: P120239.1.2

Enclosure: Original motion rationale

CC: Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors