

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION BRIEFING NOTE**

CLIFF #219481

PREPARED FOR: Minister Stephanie Cadieux - FOR INFORMATION

TITLE: Upcoming Report from the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) on Government's Response to RCY Recommendations

PURPOSE: To summarize the upcoming RCY report on government's response to recommendations that is expected to be released during the week of October 6, 2014.

DISCUSSION:

- This report is the first comprehensive review by the RCY of government progress on implementation of RCY report recommendations and includes the RCY's assessment of how the ministry, government and other public bodies have responded to the recommendations made in 22 reports released between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2013.
- Recommendations have addressed a wide range of topics and issues and while the majority of recommendations are directed to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) some have been directed to several different government ministries and other public bodies.
- In this report the RCY introduces a new approach to counting recommendations. Details and sub-sections that were found under a recommendation have now been reframed into standalone recommendations. Therefore the overall number of recommendations is considerably higher than it was previously. For example, the 2008 report *Amanda, Savannah, Rowen and Serena: From Loss to Learning* contains 11 recommendations. However, according to background information provided by the RCY, their count of recommendations in the 2008 is now 32.
- This report takes a broad look at a variety of themes and issues addressed in the RCY reports and recommendations and identify gaps in government's responses to recommendations.
- The findings of this report include:
 - Several key recommendations directed to the Government of BC have not been implemented
 - Recommendations directed across government to multiple ministries remain unaddressed
 - Government has not committed the resources necessary to implement recommendations to address crucial deficiencies
 - There remain serious weaknesses in MCFD's ability to assess whether services for children and youth are improving
 - Some recommendations are seemingly easily implemented while others remain unaddressed
- This report contains no new recommendations.
- According to MCFD analysis, 80 per cent of the recommendations covered in this report that were directed to MCFD have been completed and the remainder is underway.

- Since 2011, MCFD and the RCY have been working more collaboratively regarding RCY reports and recommendations.
 - An agreed upon process for responding to reports and recommendations was established in 2011 and recently been revised.
 - The action plans that are developed to respond to recommendations have been embedded in the ministry's business planning processes.
 - The RCY receives quarterly status update reports regarding progress on MCFD action plan deliverables.
 - Monthly meetings are held between the Provincial Director of Child Welfare and senior staff in the Representative's office to share information, provide updates on initiatives and address any issues between the two organizations.

Program ADM/Branch: Provincial Director of Child Welfare/Quality Assurance

Program Contact (for content): Cory Heavener

Drafter: Chris Welch

Date: October 3, 2014

Teng, Zita MCF:EX

From: Sieben, Mark MCF:EX
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2014 4:33 PM
To: Teng, Zita MCF:EX
Subject: FW: RCY report summary and Qs

From: Sieben, Mark MCF:EX
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2014 11:02 AM
To: Johnston, Karen GCPE:EX
Subject: Fwd: RCY report summary and Qs

s.13

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Lowe, Sonia GCPE:EX" <Sonia.Lowe@gov.bc.ca>
Date: October 9, 2014 at 10:47:30 AM PDT
To: "Reddy, Brandon CFD:EX" <Brandon.Reddy@gov.bc.ca>, "Johnston, Karen GCPE:EX" <Karen.V.Johnston@gov.bc.ca>, "Lauvaas, Kirsten GCPE:EX" <Kirsten.Lauvaas@gov.bc.ca>, "Sieben, Mark MCF:EX" <Mark.Sieben@gov.bc.ca>, "Johnson, Sheldon GCPE:EX" <Sheldon.Johnson@gov.bc.ca>, "Lalari, Terry MCF:EX" <Terry.Lalari@gov.bc.ca>, "Richmond, Valerie D MCF:EX" <Valerie.Richmond@gov.bc.ca>, "Klingmann, Erin A GCPE:EX" <Erin.A.Klingmann@gov.bc.ca>, "Southern, Evan PREM:EX" <Evan.Southern@gov.bc.ca>, "Fraser, John Paul GCPE:EX" <JohnPaul.Fraser@gov.bc.ca>, "van Marum, Karen GCPE:EX" <Karen.vanMarum@gov.bc.ca>, "Gleeson, Kelly T GCPE:EX" <Kelly.Gleeson@gov.bc.ca>, "Lo, Mary GCPE:EX" <Mary.Lo@gov.bc.ca>, "Gordon, Matt GCPE:EX" <Matt.Gordon@gov.bc.ca>, "Bains, Parm GCPE:EX" <Parm.Bains@gov.bc.ca>, "Bajwa, Pavan GCPE:EX" <Pavan.Bajwa@gov.bc.ca>, "Lowe, Sonia GCPE:EX" <Sonia.Lowe@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RCY report summary and Qs

METL:

Over 6 yrs, 22 reports 148 recommendations. Serious careful examination. Recommendation covered in doc are necessary to ensure best possible outcomes. Report tracks progress. Overall finding is 72 percent have been implemented. Not good enough. Talking about kids. Some recommendations that have least action are the most important. My 9 have been ignored.

Call for property strategic action plan.
Plan has not worked. Gov can on tell us they've helped 72 families.

Supports for mentally ill children. None to little action.

Aboriginal children in youth. no effective x gov strategy.

Domestic violence plan. Long on generalities short on resources. No movement in domestic violence courts. No new money.

Time to reevaluate focus from debt and def reduction.

Budget for MCFD is 100 mill lower than 2008.

New zealand report, ideas are transferable. BC cant afford to be beset by poverty. Divide in income equality. Difficult work. Applaud those on front line. Time for gov to use this as an excuse.

Qs:

Less money in budget. Root cause?

MCFD budget impossible to do work in 5 areas. Hiring freeze. Shortage of ppl. About leadership and resources.

What is most serious recommendation?

Child and youth w mental health issues. Not uncommon for kid to die when on wait list.

100 mill isn't much of total budget. Strong enough minister to advocate for these changes?

Ppl are not able to do work-staff shortages. In terms of minister, tell us what you're asking for. Leadership responsibility. I'm indp, non partisan officer. Won't have skilled labour force if we keep on this track. 1 of 2 provinces that doesn't have poverty strategy.

Main recommend go beyond just those in care?

Broader issues but important because all underlying probs. Not just on MCFD, other govs have cross gov commitment. No committee. Needs to come back.

What's the next move?

Public asks us to produce report and status of recommendations, back to select standing committee. Can't compel them to make changes.

What proportion of kids in BC are affected by these issues?

Ex. 6000 complaints for domestic violence kids in the home.

1 in 5 deal w mental health. not getting there.

Keep talking about job shortages..how does that play into this?

In order to get there, we need to address these issues. Econ and social policy go hand in hand. Shortsighted.

Of the 7 gov has disregarded..what's your top one?

Child poverty but core related to mental health, domestic violence. Social cohesion and rising inequality. Gov can do better. Need X gov strat.

What would it take to get to level of staffing that you'd be happy with?

Put this to minister. Say "were confident we've got enough to do work". I don't think so. Calling me saying "I can do this job". Ministry has to do the ask. Do not accept status quo.

Who is responsible for mental health? No one. Contrary messages from x-gov. Need minister of

state for mental health.

Need to come from top?

Obviously- need clear leadership. Deteriorate so quickly can be prevented. Costs of waiting are large.

Teng, Zita MCF:EX

From: Sieben, Mark MCF:EX
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2014 4:32 PM
To: Teng, Zita MCF:EX
Subject: FW: Latest materials re: RCY Report on Progress of Recommendations
Attachments: QA_RCY_Progress_on_Recs_2008-2013_Oct_7_14_Draft10.docx; UPDATE ON SPECIFIC OUTSTANDING GOVT WIDE RECS.docx; IN_RCY Recommendations_Progress_Oct_7_14_Final.docx

From: Sieben, Mark MCF:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 8, 2014 5:30 PM
To: Benn, Jennifer MCF:EX
Subject: Fw: Latest materials re: RCY Report on Progress of Recommendations

For e-binder in morning please, Jen.
Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the TELUS network.

From: Zilkie, Heidi GCPE:EX <Heidi.Zilkie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, October 8, 2014 5:23 PM
To: Fillion, Corinna GCPE:EX; Kristofferson, Kristie L GCPE:EX; May, Stephen GCPE:EX; Mulholland, Lauren GCPE:EX; McCray, Lindsay GCPE:EX; Sieben, Mark MCF:EX; Heavener, Cory R MCF:EX; Welch, Chris MCF:EX; Lowther, Brett GCPE:EX; Thistle-Walker, Carlene GCPE:EX
Cc: Johnson, Sheldon GCPE:EX
Subject: Latest materials re: RCY Report on Progress of Recommendations

Hello everyone,

For your information – attached are the latest materials regarding the above RCY report being released tomorrow morning. Thank you all for your assistance in gathering the necessary information.

1. Issues Note
2. QAs
3. Update on outstanding government wide recommendations

Heidi Zilkie

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RCY Report Progress on Recommendations Oct. 7, 2014

Advice and Recommended response:

- **We appreciate the hard work that the Representative has done to assist the ministry in improving the lives of children and families.**
- **Nothing is more important to this ministry, this government, and myself, than the safety and well-being of children and youth in this province.**
- **We agree that in the past, particularly early on in the Representative's office, our progress and reporting on some recommendations could have been better.**
- **Now, we meet with the Representative and her staff on a monthly basis as well as provide quarterly reports to update them on the progress we're making in implementing the recommendations.**
- **We agree that more can be done and we are taking steps to ensure B.C.'s children and youth have the supports and services they need to thrive.**
- **Government's commitment is evident through the considerable progress we've made to address the needs of children and youth across the province. For example:**
 - **We made changes to the Province's Family Law Act to ensure the best interests of the child are the only consideration when decisions affecting the child are made, including a new protection order limiting contact between family members where there is a safety risk;**
 - **We created the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence to ensure a co-ordinated approach across government and strengthen supports for women, children and families;**
 - **We increased the Ministry of Children and Family Development's budget for 2014/15 by \$11.6 million compared to last year at \$1.356 billion to further support children and youth in need; and,**

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- **We recently implemented a more efficient intake process to reduce wait times for families waiting for their initial mental health assessment.**
- **We are committed to working with our partners across government to improve collaboration to better serve children and youth in need.**
- **Government considers all of the recommendations mentioned in the RCY's latest progress report as being in development, or complete as similar work is already underway.**
- **It is important to note, a number of the recommendations are also very complex and often require work and consultation with different program areas, ministries and stakeholders. This process takes time.**
- **To be clear, the ministry does not just rely on the Representative for advice.**
- **In addition to the Representative's recommendations, the ministry also takes in to account information and recommendations received through previous experience, internal/external reports and research, communities and stakeholders, and other jurisdictions.**
- **It's clear that government's priority is to balance the budget, but it's important to note MCFD is one of the few ministries that has received a budget increase over the last couple of years.**

Key Facts Regarding the Issue:

- **In October, the Representative for Children and Youth will release a comprehensive review of the progress and responsiveness to recommendations made to government, individual ministries and/or public bodies between Jan. 1, 2008 and Dec. 31, 2013.**
- **In the report, the Representative indicates disappointment with government's progress on the recommendations by calling the response to date concerning, inadequate, unacceptable and showing a lack of leadership by government.**
- **The report indicates a number of recommendations directed to MCFD between 2008 and 2013, in the areas of domestic violence, mental health services, child poverty, and vulnerable aboriginal children and youth, are still outstanding.**
- **It is challenging for ministry staff to determine the actual number of outstanding recommendations as the Representative's tracking system has shifted and in some cases now includes individual actions as stand-alone recommendations, which increases the RCY's overall count.**

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- By MCFD's analysis, of the 22 RCY reports and related recommendations received between 2008-2013, we consider 80 per cent of the recommendations complete (20 per cent are still in progress).
- It is important to note, the majority of these remaining recommendations require significant change, co-ordination and commitment across multiple program areas and ministries, increased funding, and/or legislative changes.
- The report makes the following main findings:
 - **Government under-funding** – Government's lack of financial commitment since 2008 has played a major role in its failure to meet key recommendations by the RCY as well as continuing to fail children and youth in B.C.
 - **Lack of cross-government co-ordination** – Government has not been responsive to recommendations that call for significant change across ministry mandates and that seven of nine cross-ministry recommendations have been largely ignored.
 - **Quality assurance and outcome measures** – For half a dozen years there has been no public accountability from MCFD in the crucial area of aggregate analysis reports for quality assurance.
 - **Public reporting** – The ministry's performance measures reports do not provide enough comparative data to identify whether the ministry is achieving the intended progress.

There also continues to be a gap in available, adequate data gathered by the ministry.
 - **Gaps in service** – Public bodies and service providers have a poor record on recommendations addressing concerns related to gaps in services with only seven of 15 recommendations identifying such gaps being substantially or fully implemented, and only three of seven related to governance of services being substantially or fully implemented.
 - **Children in situations of domestic violence** – The Provincial Office on Domestic Violence is under-resourced and cannot compel the inter-ministerial co-operation necessary to advance important work.

Government's 3-year domestic violence plan lacks clear outcomes, concrete timeframes and measurements of success, and there has been no real progress on the creation of specialized domestic violence courts.

That B.C.'s response to the needs of these children are underfunded and limited in scope.
 - **Child and youth mental health services** – A 2012 review by the RCY found that B.C.'s mental health system is fragmented, frustrating to navigate and remains plagued by serious gaps.

The report emphasizes the lack of leadership and overall accountability as major contributors to the failing system.

RCY calls government's lack of response regarding complex needs children "discouraging".
 - **Vulnerable Aboriginal children and youth** – To date, government has not

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worked effectively with the federal government and First Nations leaders to develop of poverty reduction plan, just like it has not developed a province-wide poverty plan.

Given the lack of response by government, Aboriginal children and youth continue to be a significant focus of the RCY.

- **Child poverty** – B.C. has become known as the province with the highest child poverty rate in Canada.

The Canadian Paediatric Society rated B.C. “poor” in addressing child poverty reduction. “Poor” means no plan in place specific to poverty.

RCY considers the community poverty reduction strategies progress discouraging and that despite two years of effort, government still hasn’t made a meaningful impact on the issue of poverty.

Program Contacts: Cory Heavener/Chris Welch/Jackie Behrens

Ministry Contact: Heidi Zilkie

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RCY Report – Progress on Recommendations from 2008-2013

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Oct. 7, 2014

Q1. The Representative says that her recommendations have been largely ignored across every Ministry. Why has the government been so dismissive of the children's advocate?

- The Representative sits outside of government with a mandate to make recommendations that she believes will improve the way we support children and youth.
- My role is to take those recommendations, along with recommendations from other colleagues, subject experts and outside research and provide operationalize improvements to the system, and that is what we have done.
- To be clear, the ministry does not just rely on the Representative for advice.
- Government's commitment is obvious through the considerable progress we've made to address the needs of children and youth across the province. For example:
 - We made changes to the Province's Family Law Act to ensure the best interests of the child are the only consideration when decisions affecting the child are made, including a new protection order limiting contact between family members where there is a safety risk;
 - We created the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence to ensure a co-ordinated approach across government and strengthen supports for women, children and families.
 - We increased the Ministry of Children and Family Development's budget for 2014/15 by \$11.6 million compared to last year at \$1.356 billion to further support children and youth in need; and,
 - We recently implemented a more efficient intake process to reduce wait times for families waiting for their initial mental health assessment from 2-3 weeks to about one hour.
- We are committed to working with our partners across government to improve collaboration to better service children and youth in need.
- Government considers all of the recommendations mentioned in the RCY's latest progress report as being in development, or complete as similar work is already underway.
- It is important to note, a number of the recommendations are also very complex and often require work and consultation with different program areas, ministries and stakeholders. This process takes time.
- We meet with the Representative and her staff on a monthly basis. Additionally we provide quarterly reports to update them on the progress we're making in implementing the recommendations.
- We agree, that in the past, our progress and reporting on some recommendations could have been better, that is why we refined our processes to ensure a more timely and accurate response moving forward. We are also imbedding each action into our annual

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planning and addressing any outstanding recommendations.

- It's clear that government's priority is to balance the budget, but it's important to note MCFD is one of the few ministries that has received a budget increase over the last couple of years.

Q2. The Representative says the system is still failing children, youth and families? How can B.C. families have any faith?

- The Representative has pointed out that we've made considerable progress in recent years, but that more needs to be done. We wholeheartedly agree.
- We know what work needs to be done, and we're committed to working together with our partners across government – and with the Representative – to ensure that work gets done.

Q3. The report mentions a number of recommendations directed to MCFD between 2008-2013 that are still outstanding. Do you agree?

- It is difficult to come to an agreement on the number of recommendations that are still in progress or outstanding.
- The Representative's tracking has shifted some individual actions to stand-alone recommendations, which increases the Representative's overall count.
- We meet with the Representative and her staff on a monthly basis. Additionally we provide quarterly reports to update them on the progress we're making in implementing the recommendations. In some cases, this report outlines details that have never before been expressed to the Ministry.
- By MCFD's analysis, we have accepted the majority of all recommendations received from the Representative since 2007.
- All outstanding recommendations mentioned in the report are in development or underway, or are considered complete by the ministry as similar work is already underway.
- It is important to note, a number of them are complex and often require significant work and consultation with different program areas, ministries and stakeholders, increased funding, and/or legislative changes.
- This process takes time.
- It is also important to note that the ministry does not just rely on the Representative for advice.
- In addition to the Representative's recommendations, the ministry also takes in to account information and recommendations received through previous experience, internal/external reports and research, communities and stakeholders, and other jurisdictions.

Q4. The report mentions recommendations that MCFD, and government as a whole, have yet to make good progress on or fully implement. Why haven't these recommendations moved forward?

- The Representative sits outside of government with a mandate to make recommendations

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that she believes will improve the way we support children and youth.

- My role is to take those recommendations, along with recommendations from other colleagues, subject experts and outside research, and provide operationalize improvements to the system, and that is what we have done.
- To be clear, the ministry does not just rely on the Representative for advice.
- Many of these recommendations are very complex and require work across different program areas and other ministries. Some require consultation with stakeholders and community partners – and some require legislative changes.
- We have been working with the Representative for the past several years to come to an agreement on these remaining recommendations and how they can be best implemented.
- In regards to recommendations directed to other ministries, please contact the specific ministry for an update on progress to date.

Q5. In the report, the RCY claims that “MCFD’s annual budget was reduced by more than \$37 million between 2008/09 and 2013/14 – this amounts to nearly \$100-million reduction in its budget, when accounting for inflation. “ Is this true?

- This is an unfortunate misunderstanding.
- To be clear, the budgets for these services and functions were not reduced, but simply transferred out of MCFD’s overall budget. For example:
 - Shared Services BC (SSBC) was created during this time frame and all ministries, including MCFD, were required to transfer funds to SSBC to support co-ordinated, responsive and cost-effective approaches to delivering services to British Columbians.
 - Between 2008/09 and 2013/14, a number of MCFD functions were transferred to the Public Service Agency (PSA) to streamline processes.
- It is important to note, the budget for this ministry has actually increased by 36 per cent (\$360 million) since 2004/2005.
- The ministry’s budget for this fiscal year has increased by \$11.6 million to more than \$1.3 billion (\$1.356 billion).

Q6. Why is MCFD’s overall budget reduction during this period \$100 million?

- That is a very good question.
- I was also interested in the rationale used by the RCY to come up with this figure, that is why I asked my Acting Chief Financial Officer to figure out exactly how the Representative came up with this number.
- The Representative was not aware that between 2008/09 and 2013/14 government restructuring resulted in some ministry functions, and the budgets related to them, being transferred to other ministries.

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- And even accounting for inflation, according to the Bank of Canada, the inflation rate for the period in question based on the RCY's \$37 million figure would only equal \$40.5 million, or an average inflation rate of 1.41 per cent.

Q7. The RCY indicates in this latest report that government under-funding continues to be to blame for a lack of progress made in meeting the needs of children and youth. Is that true?

- Meeting the needs of B.C.'s children and youth is a top priority for this ministry.
- In fact, the ministry's budget for 2014/15 has increased by \$11.6 million compared to last year at \$1.356 billion.
- Of that, the ministry spends approximately \$93 million annually to address child and youth mental health and substance use challenges in B.C. Currently, more than 29,000 children and youth receive community mental health services annually – over double the number that received services in 2003.
- Over the last decade (since 2000/01), funding for children and youth special needs has more than doubled. Today, we're spending almost \$190 million per year.
- We've increased funding for family support (from \$27.5 million in 2001 to \$40 million) and respite services (from \$11 million in 2001 to \$16 million) by 45 per cent.
- As well, we have tripled funding to delegated Aboriginal agencies to \$93 million since 2005/06 (\$31M went to Delegated Aboriginal Agencies in 2005/06).
- There is no question, though, that this government – like all governments right now – is trying to manage growing demands for service within a very difficult, challenging fiscal climate.
- We are committed to working closely with our partners, including the Representative, to find efficient and innovative ways to improve services to better meet the needs of children, youth, and their families.

Q8. The RCY mentions a lack of cross-government co-ordination as a main factor why some of these outstanding recommendations have not moved forward. What are you doing to ensure these larger, more involved recommendations are progressing?

- Many of these recommendations are very complex and often require work and consultation with different program areas, ministries and stakeholders. This process takes time.
- With all of our partners across government, we are committed to strengthening the system of supports so that every child in B.C. receives the care that they need to achieve their full potential.
- We provide quarterly reports to the RCY regarding the progress we're making in implementing the recommendations in addition to monthly meetings.
- We continue to work collaboratively across government to further improve how services are delivered to ensure consistent service standards, appropriate information sharing across ministries and better service options for British Columbians.

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Q9. The report indicates government has not made significant progress in meeting the safety needs for children in situations of domestic violence. Is this true? What has the ministry done in regards to help children in this type of situation?

- Our government has made it a priority to address the issue of domestic violence across the province.
- Government commits more than \$70 million per year in prevention and intervention services and programs that benefit victims of domestic violence and other crimes.
- In addition, this year \$1 million in civil forfeiture grants are helping projects throughout the province counter family violence and violence against women.
- We also created the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence (PODV) in response to RCY recommendations and developed the Provincial Domestic Violence Plan with government and community anti-violence partners.
- The three-year, \$5.5 million plan builds on the considerable actions the office has undertaken to date, including those associated with 2012's *Taking Action on Domestic Violence in British Columbia*.
- *Taking Action* was a direct response to the Representative's report into the tragic deaths of three children in Merritt who were killed by their father.
- It set the course towards a co-ordinated approach to addressing domestic violence across B.C.'s child and family serving systems.
- Government has amended the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* to include domestic violence.
- Government is also working on a Violence Free BC Strategy – a commitment in this year's Throne Speech. The strategy will be our path to creating a province where everyone, including Aboriginal and vulnerable women, have the supports they need to prevent violence, to escape from violent situations and to recover if they have been victims of crime.
- In addition, government funds more than 250 programs that help women and children affected by violence.
- In 2010, MCFD identified domestic violence leads in each service delivery area to provide leadership and consultation.
- All MCFD child protection staff receive thorough domestic violence training.
- We know that more needs to be done and we are taking immediate action to ensure victims of domestic violence have the supports they need to live their lives violence-free.

From JAG:

- The Province's *Family Law Act* includes specific focus on children directly or indirectly exposed to family or domestic violence.
- The *Act* includes a new protection order limiting contact between family members where there is a safety risk, and also ensures the best interests of the child are the only consideration when decisions affecting the child are made.
- The Ministry of Justice has also developed a framework for domestic violence courts to provide guidance on best practices in establishing specialized domestic violence court processes in B.C.

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- The framework will form part of the Provincial Strategy for Specialized Courts – an evidence-based approach for specialized courts which will be finalized by March 2015.

Q10. In regards to the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence, the RCY says that it is under-resourced and can't compel the inter-ministerial co-operation necessary to advance important work. What is your response to that?

- These staff have the knowledge and resources required to ensure all necessary business and action is advanced efficiently and effectively.
- Through a cross-ministry ADMs steering committee and working group, PODV staff have successfully developed the action plan and final progress report and developed and initiated the implementation of the three-year provincial plan. All partner ministries and BC Housing report out to PODV on a quarterly basis and PODV will report out publically on an annual basis.
- We will continue to monitor staffing, as the ministry already does, to ensure the office is adequately supported and able to continue meeting all of its requirements and obligations moving forward.

Q11. In regards to government's three-year domestic violence plan, the RCY indicates the plan lacks clear outcomes, concrete timeframes, and measurements of success. What is the ministry doing to ensure the plan is measureable and accountable?

- Government's three-year domestic violence plan acknowledges key areas that consultations with the public, government and the anti-violence sector have identified as requiring immediate attention and action.
- The plan outlines a government investment for direct services in four focus areas:
 - \$1 million - direct services province-wide for victims and survivors of domestic violence;
 - \$2 million - direct services for Aboriginal women, children and families affected by domestic violence;
 - \$1 million - direct services for perpetrators of domestic violence; and
 - \$1.5 million - direct services in rural and remote communities for victims and survivors.
- The plan clearly articulates outcomes we intend to achieve in a focused time frame.
- The plan focuses on achieving three primary goals:
 - an integrated, coordinated response to domestic violence in B.C.;
 - enhanced information sharing between all service providers to increase safety for those affected by domestic violence; and,
 - improved direct services for survivors, children and perpetrators.
- The plan is being monitored and evaluated. If more time is needed or new priorities arise, those needs will be considered.
- PODV has collaborated with an academic partner to develop the evaluation framework to support the implementation and evaluation of the plan.

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Q12. It seems dismissive to appoint an Assistant Deputy Minister to oversee improvements to the child and youth mental health system. Why not do what the report asked and appoint a Minister of State?

- While the Representative might feel comfortable on advising the Premier how to structure her government, that falls beyond my mandate.
- That being said, my role is to operationalize improvements to the system across the province, and that is what we have done.
- I have faith in my ability, and the ability of the Minister of Health, to lead the mental health file for children and youth.

Q13. When it comes to youth mental health services, the report mentions recommendations that government has made absolutely no progress on. Will you be moving forward with those?

- I can assure you that child and youth mental health is a key priority of this government.
- Much of the detail laid out in the report's youth mental health section supports work already underway by my ministry and the Ministry of Health.
- Our focus is on optimizing the resources we have to improve outcomes for children and youth dealing with mental health or substance use challenges.
- In Nov. 2010, the Province released its 10-Year plan to address mental health and substance use across the lifespan in B.C. – *Healthy Minds, Healthy People*.
- A key focus of the Plan is promoting healthy social development, preventing problems before they begin, and intervening early when challenges occur to achieve better outcomes now and later in life.
- In response to an earlier recommendation from the RCY, the ministry also appointed an Assistant Deputy Minister to oversee improvements to the system, and we continue to work with our service partners, stakeholders and Aboriginal partners to strengthen that system.
- For example, we recently implemented a more efficient intake process to reduce wait times for families who are waiting for their initial assessment.
- Early results have been very encouraging, showing a reduction in wait times from 2-3 weeks to about an hour.
- We also opened a new six-bed facility located in Burnaby at the Maples site to meet the specific needs of children who have complex special needs. Additional community-based complex care beds in Prince George and Vernon are also in the planning stage.
- In addition, over the next few months we'll be launching a new on-line service map for families so it's easier for them to find info about services in their community.

Q14. As with numerous other RCY reports, a provincial poverty plan continues to be mentioned as an urgent requirement to address child poverty in B.C.? Are you ever going to create one?

- No government wants to see any child or family living in poverty.

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- We have a plan, you can call it a prosperity plan, an economic development plan, a job creation plan, a good taxation policy plan or even a poverty reduction plan. But whatever the label our actions are making a real difference for B.C. families.
- Today, British Columbia's child poverty rate is at its second-lowest level in twenty years. Any amount of child poverty is too much. But with the number of children living in poverty falling by 38 per cent in the last eight years alone, we know that our plan is working.
- It's working, but the reality is, we have a ways to go and we can't do it alone.
- We are also working closely with municipal governments, local community organizations, service providers and business representatives to develop measurable community poverty reduction strategies that meet the unique and specific needs of individual communities and families.
- Moving forward, these pilots will provide strategic direction for other communities as they work to address poverty and create their own localized poverty reduction plan.

Q15. The report mentions outstanding recommendations to address the issue of vulnerable Aboriginal children and youth. What progress has the ministry made in addressing this issue?

- It's important that all levels of government – provincial, federal, First Nations leaders – work together on strategies to improve services and outcomes for children on and off reserve.
- There are currently thousands of Aboriginal children receiving quality services from the ministry; however, it's clear that we can use our resources more effectively. This includes children in care and children served in their families and communities.
- We would like to see the federal government do more on reserve in the area of prevention funding, child mental health, and children and youth with special needs supports.
- In B.C., we have made it a priority to work collaboratively with First Nations communities to support them in reducing the number of Aboriginal children coming into care.
- Our commitment is reflected in a number of actions we have taken, and continue to take, with respect to service and program delivery. As an example:
 - We have created an Aboriginal Service Innovations program that invited Aboriginal service providers to apply for funding by submitting business plans clearly outlining measurable targets for providing services to children.
 - We provide culturally relevant support services designed to improve and expedite case planning, and mitigate risk.
 - We are currently working with aboriginal partners on developing an Aboriginal Practice Framework to help guide policy and practice in Aboriginal service regardless if they are provided through the ministry or a delegated Aboriginal agency.
- This is not an issue that will be addressed easily, but it is one we are working to address. Moving forward, my focus is on continuing to improve direct services to Aboriginal children and families.

CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE TO MINISTER

- It is important to note, the total number of Aboriginal children served by a delegated Aboriginal agency has more than tripled since 2001 – from 570 (Dec. 2001) to 2,089 (July 2014).

Additional government support / good news:

Education

- In 2013/14, the Ministry of Education invested \$64.2 million – more than \$1,000 per student – to support Aboriginal students, which now make up more than 11 per cent of B.C. public school enrolment.
- The Aboriginal student completion rate has climbed more than 13 per cent in the past 10 years. Between 2003 and 2013 the number of Aboriginal students graduating with a Dogwood increased 72 per cent.
- Fifty-four school districts across the province have signed Aboriginal Education Enhancement agreements. These agreements are a partnership between Aboriginal communities and school districts to share decision-making and specific goal setting to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students. Districts with these agreements have seen improved completion rates.

Economy

- The provincial government has reached a total of 36 non-treaty agreements with First Nations since the BC Jobs Plan was launched in 2011.
- These agreements improve opportunities and resources for First Nations to participate in resource activity in their traditional territory.

Q16. The RCY continues to mention the need for additional service quality and regular reporting on outcomes for children in care. When will the ministry start doing that?

- I certainly don't have to be urged to do that.
- We continually monitor our performance to track our progress and use information to improve outcomes for the children, youth and families we serve and for our programs and services.
- As part of the commitment we made to the Selected Standing Committee, twice a year, we produce a Performance Management report that helps us examine the quality of services within B.C. communities and how effective those services are for vulnerable children, youth and families – including youth who are transitioning out of care.
- This is the most comprehensive report this ministry has ever produced. Where previous reports showed provincial-level information only, this one looks at detailed local-level information on services delivered to approximately 155,000 children, teens and families each year.
- The report is shared with the Representative and the chairs of the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth to solicit their feedback.
- In addition, we also conduct reviews using external agencies – such as the McCreary Society – to help us to continuously improve the services we provide for youth and their families.

CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE TO MINISTER

- As well, to ensure quality assurance, individual case studies are also reviewed by ministry staff to ensure desired outcomes have been achieved and to learn where more work needs to be done.

Q17. How has government answered the call to ensure children and youth with special needs have access to the the supports and services they require?

- Government invests more than \$1 billion annually on services and supports for children and youth with special needs. Of that, \$600 million goes towards more than 90 services and supports for children and youth with significant special needs.
- Since 2000/01, MCFD funding for children and youth with special needs has nearly doubled – from \$153 million to \$301.5 million.
- Approximately 30,000 children and youth with special needs access a range of intervention and support services funded by MCFD.
- MCFD works in collaboration with other ministries to provide a continuum of services and to develop strategies and approaches to improve access, quality and coordination of services.
- This includes implementation of:
 - The cross-ministry Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) Framework for Action by MCFD and the Ministries of Education and Health (February 2008)
 - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Building on Strengths - A Provincial Plan for British Columbia 2008 – 2018, a 10-year plan developed with input from nine ministries (March 2008)
 - The Cross-ministry Transition Planning Protocol for Youth with Special Needs, an agreement between nine government organizations to work together to support the transition of youth with special needs to adulthood (November 2009).
 - An integrated service delivery model, led by the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation, to support transitioning of youth with developmental disabilities to adulthood.
 - In school supports for students with Type 1 Diabetes, in collaboration with the ministries of Education and Health.

Q18. The RCY indicates that the ministry's Performance Management reports do not provide enough comparative data to identify whether the ministry is achieving its intended progress goals. Is this true?

- Twice a year, the ministry produces a Performance Management report that helps us examine the quality of services within B.C. communities and how effective those services are for vulnerable children, youth and families.
- This is the most comprehensive report this ministry has ever produced.
- Where previous reports showed provincial-level information only, this one looks at detailed local-level information on services delivered to approximately 155,000 children, teens and families each year.
- The report includes:

CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE TO MINISTER

- An overview and summary of key themes;
- Demographic data across each service delivery area;
- Provincial-level service, human resource and expenditure data; and,
- Data regarding operations, expenditures and outcomes for each of the six service lines.
- This level of detail means we can examine the quality of services within communities and how effective those services are for vulnerable children and families.
- Over the next few years, we will gradually expand the report's quality and scope to create a more effective tool for improving performance.
- In future reports, we will expand to include more information about Delegated Aboriginal Agencies and Community Social Service Agencies.
- Some areas may require the development of new data sets not currently available to the ministry.

Q19. Specifically, the RCY mentions the crucial area of aggregate analysis reports. What is the ministry doing to ensure these reports become part of regular ministry reporting business?

- The Provincial Director of Child Welfare is committed to and has a plan to conduct aggregate analysis of quality assurance findings and to report out on the themes and trends of these on an annual basis.
- An analyst has recently been hired to focus on this area.

UPDATE ON SPECIFIC OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. REPORT: Monitoring Brief System of Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs & Update: System of Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs

RECOMMENDATION #1 - Services to children and youth with special needs serves children and youth from birth to age 24.

STATUS:

- Considered complete.
- This Government is committed to ensuring children, youth and young adults with special needs have access to the supports and services they need to reach their full potential.
- That is why the ministries of Children and Family Development and Social Development and Social Innovation work together to ensure the transition between services - from child and youth, to young adult - is as smooth as possible.
- The needs of children, youth and young adults with special needs vary throughout their development and require a variety of supports and services.
- MCFD offers a range of supports and programs to assist children and youth (aged 0-18 years) with special needs. For example:
 - The 2014/15 MCFD budget for children and youth with special needs services is \$301.5 million.
 - As a result of budget increases and program development, approximately 30,000 children and youth with special needs access a range of intervention and support services funded by MCFD.
 - Funding for Early Intervention Therapy services, which includes occupational, physical and speech therapy, has increased by 45 per cent – from \$20.2 million in 2000/01 to \$29.4 million in 2014/15.
 - MCFD funding for School-Aged Therapy services (occupational therapy and physical therapy for school-aged children with special needs) has increased more than six times since 2000/01 – from \$600 thousand to \$4.5 million in 2014/15.
 - MCFD funds the FASD Key Worker and Parent Support Program. Since 2006, thousands of children and their families have accessed services provided by 52 contracted agencies. The current budget is \$5.1 million.
- SDSI provides support for young adults (aged 19-24 years) with special needs to ensure they continue to receive the services they need to thrive.
- A protocol for cross-ministry transition planning for youth with special needs was jointly developed and endorsed by nine ministries and organizations in 2009, including the Ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation and Children and Family Development.
- As a result of the protocol, the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation process was simplified last year to make it easier for young people and their families.
- SDSI and its partner organizations have also launched an integrated-service-delivery model in some communities that provides a navigator service to help youth 16 to 24

with developmental disabilities plan and access cross-government supports during the transition to adulthood.

- The new model and navigator service is available to youth 16-24 in Prince George, Haida Gwaii, Surrey, Kamloops, Merritt, Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum and Courtenay.

2. **REPORT:** Monitoring Brief System of Services for Children and Youth with *Special Needs*
RECOMMENDATION #5 - RCY provides advocacy services for children and youth and their families from birth to age 24.

STATUS:

- Complete.
- Select Standing Committee has expanded the Representatives Mandate.

3. **REPORT:** Amanda, Savannah, Rowen and Serena: From Loss to Learning
RECOMMENDATION #7d - That the Government of British Columbia, after community consultation, establish an Aboriginal Children's Council for the North region.

STATUS:

- Considered inapplicable.
- Existing forums and dialogue between Aboriginal leaders, service providers and government regarding support and services for Aboriginal children already occur locally, regionally and provincially.
- Past examples include the Indigenous Child at the Centre II - BC First Nations Chief Forum, the Indigenous Forum, and the Touchstones for Leadership Gathering.
- Government supports this process.
- The provincial government has committed to the vision of closing the social and economic gaps for Aboriginal peoples, including children, youth and families.

OTHER PROGRESS:

- In B.C., we have made it a priority to work collaboratively with First Nations communities to support them in reducing the number of Aboriginal children coming into care.
- Our commitment is reflected in a number of actions we have taken, and continue to take, with respect to service and program delivery. As an example:
 - We have created an Aboriginal Service Innovations (ASI) program that invited Aboriginal service providers to apply for funding by submitting business plans clearly outlining measurable targets for providing services to children. The program's key objectives are to maximize effective, responsive, culturally appropriate and safe services to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and youth under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (CFCSA).

- We provide culturally relevant support services designed to improve and expedite case planning, and mitigate risk.
- We are currently working with aboriginal partners on developing an Aboriginal Practice Framework to help guide policy and practice in Aboriginal service regardless if they are provided through the ministry or a delegated Aboriginal agency.

4. REPORT: Kids, Crime and Care - Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes

RECOMMENDATION #7 - That the social policy ministries of government (Education, Health, MCFD, MHSD, Healthy Living, Attorney General, PSSG) produce a cross-Ministry plan that identifies an interlocking network of services to support and assist children, youth and families through the developmental stages (from prenatal to adulthood).

STATUS:

- In progress.
- We are committed to working with our partners across government to improve collaboration to better service children and youth in B.C.

5. REPORT: Housing, Help and Hope: A Better Path for Struggling Families

RECOMMENDATION #1b - That the Government of British Columbia engage the Federal Government and First Nations leadership and communities to develop a plan to reduce Aboriginal child and family poverty in B.C.

STATUS:

- Complete.
- No government wants to see any child or family living in poverty.
- It's important that all levels of government – provincial, federal, First Nations leaders – work together on strategies to improve services and outcomes for children on and off reserve.
- We would like to see the federal government do more on reserve in the area of prevention funding, child mental health, and children and youth with special needs supports.
- Under the BC Jobs Plan we are working with First Nations and all Aboriginal people in B.C. to ensure they are part of the strategy and we are making significant investments in skills training to ensure that all Aboriginal people have access to the good jobs created here at home.
- The best way to move beyond poverty is to create opportunities for success through education, good health and well-being, safe and strong communities. We recognize that

government can't do this in isolation from Aboriginal communities, but must work in partnership with them.

- That is why we're working directly with First Nations communities and Aboriginal organizations to implement changes and new approaches that will improve the care, safety and well-being of Aboriginal children and families.

OTHER PROGRESS:

MCFD

- Our commitment to reduce the number of Aboriginal children coming in to care is reflected in a number of actions we have taken, and continue to take, with respect to service and program delivery. As an example:
 - We have created an Aboriginal Service Innovations program that invited Aboriginal service providers to apply for funding by submitting business plans clearly outlining measurable targets for providing services to children.
 - We provide culturally relevant support services designed to improve and expedite case planning, and mitigate risk.
 - We are currently working with aboriginal partners on developing an Aboriginal Practice Framework to help guide policy and practice in Aboriginal service regardless if they are provided through the ministry or a delegated Aboriginal agency.

EDUCATION

- In 2013/14, the Ministry of Education invested \$64.2 million – more than \$1,000 per student – to support Aboriginal students, which now make up more than 11 per cent of B.C. public school enrolment.
- The Aboriginal student completion rate has climbed more than 13 per cent in the past 10 years. Between 2003 and 2013 the number of Aboriginal students graduating with a Dogwood increased 72 per cent.
- Fifty-four school districts across the province have signed Aboriginal Education Enhancement agreements. These agreements are a partnership between Aboriginal communities and school districts to share decision-making and specific goal setting to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students. Districts with these agreements have seen improved completion rates.

AGREEMENTS

- The provincial government has reached a total of 36 non-treaty agreements with First Nations since the BC Jobs Plan was launched in 2011.
- These agreements improve opportunities and resources for First Nations to participate in resource activity in their traditional territory.

6. REPORT: Fragile Lives, Fragmented Systems: Strengthening Supports for Vulnerable Infants

RECOMMENDATION #1 - That B.C. develop a non-partisan child poverty plan, with leadership from the Premier's Office, through a special initiative that identifies strategies to address all aspects of child poverty in the province.

STATUS:

- Complete.
- **No government wants to see any child or family living in poverty.**
- We have a plan, you can call it a prosperity plan, an economic development plan, a job creation plan, a good taxation policy plan or even a poverty reduction plan. But whatever the label our actions are making a real difference for B.C. families.
- Today, British Columbia's child poverty rate is at its second-lowest level in twenty years. Any amount of child poverty is too much. But with the number of children living in poverty falling by 38 per cent in the last eight years alone, we know that our plan is working.
- It's working, but the reality is, we have a ways to go and we can't do it alone.
- We are also working closely with municipal governments, local community organizations, service providers and business representatives to develop measurable community poverty reduction strategies that meet the unique and specific needs of individual communities and families.
- Moving forward, these pilots will provide strategic direction for other communities as they work to address poverty and create their own localized poverty reduction plan.

OTHER PROGRESS:

- This government is putting money back in the pockets of families who need it:
 - We've increased the minimum wage not once, but THREE times to \$10.25 per hour, making it among the highest in Canada;
 - B.C. families generally have one of the lowest overall tax burdens in Canada, including income taxes, consumption taxes, property taxes, health care premiums and payroll taxes;
 - Provincial personal income taxes for most taxpayers have been reduced by 37 per cent or more since 2001 and, today, an additional 400,000 people no longer pay any B.C. income tax;
 - A full suite of employment services are offered through 85 WorkBC Employment Services Centres around the province;
 - Since launching in April 2012, those centres have served more than 146,000 people and the results are encouraging — with personalized supports, between 40 and 50 per cent of people have consistently found employment.
 - Since 2001, the number of people dependent on income assistance has dropped 29 per cent, meaning 71,000 fewer British Columbians are collecting income assistance in 2014 than in 2001;

- More than 800,000 residents do not pay MSP premiums;
- This government has invested \$3.6 billion since 2001 to provide affordable housing around the province – approximately \$400 million this fiscal year;
- This year, more than 100,000 B.C. households will benefit from provincial social housing programs and services;
 - More than 19,000 B.C. families live in provincially subsidized housing.
 - A further 10,000 families receive rental assistance to help keep the cost of private market rent more affordable.
- Since 2001, we have added close to 21,000 new units of affordable housing;
- In 2015, we will introduce the new BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit to improve the affordability of child care and assist almost 180,000 families with the cost of raising young children;
- When you combine this with other federal tax benefits, a single mother with one child under the age of six will receive about \$5,500 a year and a couple with two children under six will receive about \$10,800;
- And, we created the \$1,200 BC Training and Education Savings Grant to help parents save for their child's post-secondary education.

- 7. REPORT: Honouring Kaitlynn, Max and Cordon - Make Their Voices Heard Now**
- RECOMMENDATION #2** - That the Government of British Columbia take the following actions to demonstrate a renewed and serious commitment to protect children who are exposed to or are living in circumstances of domestic violence. This means identifying and closing the gaps in policies and practices across government programs and services that touch the lives of children, including child welfare, adult mental health, criminal and family justice systems, police, victim services, education and income assistance.

STATUS:

- Complete.
- Our government has made it a priority to address the issue of domestic violence across the province.
- Government commits more than \$70 million per year in prevention and intervention services and programs that benefit victims of domestic violence and other crimes.
- In addition, this year \$1 million in civil forfeiture grants are helping projects throughout the province counter family violence and violence against women.
- The Province's *Family Law Act* includes specific focus on children directly or indirectly exposed to family or domestic violence.

- The Act includes a new protection order limiting contact between family members where there is a safety risk, and also ensures the best interests of the child are the only consideration when decisions affecting the child are made.
- We also created the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence (PODV) in response to RCY recommendations and developed the Provincial Domestic Violence Plan with government and community anti-violence partners.
- The three-year, \$5.5 million plan builds on the considerable actions the office has undertaken to date, including those associated with 2012's *Taking Action on Domestic Violence in British Columbia*.
- Government has amended the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* to include domestic violence.
- Government is also working on a Violence Free BC Strategy – a commitment in this year's Throne Speech. The strategy will be our path to creating a province where everyone, including Aboriginal and vulnerable women, have the supports they need to prevent violence, to escape from violent situations and to recover if they have been victims of crime.
- The Ministry of Justice has also developed a framework for domestic violence courts to provide guidance on best practices in establishing specialized domestic violence court processes in B.C.
- The framework will form part of the Provincial Strategy for Specialized Courts – an evidence-based approach for specialized courts which will be finalized by March 2015.
- In addition, government funds more than 250 programs that help women and children affected by violence.
- We know that more needs to be done and we are taking immediate action to ensure victims of domestic violence have the supports they need to live their lives violence-free.

8. **REPORT: Still Waiting First Hand Experiences with Youth Mental Health Services in BC**
RECOMMENDATION #1 - That the Government of B.C. establish a single point of accountability for addressing the needs of transition-age youth (ages 16 to 24) with mental health problems, and the related services that span across ministries and service delivery areas. It is recommended that a new Minister of State for Youth Mental Health be created.

STATUS:

- Considered complete.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development has appointed an Assistant Deputy Minister to oversee improvements to the child and youth mental health system, and we continue to work with our service partners, stakeholders and Aboriginal partners to strengthen that system.
- The ministries of Health and Children and Family Development are working together on a three-year plan, as recommended by the Representative, to enhance and improve

service delivery to youth with mental health issues across the province.

- Both ministries have been working in collaboration with government and community partners to support *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A Ten Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in B.C.*
- The new three-year plan that is under development will identify common priorities for all partners to work collaboratively on, and will include a focus on transition, and transition aged youth.
- As well, work is already underway to create a more client-focused model of care for youth with mental health and/or substance use challenges.

9. REPORT: When Talk Trumped Service: A Decade of Lost Opportunity for Aboriginal Children in Care in BC

RECOMMENDATION #1 - That the government of British Columbia, with the leadership of the Attorney General, develop an explicit policy for negotiation of jurisdictional transfer and exercise of governmental powers over child welfare.

STATUS:

- In progress.
- There have been several meetings between the ministries of Attorney General, Children and Family Development and Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.
- As a result of those meetings, a draft policy is being developed to address this recommendation.
- Our next steps are to consider the feedback received from MARR and consider recent developments in Aboriginal law that occurred this summer.
- We will be making further revisions to the draft policy and engaging in further discussions with MARR and MCFD.
- This recommendation recognizes the importance of legal advice by the Attorney General in relation to matters involving the jurisdictional transfer of child welfare governance.

10. REPORT: When Talk Trumped Service: A Decade of Lost Opportunity for Aboriginal Children in Care in BC

RECOMMENDATION #3 - That MCFD take the lead in developing a clear plan for B.C. to close the outcomes gap for Aboriginal children and youth across government ministries including Education and Health as well as other service-delivery organizations, with clear targeted outcomes and performance measures that would be applicable on- and off-reserve, and encompass all Aboriginal children and youth regardless of where they reside.

STATUS:

- In progress.

- The provincial government has committed to the vision of closing the social and economic gaps for Aboriginal peoples, including children, youth and families.
- Guided by the New Relationship document, the Transformative Change Accord (TCA), the Metis Nation Relationship Accord (MNRA), and the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Action Plan (ORAAP), ministries are working together to co-ordinate and partner to lay the foundation for this vision.
- The ADMs from participating ministries will meet regularly and work together to ensure their ministries are aligned in their goals to close the social and economic gaps for Aboriginal peoples and establish a new relationship based on mutual respect and recognition.
- The committee will support information-sharing and open and constructive dialogue, steer cross-government co-ordination, support reporting commitments, and lead production of an annual Committee work plan.

OTHER PROGRESS:

MCFD

- In B.C., we have made it a priority to work collaboratively with First Nations communities to support them in reducing the number of Aboriginal children coming into care.
- Our commitment is reflected in a number of actions we have taken, and continue to take, with respect to service and program delivery. As an example:
 - We have created an Aboriginal Service Innovations program that invited Aboriginal service providers to apply for funding by submitting business plans clearly outlining measurable targets for providing services to children.
 - We provide culturally relevant support services designed to improve and expedite case planning, and mitigate risk.
 - We are currently working with aboriginal partners on developing an Aboriginal Practice Framework to help guide policy and practice in Aboriginal service regardless if they are provided through the ministry or a delegated Aboriginal agency.

EDUCATION

- In 2013/14, the Ministry of Education invested \$64.2 million – more than \$1,000 per student – to support Aboriginal students, which now make up more than 11 per cent of B.C. public school enrolment.
- The Aboriginal student completion rate has climbed more than 13 per cent in the past 10 years. Between 2003 and 2013 the number of Aboriginal students graduating with a Dogwood increased 72 per cent.
- Fifty-four school districts across the province have signed Aboriginal Education Enhancement agreements. These agreements are a partnership between Aboriginal communities and school districts to share decision-making and specific goal setting to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students.

JOBS/ECONOMY

- The provincial government has reached a total of 36 non-treaty agreements with First Nations since the BC Jobs Plan was launched in 2011.

- **These agreements improve opportunities and resources for First Nations to participate in resource activity in their traditional territory.**