



Honourable Josie Osborne  
Minister of Health, Government of British Columbia  
PO Box 9050, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2  
[HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

October 22, 2025

**Re: Impacts of the Elimination of the Program Lead Position – Pacific Rim Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) Team**

Dear Minister Osborne,

We are writing to convey our significant concern regarding the recent unilateral elimination of the Program Lead position for the Pacific Rim Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) Team by the Island Health Authority, and to request an in-person meeting at your earliest convenience. This decision, undertaken without prior consultation, notice, or communication with local partners, has had serious implications for program integrity, service delivery, and community trust.

**Background**

The ICY Team is a provincially funded, multi-ministry initiative designed to provide integrated mental health and substance-use supports for children, youth, and families who do not meet the threshold for more intensive services such as Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) or YSTAR. The initiative forms a key component of *A Pathway to Hope* and was established with the expectation that local governance would be co-determined through a multi-ministry Local Employers Table (LET).

In July 2025, Island Health Authority implemented broad staffing reductions, including the termination of the ICY Program Leads across the communities of (Comox/Courtenay (2), Qualicum/Parksville (1), Pacific Rim (1), Nanaimo (4), and the Cowichan Valley (2). Notice of this change was received ten (10) days after the position had been eliminated.

**Program Impacts**

a) Erosion of Program Stability and Confidence

The sudden loss of the Program Lead has had a destabilizing effect on the ICY team and its community partners. Staff morale has been adversely affected, referral volumes have declined, and confidence in the program's continuity has diminished. The perception that such a key leadership role could be eliminated without consultation has shaken both the ICY team members and the communities ICY serves.

b) Diminished Service Capacity for Children, Youth, and Families

Leadership and administrative duties formerly managed by the Program Leads have been redistributed to frontline clinicians, resulting in an estimated 50% reduction in available clinical time for clients. Staff are now required to manage intake, waitlists, family communications, and data system administration (Integrate), all of which divert time and attention from direct therapeutic care. The newly created

replacement Coordinator position will not include all of the previous duties the former Program Lead performed.

c) **Loss of Community and Indigenous Engagement**

The Program Lead had been instrumental in coordinating outreach and partnership activities with community agencies and Indigenous organizations. The abrupt cessation of this work has led to a breakdown in established relationships and a loss of trust among partners who were working collaboratively to support local service integration. Rebuilding these connections will be both challenging and time-consuming.

**Organizational Response**

The Island Health Authority has indicated that a new regional leadership position will be created to oversee both the ICY and YSTAR programs. While we appreciate this intent, it is important to note that the YSTAR program provides crisis response and stabilization services for youth experiencing acute mental health or substance-use crises—an inherently high-intensity, life-and-death function. Expecting a single leader to effectively oversee both programs will unavoidably result in the ICY portfolio receiving diminished attention, undermining its preventive and early-intervention objectives.

**Conclusion and Request**

The Integrated Child and Youth model represents a cornerstone of the province’s commitment to accessible, community-based mental health care. Local leadership, stability, and collaboration are essential to its success. We respectfully request the Ministry’s review of this situation and intervention to ensure that the Pacific Rim ICY Team can continue to deliver its intended level of service under a dedicated, locally engaged leadership structure.

We urge you to reach out to Paula Mason, Manager of Corporate Services [pmason@sd70.bc.ca](mailto:pmason@sd70.bc.ca) to arrange an in-person meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter further, with the following three key questions in mind:

**1. Program Governance and Consistency:**

Why is the Island Health Authority not required to adhere to the original Terms of Reference for this provincial program, as established by the former Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, when all other participating Health Authorities in the province continue to adhere to the established Terms of Reference, Policies and Procedures?

**2. Process and Consultation:**

Why has the Island Health Authority only recently provided an update to the Local Employers’ Table (LET) outlining changes that have already been implemented—such as the creation of a new unionized job description, interview process, and candidate selection—without engaging this group in prior consultation or collaboration? This approach appears inconsistent with the required change proposal process and disregards the established integrated partnership within the Local Employer Tables.

**3. Funding and Accountability:**

It is our understanding that the targeted funding initially allocated for this initiative has since been

absorbed into non-targeted funding, resulting in a decision by the Island Health Authority that collaboration and consultation are no longer necessary. We would appreciate clarification on how the original targeted funds were reallocated and request accountability regarding their expenditure.

We greatly value the Ministry's ongoing commitment to improving health outcomes for children, youth, and families—particularly for Indigenous communities—and appreciate your timely attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Pam Craig, Chair, Board of Education  
Pacific Rim School District  
4690 Roger Street, Port Alberni, BC V9Y 3Z4  
[www.sd70.bc.ca](http://www.sd70.bc.ca)

**cc:**

Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Education [ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca)  
Trevor Davies, CEO, British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) [tdavies@BCSTA.ORG](mailto:tdavies@BCSTA.ORG)  
Kat Eddy, President, Vancouver Island School Trustees Association (VISTA) [Natalie.Crawshaw@sd72.bc.ca](mailto:Natalie.Crawshaw@sd72.bc.ca)  
Michelle Waite, Chairperson, Board of Education, Comox Valley Schools [michelle.waite@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:michelle.waite@sd71.bc.ca)  
Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent of Schools, Comox Valley Schools [jeremy.morrow@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:jeremy.morrow@sd71.bc.ca)  
Eve Flynn, Chairperson, Board of Education, Qualicum School District [eflynn@sd69.bc.ca](mailto:eflynn@sd69.bc.ca)  
Peter Jory, Superintendent of Schools, Qualicum School District [pjory@sd69.bc.ca](mailto:pjory@sd69.bc.ca)  
Naomi Bailey, Chair, Board of Education, Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools [naomi.bailey@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:naomi.bailey@sd68.bc.ca)  
Robyn Gray, Superintendent, Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools [Superintendent@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:Superintendent@sd68.bc.ca)  
Cathy Schmidt, Board Chair, Cowichan Valley School District [cschmidt@sd79.bc.ca](mailto:cschmidt@sd79.bc.ca)  
Tim Davie, Superintendent, Cowichan Valley School District [tdavie@sd79.bc.ca](mailto:tdavie@sd79.bc.ca)  
Brent Ronning, Co-Chair, Indigenous Education Council [brent.r@huuayaht.org](mailto:brent.r@huuayaht.org)  
Jennifer Touchie, Co-Chair, Indigenous Education Council [jennifer.touchie@ufn.ca](mailto:jennifer.touchie@ufn.ca)  
Melissa Bartier, Director of Education, Training and Social Development, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council  
[melissa.bartier@nuuchahnulth.org](mailto:melissa.bartier@nuuchahnulth.org)

Other school districts in the Province that have Integrated Child and Youth Teams:

SD82 Coast Mountain	<a href="mailto:tracey.macmillan@cmsd.bc.ca">tracey.macmillan@cmsd.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:margaret.warcup@cmsd.bc.ca">margaret.warcup@cmsd.bc.ca</a>
SD59 Peace River South	<a href="mailto:cfennell@sd59.bc.ca">cfennell@sd59.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:canderson@sd59.bc.ca">canderson@sd59.bc.ca</a>
SD38 Richmond	<a href="mailto:cusih@sd38.bc.ca">cusih@sd38.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:khamaguchi@sd38.bc.ca">khamaguchi@sd38.bc.ca</a>
SD47 Qathet	<a href="mailto:paul.mckenzie@sd47.bc.ca">paul.mckenzie@sd47.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:jaclyn.miller@sd47.bc.ca">jaclyn.miller@sd47.bc.ca</a>
SD49 Central Coast	<a href="mailto:sdishkin@sd49.ca">sdishkin@sd49.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:mblewett@sd49.bc.ca">mblewett@sd49.bc.ca</a>
SD42 Maple Ridge	<a href="mailto:Teresa_Downs@sd42.ca">Teresa_Downs@sd42.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:elaine_yamamoto@sd42.ca">elaine_yamamoto@sd42.ca</a>
SD75 Mission	<a href="mailto:angus.wilson@mpsd.ca">angus.wilson@mpsd.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:tracy.loffler@mpsd.ca">tracy.loffler@mpsd.ca</a>
SD37 Delta	<a href="mailto:dsheppard@deltaschools.ca">dsheppard@deltaschools.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:jmuego@deltaschools.ca">jmuego@deltaschools.ca</a>
SD36 Surrey	<a href="mailto:pearmain_m@surreyschools.ca">pearmain_m@surreyschools.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:tymoschuk_gary@surreyschools.ca">tymoschuk_gary@surreyschools.ca</a>
SD83 Salmon Arm	<a href="mailto:dkrigger@sd83.bc.ca">dkrigger@sd83.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:cgraysto@sd83.bc.ca">cgraysto@sd83.bc.ca</a>
SD53 Oliver	<a href="mailto:mtoneatt@sd53.bc.ca">mtoneatt@sd53.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:rzandee@sd53.bc.ca">rzandee@sd53.bc.ca</a>
SD20 Castlegar	<a href="mailto:kshearer@sd20.bc.ca">kshearer@sd20.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:czaitsoff@sd20.bc.ca">czaitsoff@sd20.bc.ca</a>
SD74 Gold Trail	<a href="mailto:vmochikas@sd74.bc.ca">vmochikas@sd74.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:lcasper@sd74.bc.ca">lcasper@sd74.bc.ca</a>
SD58 Merrit	<a href="mailto:clawrance@sd58.bc.ca">clawrance@sd58.bc.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:gswan@sd58.bc.ca">gswan@sd58.bc.ca</a>