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BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY  
BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY FOUNDATION  
SUPPORTING THE BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

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January 31, 2014

The Honourable Peter Fassbender  
Ministry of Education  
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender,

The BC Schizophrenia Society is currently in the process of reviewing recommendations relating to mental illness made by the BC Coroners Service. As an organization dedicated to supporting families coping with mental illness and its devastating effects, the BC Schizophrenia Society has a keen interest in recommendations that can improve responses to mental illness within the health and justice systems.

I am writing to inquire how the Ministry of Education has responded to the recommendations noted below:

Inquest held at Western Communities Courthouse in Colwood, BC December 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011 into the death of Hayden Blair Kozeletski (File No. 2010:1007:0110)

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/coroners/schedule/archive/2011/docs/jury-findings-kozeletski-dec-16-2011.pdf>

**Recommendation:**

That middle school and high school counselors province wide will have ongoing up to date suicide awareness training. Further, that documentation be completed if suicide risk factors are identified.

*Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that suicide awareness training was not required on an ongoing basis for high school counselors and that there are no school board policies to guide staff on when and how training should be devised. Furthermore, the jury heard evidence that there are no requirements or policies to document conversations where children or youth are at risk for suicide.*

**Recommendation:**

That the Ministry of Education provide a provincial standard of risk assessment and mental status examinations for school boards across

British Columbia to ensure that there is consistent practice, assessment and tools for school counselors when working with children and youth at risk.

*Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that there is no province-wide standardized risk assessment tool or mental status examinations to guide school counselors when working with children and youth at risk.*

**Recommendation:**

That an inter-ministerial liaison be appointed to assist families in navigating the mental health system in British Columbia.

*Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that when Hayden began to demonstrate emotional distress in conjunction with her sexual abuse disclosure, several agencies became involved with the family which caused confusion for the family. The agencies had mandates which were in some ways similar but dissimilar and it became unclear for the family as to who was there to help Hayden and how.*

I appreciate your attention to this request and look forward to receiving a response by February 28, 2014.

Sincerely,



Dave Halikowski  
BC Schizophrenia Society Chair