

From: [MCF Correspondence Management MCF:EX](#)
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 4:29 PM
To: <mailto:momsonthefirstmove@telus.net>
Subject: Letter from the Honourable Mary McNeil

VIA E-MAIL

Ref: 198280

Dawn Steele
Cyndi Gerlach
E-mail: momsonthefirstmove@telus.net

Dear Ms. Steele and Ms. Gerlach:

Thank you for your e-mail addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, regarding your concerns about the community-driven Pacific Autism Family Centre (PAFC) initiative. As the Minister of Children and Family Development, I am pleased to respond on her behalf.

It is important to note that PAFC is a community project, initiated by community advocates and led by the Pacific Autism Centre Society (PACS) – not government. I understand the Society has conducted extensive community consultations with parents, service providers and researchers around the province - to ensure the Centre reflects the needs of British Columbia's autism community. I assure you that this initiative will not negatively impact current or future funding of provincial autism services and programs; instead, it will complement existing services and support programs across government.

The Province is supportive of this project and has pledged up to \$20 million toward capital costs, pending the completion of a business plan from the PACS. British Columbia Housing is working with PACS on the design and development of the building and has provided development funding for the project.

I also understand that PACS has committed to raising approximately \$14 million to assist with capital costs, as well as an endowment fund for ongoing operating costs; a commitment that will lead to improved services across the province.

In the past year, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has participated in discussions with representatives from the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Provincial Health Services Authority and other associated ministries together with the PACS, regarding planning for the Centre. MCFD will continue to work with our partners to contribute to the planning.

I understand that you have been contacted by MOH regarding the internal documents to which you are referring and I understand that they have provided feedback in regard to the content and intent of those documents.

In summary, this initiative will not impact present or future funding of autism services and programs. Government has adopted a collaborative approach in delivering autism services and

programs, which involves multiple ministries – and if the proposal being developed is aligned with our established priorities, it will create further opportunities for ministries, families and key stakeholders to work together to better serve children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.

Thank you again for taking the time to write and share your thoughts.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Mary McNeil
Minister

Sent on behalf of the Minister by:

Client Relations Branch

Office of the Deputy Minister

Ministry of Children and Family Development

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in the delivery of quality customer information*

pc: Honourable Christy Clark