



November 30, 2023

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Via email: joan@districtofmackenzie.ca

Their Worship Joan Atkinson
and Members of Council
District of Mackenzie
PO Box 340, 1 Mackenzie Blvd
Mackenzie BC V0J 2C0

Dear Mayor Atkinson and Councillors:

Thank you to your delegation for meeting with me at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention in Vancouver.

I appreciated hearing about issues in your community and I'm grateful for your advocacy. Topics raised during the meeting included the challenges northern rural communities face in providing adequate mental health support to residents, and particularly children and youth, and the desire for a Foundry Centre within your community.

The Ministry is working hard across government to create an accessible, robust, and culturally safe system of mental health and addictions care that provides the right care at the right time and place for people.

The Province is investing in the expansion of the Foundry network of services for young people ages 12-24 and their families. Once complete, there will be 35 Foundry centres across British Columbia, in addition to the virtual services available province-wide through Foundry Virtual. More information is available [here](#). My office recently provided information on the Foundry application process to McKenzie Counselling Services to ensure they are aware of the callout and encourage them to submit an application.

As committed during our meeting, ministry staff reached out to the Ministry of Education and Child Care's Learning Division for the best contact information within School District 57, and will provide that to Chief Administrative Officer Smith as soon as possible.

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Thank you again for your leadership. I appreciate these important opportunities to exchange ideas and share information. Meetings like this help me better understand the challenges people and communities across BC face on a daily basis. Through a continued partnership, I am confident we can work together to improve mental health and substance use care in the District of Mackenzie and for all British Columbians.

Thank you again to your delegation for taking the time to meet with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Whiteside". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Jennifer Whiteside
Minister

pc: Francesca Wheler, Assistant Deputy Minister, CYMHP
Diane Smith, Chief Administrative Officer, District of Mackenzie