

Working Group on Staff Issues - Ministry of Children and Family Development and the BCGEU

Terms of Reference

Draft #2 March 2014

Background

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has been working on plans to better address issues related to staffing and workload. This work has included: improved distribution of budget and resources across the Service Delivery Areas (SDAs), implementation of business process improvement processes, initiation of a recruitment and retention strategy, initiation of an engagement strategy, improvements to workplace safety processes, and a learning and development strategy for 2014/15. MCFD recognizes the importance of focusing on operational initiatives that will improve workload management for staff, enhance leadership, and achieve improved outcomes for children and families.

The BCGEU is committed to supporting an urgent, comprehensive assessment of staffing, workload and safety issues in the Ministry. We know that Ministry workers across all classifications share common workplace concerns and challenges of working to provide support and services to vulnerable children and families.

On February 6, 2014, the British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) issued a report entitled "Lost In the Shadows". Recommendation 6 of that report identified the need for the Ministry to focus on staffing, workload and safety challenges (full recommendation attached). From this report and recommendations the Ministry and BCGEU have committed adopting the representative's specific recommendations including the following specifics:

Objectives: The Ministry will work with the BCGEU to:

- Ensure BCGEU has an opportunity to provide input into planning and analysis associated with:
 - Recruitment and retention strategies
 - Workload management strategies for all classifications
 - Development and implementation of the rapid response team
 - Workplace safety
 - Learning and development
 - Engagement
- Inform the BCGEU about current and planned staffing levels and strategies
- Explore utilization of the existing Collective Agreement to address recruitment and retention challenges in certain communities
- Explore worker safety in remote locations to ensure that child safety is addressed

- Provide a forum for exchange of ideas associated with workload, staffing, and recruitment and retention challenges

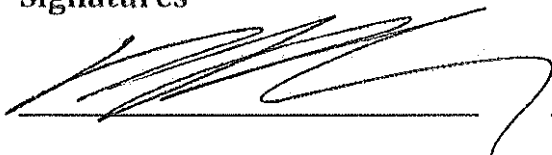
Timelines

- Provision of plans and information associated with: staffing strategy, rapid response team, recruitment and retention, learning plan, and engagement and workplace safety by end March 2014
- Working group detailed work plan to be developed by end-April 2014
- Completion of joint report on assessment and planning to date by June 1, 2014
- Working Group to wrap up by April 1, 2015 with a final MCFD report to the RCY on MCFD actions and results

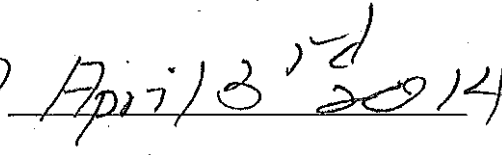
Membership

- Four representatives from the BCGEU, including representatives from Component 6 (Social, Information and Health) and Component 12 (Administrative Services) (to be determined)
- Four representatives from the Ministry of Children and Family Development: Allison Bond (Co-Chair), Robert Watts, a Community Services Manager (to be determined), Carolyn Kamper

Signatures



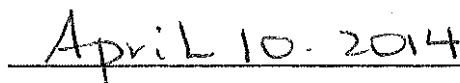
Mark Sieben, Deputy Minister, MCFD



Date



Darryl Walker, President BCGEU



Date

Appendix: Recommendation 6 from Lost in the Shadows

Lost in the Shadows: How a Lack of Help Meant a Loss of Hope for One First Nations Girl
Report from the Representative for Children and Youth, February 2014

Recommendation 6

As recommended in the Representative's report of 2008, Amanda, Savannah, Rowen and Serena: From Loss to Learning, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, as part of its current recruitment and retention strategy, undertake a comprehensive assessment of staffing, workload and safety challenges and develop a plan to address identified issues.

Details:

- An assessment of staffing levels to account for its impacts to service delivery and illustrate the challenges in meeting practice standards as a result of staff fluctuations.
- A rapid response team be available to cover service-delivery areas and MCFD offices in the areas of child safety, mental health and special needs, so that immediate steps can be taken to address emergencies and clear policies support how to trigger this response, with reporting to the Provincial Director of Child Welfare and the executive of MCFD.
- The assessment will include a review of the scope and scale of the workload of community service managers, and their roles and responsibilities. The intent of this recommendation is to ensure that CSMs are better informed of workload and staffing challenges on the front line.
- If staff turnover is determined to be a barrier to providing services in a manner consistent with legislation, standards and policies, the ministry must identify immediate corrective interventions, implementing innovative approaches to meet long term staffing needs.
- Regular and timely public reporting of staffing and training levels.
- The Representative emphasizes the need to ensure the safety of social workers as set out in Article 22 of the Master Agreement between the Government of B.C. and the BCGEU.

Assessment should be completed and shared with the Representative by June 1, 2014.

Plan should be developed and shared with the Representative by Sept. 1, 2014.

Plan should be implemented by April 1, 2015.

