



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA



Sonia Furstenau
Leader, BC Green Party

Honourable Jennifer Whiteside
Minister of Education

December 17, 2020

Dear Minister,

Congratulations on your appointment to the provincial cabinet.

I am writing today to support a request from Naomi Nilsson, the president of the Cowichan Valley Teachers' Union, who asks for a direction from your ministry for families returning from travel after the winter holiday break.

Teachers are concerned that students who are returning from travel to areas with reports of COVID-19 cases may increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission in Cowichan Valley schools. Ms. Nilsson requests (see attached) a clear directive from your ministry about what actions families should take upon their return from travelling outside of the region. This directive would reduce stress for teachers across BC as they enter into their two-week holiday already anxious about what to expect when they return to classes in January.

I agree with Ms. Nilsson that a clear, decisive, and immediate directive should be communicated to families about their responsibilities should they choose to travel over the holiday break..

In your response to my question in Question Period earlier this week, you said that you have been listening to teachers. This is a good example of a request from teachers that would go a long way in easing their fears of returning to work.

What is your ministry planning to do to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in schools in January, knowing that families will be travelling outside of their regions to visit loved ones?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SF' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Sonia Furstenau
Leader, BC Green Party
MLA for Cowichan Valley