



April 20, 2021

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Patrick Gatien, Chair  
Board of Education  
School District No. 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique)  
**Email: [patrick\\_gatien@csf.bc.ca](mailto:patrick_gatien@csf.bc.ca)**

Dear Mr. Gatien:

Thank you for your letter of January 20, 2021, expressing your concerns regarding the provincial Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) for the 2020/21 school year. I understand the concerns that have been raised about administering the FSA during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The FSA is intended to show how well children are doing in developing basic reading, writing and numeracy skills over time. It is the beginning of a series of assessments that continue through high school. The snapshot of student learning provided by the FSA is especially important this year to help assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and to help us identify necessary supports for students. This year's assessment was conducted between February 15 and March 12, 2021.

FSA results are intended to provide early interventions that can enhance student success. The results are also used to monitor educational outcomes and assist school districts in providing help to students who need it most. They are also an important source of information regarding vulnerable students and are used by the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the Representative for Children and Youth to monitor the outcome of Indigenous students and those with special needs.

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA), the Ministry of Education is obligated to release FSA results, in part to uphold public confidence in the quality of the education system. The FSA data was never intended to be used for ranking schools and the Ministry does not support the reporting of FSA results by the Fraser Institute. The Ministry no longer proactively releases school-level FSA results publicly and has revised its [masking policy](#).

We are committed to working with our partners to address concerns related to the FSA in order to ensure students have the support they need to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, as well as to support continuous improvement in the education system and to monitor and address systemic barriers to equity and inclusion.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Whiteside  
Minister