



February 18, 2026

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

As we continue to support the community of Tumbler Ridge, I know that school safety is weighing heavily on many of your minds. As a mom, I feel it too. Every single day our children walk out the door, we just want to know that they will be okay.

What happened was devastating. Our hearts are with the entire Tumbler Ridge community. At the same time, I want to reassure you that schools across British Columbia are safe. Every independent school is required to have a Safe School Coordinator who leads school-wide safety planning, including detailed safety protocols and regular lockdown drills. Safe School Coordinators also receive ongoing provincial support, expert guidance, and comprehensive training to help ensure strong, consistent safety practices across all schools.

While nothing can lessen the pain of what occurred, I am deeply grateful that the safety procedures in Tumbler Ridge, alongside the quick, courageous actions of all teachers, school staff, and students, prevented the situation from being far worse.

Independent schools have emergency responses in place, and staff are trained to initiate them when needed. This kind of planning and practice happens in communities across the province. It is taken seriously, reviewed regularly, and designed to protect students and staff should the unthinkable occur.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care works closely with the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and Safer Schools Together—provincial experts in prevention, crisis, and trauma response—to provide schools with clear guidance and ongoing support for their safety planning. This coordination ensures that schools are prepared and that best practices are shared province-wide.

I also know that many of you, and your children, have questions about what happened. Some kids may be feeling anxious or may want to talk about their own safety. It is normal for children to experience emotional reactions after hearing about or experiencing a traumatic event—even when they remain safe. Parents can watch for signs that a child may need extra support, such as worry or fear about safety, trouble concentrating, sadness, withdrawal or increased irritability, shifts in sleep or appetite, and physical complaints like headaches or stomach-aches.

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If you are looking for support on how to have these difficult conversations in an age-appropriate and trauma-informed way, resources are available on the [Expect Respect and a Safe Education \(erase\) website](#) and on this dedicated provincial [website to support people through the Tumbler Ridge tragedy](#).

I also want to acknowledge the heightened anxiety many 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families are feeling amid the rise in harmful rhetoric. Schools must continue to be safe, welcoming places where every student belongs. If your child or someone you know experiences threats or harassment, please use the [Report It tool](#) and connect with a teacher or principal.

At a time when British Columbians are coming together to support a grieving community, it is unacceptable to use this tragedy to target and harm vulnerable children.

Please contact your school principal if you have questions about safety protocols in place at your school.

We will continue working to ensure our schools remain places of safety, care, and belonging for every student.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Beare".

Lisa Beare
Minister