



February 23, 2010

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to you today to inform you that we have introduced Bill 242, Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010, for legislative approval. As you know Full-Day Early Learning is a new and exciting initiative that requires a legislative framework to ensure a smooth implementation beginning in September 2010.

If passed, the legislation would amend the *Education Act* to mandate the new province-wide Full-Day Early Learning Program, including the integrated extended-day option. The amendments would create two new core ELP obligations for boards to provide full day JK/K in every elementary school of the board, and to operate an integrated Extended Day program for JK/K pupils on instructional days, for a period before and after school.

The proposed amendments would also require boards to designate and fill ECE positions for JK/K classes and the Extended Day, provide additional recognition of the important new role that ECEs will play, include a “duty to co-operate” in the expectation that teachers and ECEs will collaborate on shared activities, and provide authority for the government to enter into arrangements with municipalities or other parties in order to provide subsidies to eligible families with children in Extended Day programs.

Two Core ELP Obligations

The obligation to provide full-day JK/K would require boards to ensure classrooms are staffed by a teacher-ECE team, while additional policies / guidelines or regulations would provide that the day is guided by Ministry program documents. Exceptions would be provided through regulations, policies/guidelines.

The Extended Day program would be led by ECEs and would complement the JK/K core program. Extended Day would be considered “school” and registrants would be “pupils”, therefore, Extended Day would operate under the regulatory environment of the *Education Act*, not the *Day Nurseries Act*. These amendments would also require boards to charge fees for Extended Day, subject to rules set out in regulation. In addition, boards would have the authority to offer Extended Day programs to older children and on non-instructional days (PA days, holidays, summer).

Designating ECEs

The designated ECE positions are to be filled by members of the College of Early Childhood Educators. Under a letter of permission, someone who is not a member of the college could fill a designated ECE position. This mirrors the conditions for filling a teacher position

Recognition of the new role of ECEs

The amendments would mirror general provisions that apply to teachers, such as requiring boards to report terminations or suspensions due to professional misconduct to the College of Early Childhood Educators. Similar board and Minister's powers regarding professional opportunities would also be provided to ECEs, such as professional development courses, exchange programs, and the creation of learning plans. ECEs would be given access to read the Ontario Student Record (OSR). Authority would be provided for boards to establish induction / performance appraisal for ECEs.

Duty to Co-operate

Both ECEs and teachers would work under the direction of the principal. The amendments would include a "duty to co-operate" on the following shared activities:

- Planning and delivery of the JK/K program
- Assessment and observation of children
- Communicating with families
- Maintaining a healthy social, emotional and learning environment

The teacher would retain the duties of formal reporting, adding to the Ontario Student Record, and engaging in the formal discipline process. It would be the role of ECEs to lead the Extended Day.

Subsidy

It is the intention of the government to enable seamless subsidy flow to families in need as their children move through the child care and education systems. The amendments would provide authority for the government to enter into agreements with municipalities or other parties to provide subsidies to eligible families with children in the Extended Day.

There are consequential amendments to other statutes including *Day Nurseries Act*, the *Early Childhood Educators Act*, the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* and the *Child and Family Services Act*.

A news release and backgrounder outlining the proposed amendments to the *Education Act* are now public and available on the Ministry's website. Additionally, the bill itself can be found online at the following site < http://www.ontla.on.ca/bills/bills-files/39_Parliament/Session1/b242.pdf>. We will continue to provide you with further information as it becomes available.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we move forward with this exciting initiative in support of children and families, and build a brighter future for all Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Jim Grieve