



Educators Children Deserve

Full Day Early Learning Educator Training & Education Task Group
Report to Niagara JKSK2010 Collaborative
June 2009

Task Group Membership

Lorrey Arial Bonilla	Early Childhood Community Development Centre
Liz Carr	Ontario Early Years Centres (Port Cares)
Kim Cole	A Child's World
Tammy M. Ferguson	Early Childhood Community Development Centre
Debra Harwood	Brock University
Allison Soave	Niagara College
Barb Sockovie	A Child's World
Kristin Willms	District School Board of Niagara

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Early Years Niagara Planning Council.

The views and opinions of originators expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the Early Childhood Community Development Centre, Ontario Early Years Centres, Brock University, Niagara College, District School Board of Niagara, or A Child's World or any associate or partner thereof.

Assistance in the production of this report

Many thanks to Julie Thompson of the Early Childhood Community Development Centre for her skills in attention to detail and Graphic Designer and Desktop publishing expertise.

Niagara's Vision

"Full day early learning and care in Niagara does what is best for young children and their families by optimizing assets and best practise that exist in our Education and Child Care community. A blended approach will be used with sensitivity to the whole child and their individual needs, and a commitment to integrated, seamless service delivery for all children". (Niagara JKSK 2010 Collaborative, 2008, p. 3)

Full Day Early Learning Educator Training & Education Task Group Goal



The goal of the task group was to provide recommendations on the required training and education of Full Day Early Learning Educators and suggest multiple pathways available to accomplish the objective. The membership of the task group comprised of individuals across several sectors of Niagara's community, including post-secondary education, the District School Board of Niagara, Niagara Child Care Sector, and the Early Childhood Community Development Centre.

Foundational Principles of Task Group

- Common goal of putting the child and family first
- Idealizing the Full Day Early Learning Educator that children deserve
- Capitalizing on assets already present in Niagara (e.g., QCCN, ECCDC, post-secondary institutions)
- New public investment in the early years
- Teachers and Early Childhood Educators maintain their employment and collaborate to offer seamless, integrated delivery of full day program
- Flexibility to leverage our collective assets in Niagara to deliver training and education model that best suits the region's needs

"We must always focus on the child first and foremost. What does the specific child need and desire in an Educator?"

~Dr. Debra Harwood
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Brock University

Rationale for Report

The general literature review conducted in preparation of this report seems to suggest that the number of years of education and training specific to the early years is of paramount importance in offering quality early learning programs for young children. Specifically, “the presence of BA-level teachers with specialized training in early childhood education leads to better outcomes for young children” (Whitebook, 2003a, 2003b). Moreover, there is a growing consensus in the literature that Educators engaged in full day programs with 4 and 5 year olds require specific training and experiences in order to provide quality programming and experiences (Consultants/Coordinators' Association of Primary Educators, 2008; Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2008; Foundation for Child Development, 2006).

The policy debate regarding the BA requirement is not central in this report. This report focuses on the ‘essential ingredients’ of a Full Day Early Learning and Care Educator, that is the foundational and core knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are essential for all Educators to possess in order to provide quality learning and care environments that **children deserve**.



“High-quality, developmentally appropriate classrooms feature many meaningful interactions between children and teachers and their peers, whether working one-on-one with a teacher or within small-group or large-group activities. Children also have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of age-appropriate activities, which are responsive to their individual interests, developmental abilities, curiosity, and home language and culture. . . . In sum, good teachers help children build on their emerging understandings and skills by introducing them to new activities and engaging in interactions that are sensitive, responsive, and foster children’s social, emotional, and cognitive growth”.

(Ackerman, 2005, Early Childhood Research and Practice Journal)

How to Read the Report

The basis of the report is presented in the attached grid. The grid is comprised of four main sections; Foundational and Core Knowledge (with three subsections), Educator Skills, Dispositions/Processes of Teaching, and Future Pathways. Within each section several essential constructs are listed in an attempt to define what an Educator should know, do, and be in relation to children within a full day program. It is important to note that although the grid reports these 4 sections as discrete categories, the dimensions overlap as the complexity of the art and science of teaching involves the interconnected processes of knowledge, skill, dispositions, and practice (Kervin & Turbill, 2003).

Definitions of the four main sections (and subsections) are listed below:

<p>Foundational and Core Knowledge (i.e., what an Educator must know)</p>	<p>I. Foundational and core knowledge of child development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the continuum of development from 0 to 8 years to plan, implement, and evaluate quality learning and care environments for the 4 and 5 year old • Based on premise of learning in the early years as the laying of the foundation for later learning and academic success <p>II. Pedagogical knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the theoretical constructs and practices associated with the practice of teaching <p>III. Pedagogical documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous, methodological, collaborative and recursive process of collecting, interpreting, and revisiting concrete artefacts to promote dialogue, reflection, and with the expressed intention of informing practice <p>IV. Professional and practical knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge necessary to conduct oneself in a professional and deliberate manner
<p>Educator Skills</p>	<p>Discrete set of skills that are necessary in implementing a full day early learning and care program (i.e., what an Educator must be able to do)</p>
<p>Dispositions/ Processes of Teaching</p>	<p>Refers to the values, attitudes, and beliefs an Educator must possess in order to implement a full day early learning and care program (i.e., how an Educator must be in relation to young children)</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Several pathways to achieving the goal of Educators Children Deserve are indicated in the last section with both immediate and long range pathways detailed</p>
<p>Bibliography</p>	<p>Selected bibliography is attached for easy reference</p>

Foundational and Core Knowledge	
I. Foundational and Core Knowledge of Child Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theoretical understanding of developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant practices (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theoretical understanding of the continuum of child development (0 to 8 years) and teaching to enhance development and learning (Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2007)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of child development within the context of cultural and linguistic diversity (Foundation for Child Development, 2006)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of classroom and behaviour management from a ‘guidance’ perspective and within a social-emotional competency framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social emotional competencies will be fostered (i.e. Self awareness; Self-management; Social awareness; Relationship skills; Responsible decision-making) (Bailey, 2000; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of theories and historical perspectives of play and practical applications of play as a valuable medium for learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of and practices that support integrative and holistic teaching strategies that embody/exemplify principles of developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant practices; backwards design; experiential learning; learning styles; and theories of exceptionality (diverse ability)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasis on developmentally appropriate goals that are both challenging and achievable with educators who scaffold children’s progress in all areas of learning and development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of importance of building fundamental learning skills (dispositions toward learning) versus isolated skills/information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispositions toward learning refers to fostering children’s emotion and motivation for learning (i.e., interest, pleasure, challenge) as well as actual engagement in learning through action (i.e., attention, persistence, flexibility, self-regulation) (Hyson, 2008)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content and specific subject matter knowledge (e.g., emergent literacy and literacy strategies, numeracy and math, social and emotional development, physical health and motor development)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Culturally responsive teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Culturally responsive teaching</i> is “defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively”. (Gay, 2002) • Knowledgeable and capable of building <i>cultural scaffolds</i> and creating <i>culturally responsive caring</i> environments

Foundational and Core Knowledge

II. Pedagogical Knowledge

- Understanding of the continuum of **instructional strategies** available and the employment of varied strategies that best meet the needs of children
- Knowledge of and purposeful use of varied learning formats (large group; small group; one to one instruction; learning centres; routines; projects; ‘teachable moments’, etc.) that supports and facilitates a ‘differentiated classroom/program’ approach
 - Differentiated classroom involves educators responding to children’s needs and is guided by principles of differentiation (e.g. respectful tasks, flexible grouping, ongoing assessment and adjustment)
 - Content, process, and products can all be differentiated according to children’s ‘readiness’, ‘interest’, and ‘learning style’
 - (see Tomlinson, 1999 for more information on differentiated classrooms)
- Intentional and intuitive management of ‘*productivity*’ time (i.e., time children are actively engaged in play and learning)
 - Use of routines/transitions as ‘learning opportunities’
 - Recognition of natural teachable moments
 - Routines that promote child agency
 - Considered use of ‘long blocks’ of uninterrupted time (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008)
- Understanding of theory and applications of designing a **learning environment** that:
 - i. Fosters connections and sense of belonging
 - ii. Recognizes and validates the ‘**care**’ component in providing environments for young children
 - iii. Promotes flexibility and open-ended opportunities for learning
 - iv. Incorporates natural materials and materials that engage the senses
 - v. Promotes wonder, curiosity, and intellectual engagement
 - vi. Incorporates symbolic representations, literacy, visual arts (‘100 languages’)
 - (see Curtis & Carter, 2003 for more information on learning environments)
- Theoretical understanding of curriculum and curriculum planning
 - Understanding and knowledge of curriculum documents and related frameworks addressing young children (e.g. Ontario Ministry of Education Kindergarten Program; Ministry of Child and Youth Services’ Early Learning for Every Child Framework)
- Understanding of and familiarity with varied early years curriculum models in practice
 - Critical evaluation of materials and resources available for the early years
- Curriculum planning is integrated, meaningful, sequenced, flexible, interactive, engaging, contextually relevant, balanced, and based on the principle of ‘distance-from-self criterion’ (i.e., build on what children already know [e.g. family] before introducing esoteric concepts [e.g. dinosaurs] (Shipley, 2008)

Foundational and Core Knowledge

III. Pedagogical Documentation

- Pedagogical documentation involves a rigorous, methodological, collaborative and recursive process of collecting, interpreting, and revisiting concrete artefacts (e.g. audio recordings, photographs, examples of children’s work, etc.) to promote dialogue and reflection of both educators and learners (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999; Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; MacDonald, 2007)
- Assessing children’s development and learning is ongoing; varied; developmentally and culturally/linguistically appropriate and used to guide planning and decision making
- Theoretical and practical knowledge of assessment of (summative), for (formative), and as learning (Earl, 2003)
 - Knowledge of how to use assessment data to inform practice
- Theoretical understanding and practical application of observation and documentation of children’s learning
- Continuous reflection while ‘making the learning process visible to teachers, parent, children, and members of the community (Edwards, et al., 1998)
- Knowledge and application of research methods (e.g. teacher as researcher ideal)

IV. Professional and Practical Knowledge

- Understanding of complexity of Program administration
- Demonstrates professional knowledge (e.g. confidentiality, ethics, code of conduct, etc.)
- Leadership and advocacy
- Parent and family outreach, community outreach (Sadowski, 2006)

Educator Skills

- Knowing how to align standards, curricula, and instruction within and across grade levels (Foundation for Child Development, 2006) including the ability to support the continuum of learning from one grade to the next
- Awareness of the curriculum expectations for Junior and Senior kindergarten, Grade 1, and later primary grades. "Knowledge of the literacy and numeracy continua, in particular, is critical for teachers as they lay the foundations for learning" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006).
- Able to assess children and the learning environment and uses that knowledge to monitor and adjust instruction, environment and learning experiences
- Able to link knowledge of subject content with the skills children must learn to master it (Foundation of Child Development, 2006)
- Curriculum design fosters child's ability to make connections; strategic use of resources and technologies (Sadowski, 2006)
- Able to assess children and use that knowledge to monitor and adjust instruction and learning experiences and create developmental program plans and make referrals if required to specialized support services i.e. speech language supports, behaviour management specialist.
- Able to employ multiple observation and pedagogical documentation procedures (e.g. anecdotal, running record, portfolio, performance based, etc.)
- Behaviour and classroom management is based on positive 'guidance' approach
- Capable of creating/contributing to 'learning community'
- Skilled mentor and leader within professional community
- Competent and upholds principles of confidentiality, ethics, code of conduct, and professionalism
- Collaborates and connects with families, community, and advocates for children and families
- Teacher as researcher, reflective practitioner
- Skilled administrator and resource contributing to the specific 'learning community'

Dispositions/Processes of Teaching (Values and Beliefs)

- Intentional and intuitive teaching that is directed toward purposeful and thoughtful consideration in creating a “caring community of learners” (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009, p. 34)

- Values creating a *caring community of learners*
 - Shared culture within classroom
 - Promotes child agency and collaboration
 - Reciprocal and respectful relationships between educator and children and amongst children themselves
 - Inclusive and respectful of children with diverse abilities and culture and language

- Adopts a reflective practice
 - Identifies and revisits beliefs, values, and assumptions
 - Aligns beliefs and actions
 - Supportive of a culture of *praxis* (i.e., reflection is critical component that informs the actions taken within the classroom/program) (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003, p. 249)
 - Continual revisiting of beliefs through critical teacher reflection practices (e.g. using a critical peer, problem-poser, shared dialogue, case study analysis, etc.)

- Embraces and seeks out professional development opportunities
 - Ongoing professional development
 - Collaborative between school and community

- Embraces a collaborative and reciprocal relationship with families (parent partnerships)

- Coordinated and aligned approach across various contexts the child is embedded (family, school, child care, etc.)

- Responsive, supportive, and caring relationships are valued and created between child and educator

- Adopts and values view of schools as places of ‘community’ serving as centres for education and integrated social supports to nurture children's well-being and learning.

- View of schools as a hub of integrated children’s services (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2008)

- Awareness and understanding of varied documents impacting young children and their families (e.g. the Early Learning for Every Child Today framework) (Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2007)

- Embraces a ‘vertical alignment’ orientation to planning (i.e., recognition of importance for early childhood educators to integrate subject/learning and development experiences *horizontally* within their curriculum as well as alignment of experiences and expectations *vertically* across grade/development levels, thereby providing a continuum of learning from ages 0 to eight). (Sadowski, 2006, p. 7)

Recommendations	
Recommended Immediate Fast Track Educational Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridging Model ▪ Applicant with a 2 year Early Childhood Education diploma is admitted to 2 year university degree program and upon successful completion is awarded a Bachelor’s degree and eligible to apply for degree requirements for Bachelor of Education and teacher licensure in Ontario ▪ E.g. Charles Sturt University direct entry program to begin in fall of 2009 (Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies) ▪ E.g. Brock University’s proposed direct entry program (TBA)
Immediate Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bachelor of Early Childhood Education with one year consecutive program in teacher education program ▪ Additional qualification courses for existing licensed teachers (i.e. a minimum of 3-part AQ courses is proposed) (Consultants/Coordinators' Association of Primary Educators, 2008) ▪ Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition system is created and utilized to determine potential ‘exemptions’ from any required educational upgrades mandated by the government or licensing agencies
Immediate Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding be made available by the Provincial Government to support professional development and qualification upgrades for employed Early Childhood Educators and primary school teachers (e.g. expansion of Ontario’s Early Childhood Education Upgrade program to financially assist with tuition, travel, and training costs) ▪ A <i>flexible and accelerated</i> Bachelor of Education and teacher licensure in Ontario program delivery system be developed for Early Childhood Educators who are seeking to upgrade their qualifications while remaining employed full-time as an Early Childhood Educator (e.g. online and telecommunication learning combined with onsite extended blocks, service learning models, evening and weekend learning opportunities, etc.) ▪ Opportunities for combined professional development opportunities for Early Childhood Educators and classroom teachers be developed and supported by Boards of Education, Child Care operators and agencies and the Provincial Government (e.g. Mentoring Pairs for Child Care based model)
Long Range Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Universal access for all children within an early learning and childcare framework (i.e. services, agencies, and organizations that provide services/programs that are intended to enhance child development, learning, and/or well-being, and to support parents in a variety of ways.) (Friendly, 2006) ▪ Qualification and pay parity of kindergarten teachers and Early Childhood Educators become an integral part of Ontario’s Early Learning system and the establishment of a University degree equivalent to New Zealand’s Diploma of Teaching (ECE) be created as the benchmark qualification (see Appendix for a fuller description of the New Zealand model) ▪ An integrated and coordinated career lattice for all individuals working with children 0-8 years be developed and become part of Ontario’s Early Learning system (i.e., “career lattice” refers to a framework that outlines multiple pathways for professional growth and development. Individual may move vertically, horizontally, or diagonally across the Early Learning system in order to advance their careers). (Barbour & Lash, 2009)

Appendix A

New Zealand Model

General Overview

- Integrated system of care and education administered by Ministry of Education
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/educationSectors/EarlyChildhood.aspx>
- National Early Childhood curriculum framework (*Te Whāriki*)
- New Zealand's early childhood sector and Government have developed a 10-year **Strategic Plan** called *Pathways to the future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki*. The plan is focused on achieving three main goals over the next 10 years:
 - Increasing participation in quality early childhood education services
 - Improving quality of early childhood education services
 - Promoting collaborative relationships
- Multiple pathways available based on individual's current status (for e.g. primary or secondary qualified teacher considering becoming an early childhood teacher will be required to obtain a Graduate Diploma of Teaching (ECE)) [see <http://www.teachnz.govt.nz/thinking-of-becoming-a-teacher/early-childhood/your-study-options> for more information]
- By 2012 all teachers in all early childhood centres will need to be registered or in training in an approved teacher education program to be legally employed.
- Early childhood teachers who have the Diploma of Teaching (ECE) or its equivalent approved by the NZ Teachers Council (TC) can apply to become registered teachers

NZ Early Childhood Education Services & Models

- Multiple and varied
- Home-based (family day care)
- Centre-based (kindergartens, education and care centres, play centres, *ngā Kōhanga Reo*, Pacific Island centres, Montessori centres).
- Parents as educators type centres (e.g. playcentre, community-based playgroups),
- Centres offered mainly by professionally trained and paid staff (e.g. kindergartens, education and care centres).
- Centres can cater for children from birth to 5 years of age, centres
- for children from 3 to 5 years; full day centres or part day centres (e.g. morning or afternoon); and language immersion, bilingual or English-based programmes.

Current and Future Educator Qualifications

From 31 December 2007 the 50% Teacher Qualification Requirement, will come into effect. This means **teacher-led, centre based ECE** services will need 50% of the "total regulated staff" to hold an ECE teaching qualification recognized by the New Zealand Teachers Council for the purposes of registration. By 2012, the goal is to increase this figure to 80% of total regulated staff.

Bibliography

- Ackerman, D. J. (2005). Getting teachers from here to there: Examining Issues related to an Early Care and Education teacher policy. *Early childhood Research and Practice*, 7(1).
- Bailey, B. (2000). *Conscious discipline: Seven basic skills for brain smart classroom management*. Oviedo, FL: Loving Guidance.
- Barbour, N., & Lash, M. (2009). The professional development of teachers of young children. In S. Feeney, A. Galper & C. Seefeldt (Eds.), *Continuing issues in early childhood education* (pp. 158-183). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Consultants/Coordinators' Association of Primary Educators (2008). CAPE Position Paper: Full-Day Kindergarten in Ontario Retrieved May 3, 2009, from <http://www.capeonline.ca/>
- Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through age 8*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Curtis, D., & Carter, M. (2003). *Designs for living and learning: Transforming early childhood environments*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.
- Dahlberg, G., Moss, P., & Pence, A. (1999). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care: Postmodern perspectives*. London, UK: Falmer Press.
- Earl, L. M. (2003). *Assessment as learning: Using classroom assessment to maximize student learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Edwards, C. P., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (1998). *The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.
- Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (2008). *Full Day Kindergarten: Moving Ontario Forward*. Toronto.
- Foundation for Child Development (2006). Ready to teach: Providing children with the teachers they deserve Retrieved April 26, 2009, from http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/2006AnnualReport.pdf
- Friendly, M. (2006). *Canadian early learning and child care and the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (No. 22). Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(2), 106-116.
- Hoffman-Kipp, P., Artiles, A. J., & Lopez-Torres, L. (2003). Beyond reflection: Teaching learning as praxis. *Theory into practice*, 42(3), 248-254.

- Hyson, M. (2008). *Enthusiastic and engaged learners: Approaches to learning in the early childhood classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Kervin, L. K., & Turbill, J. (2003). Teaching as a craft: Making links between pre-service training and professional practice. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, 2, 22-34.
- MacDonald, M. (2007). Toward formative assessment: The use of pedagogical documentation in the early elementary classrooms. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 22, 232-242.
- Niagara JKSK 2010 Collaborative (2008). *Report on full day early learning and care*: Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services (2007). *Early Learning for Every Child: A framework for early childhood settings*. Toronto.
- Ontario Ministry of Education (2006). *The Kindergarten Program-Revised*: Author.
- Pianta, R. C., La Paro, K. M., & Hamre, B. K. (2008). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System Manual: K to 3*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Sadowski, M. (2006). Core knowledge for PK-3 teaching: Ten components of effective instruction Retrieved April 26, 2009, from http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/Core_Knowledge.pdf
- Shiple, D. (2008). *Empowering children: Play-based curriculum for lifelong learning* (Fourth ed.). Toronto: Nelson Education Limited.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Whitebook, M. (2003a). Bachelor's degrees are best: Higher qualifications for pre-kindergarten teachers lead to better learning environments for children. ERIC Reproduction No.ED480817
- Whitebook, M. (2003b). Early education quality: Higher teacher qualifications for better living environments. A review of the literature. ERIC Reproduction No. ED481219

