

**DATE:** October 28, 2009

**TO:** Unit Presidents  
Provincial Executive  
OTF Governors  
Secretariat

**FROM:** Government Relations Department

**SUBJECT:** Early Learning Program (ELP)

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Today Premier McGuinty followed through on the Liberal's 2007 campaign promise to provide full-day learning for 4 and 5 year olds. It's an exciting day for young families in Ontario. OECTA's news release can be found on our website at:  
[http://www.oecta.on.ca/news/nr2009/nr\\_FDkinder\\_Oct27.htm](http://www.oecta.on.ca/news/nr2009/nr_FDkinder_Oct27.htm)

A more detailed report on the implementation plans for the program will be provided at the November Council of Presidents meeting. A summary of what we know at this point is described below. **It will be important that you discuss the implementation plans with your Director.**

We know that the program will be offered in selected schools to approximately 35,000 students starting in September 2010, and the goal is to have it implemented in all schools by 2015-16. At the end of the 5-year phase-in period the government is projecting that 3,850 additional teachers and 9,500 additional ECEs will have been hired.

The lobbying efforts of the Association have resulted in a model that ensures that a full time teacher, along with an Early Childhood Educator (ECE), will deliver the school day portion of the program (9-3:30), with the before- and after- school portion of the program being led by ECE staff. The board-wide class average will be 26. These calculations will be excluded from other class size averages within the school and the board. The before and after portions of the program will be funded by parents on a cost-recovery basis and there will be some subsidies available for low-income families.

Directors have been asked to assign a senior staff member as the Early Learning Program (ELP) Leader and to submit a list of proposed schools in which they want to implement the program, to the Ministry by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Boards that currently offer full-day every-day kindergarten programs will be affected by the announcement in one of two ways:**

1. Those currently offering a full-day every-day kindergarten programs in **some** schools will be expected to introduce the full day ELP in other schools in the board for September 2010.
2. Those currently offering a full-day every-day kindergarten program in **every** school will receive the ELP funding for the program, but will be expected to develop a plan in consultation with the Ministry for use of these funds to support students.

**How phase-one schools will be selected:**

Schools that will offer full-day early learning program in September 2010 will be announced early in the new year in time for parents to register their children in the new programs. School boards, working with their partner municipalities, will recommend schools based on the following guidelines:

1. **Available space** – the program can be introduced at a school that has classroom space available and does not require new additions or renovations.
2. **Impact on existing local child care** – school boards and municipalities will work together to assess whether communities will be best served by selecting schools with existing child care programs, schools near existing licensed child care or schools in neighbourhoods where no child care is currently available for four- and five-year-olds.
3. **Local need** – school boards will be encouraged to consider the various needs of all the communities that they serve and how the program could meet those needs. A portion of the phase-one schools will serve low-income neighbourhoods. Co-terminus boards are to consult throughout this process.

**We need your assistance and action.** Unit presidents are to contact their Directors to ensure that you are notified about which schools are being submitted to the Ministry for consideration as Phase One Schools so that we can monitor this aspect of the initiative. It will be critical that we ensure that Catholic boards receive approval on a pro-rated basis. Once your board has identified the proposed Phase One schools, please forward the names of the schools to Victoria Hunt ([v.hunt@oecta.on.ca](mailto:v.hunt@oecta.on.ca)) or Cheryl Fullerton ([c.fullerton@oecta.on.ca](mailto:c.fullerton@oecta.on.ca)) in the Government Relations Dept..