



ALBERTA EARLY LEARNING AND CARE  
LEADERS CAUCUS

July 5, 2020  
513C Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB  
Canada T5K 2B6

Dear MLA Mrs. Tracy Allard,

Re: Licensing Review Stakeholder Engagement Sessions – Presentation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide ideas on how to maximize the efficient delivery of quality early learning and child care in AB on behalf of the AB ELC Leaders Caucus. The Early learning and child care regulations are an important part of the whole system that is required to enable child care educators and operators to support Alberta's youngest citizens and families with high quality early learning and child care services.

The work of an early learning and child care educator is complex due to the diversity of the children and families that require early learning and child care services (ELCC) and the importance of development during the early years.

Therefore, in order to do this work, the child care regulations must include a phased in approach with supports to move towards an ELCC educated workforce (with education from post secondary institutions offering ELCC Certification) of all educators in each Early learning and child care program (starting with a minimum of a ELCC Certificate and then moving to a diploma for all child care educators). This would mean that educators have research based ELCC knowledge about best practice in such areas as ELCC programming, play based learning, child development and ELCC pedagogy about working with young children and families (using the Flight curriculum). This would therefore maximize the efficient delivery of quality child care in Alberta because these educators would all have a solid understanding of working with children and families. This could reduce legislative requirements and monitoring of programs. Importantly, research has shown that this would reduce staff turnover which is extremely costly of an operator's time and finances, has been an on-going issue and was specifically noted as a challenge in the 2007 licensing review so it is past time to change this. Even more notably, staff turnover is very detrimental to quality care for young children. With an educated workforce, less support for children with additional needs would be required. As well, the current CDA level course would no longer be required (for 6000 people/year) so funding could be used for support for other requirements (CDAs turnover rate is 25% – waste of resources for Children's Services for certification as well as operators and directors). Importantly, to not disrupt the current workforce, it would have to be a phased in approach with additional supports. Currently, many ELCC Students who graduate do not stay in the field.

Additionally, a phased in process is required for program directors to have a minimum of a post-diploma certificate in management or pedagogical leadership in addition to the ELCC diploma or a degree. This

would reduce legislative requirements and monitoring of programs as ELCC directors would have good understanding of how to manage child care programs such as the understanding of regulations and the ability to provide program and pedagogical leadership.

Many operators (and educators and directors) have expressed concerns at the lack of knowledge and skills to do their work and therefore, the high level of time and cost of maintaining educators and directors that are not appropriately educated/or have equivalencies which make them unprepared to undertake the complex role that is required. This also leads to further inefficiencies for monitoring such as non-compliances that are currently common in AB's programs and put a strain on monitoring and regulations.

Furthermore, on-going professional learning for educators and directors would keep educators and program directors updated in quality standards and practice and would therefore help to maximize the efficient delivery of quality child care in Alberta.

The early learning and child care regulations are part of the systematic approach that is required to maximize the efficient delivery of a well planned transformative, quality early learning and child care system in Alberta and a well-qualified and well supported workforce is a critical base for the system to be effective for young children and their families in Alberta. The changes in Licensing regulations must be done in the best interest of the children in ELCC programs.

For further clarification or questions, I can be reached at 403-923-4893, or by email at [mfarebrother@mtroyal.ca](mailto:mfarebrother@mtroyal.ca)

Sincerely,

MaryAnn Farebrother

On behalf of the Alberta Early Learning and Child Care Leaders Caucus (ALC)

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