

THE ROAD AHEAD: Setting strategic priorities for the College

In April 2012, the second Council of the College of Early Childhood Educators held a workshop to determine the Council's strategic priorities from 2012-2015.

This is the right time for reflection. The Council recognizes that the priorities which had governed the formative years of the College from 2009-2012 have been successfully completed: the registration regulation is in place and has guided the admission of the College's 38,000 members; the elections and governance processes are fully functional; the complaints and discipline infrastructure has been implemented, resulting in over 60 complaints and seven referrals to the Discipline Committee; and the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* are in regular use and are the subject of the College's outreach efforts. Additionally, the College's fiscal, human resource and information technology (IT) capabilities have stabilized and the leadership has matured.

It is now time to set strategic priorities for the next three years.

Preparation

In January 2012, Council participated in a full-day risk assessment exercise that contributed to their understanding of the current state of the College's resources and possible future challenges. In addition, staff prepared a brief scan of the regulatory and early learning and care sectors.

Council requested that College staff hold a series of stakeholder roundtables on strategic priorities; and engage members in a survey to receive their input. In February 2012, the College conducted 10 roundtable

discussions with representatives of various stakeholder groups, including:

- Aboriginal
- Advocacy
- Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs)/District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs)
- Education
- Employers
- Francophone
- Members (RECEs)
- Parents
- Post secondary institutions

In March 2012, all members of the College were offered the opportunity to provide feedback about their views on the College's strategic priorities for the next three years through an online survey. Over 3,500 members responded to the survey.

College staff provided Council with a report on the feedback obtained from RECEs and other stakeholders. A facilitator, Sue Hunter, conducted a 1.5 day session with Council members that was designed to be collaborative and participatory. Council members were encouraged to contribute and to reflect on Council achievements, and on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that create the context for the College governance going forward.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



If you haven't seen it yet, I encourage you to go online and watch the video recording of the College's third annual meeting of members. This year's meeting included a special presentation by the College's Registrar & CEO, Sue Corke, on professionalism in early childhood education. Watch this presentation to learn more about why early childhood educators (ECEs) are

regulated and what that means for you in your practice.

At its last meeting in June 2012, College Council welcomed four new publicly appointed members: Rosemary Fontaine, James Minore, Larry O'Connor and Ron Wideman. You can read more about them in the "About Us" -> "Council & Committees" section of the College's website, www.collegeofece.on.ca. On behalf of all my colleagues on Council, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Delora Deravi, Younglee Ha and Janette Pelletier, who completed their terms on Council as publicly appointed members in February. With terms that spanned the College's first three years of operation, they played a big role

in establishing the College's Council and committees.

Over the summer months, there are several important happenings of which members should be aware. The College has issued its first Professional Advisory on the use of the protected titles "registered early childhood educator" and "early childhood educator" and the professional designation "RECE". To learn more, please turn to Page 6 of this newsletter.

I would also like to draw your attention to the College's upcoming election of Council members. Members in five of the College's eight electoral districts will receive a Notice of Election and Nomination Package later this year, and I urge you to consider running for election for the position of Council Member. As well, as so many members did in our last election, you can also get involved by applying for a position as a non-Council Committee member. This newsletter has more information, and we'll continue to provide you with news about the election through the College's website.

Happy Summer!

LOIS MAHON, RECE, PRESIDENT

REGISTRAR'S MESSAGE



Over the first half of 2012, the College has been hard at work gathering feedback from members and others involved in the early learning and care sector about the College's future strategic priorities. Thank you to all those members who took the time to respond to the College's online survey about important areas of focus for the College.

Following the collection of feedback from the online survey and a series of roundtables with parents, employers, members and stakeholders in education and early learning, Council participated in a very successful strategic planning exercise as part of its April 2012 Council meeting. The session produced Mission, Vision and Value statements and five key priorities for the College that we have shared with you in this newsletter.

In its fourth quarter, the College held three more disciplinary hearings, bringing the total held in the 2011-2012 fiscal year to four. Findings of all hearings are published on the College's website and two are published in this newsletter.

At the end of its fiscal year in June 2012, the College

issued a package to employers, including licensed settings and school boards, with the Professional Advisory on the use of the protected titles and designation as well as an Employer Bulletin and five new brochures published by the College. All of these materials are available to members on the College's website, www.collegeofece.on.ca under "Members" -> "Resources & Publications".

I am pleased to tell you that the College wrapped up its fourth fiscal year of operation in which we have continued to grow and pave the way for future developments. Over 38,000 Certificates of Registration have been issued to date and the percentage of members who renew their membership annually is very high, at approximately 94 per cent.

I understand that there are still some questions about why professional self-regulation is important and some members are still seeking to understand what the College does with your \$150 annual membership fee. We will address your important concerns in future newsletters.

Best wishes for a happy summer!

SUE CORKE, REGISTRAR & CEO



ELECTION 2013

In April 2013, the College of Early Childhood Educators will hold its third election of Council members. Members will be elected to the College Council in five of the College's eight electoral districts.

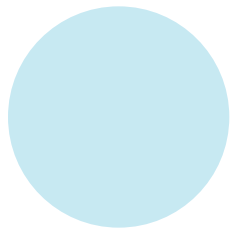
The College is governed by a Council of 14 elected members of the College and 10 public members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council. The Council makes decisions related to entry to practise requirements, professional and ethical standards and professional misconduct.

The statutory committees of the Council make decisions related to registration appeals, complaints, professional misconduct, incompetence and incapacity.

Beginning next year, elections will be staggered so that Council members are not elected in all of the College's eight electoral districts at one time.

Elections are scheduled in five districts in April 2013:

Electoral District	Number of Members of the College to be Elected April 2013
3 – South East Region	1
4 – Central East Region	2
5 – Toronto Region	3
7 – Hamilton/Niagara Region	1
8 – South West Region	2



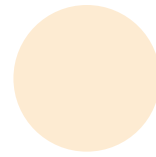
Get involved – Make a difference. Participate!

- Will you be a current member as of December 2012?
- Are you a member in one of the following electoral districts?
 - District 3 – South East Region
 - District 4 – Central East Region
 - District 5 – Toronto Region
 - District 7 – Hamilton/Niagara Region
 - District 8 – South West Region
- Do you want to participate on the College's Council as a member of your profession?

If you have answered 'yes' to all of these questions, you may be eligible to stand for election.

Nomination information will be sent to current members of the College in the electoral districts noted above in December 2012. Stay tuned for more information or contact the College at election@collegeofece.on.ca.

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Vision

Until now, the College Council had not articulated a vision for the College. Now, Council agrees that they see a future in which the College's role is so broadly recognized that:

All members of the profession accept responsibility for practice excellence

Mission

The Mission is clear from the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, which is unequivocal about the purpose of the College and the functions it must perform:

The College of Early Childhood Educators regulates the profession of early childhood education in the public interest

Values

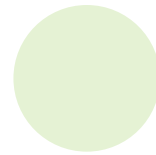
Council believes in the following values to guide its work:

- Diversity, Inclusiveness and Accessibility
- Fairness
- Forward Thinking
- Governance and Administrative Excellence
- Respect
- Transparency and Accountability

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FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Taking into account all the information that had been provided, Council deliberated on the priorities that would shape its legacy over the coming three years.

The following are the five strategic priorities identified by Council for the 2012-2015 timeframe:

Strategic Priority One

Implement a comprehensive post secondary pre-service quality assurance mechanism

The objective of this strategy is to improve the consistency and quality of preparation of entrants into the profession of early childhood education and to utilise the College's statutory authority to assist in achieving this outcome.

Strategic Priority Two

Implement a continuous professional learning (CPL) requirement that both supports member competency and encourages a culture of life-long learning

The objective of this strategy is to enable a commitment to professional learning from members throughout their careers, and to design a regulation which will facilitate the requirement for CPL.

Strategic Priority Three

Implement a member engagement strategy which will lead towards a shared professional responsibility for practice excellence

The objective of this strategy is to

engage interactively with members so that the purpose of self-regulation in pursuit of professionalism is broadly accepted and that members work together to achieve their Council's vision.

Strategic Priority Four

Implement an information strategy to strengthen public knowledge and understanding of how the College protects the public interest

The objective of this strategy is to reach out to audiences who have an interest in the work of the College, e.g. employers, parents, community resources, to ensure that they are well informed about how the College acts to protect the public interest.

Strategic Priority Five

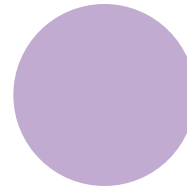
Strengthen and build relationships to enhance the reputation of the College

The objective of this strategy is to invest in relationships with opinion leaders, primary stakeholders and regulators so that the College's role is recognized and it can continue to contribute fully to the protection of the public interest and to the continued professionalism of ECEs in early learning and care.

Next Steps

Members will be kept up to date in subsequent newsletters on the progress as initiatives arising from these discussions unfold. Council is grateful for the feedback received from over 3,500 RECEs and from our many stakeholders, which has served as a valuable guide in developing the strategic priorities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at: communications@collegeofece.on.ca.

USING THE PROTECTED TITLES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



On January 10, 2012, the College's Council approved its first Professional Advisory. An advisory is one way in which the College communicates with its members, employers and other stakeholders about a particular issue in order to build awareness and understanding.

The focus of the College's first Professional Advisory is on the use of the titles "early childhood educator" (ECE) and "registered early childhood educator" (RECE). The full advisory is available on the College's website, www.collegeofece.on.ca.

The *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (the ECE Act) establishes protected titles for members of the College: "early childhood educator", "registered early childhood educator", and the French equivalents of these titles. It prohibits any person other than a member of the College from using any of the protected titles or an abbreviation of any of those titles to describe themselves or their profession (section 4 of the ECE Act).

The intent of this advisory is to prevent misuse of the protected titles and to assist members of the College and the public with the identification of the legal, ethical and professional parameters that govern members' judgement when using the professional title.

The ECE Act prohibits any person from engaging in the practice of early childhood education or holding herself or himself out as able to do so unless the person holds a Certificate of Registration issued under the ECE Act, subject to certain exceptions (section 3(1) of the ECE Act).

The purpose of a protected title is to assure the public that any person who uses the title has met the educational and other requirements for entry to practise the profession and has obtained a Certificate of Registration issued by the College. It also assures the public that any person who uses the title is accountable to practise the profession of early childhood education in accordance with the ethical and professional standards of practice for members of the College.

Use of the Title

The ECE Act has recognized early childhood education as a profession and prohibits any person, other than a member of the College, from using the titles protected under the ECE Act.

The protected title tells parents and guardians, employers, colleagues and members of the public that early childhood educators are professionals whose practice is guided and informed by the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice.

If a member's Certificate of Registration with the College has been revoked, cancelled or suspended:

- A notation will be entered on the College's public register.
- The person may no longer engage in the practice of early childhood education or hold herself or himself out as able to do so (subject to certain exceptions).
- The person may no longer use the title "early childhood educator" or "registered early childhood educator" or the French equivalents or an abbreviation of any of them to describe herself or himself or her or his profession.
- The person may no longer represent or hold out (expressly or by implication) that she or he is a member of the College.

Use of Title and Professional Designations

A member of the College is required to use the title "registered early childhood educator" or "éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrite" or "éducateur de la petite enfance inscrit" in connection with her or his practice. A member is also required to use the professional designation RECE or EPEI in documentation used in connection with her or his practice.

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Using the Protected Titles: What You Need to Know continued...

For example, members of the College use the professional designation RECE or EPEI on reports, correspondence, letterhead, business cards, e-mail signatures, marketing materials, professional materials and websites.

The professional designation RECE or EPEI cannot be modified in any way. It must be written in all capital letters with no periods in between, and should appear after a person's last name. If the individual has more than one professional designation, the designations should be separated by commas.

Misuse of Title

This Professional Advisory is intended to provide a context for the responsible, professional use of the protected titles "early childhood educator" and "registered early childhood educator" and their French equivalents. Only qualified early childhood educators, who hold a Certificate of Registration issued by the College, can use the protected titles "early childhood educator" (ECE) or "registered early childhood educator" (RECE) or their French equivalents.

More Resources

In summer 2012, the College will publish supporting resources to help members and employers understand the intended use of the protected titles. Watch the College's website for examples of situations in which members should use their title, frequently asked questions and answers and a discussion guide for members and employers to help in understanding the advisory.



Planning for a Continuous Professional Learning Program

The College has begun the process for the development of a continuous professional learning program for registered early childhood educators to engage in their continued learning and ongoing professional development.

The College has a legislative obligation under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (ECE Act) to provide for the ongoing education of members of the College. Through a regulation made under the ECE Act, the College may also prescribe ongoing education requirements for members of the College.

Throughout the development process the College will seek feedback from RECEs, stakeholder organizations, associations and institutions, employers and the public. The College will do this through a variety of means, including roundtables, focus groups, interviews and online surveys. Input will help inform Council decision-making and shape the scope and nature of a continuous professional learning program for members of the College.

For more information on the development of the College's Continuous Professional Learning program visit the College website at www.collegeofece.on.ca or contact the Professional Practice Department at practice@collegeofece.on.ca.

COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

The Complaints Committee of the College of Early Childhood Educators considers and investigates complaints about members of the College that relate to alleged professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity, a duty set out in section 31 of the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*. Sometimes, after deliberations, complaints are referred to the Discipline Committee or Fitness to Practise Committee for a hearing, but in the majority of cases the Complaints Committee makes decisions and disposes of matters.

Below are examples of complaints that were reviewed by the Complaints Committee and not referred to a hearing. Complaints Committee decisions are confidential and the information below does not include details that could identify the parties involved.

CASE #1

Complaint: Causing a child to sustain an injury and failing to examine the child and notify the supervisor and the child's parents of the injury.

Committee's decision: Not referred and no further action taken.

Summary: The College received a complaint from the parent of a child who sustained an injury while in the care of a registered early childhood educator (RECE). The parent indicated that the Member caused the child to sustain a lower body injury and did not examine the child or notify their supervisor or the child's parents in a timely manner.

The College launched an investigation. Information was gathered from the person who filed the complaint, the Member, the Member's employer, co-workers, Children's Aid Society (CAS) and the police.

In response to the complaint, the Member indicated that she had taken the child by the hand after the child had run away from a co-worker. As the Member was walking the child by the hand, the child abruptly sat down on the floor. Shortly after sitting down the child began to cry and complained of a sore bottom.

The Member indicated she had informed her co-worker of the incident right away and examined the child twice during the rest of her shift, very shortly following the incident, and a second time when the child complained of pain. After she had left for the day, her co-worker informed the Director of the Centre, who informed the child's parent.

The Committee found no witnesses to substantiate the allegation that the Member caused the child's injury, and a police investigation determined that charges would not be laid in relation to the alleged incident, as there was no proof that the injury the child sustained was intentional. The Committee also concluded that the Member did, in a reasonable period of time, examine the child and inform her co-worker, who then informed the centre's Director. The Director informed the parent of the injury in a reasonable amount of time.

For these reasons, the Committee directed that no further action be taken regarding the complaint.

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Complaints Committee Decisions continued...

CASE #2

Complaint: Endangering the health and safety of children.

Committee's Decision: Written caution.

Summary: The College received an employer notification to advise the College that the Member had been implicated in incidents of neglect and child abuse involving three children between three and four years of age.

As part of its investigation, the College obtained copies of letters from the Children's Aid Society and the Serious Occurrence Report filed with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. A witness statement was also provided.

The supervisor alleged that the Member grabbed a child by her arms and pushed her to the ground because she had soiled her pants. On separate occasions, the Member allegedly denied two other children their requests to go to the washroom even when they exhibited signs of distress, and they subsequently soiled their pants.

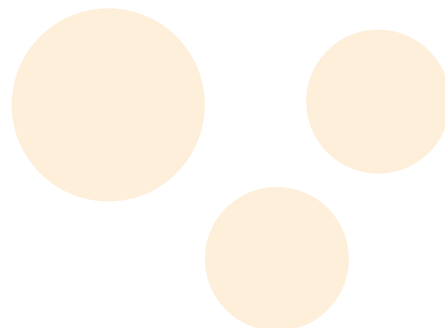
In response to the complaint, the Member denied ever pushing or inappropriately mishandling a child. The Member also indicated that she could not take the children to the bathroom in those instances because her supervisor instructed her not to leave the other educator over ratio.

The Member indicated that because the incidents took place during nap time she could not take other children with her. She was able to call upon another supervisor to take one of the children to the bathroom, and when the supervisor returned the child had soiled his pants.

The Committee carefully reviewed the documentation provided by the employer, the Member's response and statements from co-workers and parents that were provided by the Member and concluded that there was significant information regarding the complaint to raise a number of concerns about the health and safety of children while the Member was employed at the centre.

"When a conflict between practice and policy arises, the Member as a registered early childhood educator has the responsibility of putting the well-being of children first and foremost and take action, should incidents such as these which were alleged, occur," the committee said.

"The Committee would like to remind the Member that early childhood educators are significant role models in our society and the Member should take this opportunity to review the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* that guide their behaviour as a professional," said the Committee.



DISCIPLINE DECISION SUMMARIES

Sherrel Pucci

Certificate of Registration Number: 01389

Suspended

A panel of the Discipline Committee of the College of Early Childhood Educators ordered the Registrar of the College to suspend Sherrel Pucci's Certificate of Registration for defrauding her employer.

Pucci attended the public hearing by teleconference on April 19, 2012 without legal representation.

During the period of May 2008-March 2009, Pucci issued herself cheques from the general account of her child care centre, totalling approximately \$15,000. She deposited the cheques into her own bank account and altered the centre's monthly bank statements in order to hide the withdrawal of the funds.

In March 2009, Pucci repaid the funds and subsequently advised the centre's Board of Directors that she had taken the money and had since repaid it.

In May 2011, Pucci pleaded guilty to the charge of breach of trust in Thunder Bay Criminal Court and was convicted. She received a six-month conditional sentence, was required to pay restitution to the centre and complete 40 hours of community service.

Having considered the exhibits filed, and based on the Agreed Statement of Facts and the Member's guilty plea at the College hearing, the Discipline Committee panel found the Member guilty of professional misconduct. "The Member held a position of trust, leadership and responsibility in the Centre," the panel said. "Her failure to maintain the standards of the profession and to act dutifully has caused members of the public to question the integrity of the profession. The Member's behaviour as described in the Agreed Statement of Facts is conduct that is disgraceful, dishonourable, unprofessional and unbecoming of a member of the College," the panel said.

Pucci was required to appear before the Discipline Committee immediately following the hearing to be

reprimanded. The Discipline Committee panel also directed the Registrar of the College to suspend Pucci's Certificate of Registration for a period of six months and impose a term, condition and limitation on her Certificate of Registration requiring her to complete a Registrar-approved ethics training program at her own expense.

A notation regarding the reprimand and the term, condition and limitation appears with Pucci's registration status on the College's public register.

Reprimand

A panel of the Discipline Committee of the College of Early Childhood Educators reprimanded a member of the College for taking a nap while a group of toddlers were in her care.

The Member attended the public hearing with legal counsel on April 17, 2012.

In August 2011, while the Member was responsible for supervising the children in the toddler room at a child care centre, it was alleged that the Member failed to adequately supervise the children in her care when she took a nap during the children's nap time.

A panel of the Discipline Committee found the Member guilty of professional misconduct. In failing to adequately supervise the children in her care, the Member failed to maintain the standards of the profession. The Committee determined that the Member's actions would also be reasonably regarded by members as unprofessional and unbecoming a member of the College.

The fact that she was reprimanded appears with the Member's registration status as a notation on the College's public register.

REVIEW OF VOCATIONAL STANDARDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Education analysts have long debated the relationship between theory and practice. How relevant is post secondary education and how can it be applied to actual workplace situations? Can programs and resources established years ago really prepare students to enter the workforce as knowledgeable professionals?

It is especially important to ask these questions when a domain has evolved as much as the early learning and care sector has recently.

Over the last few years, early learning and care professionals have witnessed the introduction of full-day kindergarten, the creation of a self-regulatory body for early childhood educators (ECEs), new studies on child development and increased efforts to integrate children's services.

With all of these changes, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has decided to review the vocational standards for early childhood education programs offered at Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAATs). These standards have not been reviewed since 2002, and the MTCU wants to ensure that post secondary curriculum reflects changes in the sector.

Of course, there are few individuals who are more familiar with these changes than registered early childhood educators (RECEs), who do hands-on work in the sector every day and who have adapted to its evolution over the last few years.

It makes sense then that the MTCU asked the College of Early Childhood Educators to consult with its members to gather their input on revised vocational standards through an online survey.

In March, the College sent an e-mail to a sample of members registered in 2008 and provided them with links to online surveys about early childhood education programs.

Members whose preferred language is English were sent links to two surveys. One focused on the Early Childhood Assistant Certificate and Early Childhood Education Diploma Programs, while the second survey looked at the Early Childhood Education – Resource

Program (Graduate Certificate). Respondents had the choice of completing one or both of the surveys.

Members whose preferred language is French were sent a link to a survey about the program *Éducation en services à l'enfance*, which is offered at *Collège Boréal* and *La Cité collégiale*.

The College thanks participants for contributing to this initiative and the MTCU for continuing the development of vocational standards for early childhood education programs.

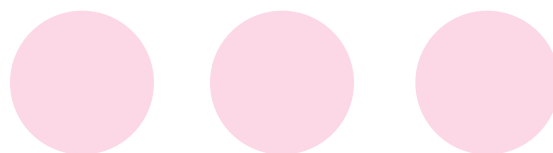
Professional Wall Certificates for Members

In another step towards greater professional recognition, the College is now issuing Wall Certificates of Registration to members.

The College's Registration and Member Services Department began the initiative in January 2012. New members now receive a Wall Certificate of Registration in their new member package, while current members are sent one when they renew their membership.

These certificates, which are stamped with an official College seal, can be displayed in an RECE's place of work.

For more information about Wall Certificates, visit the "Members" -> "Wall Certificate FAQs" area of the College's website, www.collegeofece.on.ca.



Child Care Sector

Growing Pains

Although many child care advocates see the value of full-day kindergarten, few would deny that the early learning and care sector is being affected by the introduction of the program. Child care providers are losing business as four- and five-year-olds move on to full school days and centres are finding that they need to accommodate a younger clientele. Younger children mean increased staffing, room renovations and new resources—all of which lead to higher operational costs.

Increased Funding for the Sector

The new provincial budget, passed on April 24, 2012, should help child care centres cover some of these transitional costs.

The government agreed to inject an additional \$242 million of child care funding in the 2012 budget. This funding will be staggered over a three-year period—\$90 million in 2012-2013, \$68 million in 2013-2014 and \$84 million in 2014-2015, funded by the Ministry of Education.

Full-Day Kindergarten Progress

Full-Day Learning Makes the Grade

In his recent report on the Ontario budget, economist Don Drummond recommended shutting down full-day kindergarten to help reduce the province's deficit. However, the Liberal government was determined to move ahead with the program. Test scores indicate it was the right choice for Ontario children.

In March, a study done by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto showed that students enrolled in the full-day kindergarten program scored higher in reading and math tests, and could

even produce more complex drawings than their peers who only attended kindergarten for half a day.

Information provided by the Waterloo Region District School Board revealed a similar trend. A greater number of four- and five-year-old students were able to meet the reading and writing standards once full-day kindergarten was introduced at their schools.

A Tale of Two Models

As the full-day kindergarten vision becomes a reality, school board trustees, parents and child care providers are debating the best way to implement an integral part of early learning advisor Charles Pascal's vision—the extended-day program.

Pascal drafted a blueprint for full-day kindergarten that proposed the extended-day program as a solution to the patchwork approach to early learning, which resulted in children being shuffled back and forth between different programs and educators. Pascal envisioned a board-run model where schools would provide a core-day curriculum as well as before-and-after school programs. This would allow for a seamless day of learning: Ontario's youngest students would start and end the day with the same early childhood educators (ECEs) who had been observing and responding to their needs in the kindergarten classroom.

However, some have been resistant to the idea of an extended-day board-run model. Many Ontario schools already have third-party operators running before-and-after school programs on site, and parents have voiced concerns about leaving behind child care providers that they know and trust. Some parents and child care providers have been asking boards to implement a "hybrid" model, where the school board would offer the regular school day curriculum, while third-party providers would run the extended-day program.

The hybrid model has been adopted by a number of boards, including the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and other boards throughout the Toronto region.

