

**Ministry of Education**

**Ministère de l'Éducation**

**Ministry of Children  
and Youth Services**

**Ministère des Services  
à l'enfance et à la jeunesse**



October 27, 2009

Dear stakeholders,

We are writing to you with exciting news about Ontario's plans for implementing full-day early learning for four- and five-year-olds. Our new comprehensive approach to early learning is unique in North America and will better support families and give our children a stronger start on learning.

As Premier McGuinty announced earlier today, we will phase in full-day early learning, starting in September 2010. We are confident that this model will provide the most benefits to Ontario's children, families and economy. Implementing the program in phases is being both responsible and affordable, while giving more children and families the support they need for success. In its first year, this plan will help up to 35,000 four- and five-year-olds get a stronger start as they begin their learning and get them on the right track for future success.

Here is what that program will look like:

- The schools will offer full-day early learning programs for four- and five-year-olds during the regular school day on weekdays during the regular school year.
- Certified teachers and registered early childhood educators will work side-by-side to help young students learn and grow in each early learning classroom during the regular school day (for example, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.).
- Parents will be able to choose to enrol their four- and five-year-olds in a fee-based extended program beyond regular school hours; for example, from 7:30 – 9 a.m. and from 3:30 – 6 p.m. Subsidies will be available to some families based on need.
- Registered early childhood educators will help children learn and grow during the extended program before and after school.
- The program will be expanded to more schools in the future, with a goal of full implementation by 2015-16.
- The government remains committed to providing \$200 million to implement phase-one programs for full-day learning in 2010-11 and \$300 million in 2011-12.

We will continue to share more information as it becomes available. In the meantime, we will provide direction to school boards and municipalities today to help them begin planning for next fall, including guidelines for recommending schools to host early learning programs in 2010-11.

The new early years division at the Ministry of Education is ready to begin working with school boards and municipalities to develop and implement phase-one full-day early learning programs across the province. They will also work with colleagues at the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to work with municipalities and child care operators to enhance and stabilize existing child care and other programs for young children. Together, they will review issues such as fee subsidies, capital funding to retrofit programs to serve younger children, and changes to the *Day Nurseries Act*.

Since Dr. Charles Pascal released *With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario* in June 2009, the government has taken time to carefully review his report and develop a plan of action that moves us forward. Giving our four- and five-year olds a stronger start on their learning will lead to greater success for them, and we believe this program is one of the most important investments we can make for Ontario's future.

Thank you again for participating in Dr. Pascal's consultations and sharing your hopes for this exciting new program.

Your support and involvement will be crucial in implementing this new program and we look forward to working with you as we increase the opportunities available to our youngest citizens and their families.

Sincerely,

***Original signed by:***

Kathleen Wynne  
Minister of Education

***Original signed by:***

Laurel Broten  
Minister of Children and Youth Services

## Ontario Moves Forward With Full-Day Learning

*McGuinty Government Putting Kids And Parents First*

NEWS

October 27, 2009

Ontario will start phasing-in full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds next fall as part of the province's plan to build a well-educated workforce.

Up to 35,000 kindergarten students across Ontario will be enrolled in [full-day learning](#) in September, 2010. The goal is to have the program for four- and five-year-olds fully implemented in all schools by 2015-16.

Four- and five-year-olds will learn under the guidance of a teacher and an early childhood educator. Parents may also enrol their child for extended hours for a reasonable fee, before and after regular school hours. This will make it easier for parents to get to and from work and will ensure their children have an integrated learning program for the whole day.

This is part of the government's ongoing plan to strengthen education that began with smaller class sizes, higher test scores, an improved graduation rate and [Reaching Higher](#). Building the skills and education of Ontario's workforce is a key part of the government's plan to create a stronger economy.

### QUOTES

"By giving our kids an early start in school, we're setting them on the road to success and building a stronger Ontario for us all."

— Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario

"Giving young students an earlier start on their learning will improve their reading, writing and math skills, provide a smoother transition to Grade 1 and help increase their success in school and beyond."

— Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education

"This initiative is great for kids, great for their families and responds to what the experts have been telling us about the early years being critical to a child's educational and social development."

— Laurel Broten, Minister of Children and Youth Services

"Establishing a strong foundation in the early years and building on it is the single most powerful factor in Ontario's social and economic future. This is definitely a step in the right direction."

— Dr. Charles Pascal, Premier's Special Advisor on Early Learning

## QUICK FACTS

- Ontario is the only place in North America that will offer full-day learning for all four- and five-year-olds.
- This year, school boards will recommend sites. In the new year, school boards will know which schools will start the early learning program in September 2010.
- Subsidies will be available, based on need, for families who need help with the cost of extended day programming, before and after school hours.
- There will be approximately 26 kids in a class with one teacher and one early childhood educator under the new program. That means more individual attention over a full day than students get now over a half day.

## LEARN MORE

Find out more about [full-day learning](#).

See how early learning is part of Ontario's plan to [reduce poverty](#).

Read a summary of the [report on early learning](#).

## Phasing In Full-Day Learning For Four- And Five-Year-Olds

October 27, 2009

Ontario will start phasing in full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds next September as part of the province's plan to build a well-educated workforce.

The program got its start in 2007 when Premier Dalton McGuinty committed to introducing full-day early learning for four- and five-year olds. In November 2007, Premier McGuinty appointed [Dr. Charles Pascal](#) to recommend the best way forward. Dr. Pascal consulted with many parents and members of the education, child care and municipal sectors about early learning for children and supports for families.

On June 15, 2009, Dr. Pascal presented his report, "[With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario.](#)" The report contains a number of recommendations including how to introduce full-day learning to Ontario students, how to improve education for children up to 12 and how to increase supports for young families.

Today, Premier McGuinty announced Ontario's plan to move ahead with the extended full-day early-learning program for four- and five-year-olds. The program was carefully developed to support the province's long-term vision of how to improve education for children up to 12. Dr. Pascal's overall plan will continue to push the government's economic and education policy for years to come.

Teachers and early childhood educators will work together to help children learn during the regular school day. Parents may also enrol their child for extended hours for a reasonable fee, before and after regular school hours (for example, 7– 9 a.m. and 3:30 – 6 p.m.). This will make it easier for parents to get to and from work and will ensure their children have an integrated learning program for the whole day. The extended-day program will be led by registered Early Childhood Educators, and subsidies will be available to some families based on need.

Ontario will call on its community partners to plan and develop before- and after-school programs for six- to twelve-year olds where there is sufficient parent demand.

This new approach to early learning offers children an enriched learning environment designed to help them develop the foundational social, emotional, academic and physical skills necessary to succeed in school and in life. By giving our kids an early start in school, we're setting them on the road to success and building a stronger Ontario for us all.

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

Schools that will offer full-day early learning 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:

- **Available space** – the program can be introduced at a school that has classroom space available and does not require new additions or renovations.

- **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.
- **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.

### **Supporting Early Learning and Working With Municipalities:**

The government will work with school boards and municipalities to develop and implement full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds. The partners will also work to enhance and stabilize existing child care and other programs for young children. Full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds provides an opportunity to create a comprehensive service system for younger children and their families.

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