

**Ministry of Children
and Youth Services**

Minister's Office

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**Ministère des Services
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April 9, 2010

Ms. Suzanne Malette
Children's Program Supervisor
Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB
210 Mead Boulevard
Espanola ON P5E 1R9

Dear Ms. Malette:

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to highlight our government's latest measure to support early learning and child care across Ontario. In last week's budget, the Minister of Finance announced that Ontario will permanently fill the funding gap left by the federal government with an investment of \$63.5 million annually. This new provincial funding will replace the funds lost when the federal government cancelled the Canada/Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in 2006.

Ontario is committed to ensuring that children can get the best possible start to succeed in school and in life. Since 2003, licensed child care capacity in Ontario has grown by over 67,000 spaces, 22,000 of which were the direct result of our investments under Best Start. As you also know, last October Premier McGuinty announced the implementation of full-day learning for four and five-year-olds. By 2015, 245,000 JK and SK children will have access to a full-day early learning program in schools, with extended hours where parents choose.

By committing \$63.5 million in provincial funds to child care, our government continues to strengthen support for families and children. This funding means that children, especially those in low-and-moderate income families, will continue to have access to licensed, high quality and affordable child care. It also means that our municipal partners and local Best Start Networks will be able to plan in a stable environment, while our communities will continue to retain the valuable resource that child care provides.

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However, Ontario cannot fully finance an expanded early learning and child care system on its own. We are disappointed that the federal government has stepped away from ensuring stability in the child care sector, which is why we continue to call on the federal government to reinstate the federal/provincial agreements that were terminated four years ago.

Our increased investment in child care is an investment in stable early learning and child care for our youngest children. We look forward to continuing to work with all of our partners - municipalities, Best Start Networks, service providers and parents - to provide families and kids with the services that they have come to rely on, now and into the future.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurel Broten". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laurel Broten
Minister