



June 18, 2014

Ms. Lyse-Anne Papineau  
Directrice de l'éducation  
Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-  
Ontario  
201, rue Jogues,  
Sudbury ON P3C 5L7

Mr. John Stadnyk  
Huron Superior Catholic District School  
Board  
Director of Education  
90 Ontario Avenue  
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6B 6G7

Dear Ms. Papineau and Mr. Stadnyk:

**Re: Capital Funds to include Best Start Hub in New Espanola School**

First, let me take the time to congratulate the school boards on the collaborative plan to build a new school as well as for receiving the funding approval to move forward. As we know, the Ministry of Education provides capital funds to ensure that child care centres are included in new school builds, however, we are concerned about the existing Best Start Hub located at the Sacred Heart School. In the previous plan, which included a new school containing only Sacred Heart, there was no funding allocated to include the Best Start Hub. Previously, we wrote a letter to address the concern that the Best Start Hub was left out of the funding equation. The response, from the Minister of Education, was that Best Start Hub leadership was under the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. While the response from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services did acknowledge some of the active, and positive, projects in support of the Best Start vision, funding was not committed for the Best Start Hub.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board remains committed to serving our children and families, therefore, we want to see the Best Start Hub within the new school. However, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is not in a position to commit funds for the development of a Hub. In addition, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board has already provided much needed support and investment into the exiting Best Start Hub and we do not wish to see this valuable service come to an end.

The DSB continues to acknowledge the positive move forward the Ministry of Education has taken with the release of memorandum 2012: B3. Moreover, The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is pleased to see the Ministry's commitment to the Best Start vision of child care space's within schools. However, we hope that the partners can work together to ensure that the existing child care spaces at both schools, and the existing Best Start services, are included within the new school plan.

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As of April 1, 2014, the Ministry of Education has taken responsibility for Best Start Hubs, also known as Family Resource Centres/Programs, from the Ministry of Children & Youth Services. It is our belief that the Ministry will recognize the need to build Best Start Hubs within new schools, the same way the Ministry recognized the need to build child care centres within new schools.

In accordance with the Best Start vision, and along with child care site selection preference, schools were also designated as the preferred sites Best Start Hubs. If the current Hub space is not funded to remain within the new school plans, and within proximity of the child care site, we feel this would be a shortfall in reaching the Best Start Vision. It is our hope to continue to work with our local school boards and the Ministry of Education in order to fulfill Pascal's recommendations and the Best Start Vision. Since the school boards will be meeting with architects and reviewing plans, we feel that the matter of support for the Best Start Hub is of urgency. At this time, it is also important to ensure that the existing child care spaces, which are currently located in two separate schools, are supported under the new plans.

In order that the Best Start vision continues to move forward rather than backward, we anticipate your timely response to review this matter. It is apparent that excluding support for the Best Start Hub has the potential to negatively fragment the larger Best Start vision and work that has been accomplished to date.

Sincerely,



Fern Dominelli  
CAO, Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB

c.c. Jim Grieve, ADM, Ministry of Education  
Lina Davidson, Ministry of Education