



December 9, 2015

Mr. George Zegarac
Deputy Minister of Education
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Mr. Zegarac:

Re: The Release of the 2014/15 Early Development Instrument (EDI) Results

The Northern Ontario Service Delivery Association has been made aware that Ministry of Education, specifically the Education Statistics and Analysis Branch has not yet decided on some very important aspects of the release of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) results of 2014/15. We are very concerned that the EDI results may not be released with a 6-digit postal code field as the geographic location for each child. The Best Start Networks in Northern Ontario and the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers that make up NOSDA rely on 6-digit postal codes to aggregate EDI results into traditionally defined EDI neighbourhoods. The Data Analysis Coordinators working on behalf of the Best Start Networks in the North utilize the Postal Codes to aggregate data and the data is not released at an individual level, thus maintaining the confidentiality of the data.

Our goal along with the Best Start Networks is to work to ensure that children born and growing up in the North achieve their social, intellectual, economic, physical and emotional potential through the provision of integrated children's services. The communities and neighbourhoods within our Northern Districts are not uniform and vary greatly in socio-economic advantage and vulnerability rates. As such, early years programs and initiatives are tailored to meet the needs of these neighbourhoods.

Our Best Start partners rely on neighbourhood level EDI data to confirm challenges or issues in the child population in a certain area; change how we deliver programs, allocate resources, and decide what programs we offer; validate what we already know; encourage inquiry and further exploration of issues; question what we assume is working or not working; provide reliable information for accountability issues; and guide our continuous improvement.

Without aggregating the data into our traditional EDI neighbourhoods, it will be impossible to identify gaps and monitor progress on initiatives and programs that have been implemented with the goal of reducing vulnerability in certain neighbourhoods. Without neighbourhood level EDI data gaps in services and needs will not be identified and the effectiveness of neighbourhood programs cannot be monitored

We urge you to consider the local impact of your decisions regarding the geographic level of the EDI data results. If we can be of any assistance in the decision making process please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Iain Angus', written in a cursive style.

Iain Angus, Chair

cc. Tyler Campbell, Lead, NOSDA Child Care Working Group