



**Meilleur départ
Manitoulin-Sudbury
Best Start**

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September 10, 2009

Sandra Russell
Program Supervisor
Ministry of Children and Youth Services
199 Larch Street, Suite 601
Sudbury ON
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Dear Sandra,

On behalf of the Manitoulin/Sudbury Best Start Network I am pleased to submit the attached response document to the report by Charles Pascal "With Our Best Future in Mind- Implementing Early Learning in Ontario.

The methodology employed by the Network in preparing this response was aligned with the specific questions framed by MCYS to the Networks. Specifically we considered each recommendation outlined in the report, and summarized where our Network is currently positioned in relation to the recommendation. We then identified the opportunities, barriers and potential strategies in relation to each recommendation.

We would be pleased to review this document with you at the September 11th meeting of the Network and provide response to any questions you may have in relation to our submission.

On the whole the Network welcomes the Pascal report and the opportunities it presents for improving the system of Early Learning in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Jane Bauer, Chair
Manitoulin/Sudbury Best Start Network
C.c. Suzanne Malette
Amy Sonnenburg

"The Network was asked along with all other Networks to respond to the report from Dr. Pascal "Our Best Future" concerning early learning and child care in Ontario. The response followed a format developed by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. This response was developed over several meetings with input from DSSAB staff. It is a very good reflection of the local concerns and preparedness related to implementation of many aspects the report's recommendations. The input from various sectors is being sought before there is a final statement of the government's response to the report. We expect some formal response in October."

"All children within the district of Manitoulin and the district of Sudbury have the right to childhood experiences that promote healthy child development and thereby improve their chance of achieving success in life by developing to their fullest potential."

The vision of the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network

Recommendations from the Report “With Our Best Future in Mind – Implementing Early Learning in Ontario”	Where are we positioned as a Best Start Network currently in relation to this recommendation?	What opportunities do we see for furthering this recommendation in our area?	What are the barriers to implementing this recommendation?	What will be required to address this barrier?
<p>1. The Province should create a continuum of early learning, child care, and family supports for children from the prenatal period through to adolescence, under the leadership of the Minister of Education.</p>	<p>Where the Minister of Education does not currently “specialize” in these areas of ages and stages (prenatal to preschool). The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network has established a strong foundation due to Best Start, with multi-sectoral representation across the service jurisdiction.</p> <p>The Network is well positioned to support our Education partners in extending the continuum of service to these age groups.</p>	<p>We see the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network in a position to build on infrastructure already in place in schools from the development of Hubs.</p> <p>In the north we have the opportunity to learn from the best practices developed by the Timiskaming demonstration site. Although the Timiskaming demonstration site has a ‘northern feel’, it is imperative that the roll out be community based.</p>	<p>Ensuring that families have access to seamless services given that the recommendations still imply multiple ministries governing the process and elements of the continuum.</p> <p>This model is based on the assumption that all services (everywhere) are adequately funded and readily available. Before implementation, an inventory of services must be conducted to ensure that the continuum can be supported.</p> <p>Ensuring availability of specialized services for all children particularly children with special needs. Schools need to be equipped to deal with children with special needs.</p>	<p>Strong inter-ministerial leadership and consistency of standards and guidelines.</p> <p>Building on healthy partnerships to empower communities to plan for implementation.</p> <p>Tangible incentives to collaboration i.e. resources, HR, financial</p> <p>Vigilance that service gaps do not result from service realignment in support of the continuum</p>

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<p>2. The Ministry of Education should establish an Early Years Division to develop and implement an Early Years Policy Framework that will create a continuity of early learning experiences for children from 0 to 8 years of age.</p>	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network is actively working with educational partners toward the implementation of Best Start, and has had significant success.</p> <p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network embraces this recommendation and believes it is well positioned to move forward.</p> <p>To date, the expansion of child care into schools has benefitted many of our local schools; capital improvements and renovations, including expansion of washroom facilities, improvement of fire standards and exits, increase in natural light/windows, climate</p>	<p>The Ministry of Education should be consulting the provincial Best Start Networks as they have the expertise to contribute to such a framework.</p> <p>There are numerous resources available and can inform our work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Learning for Every Child Today: A framework for Ontario Early childhood Settings, January 2007. - Investing in Quality: Report of the Expert Panel on Quality and Human Resources, March 2007. - Toronto First Duty Phase 2, 2006-2008: Final Research Report, June 2009. 	<p>The Ontario ministry of education does not have anything in place like this to date. However, there are other provinces that have combined ministries. This would be an opportunity to learn from best practices. It will take immense co-operation between MCYS and the MOE to facilitate this.</p> <p>Ensuring that there are inter and intra ministerial links / dialogue/planning between the various divisions (finance, French language, etc...)</p> <p>Ensuring quality standards (maintaining sections of DNA legislation that promotes healthy child development and growth). Including working with other regulatory bodies to</p>	<p>Long term sustained political commitment, through appropriate legislation.</p> <p>Substantial planning and co-ordination. Input and involvement from relevant parties to ensure a smooth transition. Including the opportunity for stakeholders to be included in the plenary process.</p>

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	control for classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcare Resource and Research Unit www.childcarecanada.org - Childcare Human Resources Sector Council www.ccsc-cssge.ca/english/research - Centre d'excellence pour le bien-être des enfants www.excellence-jeunesenfants.ca 	re-establish policies and guidelines. This process would prove to be lengthy and involves several parties with varied guidelines to be merged.	
<p>3. The Early Years Policy Framework should mandate school boards to offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a two-year, full-day Early Learning Program prior to Grade 1, available to all children who turn 4 by December 31. Children’s participation would be by parental choice, with parents having the option of a half, full (school hours), or a fee-based extended day of programming; • at the request of 15 or more families in a school, a fee-based Extended Day Primary program, offering developmentally enriched programming 	<p>As a Network, our experience with Education in planning and implementing Best Start indicates that they are full partners in the planning process.</p> <p>The concept of an early years policy framework within education builds on our established base.</p> <p>Some local school boards already offering full time JK;</p>	<p>An opportunity to develop and/or enhance existing partnerships with Board of Education.</p> <p>This would become an opportunity to share experience and knowledge between child care and education.</p> <p>Opportunities / better outcomes for all children regardless of economic status (universal early</p>	<p>Lack of awareness to families on the benefit of the proposed framework.</p> <p>The requirement of fifteen families ‘requesting’ participation in full-day/extended day learning is a barrier for rural/remote communities with low population bases.</p> <p>Fee based extended day (high cost) and the required number of requests to offer</p>	<p>Strong public awareness campaign.</p> <p>Flexibility for Northern and rural communities.</p> <p>Allow for communities to offer care as needed, not at the request of 15 families. (unless the 15 families make up a variety of age groups)</p>

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<p>for children from 6 to 8 years old;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the request of 15 or more families in a school, fee-based after-school programming for children from 9 to 12 years old. School boards may deliver the programming directly or enlist the support of municipal parks and recreation services or community agencies; • extended programming that operates 50 weeks a year, including fee-based activities during school breaks and summer vacations. Daily hours of operation would be determined by school boards in response to the needs of families in their communities. 	<p>there are other models in Ontario that can inform planning.</p> <p>Child care centres developed through Best Start and located in schools are currently offering programming for these age groups—often within the same classroom space and with success. Teachers and ECE workers are collaborating in the classrooms on programming and in sharing resources.</p>	<p>learning and care for all 4 year olds)</p> <p>School boards should be able to contract with Child Care Centres, instead of providing direct service. Programming may be altered (if required) to meet the requirements of school boards. There may be opportunities to share resources and space.</p>	<p>extended day. In rural areas this will be quite challenging.</p> <p>To some extent, full-day learning and care reduces parent choice. Parents, who choose not to send their children to JK, will most likely not have the option of preschool programs in a licensed setting. Preschool programs will not be viable.</p> <p>Access to adequate and appropriate school space (due to cleaning schedules, other community use, aging facilities, etc.). At the present time the Ministry of Education is focused on school based learning, in the event of an increase in enrolment, child care centres are at risk of being eliminated in the interest of</p>	<p>Base funding model for children aged 0-12.</p> <p>Strong collaboration/ planning of services between DSSAB’S, school boards and community agencies</p> <p>Clear direction from ministry of education</p> <p>Opportunities for capacity building at a local level</p> <p>Enhanced inter-agency communication / planning</p>

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			<p>space.</p> <p>There is the possibility that hours would not address all needs for families working extended hours and shift work.</p>	
<p>4. The Early Years Policy Framework should also guide the transformation of programming for Ontario’s youngest learners. Municipal authorities, with the necessary resources, should be mandated to plan, develop, support, and monitor an integrated network of Best Start Child and Family Centres providing families with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexible, part-time/full-day/full-year early learning/care options for children up to age 4; • prenatal and postnatal information and supports; • parenting and family support programming, including home visiting, family literacy, and playgroups; • nutrition and nutrition counselling; • early identification and intervention resources; 	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network’s membership is representative of all organizations serving children across the geographic area served by the DSSAB. The Network is well positioned to support the DSSAB in a mandated role to plan, deliver, and support and monitor an integrated Network of Best Start Child and Family Centres.</p> <p>The DSSAB is ready for the transition, as we already share best practices with the Northern Ontario</p>	<p>Extension of the Network to include, partners in health, recreation, housing, libraries, etc. Will ensure a fully integrated planning perspective.</p> <p>Better planning at a local level for early learning and care. As it stands now anyone can be in the business of child care as licensing is a provincial mandate.</p> <p>Manitoulin Sudbury Best Start Network would be in a unique position to serve as a pilot community for the early years policy</p>	<p>This is a complex system change. Weak transitional planning will result in chaos.</p> <p>Territorial protectionism</p> <p>Ensuring standards from one municipal authority to another.</p>	<p>Schools and all relevant providers of children’s services would need to embrace the idea of working with other service providers at the earliest opportunity and would need to ensure services are sought in a timely manner.</p> <p>Strengthen the mandate for participation at local network tables.</p> <p>Base funding model for children aged 0-12.</p> <p>Ensure collaboration across the ministries</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> links to special needs treatment and community resources, including libraries, recreation and community centres, health care, family counselling, housing, language services, and employment/training services. 	<p>Service Delivery Association (NOSDA) and through association with OMSSA</p>	<p>framework. In light of the diversity in population (Anglo, Franco, first nations), the unique geography, and the commitment to partnership to benefit families, as evidence by our Best Start Network.</p>		
<p>5. To support the service continuum and support children’s transitions to the Early Learning Program, the preferred location for Best Start Child and Family Centres is schools. Non-school locations would be partnered with a school or family of schools.</p>	<p>Three of four Hubs are located in schools. Due to local realities the Hub in Sudbury North was best positioned at the existing OEYC satellite location.</p> <p>All Hubs, including the non-school based Hub have a strong presence in all of the local schools for outreach and programming.</p>	<p>An opportunity to develop and/or enhance existing partnerships with Board of Education.</p> <p>Possibility to expand into all elementary schools on a permanent or semi permanent basis.</p> <p>Expansion of Hubs will be coordinated by the Network as a planning body.</p>	<p>Low community and school population makes it difficult to establish viable separate programs.</p> <p>In rural communities’ access to programs, regardless of location (meaning in a school or not) creates transportation issues. None of our communities have public transportation and few have taxi services.</p> <p>Physical space and capacity</p>	<p>A sensitivity to look at individual community needs population, context, etc.</p> <p>Reorganization of schools, make use of temporary space i.e. Manitoulin Best Start Hub’s mobile program visits schools weekly</p> <p>Ministry of Education needs to reinforce the current presence of Hubs and child care in schools, with a commitment to maintain current resources.</p>

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<p>6. Under the systems management of municipal authorities, the direct operation of Best Start Child and Family Centres could be provided by local or regional governments, school boards, postsecondary institutions, or non-profit agencies.</p>	<p>The Best Start Network in conjunction with the municipal authority should be built on existing established capacity for the operation of Best Start Child and Family Centres within its catchment area.</p> <p>There is a strong history of collaboration between the boards of education and the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network.</p>	<p>An opportunity to enhance existing partnerships with Board of Education or other relevant parties.</p>	<p>Uncertainties related to the framework which will be directed by the Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Further clarification with respect to the framework and guidelines, including consultations with existing Best Start Networks.</p>
<p>7. Non-profit and commercial providers may continue to operate licensed child care in accordance with current program standards. All service expansion would take place through Best Start Child and Family Centres and school boards.</p>	<p>Since the inception of Best Start, local municipal authorities in concert with the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network have tried (and been generally successful) to plan expansions in this fashion.</p> <p>There are currently no commercial operators of child care in our service jurisdiction.</p>	<p>An opportunity to continue collaboration with other service providers.</p> <p>The shift of licensing to local authorities would allow better planning and use of resources at a community level.</p>	<p>Low population – puts all programs at risk for viability as separate entities.</p> <p>Responding to rural communities’ needs.</p>	<p>Formation of partnerships; system would need to be re-worked for rural communities relevant to their needs, issues, etc.</p> <p>Funding to municipal authorities including a child care base funding model.</p>

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<p>8. The expectations set out in the Early Years Policy Framework should be operationalized through local Early Years Service Plans developed by municipal authorities in partnership with school boards and community partners. Outcomes and targets should be developed through provincial-municipal collaboration and funding flowed through municipal authorities and school boards to meet targets.</p>	<p>Although there is uncertainty around the proposed framework, the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network is currently working in partnership with municipal authorities.</p> <p>There are some MCYS policy documents that can inform some of this work (Northern Framework for children, Poverty Reduction Report, MCYS Strategic Plan (Realizing our children’s full potential).</p> <p>The Best Start Network has some experience in establishing work plans and common service delivery targets.</p>	<p>Ensure standardization and quality of programs and services.</p> <p>Allows an inclusive opportunity toward integration of services.</p>	<p>There are multiple different school boards in this area. This geography can make collaboration particularly difficult.</p> <p>Rural communities can’t operate the same as larger communities due to low population and funding being jeopardized.</p> <p>Potential for wide scale planning to over look the needs of small communities.</p>	<p>Plan differently for rural communities vs. larger communities.</p> <p>Expertise at all levels</p>
<p>9. The Province should build on existing maternal and parental leave options to design a made-in-Ontario Parental Leave and Benefit Program that:</p>	<p>The timeline proposed with implementation in 2020 allows sufficient time for Best Start Networks to plan.</p>	<p>A longer parental leave period would allow for enhanced parent / child relationships.</p>	<p>Families may not be able to afford to take this much time off. A lack of child care may be a barrier for</p>	<p>Affordable childcare for infants. Child care programs would require base funding to run</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides parents with paid leave after the birth or adoption of a child for up to 400 days; • expands coverage to include self-employed parents; • provides flexibility to allow parents to extend and supplement their leave by returning to work part-time; • provides 10 days annually of job-protected family leave for parents with children under the age of 12; • designates six weeks for the exclusive use of the father or other non-birthing parent; if not used, this time would be deducted from the 400 days. <p>This provision would not reduce the leave of single parents.</p>		<p>For families who can afford the extra time at home, the bond between parent and child may become stronger.</p>	<p>such families.</p> <p>Potential impact on employers, replacing staff for an extended time period.</p>	<p>affordable infant programs.</p> <p>Extensive planning and consideration of impacts.</p>
<p>10. The Early Years Policy Framework should contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) as the curriculum and pedagogical framework for Best Start Child and Family Centres, the Early Learning Program, and the Extended Day Primary program; • the Continuum of Development in ELECT as the central tool for ongoing individual observation and documentation in programs for children 	<p>A common framework would prove easier for programs to work with. It would be essential that training and support be available as part of this process.</p> <p>Some Hubs and child care centres are already using some aspects of this</p>	<p>With the implementation of a common framework, this allows us to move further along the integration continuum. Allows and encourages team-work and sharing of information and ideas.</p> <p>Expand the use to all Hubs, child care centres and JK/SK</p>	<p>Time pressures for undertaking the cultural and philosophical shift, before scheduled date of implementation are crucial.</p> <p>Training of staff and a shift in thinking for some educators and parents.</p>	<p>Promoting the ELECT must include informing and training professionals and parents.</p> <p>Reconciling the conflict between the spirit of this recommendation and the legislative realities of the current situation – i.e. safe</p>

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<p>from 0 to 8 years old;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • based on ELECT, guidelines for facilities and outdoor spaces, scheduling, and appropriate behaviour guidance practices to accommodate programs for children from 0 to 8 years old and their families; • the Early Learning Program Curriculum (for 4- and 5-year-olds) as the curriculum in the Early Learning Program and adapted for use in French- language settings; • Strategies to promote the effective engagement of parents in their children’s learning, with emphasis on regional and local efforts. 	<p>document.</p> <p>The new Kindergarten program and resources like "Planning Entry to School" (2005) from the Ministry of Education are in line with the ELECT curriculum</p>	<p>classrooms.</p>		<p>schools act.</p> <p>Financial resources to allow for training and purchase of new materials and equipment as required.</p>
<p>11. The Early Years Division at the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Aboriginal educators and organizations, should adapt ELECT to reflect Aboriginal content for use in all early childhood settings in Ontario.</p>	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network would welcome leadership from the ministries in supporting our joint planning and engagement with First Nations people.</p> <p>Several communities within the Manitoulin-Sudbury service jurisdiction have Local Children’s Service Provider Networks with active First Nations</p>	<p>Most school boards have been getting funding, resources and programming to increase First Nations awareness and to improve outcomes for First Nations students. Existing partnerships would be enhanced and new partnerships would be created.</p> <p>Provides an opportunity to address the specific needs</p>	<p>Access to culturally appropriate First Nations resources.</p>	<p>Seek partnerships with First Nations, and joint planning in program development.</p>

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	<p>representatives from specialized children’s services.</p>	<p>of First Nations’ children and correct historical limitations in service.</p> <p>Creates an opportunity to learn from best practises in First Nations’ child care and programs.</p>		
<p>12. The Early Years Policy Framework should mandate municipal authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish a consistent early identification protocol that incorporates the Nipissing District Developmental Screens (NDDS) and the Continuum of Development in ELECT; • consolidate responsibility for early identification and intervention services; • develop partnerships with public health, school boards, and specialized agencies to facilitate individualized intervention plans for children. 	<p>All licensed child care providers and Hubs have been formally trained in the administration of the NDDS. All children entering child care are screened using the NDDS.</p> <p>Knowledge of the ELECT document is variable across the service jurisdiction.</p> <p>Currently responsibility for identification and early intervention services are distributed and coordinated.</p> <p>In some communities</p>	<p>This is an opportunity to further our progress along the continuum of integration.</p>	<p>Would need to establish a co-ordination of relevant parties to review and rework existing systems.</p> <p>Inter and intra ministerial directive reconciliation.</p>	<p>Clear mandates to service providers from their funders.</p>

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	<p>programs are provided in partnership, but a consistent practise across the service jurisdiction is not existent.</p>			
<p>13. The Early Years Policy Framework should establish staffing for early learning environments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Learning Program for 4- and 5-year-old children should be staffed by teams of certified teachers and registered early childhood educators (ECEs). Local flexibility should be possible, but two “non-negotiable” essentials must always be included: educators skilled at applying child development knowledge and a strong and effective parent engagement strategy. • The Extended Day Primary program for children from 6 to 8 years old should have one registered ECE for approximately 15 children. • After-school programs should be led by staff knowledgeable about the developmental needs of children from 9 to 12 years old, and guided by current best practices in programming. • Best Start Child and Family Centres should be staffed by registered ECEs and 	<p>Most schools have before and after school programs.</p> <p>All French language schools have full day JK. All English schools have part-time day JK. All schools have full-day SK. All JK/SK classrooms are staffed by qualified teachers.</p> <p>Currently we are challenged with recruitment and retention of qualified ECE’s. In particular French language ECE’s are in scarce supply.</p> <p>Currently our school age programs all operate on a 1:15 ratio.</p>	<p>Ensuring appropriate qualifications and training opportunities for staff working in these programs.</p> <p>In the northern areas of the province specific incentives may be required to generate the necessary workforce.</p> <p>Potential to grow preschool/nursery programs in current non-profit licensed child care centres for three year olds, as programming will be alternately provided for four year olds.</p>	<p>Non-profit licensed child care providers will lose qualified ECE’s to better paying positions within the school boards.</p> <p>We would need to find ways to integrate professional roles and working conditions.</p>	<p>Planning; involvement from all relevant parties throughout the entire process to ensure a “buy-in’ for this venture and a feeling of ownership that is essential to making things work.</p> <p>The Day Nurseries Act should be considered in the planning of staffing ratios to ensure that appropriate and realistic ratios are determined.</p>

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<p>special needs resource teachers. Municipal authorities should establish appropriate staffing levels to meet programming needs. Day Nursery Act regulations currently governing child-staff ratios and age groupings should be reviewed and updated.</p>	<p>Members should familiarize themselves with the Best Start Expert Panel on Human Resources and Quality.</p> <p>Hubs have variable staffing. Hub leads strive to ensure qualified staff, however supplies barriers exist. Hubs are not staffed to meet ratios</p>			
<p>14. School boards should organize staffing to promote full-time employment for ECEs. ECEs should form a unique professional classification within school boards.</p>	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network supports the concept of full time employment for ECE staff, as this will attract new ECE professionals to the field.</p>	<p>Stability to the ECE profession and to the programs.</p>	<p>Differential pay rates for ECE’s depending on place of employment.</p> <p>Lack of funding and availability of qualified staff.</p>	<p>Joint planning and wage parity across the profession of ECE’s.</p>
<p>15. The Ontario College of Teachers should require all teachers who do not have early childhood knowledge to complete an early childhood Additional Qualification course (or equivalent experience) within five years in order to hold a position in the Early Learning Program.</p>	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network supports the concept.</p>	<p>Better outcomes for children.</p>		

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<p>16. To support the development of the early childhood workforce, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, in consultation with the Minister of Education, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refocus ECE diploma programs on children from 0 to 8 years old; establish an early childhood specialty degree program focusing on children from 0 to 8 years old; • encourage French-language postsecondary institutions to increase the number of francophone ECEs, and intervention and family support professionals; • encourage postsecondary institutions to recruit students and education faculty reflective of the gender, race, and ethnicity needed in the early childhood workforce; • encourage postsecondary institutions to recruit Aboriginal students to become educators in early years programs; • require ECE diploma and early childhood specialty degree programs to apply transparent, accessible prior learning assessment and recognition processes; • ensure that ECE apprenticeship training is aligned with the Ontario Program Standard for the ECE diploma; • fund postsecondary programs to expand bridging programs into ECE diploma and teacher education degree programs specifically designed to fast-track people with out-of-country credentials. 	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network supports the recommendation to establish a speciality degree; to increase the number of French-language qualified educators; and to encourage the recruitment of Aboriginal students into the ECE program.</p>	<p>Better outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Creates an opportunity for continued learning and professional development, providing there are flexible options and incentives.</p>	<p>Prominent issues related to the ECE career and field of work include: little recognition; low paying positions; and little or no benefits.</p>	<p>Funding for training, and upgrading of current ECE’s. I.e. enhancing the NOGAP program.</p> <p>Partnerships with MTCU; relevant Colleges and existing programs to promote this option as a way of attaining the ECE qualification in rural and remote communities. I.e. the ECE apprenticeship program.</p> <p>It is essential that programs such as the ECE apprenticeship training option be aligned with the Ontario Program Standard for the ECE diploma and that this form of learning be promoted as a crucial option for rural and remote communities.</p>

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<p>17. The Early Years Division should support the development of management tools and establish a province-wide in-service training plan to assist school board and municipal managers, school principals, and centre directors in the establishment and operations of the Early Learning Program, Extended Day Primary program, and Best Start Child and Family Centres.</p>	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network supports the concept.</p>	<p>Consideration of our service jurisdiction as a pilot for implementation.</p>		
<p>18. The Early Years Division should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build on existing information sources to develop and implement a consolidated integrated accountability mechanism, the Early Years Index, focused on the systems monitoring of inputs, measurable outcomes, and transparent public reporting. The index would include a standard program evaluation tool that links the developmental outcomes in ELECT and the operation of Best Start Child and Family Centres, Early Learning Programs, and Extended Day Primary programs; • provide mechanisms to foster learning and expertise by promoting the exchange of best practices and staff knowledge about how outcomes are measured and how the information can be used to improve performance 	<p>We support the idea of a tool that encourages and supports staff to measure their own performance and establish goals for their professional development on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>A common standard program evaluation tool would be useful for the ongoing assessment of programs and services and would prove valuable for determining future planning.</p>	<p>This recommendation would allow our program to determine needs, gaps, issues, etc. to assist in future planning and delivery of programs and services.</p> <p>An opportunity to work with other service providers to share knowledge, information and resources.</p> <p>Creates an increased accountability to families and children.</p>	<p>A tool that is relevant to varied and unique communities will need to be developed to ensure cultural and linguistic sensitivity.</p>	<p>Broad based consultation on the development of the tool.</p>

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<p>19. The Province should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopt a three-year time frame, beginning in September 2010, to implement a two-year full (school) day Early Learning Program prior to Grade 1, for every child who turns 4 by December 31; • provide sufficient funding for operations and staffing levels for the Early Learning Program for 4- and 5-year-olds to support the recommendations in this report; • allocate equitably across all regions and school boards, including boards that now offer full-day learning; • provide sufficient funding to school boards to cover occupancy and related costs for the operation of extended day/year programming for children from 4 to 12 years old; • modify child care fee subsidy eligibility to facilitate flexible enrolment options and remove parents’ work requirement for eligibility so that more children can benefit, especially the most disadvantaged children; • maintain the current 75 per cent target for French-language elementary schools to have French-language programs for 0- to 3-year-olds by 2011-12; • transfer to municipal authorities funding for Best Start Child and Family Centres in a single envelope that includes all existing transfers for programs/resources that will be consolidated under Best Start Child and Family Centres, resources associated with regulation and oversight, plus all child care savings generated 	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network supports this recommendation in its entirety.</p>	<p>Could address discrepancies of funding for Northern Ontario Child Care. It could 'level the playing field' for those places that do not have an O.E.Y.C.</p> <p>An opportunity to develop and/or enhance existing partnerships with Board of Education or other relevant parties for delivery of services.</p> <p>This will allow a wider spectrum of families to access our programs and services which in turn ensures our ongoing viability.</p>		

Recommendations from the Report “With Our Best Future in Mind – Implementing Early Learning in Ontario”	Where are we positioned as a Best Start Network currently in relation to this recommendation?	What opportunities do we see for furthering this recommendation in our area?	What are the barriers to implementing this recommendation?	What will be required to address this barrier?
<p>from implementation of the Early Learning Program;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • negotiate transitional funding, as necessary, to support program reorganization through Early Years Service Plans; • secure continued support for Best Start child care spaces now funded by the federal government; • undertake immediate discussions with the federal government to ensure children of First Nations are not disadvantaged by the implementation of full-day learning. 				
<p>20. Beginning in 2012, the Province should coordinate a process with key ministries to modernize legislation that would produce a new Education and Family Supports Act that would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable the outcomes noted in this report; • reduce redundancies; • eliminate outdated elements in various pieces of legislation and develop a single integrated piece of legislation. 	<p>The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network supports the concept with broad consultation to the Best Start Networks and community planning tables.</p>	<p>A better integrated system of service for children, families and communities.</p>	<p>Entrenched philosophical divides.</p>	<p>Strong leadership, clear communication, transition planning and staff support.</p> <p>Local flexibility and resources to implement.</p>