

Full Day Early Learning for Ontario's Four and Five Year Olds

A Submission



**Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association**

November 13, 2008



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

OUR MISSION

Inspired by the Gospel, we provide leadership, service and a provincial voice for Catholic School Boards in promoting and protecting Catholic education.

OUR VISION

In keeping with our Mission, the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association:

OPERATIONAL VALUES

- **Embodies** and promotes the values and traditions of our Catholic faith in all Association activities.
- **Respects** the principles of democratic and accountable governance.

POLITICAL ADVOCACY

- **Protects** the constitutional right of the Catholic community to govern, control and manage Catholic schools.
- **Promotes** education in our province that reflects the Catholic principles of social justice.
- **Advocates** for government recognition of the distinctive nature of Catholic education.
- **Advocates** for provincial policy, legislation and funding support that enable Catholic boards to provide quality Catholic education.
- **Influences** the strategic and political direction of the Ontario government and opposition parties regarding issues that impact Catholic education.

INFORMATION & SERVICES

- **Provides** faith formation and professional development resources and opportunities for its members.
- **Provides** to member boards information and services that recognize their diverse circumstances and needs.

COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

- **Develops** effective structures that enhance communication and working relationships among OCSTA and its member boards.
- **Communicates** with member Boards and Catholic partners regarding relevant educational issues and OCSTA activities.
- **Promotes** public understanding of and support for Catholic education.
- **Celebrates** and **highlights** Catholic education's significant and continuing contribution to Ontario society.

PARTNERSHIPS

- **Stimulates** ongoing visioning of how Catholic education partners can collaborate to serve the interests of Catholic education.
- **Builds** significant partnerships within and beyond the Catholic community in support of Catholic education.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees' Association is grateful for the opportunity to make a response to Dr Charles Pascal's invitation, and to engage in a cordial and constructive dialogue on the important educational question of the Early Learner. This we do in a spirit of mutual respect and in recognition of our reciprocal roles in our common service to the people of Ontario. Conscious of its long history in the educational context of the province, and mindful of its very significant service to its people, Catholic education brings to this debate its own distinctive character and mandate. Together with the other publicly funded educational systems, Catholic education is obligated to meet all of the requirements prescribed for it by the Education Act. Into those requirements, publicly funded Catholic education integrates those special religious dimensions, which make Catholic schools schools with a 'difference' in Boards with a 'difference'. *"This difference does not consist in the mere addition of religious training to the academic curriculum. The religious or doctrinal aspect of the school lies at its very heart and colours all its activities and programs."*¹ Catholic education is based on an educational philosophy in which faith, culture and life are brought into harmony. It fully accepts its role in what may be termed the 'covenantal'² aspect of religion, which provides a moral framework to encourage the building up of the common good. This does not imply any contradiction, since the promotion of the human person is the civic and religious goal of Catholic education.



A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG CHILD

*“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.”*³ Responding to this Gospel invitation of Jesus, Catholic education has constantly striven, along with parents and guardians, to create that pathway, which makes it possible for the ‘little children’ to come to Jesus, and to ensure that there is no impediment to that access, that we *‘do not stop them.’*⁴ Consequently, Catholic education has always seen the education of the young child as an integral part of its entire educational system. In cooperation with parents and parish, Catholic education views the learning process of the young child as being within the mandate of its entire educational system, and worthy of its best endeavours.

Parents are the primary educators of their children.⁵ Catholic education seeks to extend and complement the process, which parents begin and continue with their daughters and sons. When parents entrust their children to our Catholic schools there is an implicit understanding that this process of their growth in faith, and development in spirituality, will be fostered and sustained. It is therefore incumbent on a Catholic educational system to honour those responsibilities for faith development within the beliefs and values of the Catholic Church. Publicly-funded Catholic education does not assume this responsibility lightly, or reduce it to an afterthought, after the other business of education has been completed. Catholic education sees the faith and spiritual development of both students and staff as fundamental and foundational to its role in education. This Catholic philosophy of education has been admirably and succinctly stated by the Courts. *“It is central to the concept and practice of Catholic education to attempt at every stage and in every institutional aspect to achieve a synthesis of faith and culture, and faith and life which are the underpinnings of Catholic education.”*⁶ *“From the Catholic perspective, education is neither merely the transmission of knowledge nor the development of various cognitive and affective skills. It is rather the integral formation of the whole person according to that vision of life revealed in the Catholic tradition.”*⁷

From the young children entering Junior Kindergarten to the teenagers on the cusp of adulthood leaving grade 12, Catholic education seeks to inform their physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual growth with a learning that tries to meet their individual needs and their individual strengths. Catholic education posits the existence of God, and a set of life values that challenge many of the values of a secular society. A child’s learning begins at birth with the gradual awakening of the child’s whole being to the world that surrounds the child. That initial tactile learning, that sensory perception which lies at the basis of all knowledge, moves inexorably to movement, to laughter, to initial steps and to initial language. Before ever going near a school, the young child has already become an early learner. Love, gentleness, warmth and kindness are contributing factors to this advance in learning. Unfortunately and sadly, this is not the experience of every young child, and it may fall to the educational system in collaboration with community services and agencies to ameliorate this condition.

With a firm understanding that all human beings are created equally and desire to be treated as such, Catholic education reaches out to all the children who attend its schools regardless of physical, spiritual, intellectual, social or emotional capacities. Rooted in the belief that these young people are created in the image of God, Catholic education consolidates the religious and faith development of the early learner, which the parents as the irreplaceable persons in this process have begun in the home, with a program that celebrates the wonder and awe of childhood as a 'trace of God.' The *In God's Image*⁸ program was created under the direction of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to introduce the young learner to the concepts of a Loving God, and meets the early learner with imagery and language appropriate to the child's age and understanding.



THE EARLY LEARNER

There is irrefutable, research-based evidence that full day JK/SK programs for early learners leads to a preparedness for Grade 1, and a better hope for future academic and social success, and a contribution to society at large.

But, as is often the case with very good ideas and initiatives, the ‘devil is in the detail’ and the implementation of full day Early Learning for four and five year old children must be approached through dialogue, sensitivity and care.

Children begin to learn as soon as they are born. Hopefully, much of that early learning process takes place within the warm and loving environment of the home, thereby making parents and older siblings, if any, the first educators of the young child. The economic pressures that face parents in 2008 in Ontario necessitate, in most cases, that both parents, or the single parent or guardian, need to work outside the home, and consequently, part of the early education of the young child moves from the home to the child care centre. It is important to remember that most of the young learner’s day is still within the home context, and that the learning process is continuous, though not necessarily connected. In some homes, the care of the young child is in the hands of grandparents or other relatives within the home or in the home of the provider. It is important to note that this care is still in a home setting.

As the child moves to its first, second and third birthday, this learning process continues in the home or in the house of a grandparent or relative or neighbour, and in many instances in a Child Care centre staffed by qualified Early Childhood Educators. These experiences prepare the young four year old for a transition to a more formalized centre of learning – the school.

One cannot make the assumption that it is only at this point in the child’s life, *i.e.* the school, at which real learning begins. It is therefore extremely critical that the transition from the home or the Child Care setting to school is as ‘seamless’ as possible. This is not to say that the ‘first day at school’ is not somehow traumatic for the child and the child’s parents! Although it may be a truism to say that the world of the child has indeed changed over the past few decades, fortunately the child is unaware of this. Young children are people of the present moment. The ‘seamless transition’ is an adult perception. Our four and five year olds may be much more adaptable.

Although it is the same child, the experience and qualifications that are needed to provide a quality learning experience for the child varies as the child ages. Since the learning of the young child may vary considerably from child to child and from year to year, those responsible for the learning will differ in experience and qualifications. In the school system, teachers are not randomly transferred, from the Primary to the Senior division, from teaching 4-8 year olds to teaching 15 to 18 year olds, without due qualifications for each division. A similar argument may be made for those responsible for the learning of the 1, 2, or 3 year old, and those responsible for the 4 and 5 year old.

Whatever the research may say about the merits of full day learning for four and five year olds, parents should still enjoy the choice of half day or alternate day learning. One size does not fit all, and this parental right to some choice in the form of education for their children before they reach the mandated age of schooling at six years of age should be given due consideration. OCSTA is aware that there are costs attached to providing such a choice, but given that parents are the primary educators of their children, such a choice should be available.

Recommendations

- 1. That parents have the opportunity to select the model of early learning in a publicly funded school system that best meets their needs and desires for their children.**
- 2. That there be increased access to a continuum of early identification and intervention services programs for early learners who may have difficulties.**
- 3. That cross sectoral partnerships developed over time in local communities be preserved.**



THE CURRICULUM

The corpus of relevant research seems to indicate that for the four year old and five year old learner, a curriculum that has a solid learning-based play foundation is the one best suited to meet their needs. The young child's world is a world of wonder, where everything is new and magic is real. The natural inquisitiveness of young children, coupled with a healthy curiosity about the world that surrounds them, makes them readily disposed to learning. For them play is learning, and learning should be play. Although they did not consciously or knowingly understand or perceive it, they have been in the process of learning from the day of their birth.

The curriculum for the four year old and the five year old must be age appropriate and suited to their environment. The use and acquisition of language skills, the experience of socialization, and the positive sense of self are critical for this stage of development and serve as a foundation for the more formal schooling of Grade 1. **The Kindergarten Program**⁹ outlines six fundamental areas of learning: personal and social development, language, mathematics, science and technology, health and physical activity and the arts. It emphasizes the necessity of building an early learning community consisting of children, parents, caregivers, teachers, school administrators and community partners. Within this early learning community, the young child learns early literacy and numeracy skills and becomes acquainted with such concepts as effective communication, sharing, respect for self, others and property, and waiting turn. The child is made aware of the presence of others and the need to be able to share the same place and space with them in what is referred to as community. With its emphasis on learning through inquiry, exploration and real-life contexts, this document serves as an excellent starting point for the curriculum of the early learner.

Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings¹⁰ outlines the sequence of skills that children at different ages can be expected to acquire across broad developmental domains. These two documents are complementary and together can serve as a basis for planning a program that addresses the four and five year old child.

Children come to Junior Kindergarten and to Senior Kindergarten with a very wide range of age – the month of their birth – and disposition. As any Junior Kindergarten or Senior Kindergarten teacher will attest, a few months can make a huge difference in the learning pace of the young child. The child's natural disposition, whether that is painfully shy or boisterously extroverted, is a factor in these early years of learning. Consequently, a program is required that meets the needs of all children and provides them with ample opportunities to grow and learn at their own rate.

The creation and maintenance of such an early learner community is supportive of the learners themselves, their parents/guardians and their teachers. This will be an environment that will be consistent, language rich and appropriate. The naturally self-centred "me" perception of the two year old evolves into the growing realization of the four and five year old child that respectful interaction with others is an important part of living.

The longer period of time before entrance to Grade One will help to level the playing field for disadvantaged children. This longer time will give more opportunity to recognize difficulties and to take appropriate action. There will be increased access to a continuum of early identification and intervention services.

A typical four year old child is not as ready for the same kind of day as the five year old. Consideration will need to be given to the different developmental needs e.g. a rest and refreshment period for the younger child within the classroom setting. There will be a need to provide appropriate care and supervision for the lunch period to ensure student safety and this will involve some extra cost.

Catholic School Boards across the province of Ontario address another critical area of growth: the spiritual growth of the young child. **In God's Image**¹¹ is the catechetical resource used in Catholic schools across the province. This resource is age-appropriate and compatible with existing educational resources for four and five-year old children. The activities engage the children at the affective and sensory levels at this early stage in life. The resource reaffirms what a child of four and five does well by nurturing "the children's ability to play, to be creative and to wonder. This is the child's religious/spiritual way of being in the world.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment, evaluation and reporting practices for four and five-year olds must also reflect the unique characteristics of the young learner. Young children display their understanding of the world by doing, showing and telling. As such, appropriate assessment strategies must incorporate observing, listening, asking probing questions and talking with young learners in order to assess and evaluate progress and growth. Young learners also require ample time to demonstrate their understanding through varied learning opportunities. Assessment practices must be ongoing, authentic components of everyday classroom experiences and reflect a variety of strategies and tools including: documented observation, portfolios, conferences, self and peer assessments, developmental continua, records of reading behaviours, to name a few. Reporting practices should indicate the child's growth or achievement in relation to the specified learning expectations in all areas of learning or domains and must include parent conferences. Reporting should be ongoing and include both formal (i.e., written reports and conferences) and informal methods (i.e., notes to parents and conversations).

There should be an Assessment and Evaluation of the Early Learner program for four and five year olds that is:

- Age appropriate
- Based on learning expectations as outlined in the Kindergarten program
- Ongoing

Reporting mechanisms should be:

- Easily understood by parents
- A meeting with parents that is obligatory for both sides
- Parental meetings twice a year at a mutually agreeable time
- Includes social issues e.g. cooperation
- Preparedness for reading and numeracy
- Student friendly

Recommendation

4. **That learning based play remains the central pedagogical methodology for the four and five year old learner.**
5. **That the pedagogical principles and guidelines outlined in the 2006 *The Kindergarten Program* (Ministry of Education 2006) supported by the *Early Learning for every child today: a framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings* be the basis for programming for the early learner.**
6. **That there be increased access to a continuum of early identification and intervention services programs for early learners who may experience difficulties.**
7. **That policy guidelines and assessment practices address the differing mandates of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.**
8. **That a new Report Card be created that is more anecdotal in nature rather than a check list.**



THE TEACHER

In the history of learning for four and five year olds in the Province of Ontario, the delivery of the curriculum has been in the hands of teachers who have been certified by either the Ministry of Education or the Ontario College of Teachers. These teachers have accumulated a reservoir of knowledge and expertise from their experience in the classroom. As teachers employed by a Board of Education to teach in a school run by a publicly funded Board of Education, they are accountable to their Principal and to the school community for the implementation of the legislated curriculum. This employment of certified teachers has proven effective, reliable and responsible. It is the opinion of OCSTA that this practice continues in a full day learning curriculum for four and five year olds. But there is no objection to the active presence of persons, duly qualified as Catholic Early Childhood Educators, within the classroom in any capacity, which would enrich, support or sustain the learning progress of these students. OCSTA sees it as critical that no confusion exists as to whom the accountability for the entire program should rest, and sees the school and its administration as the locus where that responsibility lies. It must be clear to parents as to who is in charge, and to whom they can confidently turn when questions or concerns arise.

In our Catholic schools the education of those entrusted with the early learning of the four and five year old must be in the hands of Catholic teachers. Imbued as they must be, not only with the pedagogical skills required in the instruction of the young child, but with a conscious development their own faith and spiritual journey, they will be true models of Christian living to these very impressionable young people.

It is felt that the various Faculties of Education will need to pay more attention to the preparation of primary teacher candidates to teach the four and five year old learner. Similarly it is felt that significantly more opportunities for the professional learning of what are the current Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten teachers should be made available. Full day everyday learning for these young children will be different from the present situation and will call for an enhancement of the skills and procedures that have worked with a shorter time spent in school by young learners.

Our understanding of the psychology and pedagogical capacity of the young learner is constantly growing and being refined. The teachers of the four and five year old learner must have timely professional learning available to them. Good teacher professional learning is solidly based on good research, cognitive engagement, effective delivery and with a strong personal involvement. Critical to this will be the opportunities to meet and interact with colleagues. For those responsible for the delivery of staff development programs, this particular professional development must be a conscious, intentional, systematic and sustained.

Recommendations

- 9. That teachers certified by the Ontario College of Teachers be the principle instructors for the early learning of the four and five year old child.**
- 10. That duly qualified Early Childhood Educators work alongside the classroom teacher in the delivery of the Early Learner program.**
- 11. That the Ontario Faculties of Education be directed to create programs that will prepare teacher candidates to teach in Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten classes.**
- 12. That Teachers and early Childhood Educators, as an early learning community, be provided with ongoing opportunities for professional learning that will enhance quality programming for the early learner.**



ACCOMMODATION

From the perspective of OCSTA, the local publicly funded school is the place of choice for the delivery of the early learning program. This provides an introduction to the early learner to the place and community where the child will likely spend the next ten years. This seems to be a requisite part of the ‘seamless transition’, which research has shown as being a vital contributor to the chances of academic and social success for the young learner. OCSTA looks to accommodation that is safe, secure, appropriate, accessible, clean and sustainable.

For school boards, the provision of the extra space for every day, full day learning for four and five year olds will involve additional expenses. The establishment of JK and SK classrooms involves specifications and safety measures that go beyond the cost of providing a regular classroom e.g. suitable washrooms, fenced in play area, appropriate sized sinks. Declining enrolment in many schools may provide some empty space. That space, however, may not readily translate into JK/SK classroom space without considerable costs in time and expenses. The combination of increased spaces for early learning and the apparent decline in numbers will be seen in some financial quarters as off-setting costs. The experience of the Catholic school boards is that such is not the case. Going off-site may indeed be needed, but only as a temporary measure. Providing the early learning experience for four and five year olds in a Child Care setting may lead to jurisdictional problems and concerns.

In the light of current declining enrolment in most school boards, and the commitment to community use of schools or school spaces, Boards have been encouraged to increase the use of leasing their empty space to community programs. Recalling these spaces to the use of the school to provide classroom space for full day everyday learning for four and five year olds may endanger good relations with community groups, or the breaching or withdrawal of a signed contract. Boards will want to be respectful of those programs, which are already in place, and are important to the people in these communities and to their uniqueness and diversity.

School boards anticipate that the introduction of full day, every day early learning for four and five year olds, or the expansion of current programming for JK & SK from half-day to full-day will have implications for capital needs because many Catholic schools are operating at capacity. This raises questions about the equity of implementation.

OCSTA takes this opportunity to raise our concerns and propose a possible solution. It is understood that the implementation of full day early learning will be “phased in.” The availability of spaces for program expansion is not similar between Catholic boards and their coterminous counterparts. Full day programming in particular areas may become a competitive advantage for a particular board. OCSTA believes, as a matter of equity, that the roll-out of the full day early learner program for four and five year olds be facilitated with capital funding that allows Catholic boards and coterminous boards implement expansion in a manner that is similar.

Significant loss of funding from the Ministry occurs when rooms are leased to outside agencies. This space is removed from a school's inventory and has subsequent effects on the funding for the library, the gymnasium and other school facilities. It will be important to ensure that structures that are currently in place do not become unnecessary in the light of the new program. A one-size-fits-all model will not work. There is need for local flexibility in providing accommodation for the four and five year old early learner. In a response to a survey of Catholic Boards across the Province the question was asked, "*What will become of good integrated models of service already in place?*"

Recommendations

- 13. That the Ministry immediately consult with school boards to address the capital needs of boards with respect to full time kindergarten.**
- 14. That the provincial Government provide direct additional and full funding to address the capital requirements related to delivering a full time program for kindergarten aged students.**
- 15. That the funding model approach to the new Early Learner initiative be that of the Primary Class Size funding.**
- 16. That the need for capital funding and capital planning be recognized and provided.**
- 17. That the capital needs associated with the Early Learner program be integrated with existing capital needs of boards.**
- 18. That adequate funding be allocated in a timely manner to facilitate structural implementation.**
- 19. That in the name of equity, the roll-out of the early learner full day program be facilitated with capital funding in such a way that it allows Catholic boards and their coterminous boards to implement the program at similar times.**

FUNDING

It will come as no surprise that OCSTA, along with the other Trustee organizations, is very concerned with the funding arrangements for a full day early learning experience for four and five year olds. Catholic School Boards across the Province have indicated to OCSTA that sustained funding for this initiative is crucial. It will be incumbent on the Ministry of Education, or of a combination of Ministries, to provide adequate, sustainable funding for full day JK/SK programs. This funding must come through the grants. The grant funding must recognize costs such as accommodation costs, administration costs, staffing costs, transportation costs and curricular support costs. The Education Act governs the operation of a school facility and all elements of a school facility, but Boards have to comply with all the acts and regulations that govern a public institution e.g. Public Health Act, Accessibility Standards. There will be costs for Educational Assistants, Early Childhood Educators, and psychological and social services costs. It is important to identify all these costs up front, before what we see as an excellent program for four and five year old learners, is promulgated and installed.

May we stress the word ‘sustainable.’ The Ministry of Education has launched several significant and educationally successful initiatives over the past few years. That they have remained a successful contribution to education in Ontario is very much due to the fact that the Ministry has continued to support these initiatives financially. There will be an expectation that this excellent policy will be the model for the new Early Learner initiative.

It may be axiomatic to state that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well. Research and good intuition suggest that the full day learning for the four and five year old child is laudable, commendable and indeed necessary. Such a project is worth doing well, and doing it well will cost money. To try to implement the program when a Board lacks the necessary fiscal resources to provide the accommodation or the teachers would be counter productive.

Recommendations

- 20. That the P.C.S. (Primary Class Size) funding model be applied to any Early Learner accommodation costs.**
- 21. That the funding for a new Early Learner program for four and five year olds be adequate, flexible, and sustained.**
- 22. That there be significant flexibility to cope with actual changes**
- 23. That grants associated with full day every day learning be announced and allocated to allow for timely implementation.**

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER MINISTRIES AND SERVICES

OCSTA sees room for cooperation between the Early Learning for four and five year olds, and the Early Childhood Learning for the one to three year old. This involves cross-Ministry activities, and some working together. There will need to be a clear articulation of the complementarity of the roles and responsibilities, and the times and places of this cross-Ministry cooperation must be precise and in law.

Since each Ministry is accountable to its own Minister, and ultimately to the premier and the Provincial Cabinet, there will be a need for a very clear delineation of responsibilities, reporting and accountability. There is a concern that all of the responsibility and accountability will fall to the school and to its administrators. It will be important to remember that at the centre of this entire enterprise, and indeed its very *raison d'être* is the four and five year old child. Ultimately, we are in service to these wonderful little images of God's creation. They deserve our very best.

Recommendation

- 24. That there be a clear articulation of the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of the individual Provincial Ministries involved in the Early Learning for four and five year old child.**



CONCLUSION

If, as we confidently assert, our children are our greatest gifts, and if their education rests as a primary duty of parents, then the early learning of the four and five year old is critical to the family, the province and indeed the nation. Since research and our own good sense dictates that this assertion is true, then the early learning of our four and five year olds is worthy of our keenest attention, and our best considered practices. In twenty-five years time these children will be rightly assuming leadership roles in all facets of Ontario and Canada life.

We, Ontario's current educators, are charged with their preparation. None of us can foresee what the Ontario of 2033 will look like, anymore than the educators of 1983 could foresee the world of today. What is asked of this group of Ontario educators is to provide to the best of our ability and our resources, human and material, an education that will prepare these young learners for the tomorrow we cannot see. Catholic Education, by its very mandate and mission looks even further. Our Mission has eternal ramifications. But, with our colleagues in the other three publicly-funded school systems, we share the challenge and the privilege of preparing the citizens of tomorrow.



OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That parents have the opportunity to select the model of early learning in a publicly funded school system that best meets their needs and desires for their children.
2. That there be increased access to a continuum of early identification and intervention services programs for early learners who may have difficulties.
3. That cross sectoral partnerships developed over time in local communities be preserved.
4. That learning based play remains the central pedagogical methodology for the four and five year old learner.
5. That the pedagogical principles and guidelines outlined in the *2006 The Kindergarten Program* (Ministry of Education 2006) supported by the *Early Learning for every child today: a framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings* be the basis for programming for the early learner.
6. That there be increased access to a continuum of early identification and intervention services programs for early learners who may experience difficulties.
7. That policy guidelines and assessment practices address the differing mandates of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.
8. That a new Report Card be created that is more anecdotal in nature rather than a check list.
9. That teachers certified by the Ontario College of Teachers be the principle instructors for the early learning of the four and five year old child.
10. That duly qualified Early Childhood Educators work alongside the classroom teacher in the delivery of the Early Learner program.
11. That the Ontario Faculties of Education be directed to create programs that will prepare teacher candidates to teach in Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten classes.
12. That Teachers and early Childhood Educators, as an early learning community, be provided with ongoing opportunities for professional learning that will enhance quality programming for the early learner.
13. That the Ministry immediately consult with school boards to address the capital needs of boards with respect to full time kindergarten.

- 14. That the provincial Government provide direct additional and full funding to address the capital requirements related to delivering a full time program for kindergarten aged students.**
- 15. That the funding model approach to the new Early Learner initiative be that of the Primary Class Size funding.**
- 16. That the need for capital funding and capital planning be recognized and provided.**
- 17. That the capital needs associated with the Early Learner program be integrated with existing capital needs of boards.**
- 18. That adequate funding be allocated in a timely manner to facilitate structural implementation.**
- 19. That in the name of equity, the roll-out of the early learner full day program be facilitated with capital funding in such a way that it allows Catholic boards and their coterminous boards to implement the program at similar times.**
- 20. That the P.C.S. (Primary Class Size) funding model be applied to any Early Learner accommodation costs.**
- 21. That the funding for a new Early Learner program for four and five year olds be adequate, flexible, and sustained.**
- 22. That there be significant flexibility to cope with actual changes**
- 23. That grants associated with full day every day learning be announced and allocated to allow for timely implementation.**
- 24. That there be a clear articulation of the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of the individual Provincial Ministries involved in the Early Learning for four and five year old child.**

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P.O. Box 2064, Suite 1804, 20 Eglinton Avenue West, Toronto, Ontario M4R 1K8
Tel: 416-932-9460 Fax: 416-932-9459 Email: ocsta@ocsta.on.ca Website: www.ocsta.on.ca