



COALITION OF

child care advocates

OF BC



Working together for a community based, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and accountable.

November 10, 2010

Honourable George Abbott
Ministry of Education
PO Box 9057 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Abbott,

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of this extremely significant portfolio.

As you no doubt understand, access to quality, affordable child care is a major challenge facing BC families with young children. This challenge remains despite the convincing research on the early brain development during children's first five years of life and recent polls confirming that the public expects government to play a role in the provision of services to meet this need.

For several decades, our organization, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, has articulated concerns about the lack of quality child care spaces, high user fees, dismally low wages and benefits for early childhood educators and the lack of a plan outlining how government will address these issues. As a voluntary organization of parents, child care providers, community organizations and concerned citizens we have advocated for a quality, comprehensive, accessible, inclusive and affordable non-profit child care system in BC.

Given that quality child care is early learning – and that there can be no learning without care – we are concerned about the artificial divide that currently exists between your ministry's responsibility for early learning and MCFD's responsibility for child care. We believe the public interest is best served when early care and learning are integrated into one system.

This is particularly relevant given the work of the Early Learning Agency in your ministry to design a curriculum for four year olds in BC and statements in the 2009 and 2010 Throne Speeches regarding pre-Kindergarten and private preschools.

Fortunately, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, along with the Early Childhood Educators of BC, has taken the bold step of developing an innovative Emerging Plan for an Integrated System of Early Care and Learning in BC. We have shared the Emerging Plan with thousands of British Columbians and the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

A copy is enclosed and we're sure you'll quickly see this Emerging Plan paves the way for the provincial government to meet the needs of BC children and their working families with strong

economic benefits. We would welcome the opportunity to brief you and your senior staff on the Emerging Plan at your earliest convenience.

We believe you have a historic opportunity to build an early care and learning system that BC children and families need and deserve. They are counting on you to do the right thing!

We look forward to hearing back from you about a meeting. Your office can contact us at 604-515-5439 or info@cccabc.bc.ca.

Sincerely,



Susan Harney
Chairperson