



July 28, 2017

The Hon. Minister Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9

Dear Minister Duclos:

The Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCF) and its affiliates from across Canada thank you for your leadership in starting to bring the multi-lateral framework to realization, placing early learning and child care rightfully back into the federal government's policy and budgetary commitments. We fully support and believe that the promised federal leadership is essential in creating better policy, programs and outcomes for children and families across Canada. We also thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the round table meetings and initial discussions on innovation.

As stakeholders in Canada's child care sector, the CCCF and its affiliates are directly connected to the grassroots of child care—the people, programs and practices—and liaise with governments and their respective policy directions to positively impact child care services and practice. Meaningful involvement of the child care sector and stakeholders is essential in ensuring strong linkages between policy and practice are made. It is from our collective knowledge and experiences that we make the following recommendations:

1. That the issues of compensation, recruitment and retention of Canada's child care workforce be integral policy and spending priorities of the bi-lateral agreements and further, that the federal government provide leadership in partnership with the provinces, territories and Indigenous communities in order to move forward on national solutions and strategies. Quality is inextricably linked to the women and men that provide the care and education of children. These long-standing systemic issues, crossing all jurisdictions cannot be left to one-off solutions. In our female dominated profession, the economic security and well-being of this workforce is a ready-made sector for the federal government's commitment to supporting the middle class—and more specifically, women's equality—and those who want to join it. If we are to build high quality child care across Canada, it starts with supporting the people delivering the service -- as they are essential to its implementation.
2. That federal funds for child care be allowed to carry over after the expiration of the original bi-lateral agreements. There are many pressing operating needs that provincial, territorial and Indigenous communities have for child care. And while appreciating that funds cannot be carried over for an indefinite amount of time, some level of flexibility would be appropriate in ensuring that spending is not rushed out the door without the proper time and planning necessary to ensure that the federal funds are spent on priority policy and project objectives, such as infrastructure.

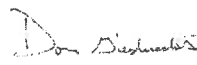
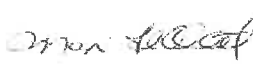

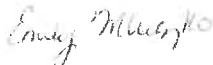
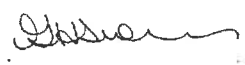
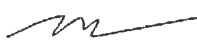




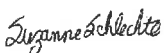
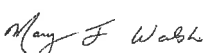
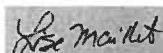
3. That the federal government, as it has done in other sectors, put in place a national advisory council or leadership structure, ensuring the regular and ongoing involvement of child care sector stakeholders. To date, there has been minimal and inconsistent consultation at the federal and provincial levels with key stakeholders from the provinces/territories. There is a wealth of knowledge, leadership, experience and expertise that is willing and able to work with the federal government—and all governments across Canada—in pursuing high quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive child care for Canada’s children and families.

4. That infrastructure support for national leadership and capacity building of the child care sector, long ignored, be a part of the federal government’s financial commitments to child care in Canada.

As the federal government continues negotiations for bi-lateral agreements with the provinces and territories, we see opportunity and need for deeper collaboration, consultation and communication among our organizations and to align the federal policy priorities with those of the provinces/territories and Indigenous communities. Understanding that child care delivery is a provincial/territorial responsibility, it is imperative that the federal government clearly understands the whole child care landscape while the provincial/territorial and Indigenous governments work in conjunction with their respective stakeholders in identifying and working towards holistic policy solutions. Co-establishing these child care delivery priorities with your government will ultimately create a comprehensive child care system rather than one-off solutions.

There is much to be done. After years of little federal government leadership on child care, the opportunity to move forward on evidence-based decision making, innovation, best practice and policy based on systems development approach are required for the future of child care in Canada. Respectfully, we ask that you consider our concerns, recommendations and years of experience and commitment to Canada’s children, families and child care sector as valued contributors to building high quality child care for all in Canada. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

 Don Giesbrecht CCCF	 Marni Flaherty HCCAO	 Pat Wege MCCA	 Emily Mliczko ECEBC	 Georgia Siourounis SECA
 Manna Middleton AECEA	 Lyndsay Macdonald AECEO	 Susan Bencini AFCCA	 Catherine Cross NSCCA	 Sonya Hooper ECDA of PEI
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