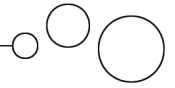


COALITION OF

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.

April 23rd, 2011

The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia
Box 9041 Station PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark,

Congratulations on your election as British Columbia's 35th Premier!

We are particularly encouraged by your focus on a Families First agenda and appreciate your intention to provide communities and parents with the tools they need to grow and succeed. As you know however, access to quality, affordable child care is a major challenge facing BC families with young children.

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, dimly 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 in your government between the education 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 2008 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.

As senior staff in your government are aware, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, along with the Early Childhood Educators of BC, have taken the bold step of developing a Plan for a Public System of Integrated 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 of the Emerging Plan was sent to you during the Leadership Campaign and we thank you for your response. A copy of the finalized Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning, released this month, is now enclosed for you. We request an opportunity to brief you and your senior staff on the Plan at your very earliest convenience.

As stated in the recent Newfoundland and Labrador Speech from the Throne, "insufficient access to early care and learning is not only a barrier to employment but also an obstacle to economic growth". We believe that

the availability of affordable, high quality, regulated early care and learning is critical to the success of your government's Families First agenda.

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