



Operator Engagement Table

Early Learning and Childcare System

Terms of Reference

*Note: to alleviate the text, the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement will be abbreviated to “the Agreement” and the Operator Engagement Table will be abbreviated to the “Table”

Introduction

The Government of Canada committed to a transformative investment of \$30 billion over 5 years to build a Canada-wide early learning and childcare system. This commitment targets both economic and social issues and is an essential part of the social infrastructure needed to support economic growth. This investment hat trick will: create jobs; enable families to improve their standard of living; and create a generation of engaged and well-prepared young learners.

During the last four years, New Brunswick transformed its early learning and childcare system. A comprehensive public policy framework created a new service delivery model via the designation program which improved the affordable access to quality and inclusive early learning services. New Brunswick’s vision is clear: to build a high-quality early learning and childcare system that families can rely on, and where children receive appropriate services that enables them to reach their full potential.

Both levels of Government are committed to collaboration to build a community-based system of quality of regulated early learning and childcare, and to ensure that all families, regardless of location, have access to high quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care. The shared dual-mission of the early learning and child care system is to support both the workforce and the early education of children, and as such, the effectiveness and efficiency of the system is critical to the economy in both the immediate and long-terms.

Mandate

The Table is an ongoing forum to ensure greater engagement of Operators in critical dialogue necessary for the transformation and continuous improvement of the early learning and childcare system in New Brunswick. Capacity building and systemic change resulting from the implementation of the Agreement will facilitate achievement of New Brunswick’s goals. While the priority will be given to addressing the implementation of the Canada-Wide agreement, the deliberations of the Table will also include discussing challenges as they pertain to school-age programming.

- to ensure families have access to high quality, affordable, inclusive, and flexible early learning and childcare that meet their needs and they can depend on
- to offer children the best start in life making sure that everyone has the same access to opportunities, from their youngest age
- to support the province’s economic growth by supporting population growth and enabling parents, particularly mothers, in reaching their full economic potential
- to strengthen a community-based, high-quality early learning and childcare system
- to focus on child-centered outcomes and the best interests of families

The mandate of the Table may be summarized as follows:

- to provide constructive input to the Department on a collaborative path forward to creating a community-based, high-quality early learning and childcare system that is responsive to the needs of families and children
- to provide input to the Department on relevant frameworks and action plans, and subsequently to provide advice for updating them as necessary
- to engage in discussions on evidence-based research, as required, on matters considered of vital importance to the sector
- to foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement
- to improve communication and create greater alignment between the sector and government
- to address issues and challenges and seek innovative solutions that are mutually beneficial
- to provide a forum for dialogue on operational practices and processes that impact the sector

Meetings

- Chaired by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Table meets at least four (4) times per year.
- The Chairperson solicits suggestions from members in drafting agendas for meetings, as well as time and venue for meetings.
- Secretarial and support services are provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
- Meetings are provided with simultaneous translation, and materials are made available in both official languages.
- Meetings may be assisted with an experienced external facilitator to guide effective dialogue.
- Members are compensated for traveling expenses in accordance with government standards. Release of time if necessary, will be accommodated.
- Minutes of the meetings are considered internal documents not to be circulated beyond the membership of the Table unless otherwise approved by all parties.
- Public announcements or statements as well as other communications concerning the activities of the Table are to be routed through the Chairperson of the Table.

Membership

The Table has a cross representation of Operators from different facility type from around the province. Membership is comprised of champions from licensed anglophone and francophone facilities, from urban and rural regions of New Brunswick. Membership will be selected through a nomination process and selected participants will be appointed for a period of one year that may be renewable to maintain appropriate sector representation.

Membership is for an appointed individual to represent the sector, not their organization and is not transferrable. Membership is considered for those who are willing to invest the time and energy, and who have demonstrated the following: collaborative leadership, innovative approach to problem solving and strategic thinking, a provincial understanding of the realities of the early learning and childcare sector they represent.

Membership of the Table:

- Representative of the Early Learning and Childcare NB (1)
- Representative of New Brunswick Association of Early Childhood Professionals (1)
- Representative of the Association des Services de garde éducatifs francophones (1)
- Early Learning and childcare operators (20) – 50% francophone and 50% anglophone

Ad-hoc / Consult as Required:

At anytime throughout the deliberations of the Table, the Chairperson may invite ad-hoc representatives from other advisory groups, following the request by the Table, to participate in discussions and consultation relevant to the Table's objectives.