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ECEs have strong role to play, professional association says

Toronto, ON - Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) have an important role to play in the proposed full-day early learning program for Ontario.

“ECEs need to play a strong role in the implementation of full-day early learning that is currently being researched by Dr. Charles Pascal,” said Eduarda Sousa, executive director of the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario.

“The qualifications and skills of ECEs should not be underestimated,” Sousa continued. “Though they are not currently required to earn a university degree, ECE professionals are required to undergo intense study of early childhood development, including the implementation of developmentally appropriate curriculum for infants to school age children, with a focus on involving parents through active communication.

“ECEs are currently required to have a minimum two-year diploma, though a substantial number of practicing ECEs have additional specialized post-secondary education.”

While Sousa did not discount the equal role elementary school teachers could play in full-day early learning, she cautioned against discounting the important role of ECEs.

“ECEs have an exceptionally important role to play in full-day early learning. Their qualifications, and the specialized skills they offer young children, must not be discounted as we move forward.

“Our Association is looking forward to acting as a source of information and support to Dr. Pascal so that the best possible vision for full-day early learning can be achieved,” said Sousa.

“Ontario must seize the opportunity to support families and young children with a diverse workforce and learning environment that best meets the needs of families and young children through an all-day early learning environment.”

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