



Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
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January 27th, 2026

Re: Upcoming Federal Provincial Territorial Forum of Ministers Most Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care

Dear Minister Calandra,

Today, I am writing to you on behalf of the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario, the professional association for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) in Ontario for over 75 years. This letter comes to you in advance of the Federal Provincial Territorial Forum of Ministers Most Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care on Friday January 30th, 2026 to urge you to continue, strengthen, and expand the \$10aDay child care system here in Ontario through the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement (CWELCC).

At a time when it feels as though every possible living expense is rising, the CWELCC program and decreased child care fees in Ontario have been a lifeline for families, and have provided significant economic return to the province. Parents are able to rely on affordable, accessible, high quality care for their children. Children have a safe and caring place to learn through play. Our families, communities, and economy have all benefited from the implementation of the \$10aDay program.

Early Childhood Educators are the beating heart of this system. They provide developmentally appropriate education and care to Ontario's youngest citizens. As a female dominated workforce providing work based in the care of others, ECEs have historically been neglected, undervalued, and disrespected. The CWELCC program has provided an opportunity to mitigate this. With the implementation of the first wage floor for RECEs and its subsequent increases, many RECEs have seen wage increases of up to \$5 per hour. While there is still much work to do to address the retention crisis in the field by providing decent work and pay to all child care employees, we cannot give up what we have gained through this program. Expansion and increased access depend on it.



Much remains to be done to ensure this life changing program meets its initial objectives and true potential. The AECEO is a signatory on a letter organized by Child Care Now and signed by all major child care associations across Canada, as well as by every federation of labour and other important partners. This letter calls on all governments to strengthen the CWELCC program by:

- Increasing public funding to meet the real cost of operating high-quality programs and to expand the availability of licensed child care under the \$10aDay child care system;
- Building a primarily non-profit and public system of child care so that public investments advance high quality, equitable services, not profitmaking;
- Achieving a maximum parent fee of \$10aDay with further fee reductions for low income families;
- Investing in the early learning and child care workforce to attract and retain qualified educators;
- Developing and implementing concrete, proactive child care expansion plans with emphasis on making access more equitable;
- Publicly and promptly sharing the text of your child care agreements, associated action plans and results.

It is necessary that both the provincial and federal governments work together to expand and strengthen the \$10aDay child care program. Increased investment in the early years workforce, including a pay-equity compliant wage grid, will be critical to the success of the program, and necessary to ensure that all families have access to high quality early learning and child care, child care that has already transformed and benefitted Ontario. We urge our provincial government to commit to collaborating with our federal partners, increase its own investment in early learning and child care, and to sign a new 5-year CWELCC agreement as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

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