



early childhood community development centre

October 27, 2009

*For Immediate Release*

## **ECCDC APPLAUDS NEW PROVINCIAL POLICY ON FULL-DAY LEARNING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN**

St. Catharines: The Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) is pleased to welcome the Honourable Laurel Broten as the new Minister of Children and Youth Services and looks forward to working with other Niagara stakeholders to implement the new Provincial child care policies announced earlier today.

“The announcement is a first step toward implementation of the broadly supported recommendations made last spring in a report by the Premier’s early learning advisor Dr. Charles Pascal,” says Tammy McCormick Ferguson, the ECCDC’s Executive Director. “Dr. Pascal’s recommendations amount to transformational change for a comprehensive publicly funded early learning system in Ontario.”

“Certainly Minister Broten has her work cut out for her,” notes McCormick Ferguson, “Premier Dalton McGuinty’s announcement earlier today is a welcome step in a lengthy process aimed at making elementary schools hubs for both child care and a variety of other services for children and families.” McCormick Ferguson applauds the move, noting that it will mean greater convenience for parents and make it easier for them to access high quality early learning experiences for their children, while serving as an important economic stimulus investment. “There will be benefits to having both early childhood educators and teachers in the school environment,” she adds.

“Niagara is better positioned than many other Ontario communities to move ahead with the Province’s announcement to develop and implement full-day learning for four- and five-year olds and to enhance and stabilize existing child care programs,” notes McCormick Ferguson. “There has always been a high level of cooperation between area school boards, the licensed child care community and the Regional Municipality of Niagara Children’s Services and Public Health Departments. Representatives from these and other community organizations have worked together for nearly a decade as Early Years Niagara. We’ve developed highly effective programs to help children make the transition from day care to kindergarten and to support families whose children have special needs. We’ve also created a network of early learning hubs offering a range of early learning and parenting programs and early intervention services to families and children throughout Niagara.”

The ECCDC is an independent charitable organization dedicated to providing Niagara’s early learning and child care programs and providers with affordable access to the specialized learning resources, training and supports they need to deliver high quality early learning and care programs. Among the ECCDC’s services are the operation of a lending library of classroom resources and learning equipment, a workroom for educators to research and develop new learning activities for children and professional development programming for early childhood professionals. The ECCDC’s services are available to all of Niagara’s early childhood educators and teachers, as well as others involved in the care and education of children.

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