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**A BULLETIN OF THE
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RESOURCES SECTOR COUNCIL**



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Canada

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Newly released occupational standards reflect realities of working as an ECE

For Sue Melanson, participating in a sector council workshop to update the *Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)* was an opportunity to take more of a leadership role in her sector. For Sharon Black, it meant being able to establish networks with early childhood educators from other parts of Canada. For both ECEs, it was a recognition of the value of their profession and expertise.

The newly released standards – updated from an earlier version produced by the Canadian Child Care Federation in 2003 – are the product of an inclusive process that sought out the participation of ECEs from across Canada in development workshops, and a combination of ECEs and other stakeholders in subsequent validation sessions. The aim was to ensure that the standards

reflect the day-to-day realities of working in early childhood education and care programs. All ECEs should see themselves reflected in the new occupational standards,

but not everything in the standards applies to every ECE.

“I was proud to be there because

someone was listening to us,” said Black, head teacher at Epnigishmok Aboriginal Head Start program in Toronto. “Our role in developing the standards was important because we do this job every day. We were able to break it down and really fine tune all the details.”

Workshop participants tried to ensure that all sections, tasks and sub-tasks accurately and clearly conveyed the du-

“The responsibilities of ECEs have increased because of the importance of what they are delivering and because of the policies and standards in place [for early childhood education and care programs] in different provinces.”

– Sue Melanson, ECE at Halifax’s Le Petit Voilier

ties and responsibilities of the job. “No matter where we’re from we all have the same issues that we deal with,” said

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Newly released occupational standards...

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Black, who was also looking at the standards from an aboriginal perspective, making sure that they addressed and included language and culture.

A complex job

Sue Melanson, an ECE at Halifax's Le Petit Voilier and chairperson of the Nova Scotia Child Care Association, said the review process revealed how much the job has changed over the years. "The responsibilities of ECEs have increased because of the importance of what they are delivering and because of the policies and standards in place [for early childhood education and care programs] in different provinces....And documentation is playing a bigger role than before. Everything is being recorded, from daily programming to taking care of equipment to medications and your meetings, because of regulations to meet certain standards."

Melanson, who participated in the francophone workshop in Montreal and

a validation session in Halifax, has no doubt that the new standards will be used and useful to ECEs as well as employers. She plans to give all of her coworkers a copy of the standards, and is considering holding a session to introduce them.

cial needs properly? How am I making the environment friendlier? Am I incorporating families day by day?"

For Black, "at the end of the day you realize all the responsibility you have, all the positions you hold. I was

"At the end of the day you realize all the responsibility you have, all the positions you hold. I was overwhelmed at how many things I am responsible for as a supervisor with 32 children in the program, and staff and parents."

— Sharon Black, Epnigishmok Aboriginal Head Start program

"They provide a good path for ECEs to know where they're at and where they're going, and can help them form goals for themselves in the program." They also provide reference points for questions ECEs can ask themselves about their role in different aspects of quality program delivery. For example: "How do I make sure I'm dealing with children with spe-

overwhelmed at how many things I am responsible for as a supervisor with 32 children in the program, and staff and parents."

To obtain a copy of the *Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators*, visit: www.ccsc-cssge.ca or call the sector council office toll free at 1-866-411-6960.



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Survey highlights perceptions, priorities around emerging ECEC issues

The CCHRSC has completed a survey that is part of a project on the human resource implications of four emerging issues in the sector: inclusion of children with special needs and from diverse cultural and language backgrounds, school age care, family child care, and integrated early learning and education. A total of 825 individuals from every province and territory responded to the questionnaire, including employers and front-line staff of centre-based child care programs, regulated family child care providers, ECE provincial/territorial/national organizations, post-secondary ECE faculty and child care program licensing officials. Key informant interviews were also conducted to further explore the major themes emerging from the survey.

The survey shows that employers (centre directors) in provinces with significant policy shifts for the ECEC and education sectors are more likely than others to anticipate adapting their programs to care for younger and/or school age children, lower enrolment, higher fees, and more ECEs moving to education. In each of these provinces (BC, Ontario, and PEI) large numbers of children previously attending ECEC programs will be moving to the public school system in September 2010.

However, employers in these provinces also feel that greater collaboration with education will enhance their programs and services for children with special needs, and provide greater professional development opportunities for staff.

Among the other survey results:

- 92% of centre-based employers said they enrolled children with special

needs. Taken together, respondents from all stakeholder groups identified the need for more funding for children with special needs, better government policies on funding eligibility, more

on-site consultation, more inclusion content in post-secondary ECEC programs and more effective staff recruitment.

- More than 80% of respondents agreed that some staff in school age programs should have formal credentials. Fewer than 40% agreed that the current training requirements in their province or territory are appropriate. Many key informants commenting on these findings also said training should be more specific to the (older) age range

Integration of child care and education

Survey respondents agree that the top human resource priorities surrounding the integration of child care and education are:

- 1) the wage gap between teachers and ECEs
- 2) work reorganization enabling teachers and ECEs to work together as a team
- 3) ensuring the continued viability of community-based child care programs that operate outside the mandate of the school system

Taken together, respondents from all stakeholder groups identified the need for more funding for children with special needs, better government policies on funding eligibility, more on-site consultation, more inclusion content in post-secondary ECEC programs and more effective staff recruitment.

of the children in these programs.

- Respondents overwhelmingly said there should be more professional development opportunities for staff in school age programs, and that wages and working conditions need to be better understood.
- More than 80% of respondents agreed that family child care should be part of the regulated ECEC system, and that there should be a required post-secondary credential and increased development opportunities for providers.

Coming April 2010 - new online guide!

ECE credentialing information will be just a few mouse clicks away

- Are you considering a career in early childhood education, but don't know the requirements for working in regulated child care in your province or territory?
- Are you an ECE interested in finding out about certification, or moving to another province and wondering about the equivalency of your qualifications?
- Are you a child care centre employer who needs information about credential recognition for job applicants from other Canadian jurisdictions or countries?

Finding answers to these questions used to be time-consuming and could take several phone calls and e-mails. With the CCHRSC's new online *Guide to Credentialing*, the process has become much easier. In April 2010, visit www.cpsc-cssge.ca and click on *The Guide to Credentialing*. From there, you will be able to choose a province/territory or a specific topic to get started.

You'll be able to:

- Review your province or territory's requirements, certification process and related information.
- Compare two or more provinces and territories side by side.
- Pull up cross-Canada comparisons on specific topics, such as recognized post-secondary ECE programs, out-of-province and out-of-country credential and work experience assessment, how to apply for higher certification, appeals and provincial/territorial contacts.

The information in the guide will also be of interest to child care licensing officials, ECE faculty in post-secondary institutions, ECE decision-makers and other government officials, and others who want to know about the requirements and processes in other provinces and territories.

Project update: feasibility of developing curriculum for child care administrators

The Curriculum Development for Child Care Administrators project is well underway in Phase I, which explores the feasibility of developing a post-diploma certificate program for administrators/supervisors/directors working in ECEC.

The project is currently wrapping up the research and consultation phase, which included: reviewing key pieces of literature and course outlines, surveying post-secondary institutions that offer ECE programs, interviewing key stakeholders, and hosting virtual meet-

ings to inform stakeholders about the project. According to the survey, 86% of respondents thought there was a need for a specialized post-diploma/post-basic curriculum for ECE administrators that is relevant to the *Occupational Standards for Child Care Administrators*.

If Phase I determines it is feasible to develop curriculum for administrators, the project will then move into the second phase, which will focus on developing curriculum in partnership with several post-secondary colleges and degree granting institutions involved in delivering programming for the ECEC sector. The research findings from

Phase I will provide the project steering committee and sector council with an action plan on how to best move forward into the curriculum development phase, including partnership agreements with post-secondary institutions.

The next steps for the project will include meeting with interested post-secondary institutions, confirming the feasibility and developing a plan of action.

For more information on the Curriculum Development for Child Care Administrators project, please visit the CCHRSC website at www.cpsc-cssge.ca.

Joining the ECE Affinity Group

Since it was established in 2005, the ECE Affinity Group has been bringing together faculty of Canada's ECE post-secondary education community to:

- Stimulate dialogue, ideas, and best practices in ECE post-secondary programs;
- Promote resource sharing;
- Improve coordination and communication among post-secondary institutions;
- Identify and move forward on common issues or concerns;
- Develop information and/or tools for the ECE post-secondary education community; and
- Organize occasional joint activities to explore and promote common interests.

The main activity for the ECE Affinity Group has been the Annual Forum, which was first held in Winnipeg in 2006, followed by Toronto in 2007; Montreal in 2008; Edmonton in 2009; and finally, the upcoming 2010 Forum being held in Vancouver from November 4-6, 2010.

The ECE Affinity Group is a joint initiative of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) and the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC). To join the list-serve, go to the ACCC website, www.accc.ca. Under "Programs and Services" click on "Networking and Affinity Groups," then follow the directions.

Something to Share

CCHRSC will soon be releasing the next publication of *Something to Share*, a booklet containing leading practices from different colleges and resource links for those delivering early childhood education. The information was gathered at the 4th Annual ECE Affinity Group Forum, held in Edmonton from November 19-21, 2009.

Forum participants were given the opportunity to share best practices with colleagues from across the country during the "Something to Share" part of the program. Forum

participants then submitted their innovative idea to the CCHRSC who compiled all of the submissions into one publication. It acts as a useful resource tool for faculty in ECE who are looking for new and unique ways of instructing their ECE students.

Something to Share will be released in April 2010 and will also be available on the CCHRSC website at www.cchsc-cssge.ca. To request a print copy free of charge, please write to info@cchsc-cssge.ca.

New publication describes ECEC workforce data collection

Quality data is key to accurately defining and addressing labour market issues in the early childhood education and care sector. It's important to know how data is collected and used, and a new sector council document provides this information for stakeholders. *Gathering Labour Market Information on Canada's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce: Data Collection Methods and Classification Systems* contains a series of question-and-answer fact sheets on public data sources relevant to ECEC human resource trends, including the:

- National Occupational Classification (NOC/NOC-S)
- Census
- Labour Force Survey (LFS)
- Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours (SEPH)

These data collection methods and classification systems are used by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments overseeing ECEC services, provincial/territorial child care organizations, and by communities to plan services and programs and inform decision-making. The fact sheets describe the data collected, and its limitations, uses and relevance to the ECEC sector. They underline the importance of accuracy, especially in collection methods such as the Census, where occupations are self-reported and can therefore sometimes be coded incorrectly (for example, when an early childhood educator self-reports as a babysitter).

To obtain a copy of this document please write to info@cchsc-cssge.ca.

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Upcoming events across Canada

The following is a list of upcoming sector events across Canada:

April 16 – 17, 2010

ECCENB, Braiding Our Resources

Fredericton, New Brunswick

For more information visit:

www.eccenb-sepenb.com

April 16 – 17, 2010

YCCA 2010 Training Seminar

Whitehorse, Yukon

For more information visit:

www.yukonchildcareassociation.com

May 20 – 21, 2010

It Takes a University – Child Care and Post Secondary Institutions

Vancouver, British Columbia

For more information visit:

www.childcareconference.wordpress.com

May 27 - 28, 2010

AECEQ Conference 2010 – Our Time to Shine

(in conjunction with the Canadian Child Care Federation)

Montreal, Quebec

For more information visit:

www.aececq.ca

May 27 - 29, 2010

AECEO 60th Annual Provincial Conference

Hamilton, Ontario

For more information visit:

www.aeceo.ca

May 27 - 29, 2010

ECEBC 39th Annual Conference

Richmond, British Columbia

For more information visit:

www.ecebc.ca

May 27 - 29, 2010

33rd Annual MCCA Conference

Winnipeg, Manitoba

For more information visit:

www.mccahouse.org/conference.htm

June 11 – 12, 2010

Nurturing Nature: Child Care Conference and Trade Show

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

For more information visit:

www.ccnns.org/conf10/conf10.htm

November 4 -6, 2010

5th Annual ECE Affinity Group Forum

Vancouver, British Columbia

For more information visit:

www.accc.ca

November 12 – 14, 2010

AECENL 18th Annual Provincial Conference

St. John's, Newfoundland

For more information visit:

www.aecenl.ca