

# Review of the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*

## Discussion Paper

### Introduction

In 2007, the Ontario government established the College of Early Childhood Educators ('the College') through the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* ('the Act'). The College is the first self-regulatory body in Canada overseeing a professional membership of early childhood educators (ECEs). The primary responsibility of the College is to serve and protect the public interest by regulating the profession of early childhood education.

The work of the College supports the government's vision for the early years as articulated in the Ontario Early Years Policy Framework. The vision focuses on a system of responsive, high-quality, accessible and increasingly integrated early years programs and services that contribute to healthy child development today and a stronger future tomorrow. High-quality programs and services are supported by knowledgeable, responsive and reflective ECEs.

With the purpose of the College and the government's vision in mind, the Ministry of Education is conducting the required review of the Act to determine if it is adequate to achieve its objectives and identify any legislative barriers to effective implementation of the College's responsibilities. The review is not intended to be an evaluation of the College's performance.

This discussion paper provides background on why the legislation was introduced; an overview of the legislation; sets out review questions for stakeholder and public consideration; and outlines the process for how stakeholders and the public can contribute to the review.

### Background

#### Purpose of the Act

The *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, established the College of Early Childhood Educators which is primarily responsible for serving and protecting the public interest, including those of children and parents, by regulating the profession of early childhood education.

To fulfil this mandate, the College promotes and ensures high standards for the profession of early childhood education by:

- Establishing registration requirements and coordinating the registration process;
- Maintaining a public registry of ECEs;
- Establishing a professional code of ethics and setting standards of practice that all members of the College are required to meet;



- Providing for ongoing education and continuous professional learning to members of the College; and
- Investigating complaints from the public about the conduct, competency and fitness to practice of members and, if necessary, disciplining members.

As of January 2013, the College had a membership of about 42,000 registered ECEs. ECEs work in a variety of settings (e.g. child care programs, full-day kindergarten and primary grade classrooms, special education and intervention programs, family support programs, etc.) planning and delivering inclusive play-based learning and care programs in order to promote the well-being and holistic development of children.

Given the important role of ECEs in working with children across Ontario, the Act is critical in providing public protection, ensuring accountability in the profession and setting the foundation for safe, ethical and professional practice of ECEs across Ontario.

### Overview of the Act

The *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* received Royal Assent on May 17, 2007 and was proclaimed in stages with the final sections proclaimed on February 14, 2009.

The Act supports the College in meeting its duty and objectives by providing:

- A definition of what constitutes the scope of practice in the profession;
- A requirement for persons to be members in order to practise the profession;
- Title protection authorizing only members of the College to use the titles "early childhood educator" or "registered early childhood educator" or an abbreviation (including French equivalents);
- Roles and responsibilities of the Registrar; Registration Appeals, Complaints, Discipline, Fitness to Practise Committees; and
- Transitional provisions.

The Act also outlines the role of the Council which serves as the College's governing body and board of directors, and manages and administers the affairs of the College. The Council consists of 14 elected members and 10 public members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

The Act includes a number of measures to support public accountability including:

- Annual reports by the Council on its activities and financial affairs;
- Annual meetings of members held by the College;
- Council meetings that are open to the public with reasonable notice provided to members of the College and the public; and
- Council regulations subject to approval by the Lieutenant Governor in Council with prior review by the Minister.



## The Review

Under subsection 58(1) of the Act, a review of the Act must be conducted by the Minister by February 14, 2014. The Minister is required to inform the public when the review begins and prepare a written report on the review that is publicly available.

All public and stakeholder responses to the following questions will be received and analyzed by the Early Learning Division, Ministry of Education. Submissions will form the basis of a report to the Minister. The final report will be made publicly available.

## Review Questions

If you wish to participate in this review, the Ministry of Education will be accepting written responses to the following review questions until **August 27, 2013**.

Given the roles and responsibilities of the College as well as the government's vision for the early years and supporting guiding principles set out in the Ontario Early Years Policy Framework:

- Are the provisions in the Act adequate for achieving the objectives of the Act (i.e. public protection, high standards for the profession of early childhood education and accountability)?
- What changes to the Act, if any, should be considered by the government to improve the operations of the College in carrying out its roles and responsibilities and support the government's vision for the early years?

## How/Where to send your submission

Written submissions will be accepted via the Regulatory Registry website, email and mail.

- Submissions may be made directly through the Regulatory Registry website at: <http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/>
- Submissions may also be sent by email to [ECEA.Review@ontario.ca](mailto:ECEA.Review@ontario.ca) or by mail to:

RE: Early Childhood Educators Act Review  
Early Learning Division  
Ministry of Education  
900 Bay Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1L2

Thank you for your interest and for taking the time to participate in this review.



## Resources

*Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_07e07\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_07e07_e.htm)

O. Reg. 221/08 under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (Registration)

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_080221\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_080221_e.htm)

O. Reg. 222/08 under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (Designation of Geographic Areas)

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_080222\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_080222_e.htm)

O. Reg. 223/08 under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (Professional Misconduct)

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_080223\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_080223_e.htm)

Ontario Early Years Policy Framework

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/OntarioEarlyYear.pdf>

Ministry of Education Website:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/>

College of Early Childhood Educators Website:

<http://collegeofece.on.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

