



Toward a Provincial Framework for Early Learning and Care in Alberta

A Record of Participant Discussions

Fort McMurray

November 19, 2012

Fort McMurray • Grande Prairie • Edmonton • Red Deer • Calgary • Medicine Hat • Lethbridge



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1. Introduction

In November 2012, The Muttart Foundation, Success By 6 and Calgary UpStart hosted consultations in 7 Alberta cities to consider the design of a new provincial framework for early learning and care. The consultations, funded in part with support from the Government of Alberta Ministries of Human Services and Education, explored how Alberta might, over time, more closely integrate early learning and care and how a potential framework could be structured to guide and support this process of integration.

The stakeholders invited to attend the consultations included senior staff and volunteers from early learning and care organizations, senior staff who oversee or work in school-based early learning programs, academic staff from post-secondary institutions as well as staff from infrastructure organizations that support service delivery.

To support the consultation discussions, the project partners contracted a team of early education and care researchers to prepare background papers that were circulated to the participants in advance of the consultations. The background papers provided an overview of the main idea of integrating early learning and care and considered the potential features or nature of this integration across the key domains of service design, funding and delivery. The papers summarized the research literature on integration, and provided examples of how individual jurisdictions have approached integration (copies of these background reports can be downloaded from the Muttart Foundation website at www.muttart.org/reports).

The consultations followed a similar format. At each meeting, the participants engaged in a series of facilitated discussions that initially explored the main idea of more closely integrating early learning and care followed by a series of more detailed discussions on the main design features or elements of a more integrated approach and their expression in a new provincial framework.

Throughout the discussions, participants recorded their own responses to the various questions they considered on individual feedback sheets. These sheets were then collected at the end of the consultations, transcribed and analyzed to provide a record of the discussions. The participant comments were organized according to the main questions they considered and sorted to reflect the key themes and ideas they expressed. The comments made were not attributed to individual participants.

This report presents the participant comments from the Fort McMurray consultation held on November 19th, 2012 at the Quality Hotel and Conference Centre. Twenty-eight participants took part in the discussions. The project partners greatly appreciate the time and energy the participants contributed to the discussions and thank them all individually for their insights and commitment to this work.

A final consultation summary report prepared by the Muttart Foundation, Success By 6 and Calgary UpStart for the Ministries of Human Services and Education presents the findings from across the seven consultations. Copies of this report can also be requested from the three project partners.

2. An Integrated Approach

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge for you when you consider more closely integrating ELC in AB?

Theme: Target Group

- 5 ans et plus entre systeme scolaire
- Kindergarten age birthdate cut off the same across the province – it's needed
- Target Provincial mandate to support children on reserve. (0-6) vs. INAC!

Theme: Goals

- Care in communities
- Build up resilient children and families
- Promotion family well-being and particularly lighten the triple-roles of women - working outside the home in addition to work inside the home and community management work - e.g. volunteering, sitting on board, etc.
- Being on the same level, proceeding with the same goals. Considering the school system.

Theme: The Case

- Demand. AB has many young families (Fort McMurray broke records for births in 1 month at hospital).
- Birth rates are up in Fort Mac

Theme: Paradigms of ELC

- How to have education/schools understand and reflect on DAP in EEP and K classrooms.
- In schools it seems that they don't understand ELC philosophy - how do we integrate play and learning into early years of school
- How to seamlessly streamline EY into school philosophy or curriculum
- Ed. has more idea concentrating on desk/task work.

Theme: Integrated Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- School Act – needs to include care in early years.
- Would one ministry meet the “needs” of the entire education spectrum?
- We need a new-ministry.
- An independent early learning ministry or department within the ministry of education will help ease integration.
- Bringing all stakeholders to the table - (human) family services, health/wellness/education to begin to develop a common vision rather than “silo thinking”.

Subtheme: Curriculum

- Encouraging play and the importance of learning opportunities.

- A “curriculum”, but not outcome based, or tested, should allow for fluidity of learning without testing the children on outcomes.

Subtheme: Financing

- Finances to help families to have equal access
- Braiding resources: Can the ministries do this? All coming together
- Funding
- Key theme for me goes back to visual aid in “in the best interest of children and families” of the current funding model, and how that is clearly not a good way to support and manage a stable system. We need some aligning of current systems but ultimately a greater percentage of funding and management to be from one ministry
- Pre-kindergarten needs to be publicly funded. (3.5 to 4.5 years)
- Putting money where it is right
- Finances for retention of staff - for parent to have equal access
- Subsidy levels are way too low for our families
- Taxes may have to be raised if necessary to support effective financing of integration since we pay for the lack of it in one way or the other.
- A model that provides daycare directly in the schools for infant care - kindergarten funded by the government (modulars put on school grounds)
- How to educate families/fund programs so parents don't feel financially torn to send children to school early because it is “free” or funded and EYC programs they have to pay for.
- Financing for agencies etc. to focus on providing more effective programs. Specific training to enhance the goal and actions necessary for quality effectiveness
- ELC funding from government to ensure affordable care for families
- Increased subsidy for single families

Subtheme: Service Delivery

- Facilities – where do we house all these children?
- Hospital services should flow well into school services – one team (SLP, OT, PT) early intervention workers

Subtheme: Human Resources

- All staff have the same training
- Preparing tomorrow's workforce and community members
- Training
- Training: how do we prepare our staff?
- Wages to keep trained staff in the field
- Orientation (level1) should be no longer offered at its level. It should be wiped out completely
- EAL (English as additional language) a huge factor for Fort McMurray – nannies
- Staffing ratios – do we have enough adults being trained in this area?
- Staffing hard to retrain due to dollars. Not enough pay
- Staff qualification may need to be considered and raised (even if dramatically) to boost quality experience for children
- The value of education for ELCC
- Devaluing of child care as a professional
- Training for all ELC professionals

- University trained teachers for early learning is a must.

Theme: Specific Services/Infrastructure

- Full day K and OSC? How do we create the space and where?
- Full time kinder (help parents when it comes to the cost of care for the children)
- Space/facilities
- Transportation
- Environment: where do we or what buildings do the children attend more from one building environment to a totally different one. Or all housed under one building would be beneficial
- Full day K - great idea especially children at risk
- Full day kindergarten.
- Licensing regulations and education are too far apart i.e.: ratios, education of EA's in ELC (balance of expectation for families).
- Out of school programs for early learning (0-6) and school age (6-12) in all schools

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Accessibility & Affordability

- Costs, how does it become more equal?
- How do we make it that everyone has equal access
- Access for all
- Is this going to be affordable for families?
- Transportation to facilities
- Supports for families in neighbourhoods... would make like easier for parents and families

Subtheme: Seamless

- Have to be better transitions for 0-3 (out of school care, daycare, home care etc.) to in school programming. (Pre-k, k) to grade one - (Alberta program of studies)
- Improve transitions between child care and school age
- Streamline education and ELC in schools
- At our daycare we have several 4 year olds who spend a portion in early entry program and then spend the remaining of their day with us, I think the transition needs to be smoother as we also follow the YMCA play to learn philosophy attitudes have shifted now supporting more ELC in community
- Transitions and philosophy between childcare and schools
- Multiple transitions vs. home daycare school afterschool...
- Consistency of program - one facility to another could be planned based on appropriate child development philosophy
- Developmentally it would be good for children. Easy flow from 1 program to next.

Subtheme: Family & Child Centered

- The largest idea of question for me personally is how this integration is going to happen ensuring the integrity of the individual programs? We approach each child and develop plans based on individual need - how is this going to be done on a larger scale without losing this individuality
- Through an integrated approach the "whole child" is being cared for.

- What works for parents, families and children, not just agencies/gov't

Subtheme: Holistic

- Holistic approach, not just collaboration/integration of daycare and kindergarten, but issues of access, transportation, cost, rapport with parents

Subtheme: Developmentally Appropriate

- Losing the ideology of life-long learning by means of focusing on areas and not ages, i.e. education department focusing on the continuum of education
- How to educate parents on these new frameworks and how this builds the foundation of successful learning for children and that desk based learning is not the "norm" for child education
- How to educate K and Pre-K to integrate more play based learning into their philosophies/curriculum

Theme: Regional Variation

- How do we look at regions as opposed to the full province? i.e. child care subsidy - standards in Fort Mac, where the average family income is 150+K, need to be different than Brookes for example

Theme: General

- Time is right
- It's more than \$, it's buy in
- Pacing. Move to gradual integration to full integration. 10 year plan
- Employeur besoin: de contribuer
- Great examples exist that we can learn from
- Partnership
- What would this look like in Ed. classroom? Would moms be less likely to stay home with children if full care was provided? Would they feel their children were "missing out" if they didn't attend a daycare/preschool program?
- Familiarity of system/staff/expectations

What level or type of integration do you see as valuable in AB?

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Accountability at gov't level, financial backing that supports it
- Streamline education and ELC to work together
- Tiered integration - a focused ministry with tiered focus areas/departments
- Un systeme avec un ministere sort federal et provincial, Un system coerant. Tout en respectant le besoin de la clientele. Surtout repondre a leur besoin. Ceci touché aussi le point culturel, ethnique, francophone et Anglophone
- I believe that a one system of integration would be the best value. We run under many different levels of government and we find they clash on key points.
- It's a service provider having direction from one governing body would make the program more consistent.

Subtheme: Types of Services

- Full day kindergarten with more supports for teachers due to integration
- Pre k need curriculum
- Integration between daycare to school, early learning to school
- More out of school care for pre-k and half day k children

Subtheme: Financing

- Funding - public and private
- Fully funded quality child care
- Funded by education
- Funding required. We need to be inclusive.
- Streamline funding and keeping partnerships

Subtheme: Organizing Services

- Providing ELC through Parent link centers. Mandatory in daycare settings
- Schools and community centers located close or attached to allow team work and easier transitions for children and families

Subtheme: Human Resources

- A general EA in each pre-k and K classroom, plus an “assigned PUF EA plus m/m speech and language EA
- EEP and k classrooms team taught by educators and ELCC
- EEP and K teachers must have an early childhood degree or an ELC diploma plus a teaching degree.
- I think developing an appropriate link between formal education roles and early child educators need to be formatted
- Mandatory ELCC background for kindergarten
- Delivery ELCC must be part of Ed. team

Subtheme: Curriculum

- Educational philosophy at the early entry level (ages 3/4/5) matching/working with the ELCC community/professionals
- ELC is not babysitting job but a learning environment
- Need for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten program of studies
- Curriculum philosophies/pedagogies
- Preschools in schools: Flow, framework (curriculum) could be consistent.
- School until age 7 should be more ELCC based, not “education” system based

Theme: Level of Integration

Subtheme: Full Integration

- Full integration – but who would run the program? Could the YMCA continue to run ELCC programs in the school?
- Full integration but should start at partial then move into full
- Full integration with continued collaboration from other ministries. Wherever we end up be it under a new ministry or moving into being under one of the current ones, we continue to consult with health and whoever else has a stake in the well-being of children and families.

- Full integration - early learning in schools. Families can stay together/one stop for families

Subtheme: Partial Integration and Towards Full

- Partial integration - space provided in schools to allow a non-profit organizations such as the YMCA to run a quality childcare program directly in the school. Funding also provided to support programs to run high quality care (above to support staff in also achieving higher levels of education, and funding for families to be able to put their child in an ELCC program)
- Since we are working with an existing system, a partial integration starting with the most “beneficial” integration element towards a full, seamless integration

Theme: Principles

- Universal access for PUF/FSCD specialized services. Too many requirements for access to FSCD.

Theme: Evidence Based

- There needs to be a new approach (based on research) to more fully recognize and realize the importance of the development at the early years level (0-6)
- Develop pedagogy based on research.
- Infants all the way to school age I feel as valuable we all need to listen to the research out there.
- I would suggest that Alberta model its integration against existing effective models of integration both within and outside Canada.

Theme: Planning and Phasing

- Planning 10 year plan to move from partial to full integration.
- Start with kind (full day) (step 1); Move to preschools – 4 year olds (step 2); Finally reorganize care for 0-3 (step 3); Have to take our time for the transition times from 0-3 to 4-6.

Theme: General

- Guidelines that don’t have a “cookie cutter” expectation for every community but basic guidelines that everyone can incorporate at their own level.
- Stronger program support in daycare for children with special needs.
- Educate families on child development and that ipads are not enough to stimulate your child’s brain.
- Change perspective of community. Readiness does not mean teacher directed tasks like vote counting.

How would you characterize the state of readiness in AB for more closely integrating ELC?

Theme: Readiness by Stakeholder

Subtheme: Education

- Fort Mac Catholic already has many integrated supports: good to go.
- Start the integration in smaller school boards – they are ready. Start pilots.

- Early entry - ECDP a start in Fort McMurray, let's keep this going.
- Education system is not ready to accept and develop appropriate early learning into schools.

Subtheme: Early Learning and Care Communities and Government Ministries

- I believe the timing is right and the ELC community and the government is ready. The public awareness of the importance of the early years is at its peak (kudos to research in ELC) so the idea is in the mainstream now and a public campaign to garner support will work well (hopefully).
- The childcare world (ELC) want to work with the early entry programs more closely
- We have the priority as set forth by the province but we don't have proper focus. I believe the new gov't ministry of everything has set us back tremendously.
- I think it is coming together but there is serious division and tension between early years and schools. Almost a sense of ownership and competition that should be breached or squashed.

Subtheme: Parents

- Parents are ready for the change. New people to community would be at the same advantage as people who have been here for years... they will know where to go for services
- Families are in need of (and want) an integrated or partially integrated program.
- Parents are ready and need to be included: make it easier for parents.

Subtheme: Post-Secondary

- Alberta Colleges are ready with educational opportunities
- Very strong leadership amongst provincial coordinators of Alberta post-secondary institutions of ELCC Programs.

Subtheme: ELC Professionals

- I think Alberta is on the right track to become ready. But I think to become completely ready all ELC professionals and education professionals need to be on the same track for it to be completely ready.
- Nanny population not qualified/training (ESL)
- People and physical infrastructure lacking resulting in lack of child care spaces
- We are on the right direction but have big leaps to go – we have pre k and integrated groups in Ft. Mac
- Not ready. The fact that there is a diversity of education levels among the “teachers” is one of our biggest obstacles. A nurse, though well qualified for her field, knows little to nothing regarding emergent based planning or DAP. We would never have a nurse be a teacher in the school system, why does this field not have the same recognition of importance?

Subtheme: Employers

- La façon d'écrire ou qui est écrit l'intégration a besoin d'être repensée. La façon de financer les garderies, l'exigence d'avoir des employeurs qualifiés sans pour autant avoir en place un système d'éducation pour les employeurs.
- If we don't support our society, workers will fail and the economy will take a downfall in the long term.

Theme: Levels of Readiness

Subtheme: High

- I feel Alberta is ready - enough to be a leader in making this change. As the economic driver in Canada, creating the most jobs and immigrants we need to support workers in our province so they can succeed in their work and feel work-life balance maintained as both parents enter the work force.
- Support seems widespread throughout the province as communities have such different dynamics and needs - Southern, Northern, Far North. This is an evident need; we need training with this in mind.
- We are a hard working group in Fort McMurray, so yes!

Subtheme: Low

- Not close.
- Not ready at all
- Not very close
- Poor
- We aren't ready but we need to go to fully integrated to help support all families/members of the community.
- On a continuum of 0-10, Alberta seems to be between 0 and 5. Services and philosophy is fragmented - again partially due to the fact that each ministry focuses on an aspect of a child rather than the whole child.
- The difference in programs just in Fort McMurray are huge, I can't imagine trying to develop a province wide one.

Subtheme: Mixed

- I think we have a ways to go yet. It is easy for folks to see that what we have is fragile and needs fixing. But the ideas about how will vary based on attachment to current roles
- I think we will have a long hard road in front of us but I also feel it to be very valuable and worth-while.
- The Government has so many changes going on, from Inclusive Learning Model, bringing Ministries together, etc. that this conversation is down the same line. Get ministries together to blend resources and open discussions on coordinating services
- On one hand -window seems to be open - Premier Redford has made ELCC a priority On other hand - there is a clear discrepancy in the idea that equivalencies are equivalent (i.e. B.Science = Child Development supervisor).

Theme: Other Considerations

Subtheme: Service Delivery

- Programs do not support shift workers 6am-6pm/opening hours.
- One intake meeting for families then they flow from one agency to another - seamlessly.
- Connection between (EEP/Care) not aligned
- Gaps in quality of care available
- Lack of space in schools and our community

- School principals need to be responsible for early learning programs that include pre k, K, and out of school care, all in one building.

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Do we have enough staff? With the desire of a quality program
- Early childhood work force that is highly qualified that is highly educated in early childhood education. Do we have that?
- I think we need to better secure staff who have the proper education; this will help readiness in Alberta.
- Mandated continued training

Subtheme: Finances

- We need more financial support from the government we are still hurting from Ralph Klein's cutbacks in the early 90's

Theme: Flexibility

- A Provincial approach needs to take into account the different situations in each community. For example, provincial child care subsidies do not recognize the high cost of living here: many families do not qualify due the level of income thresholds and some who qualify it is such a low amount that it doesn't really help them.

What do we need to keep in mind as we consider integrating ELC in AB?

Theme: Goals

- That this is for the benefit of all Albertans. It is not about should women work, should the public fund childcare, but rather what is in the best interest of our youngest citizens. How do we support them to be socially responsible.

Theme: Various Target Populations

- Remember all the newcomers to Canada
- That 0-7 is different from 8-12 and 13-18. Maybe one ministry, but different systems to get to the desired outcomes.
- We have a huge variation in demographics: rural/urban, First Nations, new Canadians and in migration from other provinces.
- Special needs students.
- Nous avons besoin de considerer les valeurs de notre societe et a certain degree faire des changements considerant la multiculturalisme et s'assurer la joie de ruine des enfants dans ce systeme.
- To make sure all children are included particularly the minority children and Aboriginal children. In other words, "a real" no child left behind approach.
- Alberta is very diverse. There is no universal prescription.

Theme: Demand

- Long wait lists for families for day care

Theme: Paradigms

- Education and ELCC need to put children and families first – best needs for the child – not the budget.

- ELCC and schools believe in different philosophies
- Similar goals in conjunction with the school system (Pre-k and k). Successes of other countries who have integrated ELC into their communities
- The most important thing that needs to be kept in mind for integrating ELC is that unlike the school system now the program must and needs to be developed around the children not a system set up to make it easier for adults. Such as the education system is now
- We need to keep in mind that all professions and professionals working with children need to be working together and towards the same goals.
- Reluctance of education “directed learning” approach must recognize a play based philosophy as research based and philosophically and pedagogically sound.

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Accommodating Parent Workloads

- Do we need a 12-13 hour shift?
- Big questions - Is a two parent - both working household a reality? To what extent do we need to look larger, i.e. industry responsibility for work life balance
- One intake – easy flow for parents – choices for quality care and quality schooling
- Shift work issue in fort mac is a major issue.

Subtheme: Child Development Focus

- We need to do what is best for the children.
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum - even nannies should be certified.

Subtheme: Parent Driven

- We need to encourage parents to be parents and to teach and guide their children not to expect day cares, schools and out-of-school care to teach manners, respect, empathy etc., but that we all enforce respect and above, but that parents should support programs and children.

Subtheme: Access

- Transportation for early learning is difficult - work out school bus regulation and provide funding
- Low income families are unable to access out of school care, due to high cost. Subsidy too low for single families.

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance/Organizational Structure

- How are all communities being supported by government, health, education and industry?
- Common ministry – services for children 0-7
- Follow Ontario model/when ELCC is part of early entry/kinder classroom
- How to be respectful and understanding how each ministry is working and building a strong foundation or agree on better system.

Subtheme: Financing

- Start-up funds to increase number of programs is needed

- Funding (parental financial responsibility)
- Funding
- Finance. Fees (subsidized, or provincially funded)

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Staff retention incentives

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Access. Shift workers - ELCC programs do not support shift workers 6-6 programs
- People to run the program to be able to provide high quality such as YMCA program that provides a play to learn curriculum/accredited center
- Professional body for ELC
- Salary for employees is needed
- High turnover of staff is a challenge
- Staffing limitations – so many people applying for these positions have no training. With that said, not enough people are applying.
- Training for early learning is needed
- Mandated continued training
- Nannies who are (EAC, not necessarily English speaking)
- Qualified staff
- Staff (qualified)
- Teacher to ELC ratio considerations
- Team work and understanding
- Teachers and nurses are looked at by the Government of Alberta as fully qualified to work with children. Though they have received no training in the early years. This is not ensuring quality programming.

Theme: General

- What's currently working and how to integrate those programs into the existing programs.

Theme: Moving Forward

- Finland/Sweden took 50-100 years to build and this is just work in progress but have a goal that attainable from political party to political party.
- Start slow as we need to understand each step along the way. Training staff understanding the “data” and research on what our children’s needs are.
- Start in K with making these changes, then move into pre-K. And make changes, keep moving down.

Subtheme: Organizing Services

- Limited space in Fort McMurray schools especially in new subdivisions - will be a challenge
- Limited space.
- Transportation - bussing children from daycare to schools.

Theme: Other

- There needs to be recognition of value and importance of ELCC as a profession
- Other collaborating toward common goals and not power

3. Goals and Purposes

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge for you when you consider the goals and purposes for ELC in Alberta?

Theme: Target for Supports

- All school age ranges from 6-12 years
- Early care needed for children “at risk”

Theme: Goals

Subtheme: Lifelong Learning

- The best possible start for all children
- Building on children’s natural competency towards learning into lifelong learning
- Children’s well-being main goal
- Lifelong learning with the focus on play as an integral part of early childhood development. With so many young children involved in structured activities and engaged in media activities (digital viewing) it is important to remember learning for young children happens through play.

Subtheme: Family Support

- How do we provide care in such a way that families can be engaged and supported from different backgrounds, special needs etc. Access for all
- Support for families
- Will an integrated long term care program erode the family system? Will it be received as necessary for all?
- Supporting parents
- Family support/inclusion/community and social inclusion
- Family support
- Support of whole family is imperative
- The “hub” for families is also needed for stay at home moms and new immigrant families.

Subtheme: Community and Social Cohesion

- Family support/inclusion/community and social inclusion.
- I see focusing on child well-being and being competent capable community members being the main goal. Supporting this main goal will support gender equality and families. Recognizing that children don’t necessarily have the same opportunities for social experience that we may have had.
- Bridging the economic/social gap between classes

Subtheme: General

- Common level of purpose - family support, daycare, schools

Theme: Case for Support

- Children (the early years) are really important and a really good start for children’s success

Theme: ECD Versus Education Paradigms

- How to adapt - education piece of EC to teachers and degree to ECE professionals to bring the bridge together and meet in the middle
- Remembering how early learners learn as you put programs into place – play, curiosity, energy

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Accessibility

- Children have rights/equitable access
- Universal access
- Provide easy access for all families
- How can we provide Quality child care for all children?

Subtheme: Continuum of Support

- How to continue supports throughout a child's life without having them fall off. The support of a child's success - funding - redevelopment of a system

Subtheme: Developmentally Appropriate

- Age appropriate – research based
- All children offered a developmentally appropriate program (all offered the same opportunities).
- Is full day full day K in the best interest of children or their parents?
- Full day kindergarten children entering school aged programs not being ready (developmentally)

Subtheme: Holistic

- Holistic - how to define well being
- Development of the whole child
- Looking at the whole child
- Problem solving skills
- Recognition of emotions/empathy

Subtheme: Inclusion

- Acknowledge diversity
- How can we support families new to Canada and honour their cultures/integrate into our daycares/preschools/playschools etc.?
- Diversity
- The consideration of community diversity
- Inclusive for all
- Family economics, ethnic backgrounds should be supported and considered

Subtheme: Family Oriented

- The idea of parents as first teachers - look for methods to educate and support this concept - particularly as society changes and both parents are involved in long hours in the work force.

Subtheme: Universal Supports/Seamless

- Universal Supports for new diagnosis – e.g. Son was diagnosed with autism – where do I go now?
- An integration of all the spaces children use - from home, to child care to school to support or create community cohesion.

Theme: Engagement

- Are the appropriate individuals involved e.g. frontline workers

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Consistency between gov't ministries
- Partnerships among Health, ELC, Education and parents.
- Provincial/federal collaboration, i.e. why are early learning and childcare provincial and mat leave federal?

Subtheme: Financing

- Funding for all levels of income to be involved in childcare
- Funding universal access for pre-kindergarten is needed through educational funding

Subtheme: Organizing Services

- Space needed
- Space.
- Ratios and space.
- Provide enough spaces to support families
- Immunization and early screening for babies (0-3) also needed.
- Play therapy services needed for children exposed to trauma
- Lower child/staff ratios for more 1 on 1
- New schools built with space for ELCC
- Blended, across agency collaborations

Subtheme: Curriculum Framework

- Learning through play.
- Standardized system (curriculum)

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Expectations of ELCC staff vs. school staff
- High qualified care for all children that need it
- High qualified staff given recognition they deserve and that they need to qualify
- Are the early grade teachers being included in these goals?
- How to build “professional confidence” Bring back pride in existing ECE professionals and those who have left to come back
- Provide opportunities for higher education for ELC educators and funding opportunities
- Recognize ELC as a professional body

Theme: Regional Variation

- Before you look at the province of AB you have to consider all areas are so diverse in cultural, standard of living, cost of living, and so on for these goals and purposes must recognize this difference and reflect them within the themes and ideas
- How are we as a community (Fort McMurray) able to support the high demand for ECE programs currently? All programs are overwhelmed. We have hundreds of children born in Fort McMurray every month. Where are these children going to get access to programs? Societies such as ours are trying to increase space, but with the cost of rent and land this is almost impossible. Most children are in unregulated care.

Theme: General

- Partnerships with a YMCA or other quality daycare organization to provide a model for quality care (between school/other daycare organization)
- L'idée émergente sera d'avoir comme but: créer des citoyens heureux, Fair en sorte que les enfants apprennent à faire des choix qui leur rendent services.
- Will parents feel that their children will miss out if they are not in care?
- Collaboration
- Community mindedness/responsibility
- How do we blend cultures and expectations?
- Length of time children will be in a care environment
- What does this mean?
- Is someone going to look at research and build best practices training for all children during early learning training for parents as well?

What are the main goals and purposes for ELC that you see as critical to include in a new provincial framework?

Theme: Target for Support

- Flowing from 0-3, 3-5, 5-6; vs. silos

Theme: Goals

Subtheme: Lifelong Learning/Child Development

- Lifelong learning started at young age
- Lifelong service plan for children and families. Too many access points, challenges with sharing information, communication etc.
- Main goal - all programs are child focused, developmentally appropriate, conducted by qualified staff
- Purpose - to support children's learning, support families and community as a whole. Educate on what exactly ELC is
- Socialize children
- Lifelong learning (what it looks like at each dev. stage)

Subtheme: Family Support

- Family support - supporting \$ for differing needs

- Family support and well being
- Family support/inclusion/community and social inclusion (diversity)

Subtheme: Community Cohesion – Equity of Opportunity

- Community cohesion and social inclusion
- Equitable access to quality care/early learning
- Equity of opportunity for all children
- If every child has a space or opportunity of ELC experience before they enter school - their chance of society and to feel part of community increases and benefits all - in long term

Theme: The Case

- Research has shown our children need additional help
- To view ELC as “good investment, a wise one indeed” for reducing social costs in the future and at the same time moving forward on quality of care.

Subtheme: Access

- Access for all families
- Affordability and accessibility to families
- Access availability/accessibility
- Cost so accessible to all families
- Easy access
- Access for all
- Options for families to access some level of publicly funded early learning and care and private (fees) that are affordable for families who require full day care outside of that.

Subtheme: Continuum of Support

- Intervention and prevention is the key. Good investment
- Intervention/prevention vs. fixing often the fact. Perhaps this is the way to approach those who hold the purse strings//reducing social costs

Subtheme: Curriculum Framework

- Unified curriculum that is age appropriate (0-6)
- Consistent philosophy
- Rethinking early years in pre-k - gr 1 - school structure - curriculum to consider challenges of entry students

Subtheme: Developmentally Appropriate

- Developmentally appropriate, supporting families as key stakeholders
- Ensuring all children in EL care are offered developmentally appropriate care
- Provide appropriate learning activities

Theme: Awareness & Engagement

- Educate parents on what a quality program is
- Educating parents on EL from a young age (child)

Subtheme: Family/Parent Voice

- Parent inclusion - not always agency-led

- Parent involvement is very important
- Parents know what is out there/what their children are getting
- Family support and well-being is needed to help families with - child development, counselling, 3P, new families to Canada etc.
- Two generational support for children to have high quality child care and parents to have the support. More cost effective to provide.
- Family supports – they may not be with their children many hours a day so how do they “parent” – programs such as triple P, community programs/library – literacy, swimming –gross motor, 1-2-3 Magic, etc. to support family growth and understanding
- Parents as 1st teachers – support parenting with that idea. (12 hr. days)

Subtheme Finances

- Finances
- Sliding scale for school age fees
- Funding for the program to run high quality programs
- Need all resources to come together so it is not fragmented for care-givers, teachers, parents and our children.
- Financing provincial support (long term funding)

Subtheme: Regional Differences

- Fair representation of the individuality of each area. What works in Calgary and Edmonton doesn't work anywhere else.
- Regional differences recognized when implementing provincial early learning and care programs
- Societies and communities across Alberta vary widely in resource bases, values, etc.

Theme: General

- Collaboration - not the usual suspects
- Family/community partnerships
- Le principal ELC mette en place des programme afin que les enfants de notre societe deviennent des citoyen a part entiere. Des citoyen qui contribu au developpement de notre societe et qui sont capable de resoudre les problemes ou les defies qu'il ont a remonter.

Subtheme: Governance

- Leadership guiding province: recognize ELC.
- Provincially align goals and purposes for ELC. Include in school act
- Union regulations are not focused on the children and focus on the employee. We need provincial help.

Subtheme: Holistic

- Development of the whole child, holistic approach
- Holistic safe child care

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Consistent training
- Professional body for ELCC
- Staffing/level of education

- Training and education/prof. development for ELCC staff

Subtheme: Inclusion

- Embrace and serve diversity
- Immigrant families - teach language/prepare for school
- Support for families of 'special needs students'
- The framework needs to be inclusive for all

Theme: Pace

- Obviously we need it to start somewhere

Theme: ELC Paradigms

- Balance and understanding of play and learning.
- ELC promote the foundation of learning. Play based programs offered.
- By establishing overarching guidelines for care/early learning, some consistency may evolve and playing fields may be leveled.
- How do we train parents, educators in best practice (play).
- Parents (supported, trained).

Theme: Research

- Learning from other countries/provinces of what works well and what is not as successful.
- Needs to be research driven with all the best practice.

Theme: Services/Infrastructure

- Service collaboration among ELC, Education, Health and parents.
- Need an early learning social worker to support families at risk.
- Neighbourhood/community services.
- Partnership with organizations in the community to run the program
- Space
- Space
- Space! classroom or modular attached to the school
- Unlicensed dayhomes do not have to include the number of their own children. They are allowed to take 7 and not include their own. They are in unregulated care, this is a huge issue for us in Fort McMurray - we have over 100-200 unregulated day homes.

Subtheme: Universal

- Having an opportunity for all children - to feel valued and supported no matter their family dynamic
- Universal access for all children by universal fees

Around which goals and purposes do you anticipate ELC stakeholders are most likely to reach agreement and why?

Subtheme: Access

- Equity
- More daycare/quality licensed space (this is a s.m.a.r.t. goal)
- Community spaces for use (seems to be popular)

Subtheme: Affordability

- I can see child care prices dropping to accommodate families straight across province wide but each community is different and I don't think it will help all

Theme: Awareness

- Educate the parents politically - where the votes are. Development of wrap around program and the foundation of program that will work
- When they have a full understanding in what ELC is they would be able to come to an agreement
- Community education about the value and benefits of an integrated approach will be needed

Theme: Case

- Importance of early years
- Importance of quality childcare
- It's hard to argue that we (as a community) don't want what is best for children and families

Subtheme: Continuum

- Continuum. A range of ELC Services is much needed with high quality standards to support children and families

Subtheme: Curriculum

- Curriculum Points
- Curriculum or programming - it can be based on development knowledge

Subtheme: Family

- Families need support.

Theme: Flexibility

- Framework must have the flexibility to adapt to the uniqueness of different communities.
- The needs to consider the uniqueness of each community - financially demographics, (employment extremes - sustaining centers (parent link) with similar funding throughout the province)

Theme: General

- Besoin/care. La partie la plus difficile va etre la collaboration, entre les duigent elu, conseil scolaire, les parent, et la petit enfance.
- Communities having the conversations will be positive

- We are doing this and appreciate it but who recognizes this?

Subtheme: Lifelong Learning

- Because it is about children's best interest and their future. Integration - seamless (should be)
- Children's well being
- Early learning as a foundation for lifelong learning - there is already a structure in place (schools) to adapt/modify/build upon
- EC - lifelong learning
- Ultimately supports needs of children
- People are likely to agree that all children have right to high quality care. In Alberta we still spent a lot of energy discussing who should pay for childcare and whether young moms should work. This is an outdated argument and much work needs to be done to change public perception.
- Lifelong learning
- Problem solving skills-leads to adults who can think for themselves.
- They want what is best for all children

Subtheme: Family Support

- Family cohesion
- Family support - easily falls into well-being definition

Subtheme: Governance

- Governance. Who is responsible in meeting that connection between child care, programs, education and families?

Subtheme: Holistic

- Working at the whole child not just specific outcomes and benchmarks.

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Education, qualified, staff, high quality child care centers
- University training is needed to raise the importance of universal ELC Services.

Subtheme: Quality

- Quality of care.
- What quality care is but not able to provide due to no financial or physical resources

Around which goals and purposes will they find it more difficult to reach agreement? Why?

Theme: Awareness

- Educating the public as to what ELC is, and legitimizing the institution
- Educating the general public as to the legislation of ELC, its value and how it impacts a child's development and life.
- Not enough education out there for the stakeholders to come to an informed agreement.

Theme: Goals

Subtheme: Family Support

- As the economy changes in Canada, more women are going back to work or have to work in order for their family so we need childcare and quality support programs for children so parents can work and have life balance to build the best lives for them and children. To develop a continuum of success human capital.
- Don't want a framework that allows parents to just hand them over. Parents as 1st teachers.
- Robust parental leave in a growing economy will require education (values) and a common understanding by business, education, health etc.
- Family support
- We do not support parental leaves by men.
- We need to have great value of our expectant mothers.
- Where is that basic education to becoming a mother and a father.
- Are we going to be able to support all families? I have 167 kids on waiting list

Subtheme: Community Cohesion & Inclusion

- Community cohesion and social inclusion
- Real long term benefits come from focusing on social development

Subtheme: Gender and Child Equity

- Gender equity and opportunity

Theme: Capacity

Subtheme: Continuum

- How is our pre-natal care if we don't have access to family docs.

Subtheme: Curriculum

- What does curriculum look like?
- A lot of work needs to be done around curriculum and what that looks like for young children.
- Pedagogy – curriculum or training for best practices will be most difficult

Subtheme: Gender and Child Equity

- Advancing equity for women
- Community equity in service delivery with similar goals: e.g. head start - definitely a great program, but hard to measure successes or failures if unqualified staff are facilitating (due to desperation of running this program or lose funding)
- Equal opportunity

Subtheme: Financial

- Financial – not sure gov't has the resources in place
- Here in Fort McMurray - lack of resources
- Childcare fees will not decrease enough to help all levels of income
- Funding – need more of it.
- Funding levels will be shaped by who leads.

Theme: Flexibility

- Regional differences. Definition of ELC

Theme: General Considerations

- Chacun crois qu'il a raison. Je suis dans le systeme depuis toujours. Donc ce que je fais est correct. Par contre nous savon que le status que ne fonctionne pas.
- What constitutes well-being - how to define?

Subtheme: Governance

- Ministry responsibility
- Process and policies

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Communication and training will be key in supporting and maintaining staff
- Staff qualification.

Subtheme: Inclusion

- Inclusion of newcomers/minority groups (French speaking) around the table
- Inclusive for all.

Theme: Paradigm

- Schools not open to ELC working alongside teachers with a different idea of teaching. need to be open minded
- What philosophy provides the best perspective for early years? (i.e. teacher directed vs. play based)?

Subtheme: Quality

- What does quality mean?
- What does quality mean? Educate people
- What is the value of quality care? The value of child care professionals?

Theme: Engagement and Process

- Research driven – parents and service providers.
- Real community engagement/collaboration (takes time and patience)

4. Other Integrative Elements

4.1 Governance

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge when you consider the governance of early learning and care?

Theme: Public Management

- Public management and planning for continuity

- Publicly funded ELC just like mainstream education is publicly funded. This will benefit human

Theme: Principles of Governance

Subtheme: Access

- Generating enough spaces and infrastructure for all children.

Subtheme: Community Voice

- Inclusion parents/educators/facilitator on needs from different perspectives; boards
- What roles will the parents have? On the Board of Directors?
- Will parents have time/energy, interest in being a part of a board... governing body?

Theme: Provincial Leadership

Subtheme: One Ministry

- 1 place that is accountable
- Developing main Ministry with 2 main streams of funding: 0-8 years and 8 - youth. Youth-Adult Education would provide support and service for all over a life span.

Subtheme: Ministry of Education

- Education could oversee with the adoption HS program deliver funding.
- Need board of education to plan and manage ELC services

Subtheme: New Ministry

- Un minitere a la petite enfance

Subtheme: Shared Governance

- Bringing the ministries together
- Multiple ownership
- ELCC coalition/partnership to approach has had limited effect due to conflicting priorities and knowledge of local needs.

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Financing

- Funding and strategies to expand programs

Theme: Roles

- Who will do ultimate governance?
- Who's responsibility?
- Who will answer questions re: paperwork, financing
- Are there reps from all parts of Alberta?
- How is the ministry divided up in roles? Sub areas for each age group or blanket for all?
- Representatives from all concerned parties: education/health
- What do school districts do?
- What roles will these people be taking on?

- Who is making the decisions?

Theme: The Scope of Governance

- Regulated and unregulated/unlicensed
- What areas will governance cover? Finance? Curriculum?
- What guidelines we will follow/when will they be in place?
- What would be the level of involvement?
- Who will be reporting per community/region
- What is the level of government involvement with private provision?
- Do admin have the knowledge required
- Membership representatives of all concerned parties education/health

Theme: General

- Is it possible to re-structure the pre-k and grade 1 considering ELC
- Management of process - policies
- Policy making and admin management, planning and com engagement and ownership
- We need to take into account all levels of government and departments within government.
- Boards. Management of process and policy
- Resources
- Need for provincial strategic plan for full day kindergarten
- Policy goals – strategies; need a framework

What key guidelines or directions should a provincial framework include around governance?

Theme: Goals

- Community component - to create cohesion and support among
- Targeting funding and support for: 0-8yrs, 8-youth, youth-adult
- Build the capacity for parents/guardians to help them to make informed decisions

Theme: Public Management

- Because of the foundational/critical nature of ELC, will be appropriate for government to take considerable responsibility
- Politique public
- Le gouvernement se doit d'investir plus dans la petit enfance, Cette investissement Cree un retour economique a long terme

Theme: Provincial Leadership

- Bringing the early learning years under the ministry of education or some sort of merger
- Education Ministry as the school boards are best able to focus on the needs of community, children and families.

Theme: Other Integrative Elements

Subthemes: Finance

- Increase base funding
- Funding - financial piece to create affordable programs
- May filter funding through municipality to have a voice at local levels to work with.
- Support “financier de place”
- Reduction des taxe avec augmentation

Subthemes: Curriculum Framework

- Curriculum ECD - learning components

Subtheme: Organizing Services

- Making the schools in the future the hub of the community where parents can meet and be part of.

Theme: Regional/Community Flexibility

- Allow for variance within regions
- Be respectful of all areas of AB
- Community managed
- Local community participation. Set up committee with family involvement
- Needs and outcomes should be community based - individual community needs; community managed - policy implementation
- Each community have a voice
- Municipalities – schools – child/family services
- Provincial voice go to municipal go to local rep - board made of reps from each family
- Representation from communities, not just regions and service providers as well as politicians
- Federal and provincial gov’t working together to address goals and achieve consistency toward goals
- Engagement with all providers of ELC

Theme: Scope of Governance Matters

- Need someone to develop the plan and provide oversight
- Need for guidelines and regulation but not as much as human services
- Pay attention to both policy and implementation.
- Some oversight of unregulated/unlicensed private providers - to ensure the wellbeing of children and families
- Data collection like EDI is very positive. Report cards also effective.

Which of these guidelines or directions do you anticipate ELC stakeholders will find most agreement on? Why?

Theme: Goal

- The importance of quality education.

Theme: Awareness

- Building the capacity of parents to make informed decisions because the lack of awareness of the full range of benefit to proper ELC

Theme: Links to Other Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Finances

- Ceci pourrait etre reduction de tax pour c'?
- Government taking considerable responsibility because someone has to fund all this.
- Un pourcentage du support financier devrait etre allouer pour la location d'espace.

Subtheme: Governance

- All funds should be supported through same ministry to better support a child throughout a life time. Shared infrastructure would benefit in costs and involve health and mental health if all streamed together
- Process to make decisions – policy.
- Bringing ministries together.

Subtheme: Organizing Services

- Employeur devrait contribuer = soit par offrir un service de grade ou contribuer a traver leur employee au cout reliev a la petite enfance.
- Une plus grande participation du secteur privee.

Theme: Flexibility

- Be representative of all Alberta.
- Increased community participation in early learning and care.

Theme: Models

- Successes from other such processes.

Theme: Parents

- The valuable role of parents/communities

Theme: Collaborate

- Cross collaboration will be a first step.

Least agreement? And why?

Theme: Definition

- Collaboration amongst and definition/representation of both ELC and family support. i.e. daycare and parent link

Theme: Finances

- Equality distribution of funds
- Finances always an issue
- The cost and who should pay for it. Raising taxes as a means of funding.
- Funds - private or public?

Theme: Regional/Community Flexibility

- Common needs and goals - differing in communities

Theme: Governance

- Might be difficult to combine ministries
- We need 3 ministries (i.e. Education, Health, Human Services) working together to build a framework, structure, consistent policy – tough stuff.

Theme: Paradigms

- HR Streamlining - bringing the bar up in the EC profession and connecting teachers with EYC Paradigm - Philosophy of learning

Theme: Private Operators

- Government oversight of unregulated providers because it is the underground sector
- Public Level of involvement. How much should the government be involved? What about private day homes, daycares?

What do we need to keep in mind as we consider what a proposed provincial framework will include in respect to governance?

Theme: Awareness

- A lot of education of parents/guardians is necessary

Theme: Build on What Exists

- Remember what is currently working already: accreditation; professional education; parent link.

Theme: Flexibility

- Ability that each community has to manage: qualified individuals; funding; challenges - dynamics – uniqueness.
- Flexible to be adaptable to each community
- Not just minister representing areas but ministers representing regions.
- Overall rules with elasticity for regions
- Representative of all AB

Theme: Governance

- We need policy - without consistent policy will be difficult to move forward

Theme: Inclusive

- Antibias
- To be inclusive

Theme: Paradigm

- How to better incorporate this into education? Not everyone will agree on this.

4.2 Financing

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge for you when you consider financing for early learning and care?

Theme: Economic Return

- Focus on the economic arguments: economic return, supply/demand economics return on investment.

Theme: Regional/Community Flexibility

- I don't think it can be the same across the prov. If possible ask communities what they actually need/want vs. prearranged amount.

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Affordability

- It must be affordable for all – too expensive would exclude lower income families
- Affordability for parents
- Affordable for all parents
- All families should be able to use high quality childcare, even if they can't afford it the children should not suffer because the family can't afford it
- Principles equal access

Theme: Public and Private Investment

- Corporate investment (subsidy for employee's children)
- Financial support from large industry groups
- Funding - government business individuals (parents)
- Government/corporate funded child care - (sliding scale for parent fees)
- Mix level and nature of public and private investment?

Theme: Supply and Demand Side Investment

- How do we deliver it?
- Supply side operators funding

Theme: Areas of Investment

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Funding for training both ELC and teachers to work from the same goals.
- Staff education
- Staff retention – wages and benefits.

- Staff - education
- Substitutes for ELC same as ed. \$\$
- Staffing costs will be higher (need wage to be raised)
- Training \$ for staff continuing education.
- Wage scale across-board (ELC and ED) consistent
- Must have money set aside for training and re-visit training as staff changes
- The wage grid

Subtheme: Cost to Family

- Subsidies for families
- Affordable child care fees
- Funding needs to be available for families and focused on community needs not provincial, lower class receive subsidy, but middle class “earn too much” to receive subsidy but still find it hard and live paycheck to paycheck
- Family subsidy
- Subsidy threshold: \$50,000 Fort McMurray still (low) Demographics

Subtheme: Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten

- Financial support for pre-K-early entry
- Basic instruction funds would support ½ the integrated approach for pre k and full day k
- Must provide financial support for pre-k programs

Subtheme: Facilities & Equipment

- Equipment
- Government buildings and land. (government gives land to city so stipulations should be to city that child care buildings like schools should be mandatory)
- More money for program supplies
- As new areas develop within the city – government releases more government land, a stipulation is that a daycare/childcare facility must be present.
- More space

Subtheme: General

- Funding for non-profit organizations
- Manage service costs for programs
- Inadequate funds
- Governance - Accountability
- Funding partnerships with the municipalities

Theme: Planning

- Ensure enough funded spots available for births in area. (pre-planning... like schools)

What key guidelines or directions should a provincial framework include in respect to financing?

Theme: Drivers of Investment

- Influx of staff and children
- Long term supports

Theme: Private Investment

- Increased private sector involvement

Theme: Supply and Demand Side Investment Mechanisms

- Supply Funding \$ attached to spaces and not subsidy - government funded childcare.

Theme: Affordability

- Childcare costs are very expensive – we need structure within this – some families have 1 parent’s wage going towards childcare.
- Must be affordable for everyone
- Provide accessible child care to all

Theme: Regional/Community Flexibility

- Not all communities have a Headstart, Parent Link or even a school, yet they have educated, passionate people and parents who could create great change if given the \$, and were supported with mentoring
- Subsidy rate based on cost of living in area.

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Funding partnerships for non-profit and school systems
- Municipalities partnership
- Partnership health/education/human services

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Consider wage comparisons for ELC and Education
- Improve wages of ELC by regulations - make it a sector of choice
- Funding to help ELC professionals become recognized and respected as professionals not just babysitters
- Should work towards giving ELC and teachers the same goals
- Support staff (to help relieve stress on programs)
- Education training \$ allotted yearly

Theme: Area for Investment

Sub-theme: Service Capacity

- More schools are needed in Fort McMurray
- New schools - day care and pre-kindergarten spaces need to be included when building schools

- Early learning (EEP/ECDP) - fully funded program
- Full day k funded
- Full day Kindergarten needs to be funded for hours of operation. Basic instruction is not enough at this time.

Theme: Levels of Investment

- Adequate funding to meet emerging needs
- Increased monetary supports
- Link investment to inflation

Which of these guidelines or directions do you anticipate ELC stakeholders will find most agreement on? Why?

Theme: Areas of Investment

Subtheme: Services

- Full time kindergarten program

Subtheme: Parent Fees

- There are a number of lower income families that have subsidy available but there are still middle class families with both parents working full time and barely managing to live paycheck to paycheck because they make “too much” for subsidy.

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Improve wages - comparable to other roles
- Support \$ for support staff such as substitutes
- Training dollars for quality care
- Wage/retention

Theme: Public versus Private Investment

- Where’s money going to come from to support this?
- Operators funding

Theme: Supply Side versus Demand Side Mechanisms

- Shift to a primary focus on supply-side funding
- Supply funding is needed to support quality programming across the province.

Theme: Levels of Investment

- Adequate funding – long-term.
- More money/financial support is needed to run a better program

Theme: Principles

- Quality childcare

- Affordability. Management of service cost for families - our region - and because of the high cost

Least agreement? Why?

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Bringing the ministries of education and human services closer together - will be a serious challenge

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Wages increase, operators will not agree if \$ out of their pockets.
- Support staff funding if \$ from operators

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Accessibility/Affordability

- Equal access? Some may feel it's unfair/others will
- Childcare fee increases
- Equal access

Theme: Profit v Non-profit delivery

- Profit vs. non-profit how does this work?
- Profit may not agree with establishing a max amount for parent fees. Non-profit may struggle to cover all costs with this as well

What do we need to keep in mind as we consider what a proposed provincial framework will include in respect to financing for early learning and care?

Theme: Area of Investment

- Consider enhancing basic funding in schools with low demographics and many at-risk children

Theme: Inclusive

- Further "inclusive" language needs to be worked on to increase diversity, i.e. cyber bullying

Theme: Costs for Parents

- Some parent contribution for day care... based on a sliding scale. (some parental responsibility)(i.e. income/# of children)

Theme: Human Resources

- Training and recognition is imperative

Theme: General

- Effect on the community
- Stability - Consistency

4.3 Organizing Service Delivery

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge for you when you consider how to organize early learning and care service delivery?

Theme: The Pace and Scale of Change

- Making space for children
- Earlier conversation - chunk the implementation. We talked about implementation of full day K as a place to begin.
- Can we get to 600 funded positions?

Theme: Services

- Government funded pre-k programs
- Out of school care is only for those children who attend full day programming
- Not ½ day K nor ½ day pre-k
- Full day Kindergarten

Theme: Service Models

- 0-5 year's hubs – ideally in a school. Shared between school boards – lots of LSLP, OT, PT
- Agencies may have to be a wing of the school.
- Linkages Align ELCC - Family day homes - family supports - other professionals - kindergartens
- Common community learning centers - less movement for parents/children
- Community based school. Family spaces for program for early years during school time - such as use before and after school can be used as a family drop-in program for each school

Theme: Integrating Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- We need more licensed day home monitoring
- Have a set of guidelines (loose) that people can work towards/for
- Governing body - to bring groups together
- Robust evaluation of programs to ensure standards are met.
- Creating service delivery systems that are housed under a common ministry or branch.
- Monitored by the municipality with reps from health/education/service providers already in that field

- Municipal/provincial input needs to be included to ensure programs are what the community needs and where gaps are
- Value of frontline voice
- Need provincial guidelines – access, affordability, quality

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Level of training of staff
- Regular professional development
- Upgrading for those from outside of Canada. A teacher from a third world country should have mandatory training instead of automatically receiving a high level of certification
- What does workforce look like down the road

Subtheme: Financing

- Tax deduction – \$12,000 = \$24,000

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Affordability

- All Families welcome – no caps!

Subtheme: Quality

- Quality programming

Subtheme: Regional Differences and Variations

- Communities need to tell you what will work for them? Flexibility will be important.
- Guidelines need to be developed as to the needs of the community, so a needs assessment can inform unique needs
- Guidelines need to be flexible to be able to meet the specific needs of each community
- Connecting with communities to see what their particular needs are what works well in one may not work well in another.
- Funded prov. through varying levels of need.
- Connecting at a local level/managing services at a local level.

Subtheme: Consistency

- Consistency between programs.

Subtheme: Linked Services

- How can full day K and out of school care be linked?
- Facilities - joint use - e.g. school under construction
- Public/catholic/municipal building - how can this be developed further/planned to ensure joint use space is available?
- Continuously connecting with other services in each community
- ELC resource and referral program - maybe through municipality there can be connection between all programs and ministries funds, colleges
- This program build connections/relationship with education, parent link centers, pc - gov't to keep a strong quality of services for all children and families

- New schools to have a community base that bridges gaps between childcare and education and that we support children

Theme: Other Considerations

- Time and ability to collaborate
- Economic challenges

What key guidelines or directions should a provincial framework include in respect to organizing service delivery?

Theme: Focus of Services

- Early entry (pre-school and kindergarten programs in schools? (connected) - extended care for these students at the schools... less movement for families
- Investir dans nos enfant; les etude le prouve – renfourir notre economi.
- Les cinq ans vont a l'aide par ce que les parent n'ont pas besoin de paye. Est-ce le meilleur facon de faire. Le Gouvernement economis de l'argent.

Theme: Service Models

- Family resource centers in schools: mini parent link centers; funding from education to support these centers, in turn this solves some of the challenges that pre- k and gr. 1 classes are facing.
- Having a key entry location to support all programs and services as well
- Maybe one “hub (EL)” within a wing of a school to be an early learning space
- One “entry” point for parents to access to find information. Example - Terra Center Edmonton
- One place for all parents to come to – a starting place – connects families to agencies, build in support groups in this one building as well, and forms to complete to different school – catholic, public, day homes, daycares, etc., ESL supports.

Theme: Other Integrated Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Community representation
- Run by a governing body that works toward creating supports that meet community needs. The current supply and demand is always a step behind. Too many spaces in one area and not enough in another.

Subtheme: Curriculum

- A combined course structure?

Subtheme: Finance

- Supply \$ to make services accessible i.e. school would have daycare/preschool/school age care/public health/family liaison, etc... Multisite

- Support cost for teachers/ and ELC professionals to upgrade

Subtheme: Regional Autonomy

- Decision making at a local level, by consensus
- What each community needs, they will know best what gap they have in their community

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Education development for teachers and ELCC
- Qualified individual facilitators
- Training and education teachers and ELCC
- Training easier if more centralized

Theme: Engagement & Collaboration

- All engaged in discussing what is happening
- Collaboration
- Parents + early years, daycare, licensing + kindergarten, teach + teachers + principals

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Access

- One base delivery service plan
- Accessibility for families affordable for families
- Family staying in their community

Subtheme: Child and Family Centered

- Child Centered Program delivery that is community built with understanding the needs of the families and children

Subtheme: Quality

- All are high quality. Accountability
- Quality vs. media
- Service standards of early learning, not just child care

Theme: Other Considerations

- Guidelines - facilities - trained staff
- Someone to advocate for space whether its child spaces, programs or infrastructure

Which of these guidelines or directions do you anticipate ELC stakeholders will find most agreement on? Why?

Theme: Models of Delivery

- Education Schools provide programming
- Great idea in theory - you can't argue that a centralized model would be beneficial
- Parent link
- Take the YMCA model.
- Municipality > schools

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Financing

- Municipality financial support
- Industry assists funding – big companies assist financially – assists them and their employment
- Partnerships funding models

Subtheme: Human Resources

- The education upgrades

Theme: Partnerships/Connecting Services

- Mainstreaming and building a bridge between education and HS to strengthen networks and develop the best possible program to meet all day Kindergarten model or educate or provide funded EYC programs to families so they don't feel strained to put child in early school because of cost difference
- Partnerships would be easy
- That we support each other?
- The need to connect with other services
- 1 and 2 - these speak to integrated and increasing current supports

Least agreement? Why?

Theme: Financing

Subtheme: Level of Investment

- The amount of funding with a no return cost of school given back

Subtheme: Source for Financing

- Where is the \$ coming from? (i.e. if there is mandate for ELCC professional in classroom then who pays for this?)

- Charge for care when there hasn't been for ECS

Subtheme: Areas of Investment

- Money and resources - how they are to be used
- How these gaps are to be filled
- Lack of space and the cost.
- Service needs

Theme: Delivery Models

- Private vs. Municipal model
- Schools or childcare. Schools will want for funding?
- How all day education programs are meeting the child's needs

Theme: Governance

- Who is this managing this? Education/Human Services? How is this going to work?
- Monitoring challenges
- Collaboration/representation - the WHO's?
- Who is going to decide the action to fill these gaps?

What do we need to keep in mind as we consider what a proposed provincial framework will include in respect to organizing services for early learning and care?

Theme: Awareness & Support

- Common messaging for responses from the public on statements that begin to suggest that funding early learning as alternative to mom's staying at home. This speak to public support of funding
- Nous somme exclue de la grande communité. Nous avons un centre communautaire.

Theme: Possible Delivery Models

- Strong Start program in BC model. Happens in school at the "community" center; this program could be funded through municipality
- True community centers - that service the whole child and family - Birth - 12; community events
- Services available – speech/OT/PT available to families who are not in programs. Currently families pay for services if they are not in school system, where it's free.
- New municipal partnerships important
- Model – the Strong Start program

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Parents need to have a voice as well as professionals

Subtheme: Curriculum Framework

- Guidelines (all programs based on early learning philosophy)

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Regional Differences

- Province wide salary scales
- Each community is an individual
- The different needs of the communities not only with challenges of: income; population
- In order to bring to realization the needs of Fort McMurray, you have to live it and work in it amongst the people who are finding challenges in their workplace and home.

Subtheme: Access and Choice for Parents/Families

- Convenience for parents
- More than one option for parents who require specialized care or support
- What about families who don't require/want children in care until Kindergarten and grade 1?

Theme: Change Process

- A bridge concept and who is that - is it municipalities - that are funded this position to make it work?
- Revisit what worked in the past as to funding programs

4.4 Human Resources

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge for you when you consider human resources?

Theme: Eligibility

- Who are the people applying to take training? Should have a provincial standard for who they allow into program through a screening process.

Theme: Qualifications/Quality

- Appropriate linkage between formal educ.

- Higher standards for positions (level 3 should have an ELCC background)
- Increase minimum formal education
- Min 2 year education (staff will need to be compensated so they pick this field)
- Should have to meet professional development hrs. per year. If you don't like you lose your level
- Increase formal education and PD for ELCC educators
- Qualifications
- Quality of training - why do we have a level 1 orientation program? Is that person really qualified to take care of children?
- Everyone working within an ELC program be trained
- Professional development in ELCC
- Staff qualification
- Strengthen education
- Training mandatory
- Well trained and well supported workforce
- Closer look at reassessing qualifications

Theme: Merging ELC and Education Professions

- Early childhood education for kindergarten teachers. (AMEN!) Integrated supports.
- Ed and early education - training for both. developmentally planning
- Love the idea that kindergarten teachers should have early childhood education
- Existing education and upgrade is needed to build professional confidence when merge integrating ECE with a teacher
- Support having ECE as part of kindergarten and pre-k program and ensure EYCE is being delivered age appropriately and the teacher can focus on curriculum.
- ECE integrated in pre K and K classes
- ELCC training for kindergarten teachers
- Merging the school teaching profession and the early childhood profession

Theme: Equivalencies & Upgrading

- Assist in paying for assistant education courses is completed – to ensure they complete course
- Funding to support further education
- We need to come up with more accessible ways for ECEs to access and to obtain a bachelor of Early Child studies rather than just give B.Ed. more training in the early years
- No equivalencies i.e. nurse = level 3
- Sometimes it is sufficient to send teachers with early learning training - need support and training plus ongoing training
- Firmer expectations with continued courses/training like B.C.

Theme: Professions and Professional Body

- ELCC to have a governing body and be required hours of professional development. Each year – how do we regulate the type of quality of PD
- Professional Body - registered
- Professional status of EL educators

Theme: General

- What can we do to make the environment less stressful for lead teachers
- Before placing a program (ie. “named program”) into a community ensure there are qualified staff to facilitate the programs
- Follow Ontario lead.

Theme: Recruitment and Retention

- Attracting and retaining quality professionals
- Competing with industry, government, etc. to staff early learning facilities
- Incentives to stay in field

Theme: General Staffing Themes

- Substitutes for training/sick days like teachers.
- Support staff

Theme: Wages

- How do we regulate wages? We can't increase fees.
- Increase pay would retain and build pride in ECE delivery
- Job descriptions/classification scale/pay scale
- Province wide salary grid (Fort McMurray would need to be higher as cost of living is higher)
- Remuneration
- Responsibilities and remuneration for ELCC professionals.
- Salary grids for all ELCC workers
- Wages/retention

What key guidelines or directions should a provincial framework include in respect to human resources?

Themes: Education, Training & Professional Development

Subtheme: Merging ECD and Education

- Correlations in Education and ELC systems.
- Developmentally appropriate linkage between formal education
- Implement EC into education system

- Training in ELCC for teachers
- What happened when they went from teacher certification to degree? What was the motivation?

Subtheme: Professional Development

- All workers working with early learning need to do (blank) amount of hrs. a year to keep recognized – other provinces do it accountability
- Look for varied opportunities to provide professional development to educators already working in the field
- Professional development

Subtheme: Classification

- Classification of levels

Subtheme: Evolutionary Strategy

- Graduated increases in training/qualification requirements - experienced staff - upgrading opportunities; new staff - increased, standardized requirements (credentials)
- Grandfather and new education for EC to build on professional development so they feel as “valued” as teachers in the education system

Theme: Wages & Benefits

- Good ways for assistants to make it a good paying job – feed their families too burger king pays \$16/hr. – for a 15 year old
- Province wide salary scale (Fort McMurray)
- Wage comparisons
- Increase pay for EC not only in the school system but overall child care programs that others deliver for families
- The directions should include enhancing pay scale for ECE’s

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Child Centered

- Children’s developmental needs must come first, programs and supports are for children’s appropriate development and not a “every child at the same time and place”

Subtheme: Quality

- Focus on quality – what makes a staff person a quality staff person? How do we provide appropriate total compensation and support to empower these staff?

Subtheme: Accessible Fees

- Universal childcare costs across AB - \$10/day

Subtheme: Consistency

- Consistency within programs

Theme: Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Financing

- Funding and education for staff – how to support EEPK teachers to teach a developmentally appropriate program and how to educate ELCC professional to bridge the middle with teachers.
- Mandating and supporting (financially) educational expectations/pd. expectations (i.e. B.C.)
- Training \$
- FDH's need to have professional development \$ granted to them in order to take more classes/education.

Theme: Regional/Community Flexibility

- Consider other areas aside from income and population
- Funding and service delivery specific to community needs - what's good for Red Deer not necessarily good for Ft. McMurray.
- Misconceptions of funding support in Ft Mac for non- profit
- Make sure specific needs to salary grid need to be respective to region/cost of living in FMC - it's much higher than in other areas.
- Making sure community needs

Theme: Recruitment and Retention Training

- With the need for more trades, are they really encouraged to participate in the program

Theme: Staffing

- A structure that allows for work environments that are built for early learning and care have a support staff so ECE's can spend more time engaging with children.

Theme: Professional Bodies

- Increase profile of ELCC professionals
- Alberta to have a licensing body for ELCC practitioners
- Professional body for ELC

Which of these guidelines or directions do you anticipate ELC stakeholders will find most agreement on? Why?

Theme: Education and Professional Development Requirements

- Early learning and childcare education for kindergarten teachers
- Having to keep up on your professional development, to keep up to date on the field.
- Most agreement is training staff/professional development.
- Professional status of EL educators
- The higher training standards are required
- The need to educate specialized individuals to encompass the ELC goals and objectives: not teachers, not ECE's
- The child care workers are committed to providing a quality childcare: the need for qualified staff; referring staff is required; need to upgrade education.

Theme: Integration

- Having EC as part of Kindergarten and pre-K programs

Least agreement? Why?

Theme: Upgrading Educational Levels

- Push back from the professional organization regarding raising the bar for ECDP - K teachers requiring them to have early childhood specialization
- The level of qualification necessary for delivering quality early learning experiences
- Education Degree, diploma, certificate, none and how much they should be paid
- Not everyone will want to upgrade
- Professional upgrading

Theme: Remuneration and Benefits

- The establishment of province wide salary scales
- Wages across board/salary scale.
- Developing a consistent funding model, i.e. supplemental wage
- Increase in wage - gov't issues and who will provide funds to do
- Salary grid

Theme: Other

- The mode of delivery
- The diversity of such training to meet the needs of our diverse communities
- Cash allocations
- Division of training
- On the cost of creating environment specific to early learning and care

What do we need to keep in mind as we consider what a proposed provincial framework will include in respect to human resources for early learning and care?

Theme: Case

- That research attests that quality of care and early learning experiences is directly linked to improved outcomes for children and as well directly linked to staff qualifications.

Theme: Remuneration

- All EC professionals need increase in wages not just those who choose to work in the education system.
- Province-wide salary scale
- The importance of fair remuneration for those working in early learning/childcare - particularly when the bar is raised for qualifications/credentials
- Ways of increasing retention of staff - i.e. wage, benefits, pension retirement

Theme: Regional Differences

- Province wide scale would need to keep isolated/northern communities in mind - i.e. fort mac cost of hiring.
- Regional Differences - industry towns such as Fort Mac struggle in all areas with human resources and the competition with industry
- The availability for staff in rural areas
- Widespread community needs

Theme: Change Process

- Create stability
- How do we support the fragmented system that we have while we move towards more stability
- Phasing in of new credentials - many experienced caregivers/teachers would require time to meet new requirements.

Theme: Governance

- Early learning needs to be housed under one ministry
- Integration of education/health/community

Theme: Other Consideration

- Delivery of the ELC framework
- Make the profession attractive.
- Increasing access to training for all areas of Alberta

4.5 Curriculum Framework

What key themes, ideas and questions emerge for you when you consider how to develop a curriculum framework for ELC?

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Family and Home Linkages

- Both informal and formal participation in school and home (Utilizing curriculum)
- Information needs to go back to parent (learning to play philosophy) family piece
- Knowledge to parents of the curriculum
- Parents are first teachers

Subtheme: Consistency

- Same curriculum - everyone (DAP)

Subtheme: Holistic

- Broad learning goals – socio economic context with challenges around implementation
- The children's relationships with people, places and materials in their local environments, the documentation of their learning for the purpose of making their thinking visible and for engaging with families and communities about learning

Theme: ECD and Education Paradigms

- An understanding of the two teaching methods between daycare/school systems - involving both in each program for a smooth transition for children
- Children have natural competency that needs to be harnessed through play based learning
- Common Curriculum that is based on research (playbased) that is best for children 0-? years of age
- Play to learn curriculum (YMCA)
- Playing to learn "Y"
- Schoolification
- The experiential nature of children's learning and the key role of interactions in supporting their well-being, involvement and contribution
- The need for a statement of practice that focuses on learning through play, supported social competencies in an intentionally planned environment that is a tool that helps guide ECE's as they work in collaboration with parents and communities
- What if we have curriculum that is working such as "learning to play?"
- Integrating approaches to early learning and care in school and community settings
- To introduce ELC framework into kindergarten programs

- Bridging the gap between the ECDP/EEP/K programs and developmentally appropriate practice

Theme: Links to Other Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Common education among ELC workers, they need to upgrade keep up with emerging research
- Need of support for implementation - education at a local level
- Provide education at a low level for ELC professionals
- Qualified staff to teach professional development
- Qualified staff who know the curriculum
- Wages pay/staff qualifications

Subtheme: Governance

- Daycare and kindergarten reach the same age group. Yet DC has a bunch of standards, kindergarten doesn't. Ex: child teacher ration; snack time; play time; teacher breaks

Theme: Transitions

- What happens to existing curriculums? YMCA/colleges learning through play

Theme: Other Considerations

- Development of AB. ELC curriculum framework
- Nous avons besoin d'educatrice eduque dans le domaine de la petite enfance
- What would happen to independent operators?
- Pour ce faire un meilleur acces a l'education au niveau local (en francais)
Accessibilite a donner de la formation sure place E: un besoin specifique discipline.
- Integrative approach
- Kindergarten full day
- Are colleges and universities capable of developing the human resources needed to implement a common curriculum?
- Multiliteracies - many vehicles of learning.

What key guidelines or directions should a provincial framework include in respect to a curriculum framework?

Theme: Early Childhood Development & Education Paradigms

- Importance of ELC approach to Early Entry/Kindergarten programs
- Kindergarten cannot be watered down grade 1. It needs to be more of a play based learning, like quality daycare

- Learning through play
- Not academic focused like putting pressure on children to learn to read by memorization or rote counting.
- Play-based
- Should be play-based and support emergent thinking in children.
- Using all the senses - touch, feel, hear, speak

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Child Focused

- Best interest of the child
- Remember what is best for the child when developing a curriculum framework, listen to research and best practices

Subtheme: Strong Family/Parent Role

- Educating parents on appropriate practices and development
- Parental/guardian involvement in delivery

Subtheme: Quality

- Quality programs
- Quality standards to follow
- What is quality child care?

Subtheme: Developmentally Appropriate Practice

- DAP in all programs – schools included
- Developmentally appropriate
- General preparation to allow child to succeed at own pace in elementary and up

Subtheme: Strength-Based

- Strength-based. Move away from deficit-based approach

Subtheme: Holistic

- Holistic approach: child - childcare professional; school - teachers/professional; community - partners; learning occurs naturally; diversity/multi-cultural environment

Subtheme: Inclusive

- Multi-cultural
- Inclusive of culture, community, ethnicity, special needs and
- Inclusive programming

Theme: Link to Other Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Common training in care/school
- Delivered by a trained workforce
- Offer opportunity for training for bulk school based professionals and ELC professionals
- Professional development will be “key” in Fort Mac
- Staff professional development
- Support to staff
- The content should be commensurate to the knowledge and background of staff or staff must be prepared “educationally” to deliver the curriculum
- Trained workplace/qualified staff

Subtheme: Service Delivery

- Connecting care services <-> school based services

Theme: Regional/Community Differences

- Common curriculum but ... take into consideration regional needs/limitations
- The framework should be a guide or recommended to allow for the flexibility for programs to go above and beyond.

Theme: Other Considerations

- Key examples exist that Alberta can tap into
- Continue to include knowledgeable professionals in the field to guide conversations/make decisions based on sound research/knowledge
- The increased profile of “professional” practice of ELC communities and recognition as professionals.
- Begins to influence schools to follow more interest based
- Early education to work with broad curriculum
- Nous avons besoin de diriger notre attention a mobilizer les enfants a se questionner, a resoudre leur problem et repondre a leur besoin en toute confiance
- Pour ce faire nos educateur a la petit enfance ont un grand besoin de continuer leur formation. Encore pour ce faire il y a developper la possibilite de le faire.

Which of these guidelines or directions do you anticipate ELC stakeholders will find most agreement on? Why?

Theme: The Case

- Development of a framework is important

- Importance of children/prevention/intervention
- Plus d'argent dans l'éducation a la petit enfances afin de render cette formation attrayante pour les etudiants et surtout se donner la chance d'attirer le genre masculin
- Support of families

Theme: Early Childhood Development & Education

- Creating a curriculum that encompasses the development of the whole child... but how?
- Learning occurs in the child's natural environment daily. Need to work together for child (ELC and ED)

Theme: Links to Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance

- Would fit within an idea that ELC is governed by one body

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Education: to support early learning training. Almost a specialized position
- Professional development and training is crucial
- Training: early care to take NCC curriculum training.

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Holistic

- Holistic curriculum that encompass home and school

Subtheme: Quality

- Standards to follow

Theme: Other

- If the curriculum was already taught then the staff/stakeholders would be on board

Least agreement? Why?

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Quality

- What quality means

Subtheme: Family/Parent

- Parental involvement in delivery

Theme: Early Childhood Development and Education

- Why teacher directed may not be most appropriate
- Some may not be open to integrative approach - seeing barriers vs. possibilities
- I think kindergarten teachers need to have early learning training
- Ed. academics high focus on “smart intelligent children”
- Ed concentrate on tests and scores
- What should be included in the curriculum framework
- ATA based curriculum standards and early learning play philosophy

Theme: Links to Other Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Would be training opportunities for staff, because it would be a high cost
- Professional development and training critical
- Training

Subtheme: Finance

- Where funding would come from would be tough

Theme: General

- I think we can all agree in the principal, disagreements will be based on lack of knowledge in some cases on what it looks like
- Building curriculum
- Standards and mandated? How?
- Makes sense but because of busy work life, may want to put onus on school/day homes
- Lendroit ou il y a le moins de tension.
- Est le programme à la petite enfance et l'entrée à locale

What do we need to keep in mind as we consider what a proposed provincial framework will include in respect to a curriculum framework for early learning and care?

Theme: Early Childhood Development and Education

- Play-based
- The philosophy of ELC to base curriculum on
- Programs and curriculum need to support the SPICE development of children, not the school readiness.

Theme: Principles

Subtheme: Developmentally Appropriate

- All children are unique and learn differently

Subtheme: Quality

- Quality programming

Theme: Links to Other Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Governance/Oversight

- Partnership with Ed/Human services/health/ELC/parents
- Is this in addition to licensing and accreditation or does it look different? If it is social policy does it mean answering to one body?
- Accreditation guidelines
- Recommend licensing/child care act and regulation to be a partner

Subtheme: Financing

- More \$ for more roles and training in pre-k, and k

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Qualified trained staff
- Training
- How to increase training to deliver the curriculum with a workforce that is already working

Theme: Other Considerations

- Parents/guardians to somehow involve in developing a curriculum
- Early childhood very important to children
- It takes a community to raise a child

5. Individual Reflections

a. Goals and purpose for early learning and care.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly support trying to make change in this area	Support trying to make change, but some concerns about the proposed changes	Don't know more discussion needed of the proposed changes	Do not currently support change, but willing to continue to discuss the possibility of making changes	Strongly oppose trying to make change in this area
15	4	1		

Theme: General Impressions

- Great session and nice to see the movement.
- Understanding frustration in sector.
- We have a lot of work to be done to make this happen. Busy town.

Theme: The Case

- A change needs to happen and it's great to see research finally now joining a political movement.
- Changes need to be made. Shift needs to happen between ELC and Ed with child in mind

Theme: The Level of Integration

- A partial or fully integrated system.

Theme: Links to Other Integrative Elements

Subtheme: Curriculum

- No unified curriculum.

Subtheme: Financing

- Funding for daycare programs, space, fees.
- Finance challenge – retention.

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Make level 3 early childhood training requirement - a gradual process. Could lose those with lower level of education but well experienced.
- Over worked people.
- Funding for professional development.

Theme: Crossing ECD and Education Paradigms

- I fear early learning becoming synonymous with daycare.
- My concerns on how to bridge ELC and education we know it needs to be done but how? Who are the other partners that need to be involved?
- Needs to be a shift in the way that schools and childcare work with each other with the child in mind.

b) Governance – Management, planning, participation and ownership

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly support trying to make change in this area	Support trying to make change, but some concerns about the proposed changes	Don't know more discussion needed of the proposed changes	Do not currently support change, but willing to continue to discuss the possibility of making changes	Strongly oppose trying to make change in this area
8	9	1		

Theme: Importance

- Critical topic - talking about tomorrow's future.

Theme: Definition & Clarity

- Not named yet for ELC.
- Define it and own it so you can move forward.
- Would like to hear more ideas.

Theme: General Features of Governance

- Things need to be streamlined easily.
- Need to change to become more streamlined ECE's are answering to a lot of different stakeholders.

Theme: Regional Differences

- But with a word of caution. Making sure that every community can be part of the solution and flexible enough for communities individual needs.

Theme: Key Actors

- Linking structure from Federal government and municipality.
- Health – education – human resources – bring them together.

Theme: Engagement

- How do we get everyone talking?

c) Financing early learning and care – the level and nature of public and private investments

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly support trying to make change in this area	Support trying to make change, but some concerns about the proposed changes	Don't know more discussion needed of the proposed changes	Do not currently support change, but willing to continue to discuss the possibility of making changes	Strongly oppose trying to make change in this area
15	5			

Theme: Importance

- Tough part but important and necessary for movement and change.

Theme: Level & Stability

- Stability.
- Need more funding and streamlined and easier access.

Theme: Areas for Investment

- Up financing for parent link - incorporated into programs for ELC but mandated and regulated.
- Funding for education.
- Training mandatory.
- How do you decide on where to put the \$\$\$ - parents or centers?

- Wage scale needed across province - more funding for training.

Theme: Public or Private Investment

- Industry needs to step up.
- Public funded universal child care benefits along with tax \$ we can fund this.

d) Organizing early learning and care service delivery

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly support trying to make change in this area	Support trying to make change, but some concerns about the proposed changes	Don't know more discussion needed of the proposed changes	Do not currently support change, but willing to continue to discuss the possibility of making changes	Strongly oppose trying to make change in this area
13	5	1		

Theme: General Impression

- Need to look at what this is going to look like

Theme: Engagement

- If full day kindergarten is introduced, the Minister of Education should be consulting with individuals.

Theme: Governance

- More collaboration across ministries.
- More collaboration across ministry easier access.
- Now working towards one branch or ministry.
- Finding a bridge gov't or ministry like municipality would be beneficial.

Theme: Delivery Arrangements

- In school, put mini parent link centers - more community based. More cohesiveness from educational/family support.

e) Human resources in early learning and care

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly support trying to make change in this area	Support trying to make change, but some concerns about the proposed changes	Don't know more discussion needed of the proposed changes	Do not currently support change, but willing to continue to discuss the possibility of making changes	Strongly oppose trying to make change in this area
13	7			

Theme: Education

- People with ELC diplomas should work in childcare and those who do not, don't work in childcare.
- Staffing that is educated is vital
- Model education certificate or RN and education movement would be a good model to improve ECE education and confidence with our field.
- More training to increase professionalism of workers, a wage comparison and certification changes.
- Need to completely revamp this process - make sure all people who work in early years are trained and qualified.
- Specific training requirements should be changed across the board for teachers and ELC professionals.

Theme: Remuneration

- ELC and Ed for wage comparisons, qualified staff, and certification change.

Theme: Consistency

- Need changes for consistency among all professionals.

f) An early learning and care curriculum framework

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly support trying to make change in this area	Support trying to make change, but some concerns about the proposed changes	Don't know more discussion needed of the proposed changes	Do not currently support change, but willing to continue to discuss the possibility of making changes	Strongly oppose trying to make change in this area
14	6			

Theme: Awareness

- Educating families on the importance of an ELCC program.
- Public needs to be educated on the importance of ELC workers.
- Public should be more aware of ELC worker, their education and services they provide.
- Make sure the meaning of learning (e.g. learning through play) is clear.

Theme: The Case

- We need something developed - time (critical need).

Theme: Crossing ECD and Education Paradigms, Practices & Professions

- Keep all program play based with EC focus and limit school based desk learning model until 8yr stage.
- Need to partner ELC and Ed for common goals.
- Play to learn curriculum! Education for school teachers on ELCC to bridge the gap.

Theme: Starting Points

- Pre-k curriculum needed and should connect to kindergarten.
- Pre-k needs a curriculum now then let's move younger for guidelines.
- Re-evaluate service provided to enhance ELC in Parent Link Centers - add another pillar in core service more specific to challenges involving ELC and education entry.

Theme: General

- Bring back fundamental learning.
- Still areas for supports and education.

What do you see as the next critical steps to move the development of provincial ELC framework forward?

Theme: Definitions

- I feel as though the definition of early learning and care really needs to be explored further

Theme: Awareness & Support

- Provincial effort to raise profile of ELCC as professionals in community
- Making the public more aware of the importance of ELC. Making everyone know we are a profession

Theme: Integrated Elements

Subtheme: Curriculum Framework

- Pre-k curriculum

Subtheme: Human Resources

- Training for staff

Subtheme: Finances & Resources

- Land released/facilities
- Funding to support transition of EC movement among programs

Subtheme: Governance

- Finding a bridge between ministries so that all children can be supported to the best interests of children and families

Theme: Engagement

- Bring in other stakeholders: ATA, school boards, parent councils, municipalities
- Need to get the right people involved
- Consultation in the communities not just professionals engaging parents and other stakeholders
- Get the right people involved - ministers, gov't
- Getting the ministries together to work on policy and framework
- Serious consideration of the municipal concerns. Hopefully not lost in the decision making
- Collaborate with information and see what the best interests are

Theme: Program Development

- Building programs to support and meet the needs of each community and the children and families in those communities.

Theme: Regional/Community Flexibility

- Realize that Fort Mac is different and unique.

Theme: Other

- Summary of consultation and summary report. Then acting on the recommendations.

What key ideas, themes or questions stand out for you as you leave the forum today?**Theme: Awareness**

- Importance of continuous education/pd for current elcc workers to raise profile
- Start education of the public on the importance of the early years.

Theme: Report

- Very interested in the results from this forum and where Fort McMurray stands

Theme: Goals

- Early learning is life long - value
- These points from morning session - maybe more work and conversation

Theme: Integrative Elements*Subtheme: Organizing Services*

- Facilities will be a big concern here – hub based 0-5 years would be a great idea but it means land and land is expensive here

Theme: Regional Flexibility

- How is this going to work? How do you individualize a provincial framework?

Theme: Action

- When do we get started? This will be a long term goal... we need to start now

Theme: Principles

- Family focused
- Community needs
- Cultural integration

Theme: Other Considerations

- All on the same curriculum
- It's a start

What do you most want to say to your ELC colleagues about a potential new provincial framework for ELC?

Theme: Affirmation

- Appreciate their hard work, their passion and efforts are worthwhile.

Theme: The Case for a Framework

- I feel it's great to see how that research is finally speaking for itself and we are now in fore front to make a change for children/families that will support them so they grow to their fullest potential and give economic and societal benefit in long run
- That it's a great idea and it would be nice to see all childcare on the same curriculum. It will help children be ready for their future in school
- Prevention/intervention is \$ better spend ahead for long term benefits. \$ spent in ELCC will have benefits to children/community

Theme: Possibility

- Very exciting time and opportunity to make a difference in the province.
- It is an opportunity to effect change.
- Have a say, let your voice be heard - it is our time to raise the profile.

Theme: Begin

- Awesome work – love this as a start.
- Great job... keep the movement going.
- Let's do it!

Theme: Concrete Steps

- Find funding.
- Educate families.
- Specialize training.