

CALL TO ACTION

October 22, 2008

Hon. Gord Mackintosh,
Minister of Family Services and Housing,
Room 357, Legislative Building,
450 Broadway Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Mackintosh:

Your commitment of a 20% overall funding increase over a five year period to establish a pension plan, increase wages, establish a minimum wage base and wage adjustment fund to provide equity for front line staff is encouraging, but is too little, too slow, and won't resolve the current and growing shortage of men and women available to work in the child care programs licensed by the Manitoba Child Care Program. Commendable investments have been made to recruit more Manitobans to a career in early childhood education, however similar efforts have not been made to retain them once trained and experienced. I therefore join the call on the Government of Manitoba to fast track your plan and also urge you to add a retention strategy that includes:

- funding for the Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale for Group Child Care Centres, 2008 as the minimum wage base for full and part time child care centres;
- funding to support wage adjustments to eligible programs by the end of 2008 based on the market competitive minimum wage base, and paid retroactively to April 1, 2008;
- indexing the minimum wage base annually to reflect Manitoba's growth in the average weekly earnings;
- reviewing and adjusting family child care incomes to ensure provider income is competitive and high enough to be an incentive for unlicensed caregivers to become licensed and existing providers to remain licensed;
- implementing the pension plan in year two of the Five Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care (2009) and that it include recognition for past years of service so those who have demonstrated loyalty are recognized for their contributions and have the opportunity to retire outside of poverty;
- that licensing of new spaces ramp up according to the availability of Early Childhood Educators. MCCA recommends there must be enough Early Childhood Educators to meet the needs of the licensed child care system by 2011

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Child Care Program: _____

Comments: