



	<b>REPORT NO.: 2019-60</b>
<b>MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2019</b>	<b>DATE PREPARED: OCTOBER 28, 2019</b>
<b>SUBJECT: CHILD CARE AND EARLY YEARS PEDAGOGIST MODEL</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT with respect to Report No. 2019-60, (Client Services Division), we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (the Board), approve the attached plan for a Child Care Early Years Pedagogist Model for the District of Thunder Bay.

AND THAT the Board directs Administration to proceed with the implementation of a pedagogist model for the child care and early years' system.

**REPORT SUMMARY**

To provide the Board with a proposed new pedagogist model for child care and early years service system that supports the engagement of *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.

**BACKGROUND**

From January 2011 to April 2011, Administration conducted a review of the existing Quality Assurance Program. The goal of the review was to identify ways in which the reliability and consistency of quality measurement in child care programs could be improved. It was determined that the self-assessment process, being used at the time, was a valuable but inadequate driver for making and sustaining concrete improvements at a program and system level. Upon completion of this review, TBDSSAB began to explore options that would facilitate a transition to an objective, evidence based process where evaluators external to the individual programs conducted programs review. It was after this review, that the Toronto Operating Criteria, now known as, The Early Learning and Care Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI), was found to be the most effective and appropriate for the needs of the District of Thunder Bay.

In June 2011, TBDSSAB piloted the (AQI), which concluded in August of 2011. The following key findings were highlighted:

1. The overall review of the tool was appropriate for use in the District of Thunder Bay.

2. The tool was able to clearly and consistently identify non-compliance items which isolated areas of opportunity for quality improvement in specific programs. And that the tool identified and clarified in more detail strengths and areas of non-compliance consistent with the findings of the former self-administered QA Tool.
3. The evaluations identified training needs and future capacity building opportunities for child care programs.
4. Child Care Operators and staff who participated in the pilot had an enhanced understanding of evidence based quality measurement processes and high quality early learning and care expectations, which they reported impacted their daily practice.
5. The committee members involved in the pilot noted that it contributed to their understanding of quality service expectations from a client perspective.

A phased in approach was taken to implement the AQI and in 2015, TBDSSAB began to implement the AQI with all licensed child care programs. TBDSSAB has fully implemented the AQI consistently from 2015 to present.

Over the past 4 years there have been many professional learning opportunities provided to the Early Learning community as well as individual learning opportunities for programs based on areas of non-compliance and recognized need by the Child Care Centre and Child Care Programs Officer.

The AQI also had factors that were considered to be a challenge in determining quality measurement within a child care centre, for example:

- Interactions sections have the same weight as program plans (difference of importance/value added to a program)  
i.e. “Staff unaware of number of children in the room” or “Staff shout at children” **has the same value as** “One block activity per week on program plan” or “Toy bins and/or shelves are labelled with words and/or pictures.”
- The weight of the playground assessment often increases and/or skews the centre average (for example, playgrounds has 6 sections and preschool has 31 sections) (**A passing score on the AQI is 3/5**)
- The AQI does not consider or accommodate varying philosophies (Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia). These philosophies are important to our community in allowing families to have a choice in the education and care that their child receives. Because of the inability to be flexible with the tool, the programs score lower.

Administration has worked to explore ways to work with child care and early years programs to build capacity and to assist programs to align with Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years, "How Does Learning Happen?"

In early 2019, Administration reviewed the AQI on its effectiveness for change within the Child Care Early Years System. The findings demonstrated that the AQI did not effect change in the way that it was expected.

At its July 2019 meeting, the Board approved Report No. 2019-37 (First Report – Child Care Early Years Pedagogist Network), and the Board directed Administration to prepare a report on a new Pedagogist Model for Child Care Early Years System.

### **COMMENTS**

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 legislation and accompanying regulations supports Ontario's vision for the early years. Ontario Regulation 137/15 under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 includes program-related requirements for centre-based and home child care programs that align with How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years and helps child care settings put the ideas and approaches of this pedagogical framework into practice.

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 sets out the authority for the Minister of Education to issue policy statements for the purpose of guiding early years programs and services. The Minister has issued a policy statement naming How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years as the provincial framework to guide programming and pedagogy in licensed child care settings across Ontario.

In partnership with the government of Canada, in 2018 the Ministry of Education established Provincial, Francophone and Indigenous Centre of Excellence (CoE) to support professional development in the child care and early years sector.

To fully understand the value of the Model, one must first understand the meaning of the word "pedagogy." The Ministry of Education states that pedagogy is the understanding of how learning takes place and the practices that support that understanding (HDLH, 2014, p. 5). When pedagogy and leadership are combined, the result is pedagogical leadership which involves "leading or guiding the study of the teaching and learning process" (Coughlin & Baird, 2013).

A pedagogist would immerse themselves in the centres while supporting educators to engage with children and families on innovative, critically reflective practices that would extend the practice of the educators and the children that would lead to the following:

- Enrich learning environments and build pedagogical capacity of program staff;

- Support the engagement of How Does Learning Happen, including the use of pedagogical documentation that supports belonging, expression, engagement and well-being;
- Build a community of learners within the District of Thunder Bay;
- Work within each centres context as well as a network of other pedagogical leads within the District of Thunder Bay and the Centres of Excellence;
- A pedagogist would work closely with educators in their own early years and child care programs, responding to each program's individual needs and circumstances.

In January 2019, Administration was approached by the Provincial Centre of Excellence to discuss their work to create a network of Pedagogists across Ontario.

On March 4, 2019, the Provincial Centre of Excellence staff visited Thunder Bay and shared their proposed work with the child care and early years community.

Beginning September 2020, Confederation College Early Childhood Education Program will be implementing this model into their teaching practices. The District of Thunder Bay will be seeing cohorts of students entering into their field placements with Child Care and EarlyON Centres, that will be working through a pedagogical lens. Students being taught to be thinkers first before doers.

Pedagogical leadership is necessary to ensure a strong foundation for the pedagogical model in our community; one that leads and inspires progressive change for the well-being of the District of Thunder Bay (the District). *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014 (p5) (Attachment 1 – Proposed Model)*

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**



The costs related to the Pedagogists are considered "Program" rather than "Administrative". Therefore, the shift to the Pedagogist Model will increase Program expenses (\$269,100 in 2020) with an offsetting reduction in Administrative expenses, with no change in the total Provincial funding envelope. This will be reflected in the 2020 proposed Operating Budget to be submitted to the Board at the November 20, 2019 Board Meeting.

**CONCLUSION**

It is concluded that the Pedagogist Model presented will lead and inspire progressive change within the child care and early years programs in the District of Thunder Bay (the District).

**REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED**

Attachment #1: [Proposed Pedagogist Model](#)

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