FOR RECOGNITION OF ALL CHILDREN’S RIGHT TO QUALITY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, FROM BIRTH ONWARD

1. In view of the 20th anniversary of the adoption of Quebec’s Family Policy, Les enfants au coeur de nos choix;

2. In view of the Quebec Government’s pledge, at the time of the policy’s adoption, to promote child development and equal opportunity;

3. In view of the fact that universal access to a high quality of educational services from birth onward promotes equal opportunity;

4. In view of the importance of investing as early as possible in the development of young children, to ensure they achieve their full potential;

5. In view of the fact that parents are their children’s first teachers and what they teach falls within this educational continuum;

6. In view of section 1 of the Educational Childcare Act;

7. In view of the fact that intensive, continuous quality education from birth onward has a positive impact on the welfare and development of at-risk children and reduces inequality;

8. In view of the fact that all children have a fairly similar pattern of development, but each child is unique and develops at his or her pace;

9. In view of the expertise in early childhood that has emerged through research and practice in Quebec over the past 20 years;

10. In view of the fact that education contributes significantly to national socioeconomic growth;

11. In view of the fact that Quebec is a signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

12. In view of OECD studies recognizing that quality must come first with early childhood education;

13. In view of the fact that education is a fundamental human right and is essential for the exercise of all other human rights, according to UNESCO;

We believe that:

The Educational Continuum

14. Early childhood is part of the educational continuum that begins at birth;

15. Early childhood educational services are a key link in this chain and should be recognized as such;

16. Such services make important contributions to success in school and life;

17. The educational approach for children from birth to 5 should focus on the child’s overall development, stimulation, awareness and socialization through play, to promote success in school, rather than early education;

Quality

18. The quality of early childhood educational services should be ensured, to promote child development and equal opportunity;

19. All early childhood educational services should be subject to quality standards, pertaining, for example, to staff training requirements and the children’s educational program;

20. All early childhood teaching staff should have access to continuing education, educational support and specialized support;

21. A mandatory evaluation of the quality of all early childhood services should be performed regularly;

22. Such evaluations should be conducted in the same manner for all such services and result in improvements;

23. All parents who enrol their children in an early childhood educational service should be confident that it meets high quality standards, for a greater contribution to their child’s overall development;

24. The Quebec government should set aside sufficient funding and that such funding should serve to maintain and improve the quality standards;

Access

25. Educational services should support the development of all children, including those at risk and with special needs;

26. High-quality educational services should be provided to Aboriginal communities, pursuant to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

27. To promote equal opportunities, barriers to receiving educational services, such as those limiting access by children from at-risk communities and those with atypical attendance schedules and special needs, should be lowered;

We promise to:

28. Promote the principles set out in this Declaration;

29. Mobilize broad-based support for this Declaration;

30. Participate in discussions aimed at putting these principles into practice.

I, the undersigned, ___________________________,

Have signed the Declaration on behalf of ___________________________

ORGANIZATION

SIGN INSIDE BOX