



Working Together:

A resource tool for Principals and Supervisors

Child Care and Before- and After-School Programs in TDSB Schools

Early Years, Child Care Services

Toronto District School Board

September 2023

Introduction

This resource has been developed to support collaborative approaches and relationships between leadership and educator teams working together in the TDSB system to create an integrated approach to serving children and families.

Within the TDSB there are over 300 licensed child cares that serve our current and future students. Child cares are rich early learning environments that support the early learning and care needs of many families across the Board. These programs serve children 0-12 through full day and Before-and After-School Program models.

In order to create spaces with children and families at the forefront of our work and to ensure the requirements of both school day and child care/BASP are met, a joint approach to pedagogical leadership and planning is vital.

The Value of Partnerships

There is perhaps no relationship that holds greater responsibility or reward than the relationships we develop with children. As educators, as family members, as policy makers, or as administrators, we all know that the stronger our partnerships and the deeper and more valuable our connections, the greater the benefit.

(How Does Learning Happen, p.4, 2014)

Through strong partnerships, children and families will benefit from program continuity and early learning environments designed to promote a strong sense of belonging and well-being. [How Does Learning Happen: Ontario's Pedagogy for The Early Years](#) provides a pedagogical framework for early years programs in both school and child care. With a shared objective to provide high quality early learning programs for children throughout the day, school and child care leadership teams have the opportunity to learn and educate together, leading to a fulsome approach to supporting children and families.

Using This Resource

“The Board recognizes its important leadership role in the planning and delivery of a range of early learning experiences in schools and in fulfilling its legislative duty as defined in the [Education Act](#), the requirements of [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#) and corresponding policies issued by the Ministry of Education” - [TDSB Early Learning and Care Policy](#).

This resource tool has been developed to provide a framework for professional collaboration. Through regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year, school and child care teams have opportunities to share important information about their respective program operations, requirements, and develop a plan to support transitions for our shared families. This also provides a great opportunity to foster working relationships.

In this resource you will find a sample schedule and suggested topics of discussion that may be helpful in your planning. This resource provides a starting point and suggestions but is meant to be a catalyst for conversation and joint planning. We encourage you to personalize this tool based on the local needs of your programs and partnerships.

Sample Schedule and Topics

August-September

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
<p>1. Information about your programs</p> <p>What information would be important for others to know about your program, and vice versa?</p>			
<p>2. Vision of Early Years in TDSB</p> <p>What are our shared objectives to support children and families, and how will we develop joint</p>			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
working norms to achieve these goals?			
3. Review child care program spaces to ensure they are captured accurately on the lease (lease Schedule A can be found on TDSB internal FS webpage)			
4. Explore opportunities to share information and strategies for shared or newly transitioning students (where consent has been provided Child Care: Information Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement)			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
<p>5. Transition planning for BASP students on instructional days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School start and end times ● Entrance(s) used by parents, security system ● Transition point for shared children before school and after school 			
<p>6. Agreement on use of shared space on Professional Activity Days, parent interview evening/morning (how can children's needs be met as well as teacher need for meeting space?) Alternate space use.</p>			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
<p>7. Plan a joint meeting with school and child care staff, to establish joint working norms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introductions ● Sharing expectations and brainstorming how to successfully work together in shared space ● Access to shared spaces before and after school ● Licensing requirements/ changes ● Inclusion strategies that may impact room set up ● Entry and exit routines and timing ● Transition plans ● Program alignment 			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Logistics around educator (school/child care) planning time ● Communication strategies ● Use of electronic devices ● Storage and program needs; what needs to be posted, why and where ● Shared materials; identifying needs and purchasing new/replacement materials 			
8. Coordination use of outdoor spaces			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
<p>9. Annual emergency procedures (i.e., hold and secure; fire drills, emergency announcements, etc.)</p> <p>Evacuation location and emergency procedures</p>			
<p>10. Leadership staff contact information including after hours/emergency (including Facilities)</p>			
<p>11. Ongoing communication plan including conflict resolution and strategies e.g., communication book, orientation checklist, advance notice of scheduling changes</p>			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
<p>12. School Council: share list of members and meeting schedule. Encourage supervisor to attend meetings to provide a child care update and build mutual understanding</p>			
<p>13. Board of Directors: share list of members and meeting schedule. Principal may want to attend the beginning of meetings to provide a school update and build mutual understanding</p>			
<p>14. Set dates/times for regular check-in meetings</p>			

December – January

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
1. Facilities issues and/or repairs required; Tenant work request guidelines, forms, processes and timelines			
2. Child care registration and waiting list policies			
3. Kindergarten Registration plans; Child Care/BASP involvement			
4. Out of Area Attendance Policy and Procedure			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
Discussion of out of area children who can register for school based on participation in preschool child care (ensure alignment of procedures)			
5. March Break plan			
6. Use of shared space on upcoming Professional Activity Day			
7. Next meeting date/time			

March – April

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
1. Children who will be transitioning from preschool to Kindergarten in September			
2. Need for expansion in BASP and if so, jointly decide on new shared space rooms and contact Early Years Coordinator about revising lease (see PR691)			
3. Summer facilities work in school and/or child care and potential impact on child care			
4. Plan year-end meeting of staff working in shared spaces			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
to celebrate successes and plan for next school year			

May-June

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
1. Upcoming staff changes			
2. Summer facilities work in school and/or child care and potential impacts on child care			
3. Summer permits for the school building or outside area			

Suggested Topics for Discussion	Notes & Agreements	Date Reviewed	Date to be Discussed Again
4. Negotiate use of classrooms during the last week of summer when child care has exclusive use of leased rooms and teachers want to prepare for school start			
5. Program resource budget and any costs associated with material/resource replacement			
6. Successes and challenges this school year, and goals for next school year			

Notes:

A shared understanding of children, families, and educators

Adapted from [The Kindergarten Program](#), Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016

The manner in which we interact with others is influenced by the beliefs we hold.

The understanding that children, families, and educators share about themselves and each other, and about the roles they play in children's learning, has a profound impact on what happens in the school environment. The view of children, families, and educators provided in the following descriptions is at the heart of Ontario's approach to pedagogy for the early years. When educators in early years programs reflect on and come to share these perspectives, they help strengthen and transform programs for children.

All children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential and experience. They grow up in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Every child should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to his or her surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. When we recognize children as competent, capable, and curious, we are more likely to deliver programs that value and build on their strengths and abilities.

Families are composed of individuals who are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. Families love their children and want the best for them. Families are experts on their children. They are the first and most powerful influence on children's learning, development, health, and well-being. Families bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Families should feel that they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning, and deserve to be engaged in a meaningful way.

Educators are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective, and resourceful professionals. They bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. They collaborate with others to create engaging environments and experiences to foster children's learning and development. Educators are lifelong learners. Every educator should feel he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor, and deserves the opportunity to engage in meaningful work.

- What are joint practices in child care and school that are evidence of shared understanding, perspectives, and beliefs?

Questions for Reflection as Early Years Leaders:

Leadership is the practice of engaging with colleagues to draw on collective knowledge and experiences to solve problems, create solutions and improve outcomes. Leadership involves taking and encouraging collective responsibility, contributing to an inclusive and collaborative working environment, and creating, coordinating, and directing change through vision, inspiration, commitment, and contribution.

College of Early Childhood Educators, Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, 2017

1. What steps can I take to ensure educators in both school and child care feel they belong and are valued as contributors to a welcoming, engaging, inclusive learning environment?
2. How can we work together to encourage educators to develop reciprocal relationships and collaborate in ways that honor and respect children, families, and each other? How can we arrange for professional learning opportunities that include educators from all programs? (*Working together in shared space, Ministry of Education, 2019*)
3. What strategies can we employ to build interprofessional communication and team building between school and child care educators in shared space? How can we as leaders build a professional, respectful, collegial relationship as a model to others? (*Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership, CECE/OCT, 2015*)

4. How is the child's experience considered in shared space? How about the families' experience? How can we work together to promote inclusion as well as a culture of shared rights, responsibilities and respect for the environment, belongings, and each other throughout the day? (*Working together in shared space, Ministry of Education, 2019*)

Notes:

Resources

[College of Early Childhood Educators](#)

[Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership](#), College of Early Childhood Educators/Ontario College of Teachers, 2015

[How does learning happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years](#), Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014

[Ontario College of Teachers](#) (website)

[The Kindergarten Program](#), Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016

[Toronto District School Board, Early Learning and Care Policy P022](#), 2018

[Toronto District School Board, Multi-Year Strategic Plan: Action Plans](#), 2019

[Working together in shared space](#), Ontario Ministry of Education, Early Years and Child Care Division, 2019-20

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With schools being the preferred location for early years programs in communities, many children are introduced to the school environment through [early years programs](#), and the transition from early years programs to kindergarten are facilitated by fostering strong connections between programs, providing a continuum of early learning and care.

Please provide any feedback to Child Care Services at ccs@tdsb.on.ca