



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

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OPSBA Submission regarding the Proposed Changes to Ontario's Fire Code Requirements for Licensed Child Care Centres Located in Schools, Serving School-Aged Children

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) continues to be supportive of any change that aims to modernize childcare in Ontario and/or closes legislative gaps. We recently provided comments regarding a series of proposed changes to the current *Day Nurseries Act* (DNA) and remarked on the omission of addressing differences between the DNA and Education Act with respect to Fire Regulations, Space Requirements, Playground Standards and Nutrition Standards (PPM 150). We had said, and continue to advocate, that these types of requirements should be standardized for children who attend school from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with those who attend either before or after the regular school day.

We are pleased to see the government's intention to change the Ontario Fire Code requirements and its application concerning licensed child care in our public schools. We agree that this will provide for more clarity, consistency, harmonization of emergency and safety planning and inspecting.

Proposed Change 1:

These amendments are in regards to Emergency Planning and Fire Drills. Our understanding is that the changes are to ensure that fire drills take place in the summer if applicable (i.e. when school classes or licensed child care programs for school aged children are operating) and to match up the fire drill schedule with those school-based licensed child care programs so that they happen at the same time. It also clarifies that fire drills are to take place during hours of operation. These changes all make common sense.

Proposed Change 2:

This amendment is in regard to the Code's Application and Day Care Centres. Our understanding is the change will clarify fire code requirements between day care centres and licensed child care programs in schools as many school aged children are now attending before/after school programming. Licensed child care centres in schools that provide programming to school aged children will only have to follow one set of fire safety requirements – those that apply to schools. Again, this makes sense as the children are occupying the same shared space.

We look forward to continuing the dialogue about further changes to the DNA and we also continue to monitor the developments and impacts of Bill 143, *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014*.

Sincerely,

Michael Barrett
President of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) represents public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario. Together our members serve the educational needs of almost 70% of Ontario's elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the public school system in Ontario. OPSBA believes that the role of public education is to provide universally accessible education opportunities for all students regardless of their ethnic, racial or cultural backgrounds, social or economic status, individual exceptionality, or religious affiliation.