

MINISTER'S CONSULTATION TABLE (MCT)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

MANDATE

The Minister's Consultation Table (MCT) is appointed to provide information, consultations, reviews, and feedback about any matter relating to the continuous improvement of the provincial early learning and child care system that supports meeting government priorities that:

- Ensures the health, safety, development and well-being of children.
- Provides flexible and responsive services to meet the diverse needs of Manitoba families through a continuum of child care options.
- Enhances the economic opportunities available to parents through access to services.
- Promotes inclusion and respect through high-quality programming that accommodates diversity in services.
- Fosters fiscal responsibility and sustainability of early learning and child services.

AUTHORITY

The MCT will operate under the authority and request of the Minister of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning and will report on both the activities of the Table as to ensure planning and actions support child care system improvements. It is also established to meet the requirement under 5.1.1(a) in the terms of the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and 5.1.2 in the terms of the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Agreement of consulting with representatives of key stakeholders to develop and revise Manitoba's Action Plan.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The MCT is responsible to provide recommendations for consideration that will advance system improvements in the best interest of Manitoba families, communities and to support economic growth. It is also appointed to actively support meeting the terms of the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement by collecting, providing feedback and consultation on Manitoba Action Plan initiatives.

Members of the table will offer information and guidance in their areas of expertise within the sector to:

- Assist in ongoing planning and implementation of current initiatives, including identifying potential modifications.
- Identify new opportunities with potential to meet the Agreement objectives of delivering innovative approaches to enhance quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity of regulated child care services.
- Foster communication on issues of mutual interest between the ELCC sector and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning including supporting additional



- sector consultations.
- Support project/initiative development and implementation.

To support this responsibility, MCT may form standing or ad hoc working groups as necessary to address specific issues or topics in a timely manner. The purpose of the working groups is to provide in-depth concentration in key areas and to help MCT carry out its work. Each working group is accountable and reports to MCT.

FUNCTIONS

In carrying out its responsibilities, the MCT will develop a work plan and schedule of meetings each calendar year to address priority information needs as follows:

- Issues of mutual interest between the ELCC system and the Department of Education and Early Childhood learning to advance system improvements.
- Actions to collect information and feedback on existing child care options and gaps in services to meet the needs of Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning supporting greater inclusion and diversity in services.
- Consultation and feedback to inform options to develop a more equitable, flexible, efficient, and sustainable early learning and child care system.
- Information and feedback to increase access to parents to support economic opportunities.
- Consultation on regulatory or procedural matters to advance a wider scope of early learning and child care options while ensuring quality programs.
- Monitoring of sector feedback on Action Plan initiatives.
- Identification of implementation challenges and potential resolutions for consideration.
- Consultation on communications and engagement strategies for Action Plan initiatives.
- Identification of potential enhancements on items that work towards strengthening and improving quality and sector capacity.
- Providing information, feedback, and support consultations on workforce strategies.
- Identification of emerging trends and challenges that could be addressed through the development of a new Action Plan initiative.
- Manage, monitor, and collect input for the standing or ad hoc working groups and considerations of other department advisory committee to ensure alignment and key area development supports government priorities.

PRINCIPLE

The activities of the MCT will be guided by the following principle:

- Representative: MCT will seek to reflect the various interests in the provision of early learning and child care.
- Inclusive: MCT will seek to ensure that the needs of children of differing abilities and diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds are considered.
- Collaborative: MCT members will endeavor to work collaboratively with each other to achieve objectives and goals.
- Consensus Building: MCT will seek to achieve the best possible consensus, agreement, and advice to be provided.

Members are expected to:

- Keep an open mind to others' opinions and latest ideas - find strength in diversity.
- Be kind to others; interact constructive manner, respectful of individual differences of members.
- Be professional; ensure people have the opportunity to speak without being interrupted.
- Be prepared and well informed on relevant issues.
- Take opportunities to provide input, seek clarification, express opinions.
- Explore issues from many perspectives, considering the impact of decisions on the internal and external environment (i.e.: staff/department, the public, child care operators, key stakeholders etc.).
- Focus on the children.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION/APPOINTMENT

MCT members will be appointed with respect to gender, age and cultural diversity.

The MCT will be co-chaired by an appointed member chosen by the Minister and an Assistant Deputy Minister of the department. The appointed member co-chair will also hold responsibilities for co-chairing or assigning a designate to a standing or ad hoc working group to ensure alignment in work plans.

To be eligible for appointment a person must, in the opinion of the Minister, have knowledge or experience relevant to the direct responsibility for delivering services offered in the regulated provincial early learning and child care system.

Consideration will be given to ensure representation of the diversity of Manitoba's child care system including Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, Manitoba's Francophone community, newcomer populations, persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (LGBTQ2S+).

Appointments of members will be made exclusively by the Minister based on the recommendations of the Early Learning and Child Care Division and MCT co-chairs.

Term

Terms will be two years in length and renewable for up to three terms. Extension of term beyond three terms/ six years will be at the discretion of the Minister.

Three consecutive absences may result in the removal of an appointed member; however, the Minister may remove any appointed member at any point in time.

Composition

The MCT will be comprised of up to 20 appointed members with experience and expertise in delivering and supporting the regulated ELCC sector and may be appointed from the following areas. Two member positions are reserved as standing member positions for current Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) and Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine (FFPM) as an Executive Director/Delegates. Efforts are also made to ensuring pan-provincial geographic representation supporting representation from urban and rural areas.

- Non-profit and for-profit child care providers providing different types of care including:
 - Family home-based child care providers
 - Centre-based child care providers
 - Multi-age providers
 - Large non-profit child care providers with multiple child care facilities
- Early Learning and Child Care Educators (ECEs) and facility directors
- Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) board of directors
- Sector advocacy organizations
- Post-secondary educators offering early childhood education programs
- Indigenous child care representatives
- French language child care representatives
- Child care representatives who have experience supporting children with diverse needs

MEETINGS

MCT meetings will be held monthly for a maximum of two hours with two full day planning sessions per annum. Additional meetings may be scheduled if required and with the approval of the co-chairs and a majority of members. The Table can be dissolved at the end of each year at the Minister's discretion if it is felt it is not effectively meeting its mandate.

Timing of the standing or ad hoc working group meetings is determined by the Table work plan in consultation with the co-chairs. The MCT co-chairs will circulate an agenda to members in advance of each meeting and/or planning session.

MCT meetings may be held by virtual means and in-person as required.

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

The Minister's Consultation Table (MCT) is accountable to the Minister.

As required, the committee co-chairs will forward specific recommendations made by MCT to request a decision by the Minister.

COMMUNICATION OF DECISIONS

Communication of decisions will be made by the Minister or delegate and will be copied to the co-chairs of the MCT.