

**AD HOC POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE
REPORT NO. 23-047**

31 May 2023

**RESCISSION OF POLICY P.111.GOV ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR
EXTENDED DAY AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

Key Contact: Brett Reynolds, Associate Director, Ext: 8252

PURPOSE:

1. To seek the rescission of Board Policy [P.111.GOV Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care Programs](#) and stand down the committee.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. The proposed rescission is in keeping with the Board's plans for the policy review and development process. This aligns with the Culture of Innovation and the Culture of Social Responsibility pillars under the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's (OCDSB) 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

CONTEXT:

3. In January 2014, Policy P.111.GOV was approved, based on recommendations from an interim Advisory Committee for Early Learning which had been established two years earlier to determine the membership and mandate for a permanent Advisory Committee. Since its inception, the Committee has faced a number of challenges in terms of sustaining membership and achieving quorum, despite a number of different strategies being tried to address the issues.
4. An effective policy review cycle should include a consideration as to whether a policy can be rescinded on the basis that it is no longer relevant or required or could be combined with another related policy. In this case staff are recommending the policy be rescinded on the basis that it is no longer necessary as the Committee has been consistently unable to fulfill its intended mandate and is no longer necessary for the reasons articulated below.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

5. Policy P.111.GOV Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care
The policy was issued on 28 January 2014. The policy is the guiding document for the establishment of the committee and serves as the terms of reference for the committee

outlining its membership, roles and responsibilities, the term office and reporting structure. The policy has not been reviewed or updated since its issuance, despite the quorum challenges.

The policy states that The Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Day Care Programs shall:

- a) Provide ongoing advice to the Board on the management, delivery and implementation of the extended day child care programs;
- b) Advise with respect to the development of policy with regard to extended day programming and child care to ensure successful delivery of programming for early learners;
- c) Establish a forum for stakeholders to collaborate and share experience across related sectors;
- d) To be an advocacy voice for excellence in extended day initiatives across the District; and
- e) Ensure that the members and representatives have current public information about extended day, child care and full-day kindergarten to communicate to their communities in Ottawa.

6. Operational Challenges Experienced by the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care Programs was established to assist the Board of Trustees to meet its commitment to providing quality programming in extended day and child care programs. The Committee membership comprises five parents, members appointed from other advisory committees of the Board and several non voting members. A meeting cannot proceed unless a majority of voting members is present.

The Committee has, since its formation in 2014, experienced difficulty in achieving quorum on a regular basis. The same issue is documented in every one of its annual reports to the Board dating back to 2015, despite the efforts of staff to solicit members through membership campaigns.

In 2017, the committee suggested that its structure, size, and membership terms may be barriers to participation. That year, the committee determined that instead of the six meetings per annum requirement, they would adjust the meeting cycle to four in an effort to improve attendance and productivity. Since then, the status has not changed and the committee has yet to meet in 2022-2023, owing to lack of quorum. On average four voting members were usually present.

In the intervening years since the committee was established, the District's experience and capacity with regard to the delivery of child care services and programming, both in the extended day programs and early years program (formerly toddler and pre-school), has increased substantially. Furthermore the policy and legislative framework related to child care services provided by the District is increasingly regulated. As a result, the need for and benefits of having a standalone advisory committee are reduced.

7. Risk Analysis of Policy Rescission

In assessing the potential consequences or risks associated with the rescission of the policy, the following table provides the mitigation measures already in place to support the rationale that the policy is no longer relevant.

Risk	Mitigation Measure
Loss of Advice to the Board	<p>Any member of the community is generally able to provide feedback and concerns regarding any matter that is relevant to the Board via delegation to the Board, by speaking with or writing to their trustee or early learning staff.</p> <p>Minutes from the Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care have only more recently been shared with Trustees through the Committee of the Whole reporting structure. Previously the annual report was the only mechanism for the Board to review the work of the committee. In each of the annual reports since the first one, lack of quorum and membership has been cited as a challenge. The District has a mechanism to inform the Trustees via a Memorandum of any significant changes and sharing of information related to child care or extended day programming and services.</p>
Loss of Input on Policy Development	<p>The revised structure of the policy review process, new consultation page on the District's website, expanded outreach for policies under review, and other direct communication has provided a broader outreach to engage the OCDSB community and parents in conversations regarding policy changes in this area.</p> <p>The legislative framework for the delivery of childcare programs and services has changed and evolved significantly since 2014. In 2022 the new Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement was signed by the province to help further the commitment to create new child care spaces, ensure accessible high-quality care and ensure the affordability of before- and after-school programs. This will mean that the District must license its early learning programs</p>

	<p>and adhere to Ministry standards for program delivery. The agreement and our new legislative requirements also necessitate a review and some changes to the two policies which govern these programs: P.035.SCO, Extended Day Programs and P.059.SCO, Child Care Programs in Schools. These two policies are scheduled for review in 2023-2024 and a procedure will be developed which could support a mechanism for addressing complaints and accommodate the more procedural elements of the policy.</p>
Loss of a Forum for Collaboration	<p>The Early Learning Department continually engages with and has opportunities for sharing with the City of Ottawa and other third party operators on a regular basis through a variety of mechanisms.</p> <p>The General Manager is a member of the Child Care and Early Years System Planning Advisory Group that informs and supports the City in the development of a regional Early Learning and Child Care plan as well as a forum to advocate board operated programs.</p>
Loss of Advocacy	<p>There are many existing and more readily accessible and immediate avenues for advocacy. The board has recently re-activated its Advocacy Strategy Committee and the Ontario Provincial School Boards Association is a significant and powerful force for advocacy at the provincial level.</p> <p>The General Manager has access to a Ministry advisor as a direct resource for a variety of reasons as well as advocate for how school boards have an important role as a direct service provider.</p> <p>The General Manager also facilitates regular meetings with coterminous school boards to share information and to collectively advocate from a school board perspective.</p>
Loss of Information	<p>Improvements to the Childcare section of the</p>

	<p>District website have also helped support and enhance the communication efforts of the department. With links to the parent handbook, videos, subsidy information and the parent portal, parents are easily able to connect with the Early Learning Department and have current information on all of the options available.</p> <p>A quarterly newsletter, prepared by the Early Learning department, is another mechanism to inform caregivers on operations as well as elicit community support and offer parenting tips.</p> <p>The Parent Portal used for registration is also a communication tool that permits the Early Learning Department to maintain effective communication by maintaining an active and dedicated email contact listing.</p>
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RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8. There are no financial or resource implications relating to the proposed rescission to the policy. However, the standing down of the advisory committee will yield time efficiencies for staff to strategize and reach out to parents, caregivers and other interested groups.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

9. The Early Years department has significantly broadened their communication initiatives and activities since 2014. Through targeted, direct virtual communications with caregivers and community partners, the department can engage and solicit input on any number of policy review initiatives and legislative updates; share news on important initiatives and activities and survey for issues and concerns. The targeted approach maximizes engagement and is far more effective than committee meetings. Additionally the Early Learning Department has regular and ongoing communications with third party operators which allows for frequent sharing and collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. THAT the Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care Programs be stood down; and
- B. THAT Policy P.111 GOV: Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care Programs be rescinded.

Brett Reynolds

Michèle Giroux

Associate Director

Director of Education and Secretary of the
Board