

McGuinty government moves forward on full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds ^[1]

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Background Information - Charles E. Pascal ^[3]

EXCERPTS

The government has appointed Dr. Charles Pascal to recommend the best way to implement full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds, said Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty.

"Research tells us that early learning helps children get off to the best possible start in school - so it's important that we get it right," said Premier McGuinty. "That's why we've appointed one of Canada's leading experts in early childhood education, Dr. Charles Pascal, to get our plan for full-day learning for four- and five-year olds off to the best possible start."

Dr. Pascal is the executive director of the Atkinson Foundation, a charitable foundation dedicated to economic and social justice and Chair of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). He has extensive experience in the education sector as a former president of Sir Sandford Fleming College and in taking on significant roles in different provincial governments.

In 1987, he was appointed Chair of the Ontario Council of Regents, the government's chief policy and planning body for the colleges of applied arts and technology. In 1991, he became the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and later the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education and Training.

A recent Rutgers University study showed that four-year-olds in full-time learning programs scored consistently higher in math and language skills. It found that full-time learning has dramatic and lasting effects on children's learning across a broad range of knowledge and skills.

The McGuinty government has committed to spending \$200 million in year three of its mandate and \$300 million in year four to make progress on full-time learning for Ontario children.

"We need everyone at their best for Ontario to prosper - and our government will continue building opportunity for parents and investing in the success of children," said Premier McGuinty. "Together, we'll move forward the Ontario way - by working, building and dreaming together."

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