

Province delays release of kindergarten report [CA-PE] ^[1]

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See text below.

EXCERPTS

Parents and educators who have long been waiting for government's plan for bringing kindergarten into the public school system will have to wait another week.

That's because, although provincial cabinet ministers were briefed by kindergarten commissioner Pat Mella Tuesday morning on her recommendations of how best to roll out kindergarten in Island schools, government wants a little more time to digest Mella's findings.

"Government wants to move kindergarten into our school system in the beginning of 2010 school year and there's a lot of work to be done to make that happen and the report goes into great detail on many of those specifics that have to be achieved," Premier Robert Ghiz told The Guardian outside the cabinet room Tuesday morning.

Over the past year, Mella looked at the many issues affected by this move, including how to integrate early childhood educators into the school system, delivery models of the curriculum and the numerous impacts on the early childhood sector. She met with industry stakeholders, held several public meetings, and studied models in other jurisdictions.

Ghiz described Mella's final report as "long and intensive" and that cabinet wanted to take the next week to review all the information contained therein.

But April Ennis, a parent and co-director of the non-profit group Parents for Choice and Quality, says she is disappointed by yet another delay in the release of this long-awaited report.

She believes the province is stalling its kindergarten plan due to the controversy surrounding government's recent decision to close 11 small rural schools.

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Mella's report was supposed to be completed by June and presented to government at that time. As such, government would likely have seen Mella's recommendations prior to her cabinet briefing on Tuesday, Ennis said.

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Government will take the next week to look over Mella's recommendations on these and many other issues affecting the move before making its action plan known to the public.

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A working group made up of government members, education and early childhood department officials as well stakeholders within the current early childhood education system will be struck to help develop the implementation plan once government's decisions have been made public.

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- reprinted from the Charlottetown Guardian

Region: Prince Edward Island ^[2]

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