MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors of Education
   Early Years Leads
   Data Analysis Coordinator Host Agencies
   Data Analysis Coordinators
   Children’s Service Leads, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers/
   District Social Services Administration Boards

FROM: Jim Grieve
      Assistant Deputy Minister, Early Years Division

DATE: October 8, 2014

SUBJECT: Early Development Instrument – Data Collection in 2014-15

I am writing with an update on the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and information about the plan for EDI data collection in the 2014-15 school year.

As mentioned in my January 22, 2014 memo, the provincial responsibility for the EDI transferred to the Ministry of Education from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) in 2013. In that memo, I also mentioned that EDI data collection was paused for two years (2012-13 and 2013-14) and that it was expected to resume in 2014-15.

For the past decade, the EDI has been used in the province to measure children’s readiness for Grade 1. The EDI is also used for national and community-level monitoring and reporting, as well as community planning activities. The latest EDI data collection in 2011-12 collected information on over 125,000 senior kindergarten students — from more than 10,000 classrooms, in about 90 school boards and/or school authorities across the province.

Description of the EDI and How it is Used

The EDI is a population measure of children’s developmental health and well-being as they enter school. Research has demonstrated that developmental health and well-being are connected to success in school and in life. The EDI measures early childhood development in five areas: physical health and well-being; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; and communication skills and general knowledge.
The EDI is used by:

- communities to plan for services at the local level and to mobilize the community to support healthy child development;
- school boards to set improvement goals and to plan programming; and,
- provincial, national, and international organizations to monitor the developmental well-being of their youngest citizens.

As previously communicated, the Ministry of Education convened a working group with representatives from key stakeholder groups, including school boards and Data Analysis Coordinators (DACs), to advise the ministry on the next cycle of EDI data collection. The EDI Working Group has met regularly over the past six months to plan and manage all aspects of data collection for 2014-15.

**IDI Data Collection for 2014-15 and onward**

Beginning in 2014-15, the administration of the EDI will rest with Ontario’s publicly funded school boards. The DAC Host Agencies have assumed this responsibility for the past decade and the province has benefited from this leadership. Now that responsibility for the EDI has shifted to the Ministry of Education, it is important to integrate the EDI within the education system. By using existing school board relationships and resources, we can streamline and facilitate consistent data collection and dissemination across the province.

The implementation of the EDI going forward will follow a new three-year cycle: the first year will involve planning; the second year will involve province-wide data collection and analysis; and, the final year will focus on reporting and knowledge mobilization. Therefore, based on this new cycle, the **EDI data collection will occur in the 2014-15 school year in every school board across the province**. The next year, 2015-16, will be focussed on reporting and knowledge mobilization, and will not involve EDI data collection at the school level. 2016-17 will be concentrated on planning for the next provincial data collection.

The DACs will remain in their Host Agencies. Collectively, the DACs have a strong understanding of the EDI and many have used EDI data extensively to help inform local community planning. The DACs will continue to support their communities in the dissemination of EDI-related activities, including reporting and knowledge mobilization.

As in the past, the operational completion of the EDI will be done by kindergarten teachers. Educator teams (certified kindergarten teachers and registered early childhood educators) and other school board staff supporting the educator teams (e.g. teaching assistants and special education teachers) are encouraged to collaborate and share information required for the EDI assessments. The ministry will provide school boards with funding to release teachers for training and data collection.

The EDI data will be collected under section 8.1 of the *Education Act* (Collection and Use of Personal Information). Parents/guardians will be informed about EDI data collection through a letter sent home with the students. This letter will include information about withdrawing a student from the data collection, if they prefer not to have their children participate. Active consent from parents/guardians will not be required. The Ministry of Education will provide a sample information letter to school boards at a later date.
Training and Next Steps

The Ministry of Education recognizes that the resources available to school boards and communities across the province to support EDI implementation can vary. We will continue to support collaboration for all involved in the implementation of the EDI.

Information and training sessions on the EDI will be provided in the fall of 2014 with details regarding each session to be forth-coming. The sessions include:

- school board OnSIS leads in October-November 2014 (with communication from the Education Statistics and Analysis Branch);
- Data Analysis Coordinators and host agencies in October-November 2014;
- Early Years Leads and Consolidated Municipal Service Managers/District Social Services Administration Boards in November 2014; and
- kindergarten teachers in January 2015.

Should you have any questions and/or comments concerning the EDI, please contact Laurie McNelles, Manager of the Outcomes and Assessments Unit in the Early Years Division, at laurie.mcnelles@ontario.ca or 416-212-2239.

On behalf of the Early Years Division, thank you for your support of the EDI. We appreciate all of your contributions to early years programs in Ontario. I look forward to a successful year of EDI data collection.

Sincerely,

Jim Grieve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years Division

cc. Shannon Fuller, Director, Business Planning, Outcomes and Assessments Branch, Ministry of Education

Taddesse Haile, Director, Education Statistics and Analysis Branch, Ministry of Education

Janine Griffore, Assistant Deputy Minister, French Language, Aboriginal Learning and Research Division

Magdalena Janus, Ontario Chair in Early Child Development, Offord Centre for Child Studies

Frank Kelly, Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education

Pam Musson, Director, Early Years Implementation Branch, Ministry of Education

Anne Premi, Director, Strategic Information and Business Intelligence Branch, Ministry of Children and Youth Services