

*****DRAFT*****

Dear Ministry of Education:

As educators in Ontario, we have recently been reviewing the importance of soft skill development and assessment of young learners. Within our current Ontario curriculum there is no mandated structure in place to explicitly assess the soft skills. Soft skill development is critical on the path of socialization and learning for the future of our young learners. Not only do soft skills help build self confidence, but they also foster self-esteem. They further serve to build awareness and community cohesion amongst young learners in dynamic environments. Institutes of higher learning all look at today's graduates in terms of their ability to communicate and collaborate collegially and effectively. Most employees rate soft skills as the deciding factor when considering candidates for employment. Interpersonal skills far outweigh academic performance when it comes to graduate studies and future employment. Leaders in college and career readiness recommend that academic instruction and soft skill development occur simultaneously to meet student needs and curricular objectives. (Best Practices 2014)

Proficiency in soft skills is a mandatory requirement for any professional working in a global environment. Employers expect the workforce to possess excellent soft skills apart from knowledge and expertise in their respective technical field (Padhi 2014). Not only have soft skill development and their assessment been recognized by scholars but within other educational institutions in Canada as well. The importance these skills will have on young learners as they grow and become young adults is profound. We strongly support the inclusion of assessment of these skills across the entire curriculum. These skills are necessary to build a foundation in which our students can utilize them to further their education, broaden their social circles and become strong, independent, influential members of our society.

It is our strong recommendation that you help initiate the implementation of change within the educational system here in Ontario. Make soft skill development and assessment a key component of our curriculum. We need to educate and make Canadian teachers aware of the soft skills that are critical in supporting a future of engaged and committed citizens. With this proposed change young learners of today will become the leaders of tomorrow.

In education,

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