

Early Childhood Education as a social infrastructure

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SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Social infrastructure can be defined as facilities that support social services: hospitals, schools, universities, public housing and roads. All of these serve as the backbone for communities.

Moving from a market driven childcare system to a social infrastructure



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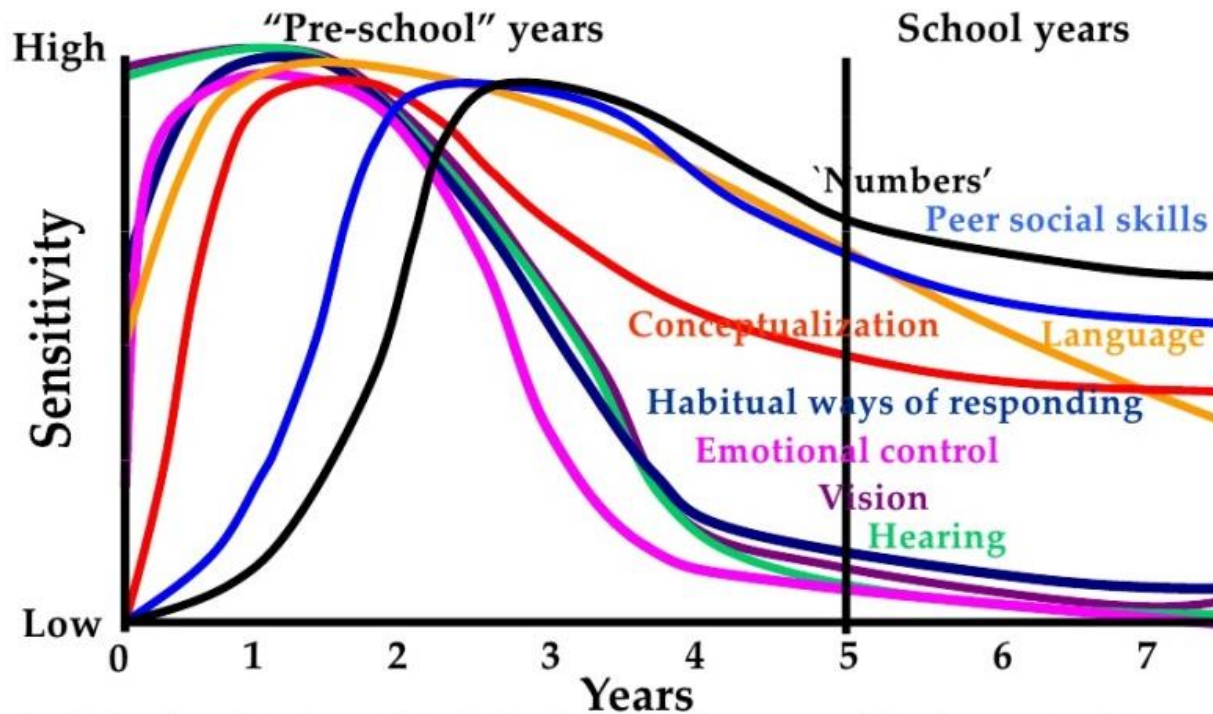
VISION 2030

The early learning and child care system in New Brunswick

- Transform the New Brunswick early learning and childcare system as a social infrastructure, universally accessible and affordable for all families and all children through a robust public policy framework
- Build an early childhood education system of high quality, aligned to the school districts that families can rely on and where every child receives appropriate services enabling them to reach their full potential.

Vulnerable periods of development

'Sensitive periods' in early brain development




Graph developed by Council for Early Child Development (ref: Nash, 1997; *Early Years Study*, 1999; Shonkoff, 2000.)


Why is this important?

- Quality early learning and child care services support:
 - Optimal child development
 - Inclusion of children with additional needs
 - Social inclusion of cultural minority groups
 - Gender equality and participation of women in the active population
 - Job creation
 - Poverty reduction and decrease need for social assistance
 - Increase of fertility rates
 - Economic prosperity

CHANGE AGENDA

From	Learning	To
Marginal parental involvement		Parents as partners
Segregated curriculum responsibility		Integrated curriculum responsibility
Segmented learning		Lifelong learning

From	Services	To
Targeted		Universal
Fragmented and siloed		Integrated

From	Governance	To
Market driven system		Publicly managed and privately delivered
Multiple Administrations		Aligned with school districts
ECD and k-12		Education 0-21

Governance

Market Driven

Current State

Offer and demand - determined or responsive by the market force, focus on profitable measures. Decisions about allocation of resources and price levels are made by individuals or organizations seeking their own advantage



Publicly Managed, Privately Delivered

Proposed State

Spaces are determined by need, services are focused on quality; funding is awarded to facilities that meet quality requirements through procurement; child care costs and educators salaries are controlled

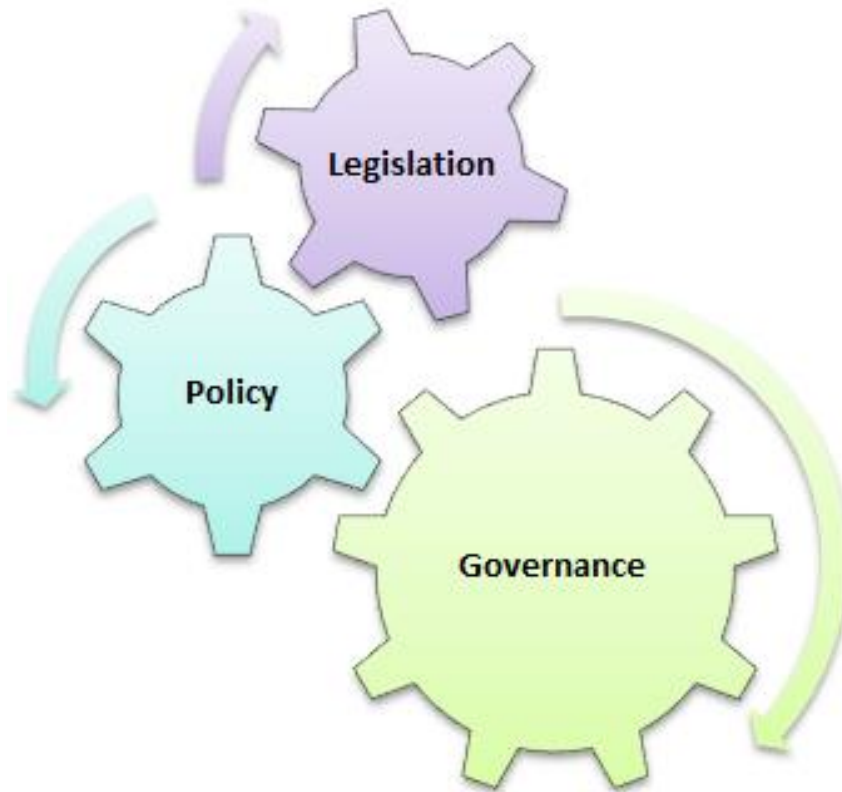


Public

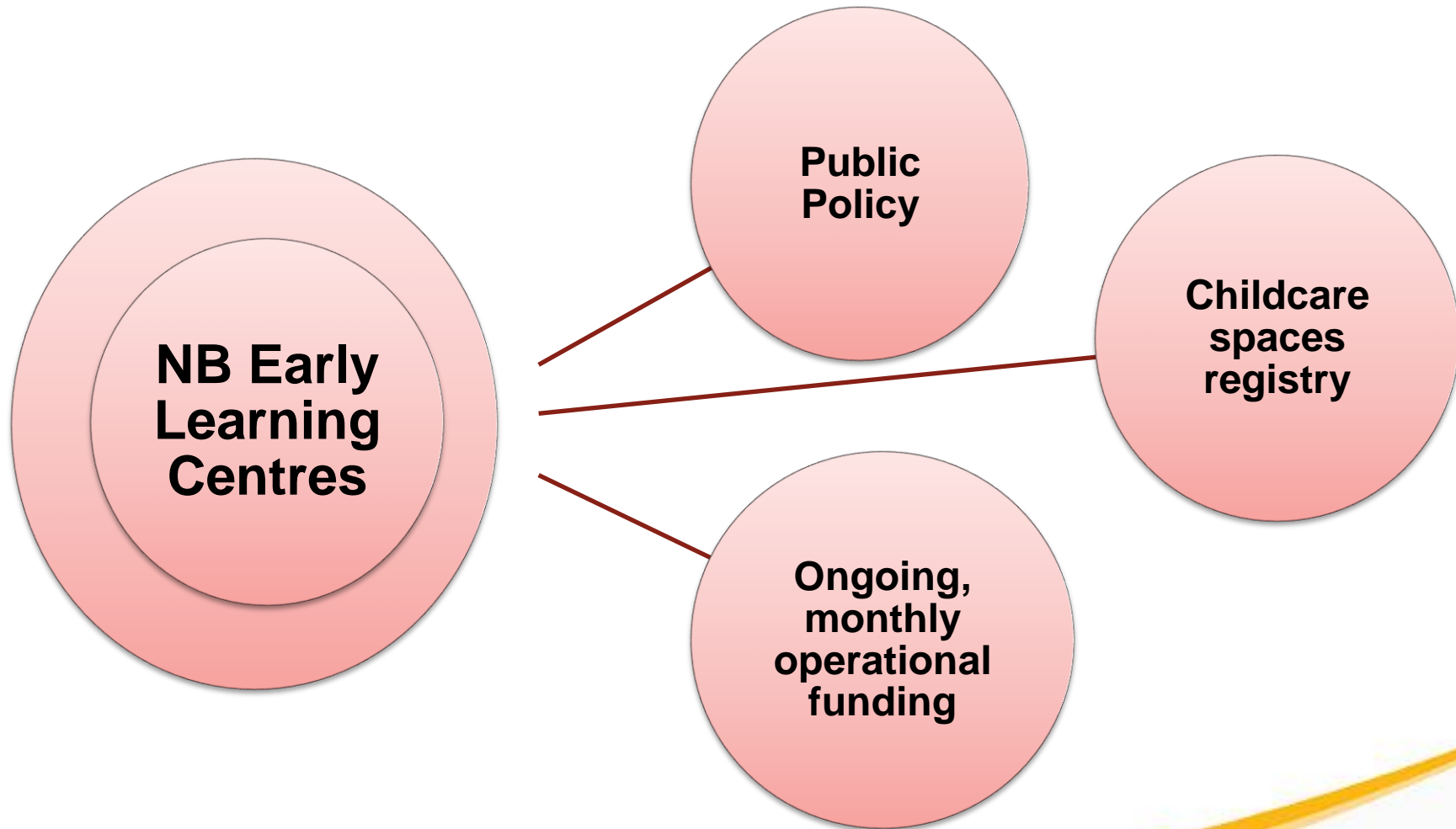
Future State

Publicly managed, funded and delivered

ALIGNMENT OF GOVERNANCE



Transformation: public management



NB Early Learning Centres

- Transformation of the early learning and childcare system – eliminating barriers to access of affordable higher quality services
 - Low fee policy – Market Fee Threshold
 - Infant spaces
 - Inclusion policy
 - Ongoing professional learning for educators
 - Quality assessments and annual quality improvement plan
 - Mandatory use of the childcare spaces registry



Ongoing operational funding

Alignment of governance

- ❖ Transition towards a **publicly managed, publicly funding and privately delivered** early learning and child care system delivered by the private sector
 - ❖ **New designation of NB Early Learning Centre**
 - ❖ Low fee policy – Market Fee Threshold Policy
 - ❖ **Ongoing operational funding**
 - ❖ **Childcare spaces registry**
 - ❖ Under the authority of the school districts over time

- ❖ Increased focus on elements of quality – instill a **continuous quality improvement culture**
 - ❖ Ongoing professional development
 - ❖ Quality Assessments – ITERS- ECERS and CIS
 - ❖ Annual Quality Improvement Plans

- ❖ **Support to parents**
 - ❖ Parent participation
 - ❖ Improved subsidy
 - ❖ Online registry for childcare spaces

New Brunswick Early Learning and Child Care Action Plan – Everyone at their best... from the start

