

# Q&A With Dainora Juozapavicius, Registrar at the College of Early Childhood Educators

## ROLES AND GOALS

**AECEO:** What are the current priorities of the College of ECE and the timelines for accomplishing these goals?

**College:** *The number one priority of the College is to serve and protect the public interest. Right now we are working hard to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are registered as members by processing the over 23,000 applications that we have received since the College began accepting applications in September of 2008. So far over 15,000 applications have been processed and are members of the College. We have a responsibility to maintain a public register of early childhood educators and are in the process of developing that. In addition, the College will need to establish a code of ethics and standards of practice for early childhood educators and once established, the College will be responsible for holding ECEs accountable to them. This will be a very involved process and the participation from members of the College is needed and encouraged. The College is also responsible for investigating complaints from the public about the conduct of our members and, if necessary, disciplining members. We are currently developing systems and tools to improve communication with both our members and potential members. We welcome your feedback and will keep you informed of future developments of the College. We encourage members to check the College's website - [www.collegeofece.on.ca](http://www.collegeofece.on.ca) - regularly for upcoming changes and news. The website is one area which we hope will better serve our members in the future.*

**AECEO:** How does the AECEO, as the professional association for ECEs, fit in with the College's current priorities and what do you envision for our relationship moving forward?

**College:** *One of the primary roles of the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO) is an advocacy role for its members. The main function of the College is to protect the public interest through self regulation of its members. While the AECEO has a different mandate than the College, both organizations are needed and interested in the promotion of early childhood educators as professionals and raising the standards of the profession. We continue to work cooperatively for the betterment of early childhood education in Ontario.*

## REGISTRATION

**AECEO:** We understand there was an overwhelming response for membership to the College by potential applicants. How many applications have you received since the College of ECE opened registration in September 2008?

**College:** *Yes, there has been an overwhelmingly positive response since the College began accepting applications - in January alone, we received over 15,000 applications. To date over 23,800 applications have been received. The College now has over 15,000 members.*

**AECEO:** Of the applications that have not been processed, how long can applicants expect to wait before they receive confirmation that they are members?

**College:** *We are working hard to process all applications received as of June by the end of August. We appreciate that potential members are anxious to receive their membership and ask for their patience as we do our best to process their applications. It is important to maintain the integrity of the registration process so that only qualified individuals are registered as members of the College. All new applicants will be mailed a letter of acknowledgement from the College within a week of the College's receipt of the application.*

**AECEO:** Once the College has dealt with the current influx of responses, what is the expected processing time that new applicants can expect for their applications in the future?

**College:** *Applications are dealt with on an individual basis and can vary depending on the complexity and completeness of the application. But for a typical application that has been completed properly and includes all the appropriate and required documentation, processing time, dependent on volume should be 4-6 weeks. Applications that are not complete and/or are missing required documentation can result in delays. The College would like to give a friendly reminder to all potential applicants to ensure that they double check their applications to ensure they haven't forgotten something in order to prevent unnecessary delays. If anyone has questions when filling out their applications, don't hesitate to give us a call, as we are here to help.*

**AECEO:** For students who have just graduated from a recognized ECE program but have not yet received their diploma, in addition to the other required documents that the College asks for, what documentation can students provide in the place of a diploma in order to register with the College of ECE?

**College:** *Students who have just graduated can provide an official transcript from an approved post-secondary institution, that indicates program completion, if they have not yet received copies of their diplomas or degrees to the College. Again, we would like to remind potential members to double check their applications to ensure that they have provided all the requested and required documentation. Incomplete applications often result in unnecessary delays.*

**AECEO:** What happens to individuals who have been working as Early Childhood Educators but whose educational credentials do not currently meet the registration requirements of the College of ECE?

**College:** They may seek a Letter of Equivalency through the Association of Early Childhood Educators (AECEO) or L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (EFESÉO).

**AECEO:** We understand that a public register, the College's list of all registered Early Childhood Educators in the province, is mandatory. When will a public register of College members be made available, what will it contain, and how will it be made available?

**College:** The College will have a public register. This is currently in development and we look forward to communicating with our members in the future as to what specifics this public register will contain and how it will be made available.

## ELECTIONS

**AECEO:** When is the next election going to be held?

**College:** The College held elections of its executive Council in January/February 2009. The next election will be in 2011 and we encourage all members to participate in that election process.

## FEES

**AECEO:** Why is the fee for the College of ECE \$150?

**College:** Most regulatory colleges charge an annual membership fee. In Ontario for example, membership fees to other regulatory colleges range from \$120 to \$4,000. All members are required to pay \$150 annual membership fee. This fee covers the costs required in operating the College such as keeping in touch with members through mailings and website, running elections, supporting committees that are developing policies to help guide the practice of the profession and develop measures to improve the profession and raise its standards. The College charges a one-time \$75 application fee which covers the costs that occur in processing the application. For those who applied by January 2009, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services covered this cost.

**AECEO:** What do members of the College receive in the mail once their registration has been fully processed?

**College:** In addition to the initial letter of acknowledgement of the application, members will receive their certificate of registration - which is a signed letter from the Registrar that includes the official College seal, as well as a membership card showing their membership to the College.

**AECEO:** What are the benefits and services provided to registered members of the College?

**College:** It is only members of the College who are permitted to practice the profession of early childhood education. In addition members of the College are the only ones permitted to use the title "early childhood educator" or "registered early childhood educator" or the French title "éducatrice de la petite enfance", "éducateur de la petite enfance", "éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrite" or "éducateur de la petite enfance inscrit" or an abbreviation of any of those titles to describe themselves, in accordance with the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007 which assures the public of the member's qualifications to practice the profession and prevents unqualified persons from claiming to practice the profession. The College serves to raise and maintain the standards of the profession, which will benefit members by enhancing their professional status. One way in which the College is working towards this goal is through the development of standards of practice and code of ethics. As mentioned previously, we will invite members to participate in the development process once it has been launched by the College. Further information will be available soon. Members will receive a certificate of registration as well as a membership card. Additionally members are able to run for elected positions on the College Council and/or vote in the election of Council members as well as participate on committees.

## COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE

**AECEO:** What are the steps for lodging a complaint against an individual?

**College:** Individuals with a potential complaint are advised to contact the College.

**AECEO:** What are the grounds for lodging a complaint against an individual?

**College:** Grounds for lodging a complaint include professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity that would bring harm to a child as outlined in the Professional Misconduct Regulation 223/08 under the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007. Access to the Professional Misconduct Regulation can be found on our website [www.collegeofece.on.ca](http://www.collegeofece.on.ca). The standards of practice and code of ethics, once developed, will also provide guidance.

**AECEO:** If an employer takes disciplinary action against an employee, is she/he required to inform the College of ECE?

**College:** Yes, the employer must inform the College if a member has been charged with or convicted under the Criminal Code of an offence involving sexual conduct and minors or that a child may be at risk of harm, in accordance with Section 49(1) a, b of the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007 which refers to Employer Reports. The College is currently developing its complaints and discipline procedures and will continue to keep members and the public informed as these are developed.