

# Margaret McCain Opening Remarks

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*Wednesday, July 10, 2013*

## **Joseph Howe School, 2557 Maynard St, Halifax**

Premier Dexter, Minister Jennex, distinguished guests. We are pleased to partner with your government as it creates the first tier of life-long learning in Nova Scotia. Your new Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has been tasked with turning a service patchwork into a comprehensive service system for young children and their families, linked to the powerful asset you already own in public education.

You take this leap with the support of thousands of Nova Scotians who took part in public discussions on how to improve supports for children and families. They brought forward the best they had to offer and your government responded.

The next step moves into the community, where local authorities, schools, child care, public health and intervention services, will test-drive how to organize into Early Years Centres. The goal is to maximize access, improve quality and enhance accountability.

Their journey will be informed by the best available research; and evaluated to help develop a model, or models, for Nova Scotia. The Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation is pleased to contribute \$100,000 a year towards this endeavor.

This is not a journey for those who just want to come along for the ride. It will be up everyone to show the kind of leadership that transformational change requires. To be successful you will need to believe in the vision and demonstrate creativity, passion and courage. It is hard work, but all the evidence tells us, it does work. The beneficiaries will be successive cohorts of youngsters, celebrated in childhood and ready to succeed in school and in life.

Thank you.