

## Critical Policy Issues, Discussion and Information

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This section provides a forum for distributing and discussing critical issues concerning early childhood policy. Contributions may include policy statements and positions, critiques of current policy initiatives, documents and developments at local, national, regional or global level. Relevant web links are also considered if appropriately annotated. Submissions will be peer-reviewed by the section editors or other journal editors before they are considered for publication by ICCPS. We also invite contributions to this section as original articles or essays, which must adhere to the 'Author Guidelines' as published on the journal website.

Please submit contributions directly to the section editor Mathias Urban ([mathias.urban@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mathias.urban@roehampton.ac.uk)) or through the journal website (<http://journals.sfu.ca/iccps/index.php/childhoods/about/submissions#onlineSubmissions>).

The first contribution we publish in this section is a comment on a programme for international standardised assessment and comparison of children as young as four, currently being prepared by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The proposed 'International Early Learning Study' (IELS) will draw early childhood firmly into the framework of the 'Program for International Student Assessment' (PISA) and other standardised assessment, comparison and ranking exercises conducted by the OECD.

The paper was written following a working group discussion at the 24<sup>th</sup> international Reconceptualising Early Childhood Education (RECE) conference, which took place in Taupo, Aotearoa/New Zealand in November 2016. It has been circulated through various channels including the RECE website ([www.receinternational.org](http://www.receinternational.org)) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RECEInternational/>). The authors have invited international colleagues to sign the document in support. We publish the list of signatories and will keep updating it. We invite readers to share the statement widely through their networks. It should be cited as:

Urban, M. & Swadener, B. B. (2016). Democratic accountability and contextualised systemic evaluation. A comment on the OECD initiative to launch an International Early Learning Study (IELS). *International Critical Childhood Policy Studies*, 5(1), 6-18. Retrieved from <http://www.journals.sfu.ca/iccps/index.php/childhoods/>