



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

CEYD-23-02

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Mandy Koroniak, Director of Children's Early Years Division
Date: Wednesday, March 08, 2023
Subject: Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care - Directed Growth Approach to Child Care Expansion

Background:

Under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System, Ontario is supporting the creation of approximately 86,000 new licensed child care spaces provincially (relative to 2019) by December 2026. Since 2019, 33,000 new spaces have become operational in Ontario, with another 53,000 spaces to be created.

The Ministry of Education has identified that a key priority in creating the remaining new CWELCC spaces is to support creating affordable child care spaces in communities with populations who need them most through a directed growth approach.

Update:

Directed Growth Approach

In December 2022, the ministry shared its Access and Inclusion Framework for consultation. The purpose of the framework is to support service system managers with updating local service plans with an increased focus on access as it relates to inclusion.

Under the Access and Inclusion Framework, the ministry is focused on improving equity of access by working towards a common provincial access ratio of 37%. In updating service plans, service system managers have been asked to consider the degree to which new affordable licensed child care spaces will support:

- Low-income families
- Vulnerable communities
- Diverse communities
- Children with special needs
- Francophone families
- Indigenous families
- Families needing more flexible models of care, including evening, weekend, and overnight care

Capital Start-up Grants

Ontario's Action Plan for implementing the CWELCC System includes providing capital start-up grants to support the creation of new spaces in targeted regions, and for underserved communities and populations. Capital start-up grants can be used to offset the initial costs required to expand or create spaces in these regions, such as equipment and leasehold improvements. Start-up funding may be used for retrofits, renovations or expansion projects, but cannot be used to purchase land or buildings.

To access capital start-up grant funding, service system managers will require a commitment from licensed child care providers to participate in the CWELCC System for the remainder of the CWELCC agreement (through 2026) and spend the start-up grant funding within two years. Eligible licensed child care providers will be able to apply to receive a grant covering up to \$90 per square foot of a new or expanded space with a cap of up to \$350,000 for every 50 child care spaces created. The ministry has indicated that further information about the access to the capital start-up grant funding, including the application and approval process, will be made available in Spring 2023.

Staff in the Children's Early Years Division are currently developing Wellington's initial approach to directed growth, in alignment with the ministry's request and Access and Inclusion framework, to be included as an addendum to the Children's Early Years service plan and provided to Committee in Spring 2023.

Financial Implications:

All capital start-up grant funding that is allocated to eligible licensees over the 2023-2026 time frame will be funded entirely from the 100% federal CWELCC funding and will have no impact on the tax levy.

Recommendation:

That the report, Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care - Directed Growth Approach to Child Care Expansion be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Koroniak".

Mandy Koroniak
Director of Children's Early Years Division