

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Human Services

Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care System Update

RECOMMENDATION

1. That County Council receive Report No. HS 2022-08, entitled “Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care System Update,” as information.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- This report provides an update on the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care System (“CWELCC”) which is being implemented across the Province to achieve an average of \$10 per day child care delivered by licensed providers by September 2025 and to support recruitment and retention of Ontario’s child care workforce.

Implementation Points

The Ministry of Education released several regulatory amendments to O. Reg. 137/15 on August 17th, 2022. One of the amendments extended the deadline for licensee’s to notify parents and staff, as well as the Consolidated Municipal Services Manager (CMSM) - the County being a designated CMSM, about their intent to enrol in CWELCC by November 1, 2022.

Oxford County will receive fee reduction and workforce compensation funding under the new CWELCC system agreement. This funding is in addition to the general operating funding currently provided by the Ministry of Education for the delivery of child care and early learning in Oxford County.

The CWELCC system will support quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in early learning licensed child care serving eligible children.

Financial Impact







There is no financial impact to the 2022 budget.

Communications

Oxford County has promoted and shared Ministry of Education communications about the CWELCC system in many forums. Human Services ensured that all Oxford County child care Licensees were aware of the CWELCC system and the application process. All CWELCC system information is posted on the Oxford County website; the Communications team reached out to local media to provide information; information was posted to social media; and newspaper notices were placed in local newspapers in advance of the application deadline.

Human Services staff have been in continual communication with the Licensees to provide information and supports throughout the application and enrollment process. Communication will continue in regards to ongoing CWELCC implementation and further child care fee reductions.

Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

					
WORKS WELL TOGETHER	WELL CONNECTED	SHAPES THE FUTURE	INFORMS & ENGAGES	PERFORMS & DELIVERS	POSITIVE IMPACT
1 ii		3 ii	4 ii	5 ii	

DISCUSSION

Background

On March 28, 2022, Ontario reached a 13.2 billion dollar agreement with the federal government for funding under the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care system. The Ministry of Education will provide funds to CMSM's to support the objectives for licensed child care programs under the CWELCC system.

The amendments to the CWELCC system released on August 17, 2022 extended the deadline for all licensed child care operators to "Opt In" or "Opt Out" of the CWELCC system to November 1, 2022 to allow Licensee's time to make their decision. The extended timeline did put additional administrative pressures on the CMSMs for determining eligibility, entering into an agreement and flowing funding to Licensee's.

The CWELCC system will:

- Give families access to more affordable and high quality child care options
- Help lower child care fees for parents of children under the age of six
- Increase child care spaces
- Support the child care workforce
- Support inclusive child care

The CWELCC system does not include capital investment for the creation of new licensed child care spaces to address anticipated demand due to the average of \$10 per day child care.

Comments

The enrollment deadline of November 1, 2022, resulted in eight child care Licensees in Oxford County “Opting In” to the CWELCC system. Two child care licensees that operate part-time preschool programs chose to “Opt-out” of the CWELCC program.

Families qualify for a fee rebate retroactive to April 1, 2022 if they have children under the age of 6 enrolled with a licensed child care provider who has opted into the CWELCC system.

Oxford County Human Services is enrolling our child care providers into CWELCC based on the following processing schedule:

1. Once a provider submitted the CWELCC application, Oxford County confirmed their eligibility within 10 calendar days. All confirmations were completed by November 10, 2022.
2. Oxford County and the provider will sign the CWELCC agreement. This will be completed within 20 calendar days of eligibility being confirmed.
3. Finally, within 20 calendar days of entering into the agreement, the provider will:
 - a. Receive funds from Oxford County for the parent fee rebates;
 - b. Begin charging lower fees (reduction of 25%); and
 - c. Will issue credits/refunds to parents.

Parents with children under the age of 6 enrolled in participating licensed child care can expect a further reduction in fees by an average of 50% to be effective December 31, 2022. A further reduction in parent fees is expected to be implemented in September 2024 and the final reduction to an average of \$10 per day child care is to be implemented in September 2025.

Conclusions

CWELCC is a five-year plan that is based on equity and inclusion. Oxford County Human Services is committed to supporting the implementation of the CWELCC System in Oxford County with a focus on increasing affordability for parents and ensuring the delivery of high-quality child care, improving wages for staff working in child care and increasing access to quality child care programs.

SIGNATURES

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