

TITLE: CHILD CARE PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

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1.0 OBJECTIVE

To govern the provision of child care services within the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the City of Ottawa, and agencies and operators of Child Care Programs.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

2.1 **Board** refers to the Board of Trustees.

2.2 **Child Care Programs** refers to programs which provide care for children who are not yet of school-age (0-4 years: infant, toddler and pre-school) for whom care will be provided during the day, during the school year and in the summer.

2.3 **District** refers to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

2.4 **Early Learning** refers to educational programming for children from 0-12 years of age.

2.5 **Municipality** refers to the City of Ottawa.

2.6 **Third-Party Partner** refers to a licensed not-for-profit child care agency that has entered into an agreement with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board to deliver a Child Care Program.

3.0 POLICY

Policy Statements

- 3.1 The Board is committed to making space available in schools for Child Care Programs, where practicable, either by:
- a) leasing any suitable surplus space, on a completely cost-recovery basis, in existing elementary and secondary schools or other sites to Third-Party Program partners; or

- b) Supporting, in limited circumstances, the direct delivery of a Child Care Program where no Third Party Partner seeks to deliver a Child Care Program and the Board has approved the operation of a program.
 - c) building child care facilities in conjunction with new schools, when full funding is allocated by the Ministry of Education, the City of Ottawa, and/or other non-District sources.
- 3.2 The District, while recognizing the need for Child Care Programs, shall ensure that its limited resources are directed to the maintenance of high quality educational programs and services in its schools, provided the construction of such facilities does not impede the Board's rights and responsibilities to organize, close or dispose of schools as provided for in the *Education Act*.
- 3.3 Where a request for a Child Care Program is made to the District, consultation shall be undertaken with the City of Ottawa, local child care providers, and appropriate community service agencies and the school and parent community to determine need and appropriate space through a Board approved consultation process.

Guiding Principles

- 3.4 The following guiding principles shall govern Child Care Programs:
- a) Child Care Programs should be provided in a safe, caring and child-centered environment.
 - b) Child Care Programs can be an important component of a comprehensive Early Learning strategy which provide a foundation for the lifelong learning and well-being of children in support of their future success.
 - c) The availability of Child Care Programs for children in a school setting can be an important aspect of fostering schools as community hubs.
 - d) The provision of Child Care Programs in school facilities reduces the number of transitions for students and the financial and logistical impact on families.
 - e) The District works in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the City of Ottawa and Third-Party Partners to provide Child Care Programs.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

Third-Party Partners of Child Care Programs

- 4.1 The Board supports the provision of quality Child Care Programs in its schools through qualified, licensed Third-Party Partners where space is available and the need for service has been requested and approved by the Board. The Board shall consider the socio-economic needs of the community and make every effort to locate Child Care Programs in communities with the highest needs.
- 4.2 Where it is determined that the District will make space available for a Child Care Program operated by a Third-Party Partner, the District shall establish an approval process for Third-Party Partners to apply to lease the space for the Child Care Program in the identified school or site.

- 4.3 The District shall not lease space to a licensed not-for-profit Third-Party Partners to provide Child Care Programs unless the partner:
- a) has a valid purchase of service agreement with the City of Ottawa for the provision of subsidized child care;
 - b) has proof of satisfactory insurance coverage to save the District harm from any liabilities resulting howsoever from the Child Care Program operations; and
 - c) has signed a multi-year lease agreement.
- 4.4 Where there is a Third-Party Partner delivering a Child Care Program in a District facility, a written lease agreement between the District and the operator shall be made that shall include but not be limited to:
- a) the operational requirements of the program including: program location, hours of operation;
 - b) the roles and responsibilities of the partners;
 - c) any legal provisions as might be required by the *Education Act* and/or the *Day Nurseries Act* or any other pertinent legislation.

District Child Care Programs

- 4.5 Child Care Programs offered by the District are governed by provincial legislation and shall only be offered in school space that has been licensed for that particular purpose.
- 4.6 The Manager of Early Learning shall be designated by the Director to have supervisory responsibility of all Child Care Programs operated by the District.
- 4.7 Each District Child Care Program shall have an on-site Program Coordinator.
- 4.8 Child Care Programs are expected to provide high quality environments and care. Child Care Programs work in partnership with the school in which they are located in order to ensure school readiness and a smooth transition to school.
- 4.9 Where the District operates a Child Care Program, it shall incorporate the ELECT (Early Learning for Every Child Today) framework and complement the educational philosophy of the District. The Child Care Program shall provide an integrated service in collaboration with the District and its community partners.
- 4.10 Parents/guardians shall have recourse for a dispute resolution mechanism through the Manager of Early Learning, Associate Director and the Director of Education.
- 4.11 Child Care Programs operated by the District shall make available to all parents/guardians, information regarding:
- a) the operational requirements of the program including: daily schedules, program location, fee structures, hours of operation;
 - b) communication protocols; and
 - c) parent/guardian dispute resolution processes.

General

- 4.12 The Board recognizes the role and responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the City of Ottawa, to select and license operators of any Child Care Program located on any District site.
- 4.13 The Board shall establish rental fees for the use of its facilities by non-profit Child Care Program operators, which reimburse the District for all direct costs associated with their operations, including pro-rata shares for heating, lighting and other utilities, and cleaning/maintenance where provided.
- 4.14 The Board recognizes that the City of Ottawa and the province are responsible for the allocation and provision of subsidies and the District will continue to encourage these partners to ensure a fair allocation of subsidies to communities according to socio-economic need.
- 4.15 Transportation to and from Child Care Programs is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- 4.16 The District recognizes that, as an exception, Child Care Programs that are offered in conjunction with Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) shall be under the jurisdiction of the federal mandate of Settlement Program Support Services Provision for Care of Newcomer Children.
- 4.17 The District reserves the right to terminate the lease of a facility for child care and/or to repurpose the use of the space, subject to the terms of the lease agreement.
- 4.18 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures and/or protocols as may be necessary to implement this policy.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Education Act, Regulation 221/11
Day Nurseries Act, R.R.O 1990, Regulation 262