

Municipality Of Chatham-Kent
Community Human Services
Child Care and Early Years

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Kelly Emery
Director, Child Care and Early Years

Date: February 9, 2021

Subject: Provincial Child Care and Early Years Funding Re-Investment

This report is for the information of Council.

Background

The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) recognizes the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have on children, families, and the child care and early years sector. Numerous supports have been provided to the sector throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including providing emergency child care for health care and other frontline workers in the spring, and supporting all child care operators to ensure they remained sustainable during the temporary closure and summer re-opening. This is in addition to the federal programs available in the Canada Economic Response Plan, which operators should continue to maximize in 2021. As a result of the collective effort to sustain the sector during this unprecedented time, over 95% of child care centres have reopened as of December 2020. Thank you for your helpful advice in developing the parameters and guidance for each distinct phase of the pandemic. The purpose of this report is to provide details on the federal Safe Restart Funding (SRF) that supports a shared commitment by the provincial and federal governments to ensure a safe, sufficient, and adequate supply of child care is available to support the gradual return to work of parents as the economy reopens.

The Government of Canada has committed to provide \$625 million in new funding nationwide to help the child care sector adapt to the COVID-19 environment and address the unique needs stemming from the pandemic. In Ontario, SRF will provide \$234.6 million in new funding and will complement existing provincial investments to help parents, families, and communities so that parents can return to work with confidence. Chatham-Kent will be receiving \$1,659,676 in SRF.

The SRF will be provided through Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB) for child care and EarlyON, through First Nations for child care and Child & Family Programs on reserve, and directly from the Ministry of Education for child care centres without a purchase of service agreement.

The investment will consist of two components:

- Funding will be used by the Province to procure and deliver face coverings directly to operators and licensed home child care agencies across Ontario in order to comply with the Ministry's reopening operational guidance.
- In addition to face coverings, funding will be provided through CMSM and DSSAB to operators which can be used for: additional personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, gowns, etc.; enhanced cleaning; additional staff to meet health and safety requirements; support for short term vacancies as operators transition to return to full capacity; and minor capital required in accordance with Ministry's reopening operational guidance or local public health requirements.

SRF will be provided through CMSM/DSSAB for operators that have a purchase of service agreement for general operating and/or fee subsidies as well as EarlyON Child and Family Centres. CMSM/DSSAB will work directly with child care operators in their area.

Comments

All child care centres in Chatham-Kent will be receiving an allocation of Safe Restart Funding. This funding is intended to be spent by March 31, 2021 and operators will be required to reconcile all expenditures.

Consultation

There was no consultation required in producing this report.

Financial Implications

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will receive \$1,659,676 from the Ministry of Education. This funding is intended to be spent by March 31, 2021 and operators will be required to reconcile all expenditures.

Prepared by:

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Attachments: None

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