



## MEMO

**TO:** Directors of Education, French-Language School Boards  
Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM)  
District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB)

**FROM:** Denys Giguère, Director, French-Language Education Policy and Programs  
Branch

**DATE:** December 9, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Strategy for Child Care Services in Ontario's French-Language Schools  
Phase III of the 2013-2018 Canada-Ontario Agreement

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Negotiations between Ontario and Canadian Heritage are now underway for the 2013-2018 Canada-Ontario Agreement. As such, the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch (FLEPPB) is launching the planning process to identify sites for new child care centres in French-Language Schools. FLEPPB staff members are working closely with the Ministry's Early Years Division and the Capital Policy and Programs Branch in order to optimize planning of early childhood capital projects.

### **Overview of Child Care Services Strategy launched in 2008-2009**

The objective of this strategy is to increase to 75% the percentage of French-language schools that host child care services.

- Phase I (2008-2009): 11 new child care services were created.
- Phase II (2009-2013): \$5 M in capital funding each year over four years. A total of 43 child care centres were built or retrofitted.
- In 2008-2009, 56% of schools hosted child care services; by the end of 2012-2013, this rate had increased to 71%.

The objective of 75% will be reached during the course of this agreement (Phase III 2013-2018).

### **Project plans to be submitted**

We are asking you to identify new child care projects for the next two years, i.e., 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, using the attached form. All of the projects submitted by school boards will be analyzed against local priorities, funds available and the eligibility criteria below. Projects will be planned in collaboration with Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) as well as other relevant local partners in order to determine child care program viability and community needs.

Criteria for eligibility:

1. School boards must obtain the support of the appropriate CMSM or DSSAB for each child care project identified.
2. Projects must not fall within the scope of the *Schools-First Policy Child Care Capital Retrofit Policy*.
3. Projects must not have received capital funding to replace child care spaces in replacement schools (see Memo 2012: B3 and 2013: B8).
4. Construction of new schools: funding for new child care space construction may be eligible to respond to student population increases or to increase access to services for French-language education rights-holders.
5. School expansion or retrofits: work to retrofit or expand space may be eligible to allow for the creation of child care spaces in schools that do not offer these services.
6. Child care service expansion: projects that involve capital expenditures that make it possible to add spaces to meet a strong demand in an existing child care facility may be eligible.

**Canadian Heritage requirements**

1. **Environmental assessment:** Under the terms and conditions of the agreement for capital funding projects, Canadian Heritage requires Ontario to comply with the requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* for each capital project. School boards must complete a checklist to this effect as early as possible in the project planning process in order to demonstrate that they meet these requirements.
2. **Ontario's share and Canada's share:** The federal government's financial contribution must represent a maximum of 50% of the total expense of the capital project for the child care centre. School boards must therefore demonstrate that they have invested an amount from a capital funding program applicable to the project that is at least equivalent to the amount received from the federal government for the same capital project.
3. **Acknowledgement of Canada's contribution:** School boards must mention Canada's contribution to projects to build child care facilities in any advertising; allow representatives of the federal government to attend any official ceremony to open the new premises; and install a plaque acknowledging Canada's participation in the capital project.

**Steps**

1. School boards must first identify and prioritize their child care projects for the years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.
2. School boards must obtain the support of the corresponding CMSM or DSSAB for each project and obtain the signature of the CMSM or DSSAB service manager on the attached form.
3. School boards must submit their list of projects, with the required signatures, by January 31, 2014.
4. The Ministry will analyze the projects, taking into account various factors including the requirements specified in this memo, the needs identified, and the funds available. Please note that not all projects submitted by each school board will necessarily be approved.
5. Once the Ministry has completed its analysis, it will provide school boards with information regarding the projects that have been approved and the next steps.

### **Issuance of child care licences**

Operators of licensed child care programs are required to meet the standards set out in the *Day Nurseries Act* (DNA) and any regulation governed by the *Act*. School boards, CMSMs, and DSSABs should work closely with local operators to meet licensing standards for child care space. School boards and CMSM/DSSABs should refer to the *Planning and Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres* (available on the EDU website at: [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/planning\\_and\\_design.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/planning_and_design.pdf)) to ensure proposed retrofits will meet licensing requirements under the DNA. Operators are solely responsible for obtaining licenses.

As a best practice, once child care operators have been selected by the school board, the operator should notify the Ministry's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Offices' staff of their intention to apply for a licence to operate a new program and/or plans to expand existing licences. In order to ensure new programs are licensed in a timely way, we encourage you to confirm the operators as early as possible to ensure there is sufficient time to complete the licensing process. As you are aware, the licensing process is complex as it includes site visits and approvals by Ministry child care licensing staff and other local officials (e.g. zoning, fire, public health, etc.). These compliance requirements must be met to approve the new or revised licence, and to permit the third party program to operate.

School boards are asked to identify their 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 child care projects, using the attached form. This completed form must be sent to [Jacinthe.leclerc@ontario.ca](mailto:Jacinthe.leclerc@ontario.ca), 416 325-1224 by January 31, 2014. Any CMSM or DSSAB wishing to obtain further information regarding this memo may contact the Ministry's Regional Child Care Advisors.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Denys Giguère

Encl. Template for the school board plan

c.c. Janine Griffore  
Rupert Gordon  
Pam Musson  
Jill Vienneau  
Grant Osborn  
Alexandre Beaudin  
Early Childhood Leaders in the school boards  
Child Care Advisors  
Education Officers  
Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Offices, Ministry of Education