



CDSB Directed Growth Plan – Revised November 2024

Ontario’s vision for the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system is that more families in Ontario have access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and childcare no matter where they live.

In line with Ontario’s vision for childcare and the early years, and consultation with community partners and local planning networks, the Children Services section has identified three priorities in District of Cochrane for childcare and early years programs.

The priorities are as follows:

- Equitable access to services;
- System coordination;
- Focus on services for children with special needs.

Ministry of Education identifies the criteria for priority neighborhoods as follows:

- Low-income families;
- Children with disabilities and children needing enhances or individual supports;
- Francophone;
- Indigenous children;
- Black children;
- Other racialized children;
- New immigrants

To determine planning for the CWELCC directed growth, priority neighborhoods have been identified by reviewing the following:

- Availability of licensed childcare
- Early Development Instrument (EDI)
- Reported waitlist information from current childcare licensees in the District of Cochrane
- Current spaces expansion projects

- Capital projects approved by the Federal and Provincial government that were in discussion prior to December 19, 2022 Direct Growth allocation

Children's Services is also currently engaged in several planning processes which continue to help identify priorities and future community needs, including the provincial Knowing Our Numbers project and a local system review. Using the Ministry of Education Access and Inclusion Framework as a guide, planning for the District of Cochrane will be a living process through the transition of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System.

Since the development of the Directed Growth Plan, the Federal and Provincial government have approved two capital school-based projects; Georges Vanier in Smooth Rock Falls and Jacques Cartier in Timmins. CDSB has requested that these two capital buildings be included in the directed growth allocation for the District of Cochrane by the Ministry of Education in the submission of the CWELCC Directed Growth Report Template 2024 on October 8, 2024. As of November 8, 2024, CDSB has not received notification of approval from the Ministry.

Identified needs:

A central waitlist for childcare service needs must be reviewed to identify expansion needs across the District of Cochrane. A centralized waitlist system will be developed in 2025 to provide accurate, childcare service needs throughout the district and provide tools for Children's Services Administration to work with current childcare licensees with an agreement with CDSB to maximize licensed capacity at their centres. This will provide a person-centric approach for families to gain equitable access to childcare in the district.

Decrease in the number of clients eligible for fee subsidy due to childcare centres not accepting many part-time children.

Local challenges include a lack of qualified staff, especially in francophone centres. This has resulted in lower utilization in existing childcare centres across the district.

Priorities

Priorities have been identified through the planning phase to determine expansion spaces/areas of need:

- Timmins (school-based capital build awaiting approval for allocation from Ministry of Education)
- Hearst (30 spaces completed April 2024 – Garderie Bouts de Chou)

- Smooth Rock Falls (currently no licensed care in the community – school-based capital build awaiting approval for allocation from Ministry of Education)
- Matheson (currently no licensed care in the community)
- South Porcupine (School capital build – approved 2018 – near completion)
- Kapuskasing (10 spaces near completion – Andre Cary AFESEO Rayon de Soleil)
- Iroquois Falls (there is currently no English childcare services in the community)
- Cochrane (toddler space identified as a need for increase at Cochrane Child Care Centre)

Process

The CDSB will review all expressions of interest. Priority will be given to childcare operators who operate centres within the district of Cochrane in the priority communities who currently hold an agreement with CDSB and who have demonstrated capacity to expand their current operations.

Application Process:

- Step 1: If applicable, submission of license application/revision through the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS)
- Step 2: Expression of Interest letter with proposed plan: Service System Manager (SSM) approves (move to Step 3) or denies or on standby;
- Step 3: Plans reviewed and scored; additional information may be required;
- Step 4: Successful proponents are notified, and the service agreement is amended or entered into a new agreement.

Note: If multiple applications for the community are received, a request for proposal may be required.

Start-up Grants Application - Childcare operators enrolled in the CWELCC system are eligible to apply for Start-up Grants. The Start-up Grants support the creation of new licensed full-day spaces for children under age six in targeted regions, for underserved communities and populations. The Start-Up Grant application is available at the request of the Director of Children's Services. These funds are for minor repairs and equipment and may only be used for expansion of community-based spaces.