

City Council

Notice of Motion

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| MM32.12 | ACTION | | | Ward: All |
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Building the Early Learning and Child Care System Toronto Needs - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll, recommends that:

1. City Council reaffirm the City of Toronto's support for building a system of early learning and child care services that are high-quality, public and not-for profit, affordable, inclusive and accessible for all families.
2. City Council express its support for the Government of Canada's April 19, 2021 budget announcement to invest in building a Canada wide system of Early Learning and Child Care and Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care, that builds on City of Toronto policies and service plans, and has adequate and ongoing operating and capital funding.
3. City Council communicate to the Provincial and Federal Governments, the City of Toronto's interest in working collaboratively, and participating in tri-lateral discussions as soon as possible, with the goal of achieving intergovernmental agreements by Fall 2021, and City Council make these negotiations a priority in our intergovernmental strategies.
4. City Council direct the General Manager, Children's Services to include in the June 2021 Growth Strategy Update report to the Economic and Community Development Committee and Council, the opportunities and funding the Federal announcement could provide to expedite the Growth Strategy in Toronto, and to report to the Budget Committee on the City's share of new committed funding for child care once it is known.
5. City Council direct the General Manager, Children's Services to work closely with, and leverage the expertise of partners including the Province, City divisions, school boards and service providers to expand existing and develop new licensed child care services.
6. City Council request the City Clerk to distribute City Council's decision to other municipalities in Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

Summary

The lack of affordable, high-quality early learning and child care is one of the most significant challenges for families in our City. The pandemic has exacerbated the situation, and accentuated the importance of child care for Toronto parents.

We have seen the gendered-impact of the pandemic on women. We have experienced the toll on parents, particularly mothers, because of the lack of access to child care. We know women will continue to face huge barriers to equitable participation in our economy if child care is not at the centre of COVID-19 recovery strategies. We also know that underserved communities, low-income and BIPOC families, people with disabilities, and those who are precariously-employed will not share in the benefits of economic renewal without access to affordable child care.

A broad consensus has emerged across all sectors, including business, academic, social service and feminist organizations, that a robust system of accessible, high-quality child care services is essential for Canada's economic renewal. The time is now to make long-awaited progress on child care for Toronto families.

The Government of Canada has recognized that investment in child care is urgently needed, and of national importance, for families and the economy. As part of the Budget 2021, it has committed to build a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system that is affordable, high-quality and accessible for all families. The plan calls for \$30 Billion over 5 years, with an ongoing annual expenditure of \$8.3 Billion. The goal is to reduce fees by 50 percent by 2022, and achieve an average cost of \$10.00 per day by 2026.

The announcement is welcome news for women, their families, and cities across the Country. Toronto manages the second largest system of child care services in the Country, and it is important for our City to show its support for building a strong system of Early Learning and Child Care in Toronto and across Ontario – and that we are ready to work with the Federal and Provincial governments to achieve it.

City Council must reinforce the urgency, and express our willingness to be partners with all levels of government, and to act now, with urgency, to ensure this promise becomes a reality for Toronto children and families.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM32.12