

Update on the Implementation of Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

City-School Boards Advisory Committee

Toronto Children's Services

October 21, 2024



Purpose and Agenda

- A. Provide an update on the implementation and impacts of Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)
- B. Discuss implications on child care expansion and the role of schools



System Partnerships

- School boards are key partners in delivering early years and child care services.
- Children's Services has a long-standing relationship of collaboration with School Boards.
- Children's Services works with all four Toronto school boards to plan capital investments, coordinate program development, and implement provincial initiatives.
- As service system manager, Children's Services has a legislated responsibility to consult with School Boards. School boards are also bound via the Education Act.



Overview: Presentation and Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care



- CWELCC agreement was initiated in March 2022 and funded by the Government of Canada with a five-year plan to reduce the cost of child care for children under the age of six to an average of \$10 per day by 2026 in licensed child care.
 - Children's Services is working with the Province of Ontario to implement the program in Toronto.
- Recent cancellation of school-based capital projects impact child care expansion in Toronto.

Highlights of CWELCC Implementation: Children aged 0 to 5

Phase 1: 2022

896 Centres and 24
Home Child Care
Agencies Enrolled

25% Refund and Fee
Reduction for Eligible
Families (with children
under the age of 6)



Phase 2: 2023

924 Centres and 24
Home Child Care
Agencies Enrolled

52.75% Fee Reduction for
Eligible Families

Opened first expansion
application process
(directed growth)



Phase 3: 2024

Introduction of new Cost-Based
Funding Guideline

926 Centres and 22 Home
Child Care Agencies Enrolled

Continued fee reductions to a
minimum of \$12 per day

2025: programs not enrolled in
CWELCC will be ineligible for
routine funding



CWELCC Implementation Roundtable



- Event held on March 27, 2024.
- Roundtable included child care sector partners from across Toronto, including School Boards.
- Key challenges and opportunities included:
 - Urgent need for capital funding
 - Addressing workforce compensation
 - Prioritizing access and inclusion
- Subsequent report went to City Council with actions adopted on July 24 and 25, 2024.

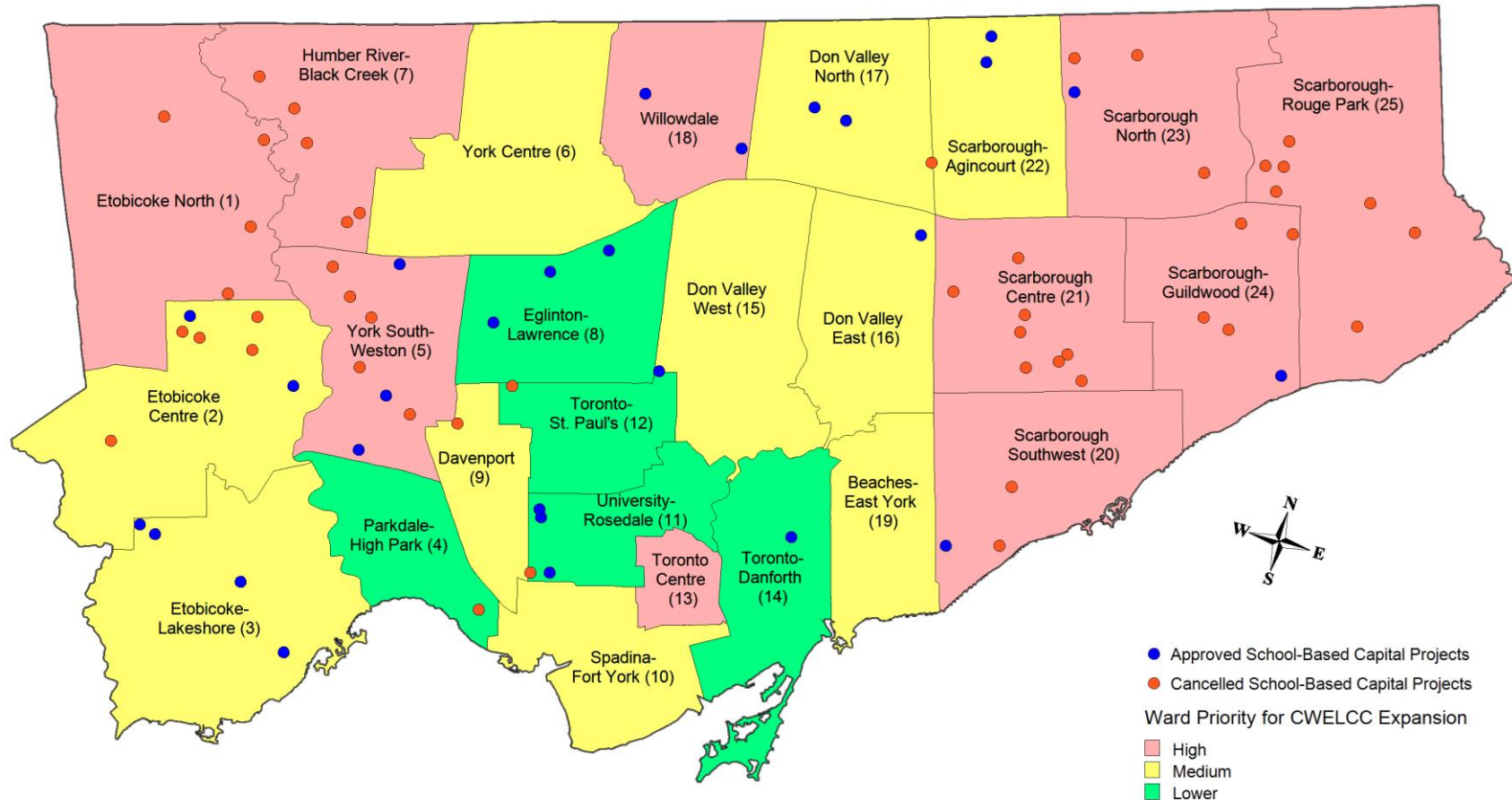
CWELCC in 2024 and Beyond – Directed Growth

- The Province has required service system managers to create **Directed Growth Plans** to ensure CWELCC-funded spaces expand in high priority areas.
- The Province has given the City CWELCC space allocation for 2022-2026 to support expansion in the community and schools.

Five Year (2022-2026) CWELCC Space Allocations for Toronto (as of May 2023)

Type of Space Expansion	Allocation
Community Space Expansion	13,627
School Space Expansion	4,550
Total New CWELCC Spaces over 5 years	18,177

School-Based Capital Projects: Cancelled and Approved



Cancellation of School-Based Projects

- On July 18, 2024, the Ministry of Education announced the cancellation of 48 school-based child care capital projects that were previously approved between 2016 and 2020, but never constructed.
- This cancellation represents 3,083 child care spaces for children aged 0-4 in some of Toronto's highest need communities.

Cancelled School-Based Capital Projects

Type of Spaces	Amount
TDSB Spaces	2,035
TCDSB Spaces	1,048
Total Cancelled Spaces	3,083

- The Ministry has indicated plans to transfer these spaces to the community; however, there is no capital funding associated with community expansion.
- School boards continue to have an opportunity to request child care capital funding for child care projects associated with a larger Capital Priorities project via the Capital Priorities Program.

Ministry Direction and Capital Funding

- The Ministry has indicated that it will reallocate the school based spaces, and has signaled that their intent is to keep the space creation target in Toronto the same.
- The reallocation applies to operating funding available **once new locations open**; however, **no capital funding has been committed for these new community expansion targets**.
 - The capital funding associated with the cancellation of the school-based spaces will not be transferred to the City of Toronto.
 - No new capital funding has been committed against these new calibrated spaces.
 - Start-up Funding under CWELCC does not cover major capital expenditures associated with creating new spaces.
 - There is no increase to the current start up allocation to address the additional spaces

City of Toronto and Ministry Response

- In July 2024, in response to the Ministry's memo, a joint letter from the City and the School Boards requested:
 - Reversal of the announcement and provision of required capital funding to TDSB and TCDSB; or
 - Reallocation of cancelled funding as pooled funding to the TDSB and TCDSB; or
 - Reallocation of cancelled funding to the City of Toronto
- In August 2024, the Ministry responded in a memo to the City indicating that spaces previously offered via the TDSB and TCDSB will be delivered through community-based spaces naming licensed home child care, not-for-profit, and for-profit opportunities.



Impacts of Cancellations in Toronto

- The cancellation of these school-based spaces is a significant loss for communities urgently in need of child care. Currently 44% of child care is operated in a school.
- Does not support access to child care in schools, a seamless day (“Schools-First Model”)
- A lack of capital investments is the biggest challenge to increasing the number of spaces and expanding child care in Toronto.
- As required under the CWELCC expansion guidelines, the City must maintain or improve the ratio of 70% non-profit child care operators and 30% commercial operators.

The Ministry’s decision, without capital funding, limits the City’s ability to meet the Provincial space and the City’s Growth Strategy targets.

Future Updates

- In Q4 2024, Children's Services will report to the Economic and Community Development Committee.
 - Update on growth and expansion within Toronto's licensed child care sector, and ongoing implementation of CWELCC
 - Analysis of the CWELCC provincial funding formula
- In 2025, Children's Services will report on the 5-Year Service Plan.





Thank you!