

Toronto Child Care and Early Learning Forum

Meeting Summary

February 2018

Agenda Item	Actions and Q&A
<p>1. Welcome and Agenda Review</p> <p>The North Forum meeting was live-streamed and attended by early learning partners.</p> <p>February meetings were co-facilitated by Suzanne Field and Donna Spreitzer (North and South) and Elisa Wilmot (West and East).</p>	
<p>2. Agenda Review</p> <p>Agenda was reviewed. The Ministry of Education and Toronto Catholic District School Board were unable to attend the Forum meeting(s).</p>	<p>To request an agenda item for future Forum meetings, please email childcare@toronto.ca with 'Forum' in the subject line, at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.</p>
<p>3. Child Care and Early Learning Forum Update</p> <p>Co-facilitator role reviewed. Position is still open for North Forum. Irene Sheridan was acclaimed as Co-Facilitator for East Forum.</p> <p>The purpose of the Forum was reviewed.</p> <p>Continuous improvement of the Forum discussed. Current challenge: early learning partners can only attend one meeting, which is live-streamed. The other three meetings therefore have fewer agenda items and inconsistent information being shared at meetings.</p> <p>Children's Services and the co-facilitators are currently discussing options for continuous improvement and are considering moving to centralized meetings only. To participate in these discussions or provide input, contact your Co-Facilitator or email childcare@toronto.ca with 'Forum' in the title.</p>	<p>Nominations for North Co-Facilitator can still be submitted to childcare@toronto.ca with 'Forum' in the subject line.</p> <p>Q: how much time does someone need to invest in being a Forum Co-Facilitator?</p> <p>A: There are a couple of meetings a year, with teleconferences being an option. Planning discussions are held prior to each Forum meeting.</p>

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<p>A meeting or conference call will be held in March with Co-Facilitators and those interested in participating to share information and brainstorm solutions. Proposed approach will be brought to the next Forum meeting in May.</p>	
<p>4. Toronto District School Board <i>TDSB's Extended Day Program (Centralized, north meeting):</i></p> <p>Colleen Russell-Rawlins, Executive Superintendent, Early Years, provided a presentation titled: "Brief Context for the Introduction of Extended Day Programs (EDP)". Provided overview on the forthcoming development of TDSB's Extended Day program including what it is, the rationale, and the following implications for Operators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current third party operators – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no change current programs continue – in the future, options to opt out of BASPs – TDSB will learn how to better support third party programs from our experience • Authorized Recreation Providers – no change • Pool of third party operators on our approved growth list – Discuss new sites & flexibility (relieve “pressure” to open programs) • All Operators – Focus on the anticipated growth in the system in 0-4 licensed child care <p><i>Update presented by Liz Hoang and Louise Humphreys:</i></p>	<p>Q: What type of collaboration is happening with Province related to Middle Years Strategy? What are expectations regarding TDSB extended care program requirements? Will they be consistent with third party operated programs in terms of regulation, quality assessments, public health requirements, etc.?</p> <p>A: Community engagement will take place. Plan was approved very recently by TDSB</p> <p>Q: Are these programs licensed?</p> <p>A: in the legislation, there is a distinction between board-operated and licensed programs. Board-operated programs do not require licensing under the CCEYA.</p> <p>Q: is this proposed model going back to the original model outlined in the Pascal report with the ECE being part of the child's day? This raises concerns about fees for the program, finding staff for the program, how much staff will be paid to work in the board-operated program, etc.</p> <p>A: Yes, it is in line with the original model put forward. We are aware of the fee range of before and after school programs in TDSB schools (\$29-\$39) and affordability is top of mind.</p> <p>Q: if there is an existing 3rd party program, the TDSB will not run one?</p> <p>A: if there's already one in the school, that program will continue. If there is a large unmet demand in the school and the current program is unable/unwilling to expand, that is a concern and we would want to work together to find solutions. Parent access is key.</p> <p>We anticipate there will be modest growth in B&A programs this year-there were 18 new programs</p>

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<p>Early learning and care policy manual is updated and available on the website.</p> <p>Parents can now register online for Kindergarten.</p> <p>Proposed school schedule for next year is online</p> <p>Dec 24 is a TDSB closure date, so if child care plans to operate, they will need a permit. Fees for permits for Dec 24th depends on your lease and the room you are using. More info will be available in Oct/Nov.</p> <p>4.2 Early Years Advisory Committee (EYAC)</p> <p>Reports shared by reps at the four meetings. Next meeting is March 23 – meetings are open to the public and held at the TDSB offices at 5050 Yonge St. Check the website for details.</p>	<p>last year. We are very conscious of not creating instability in the sector.</p> <p>Q: will board-operated programs offer summer care?</p> <p>A: yes, where there is demand</p> <p>Q: concerned about equality of access; will the City offer subsidy at the board-operated programs?</p> <p>A: we are in negotiations with the City of Toronto about service agreements.</p> <p>Q: Partnerships and seamless days aren't in place yet in many cases. A program may see the need to expand but there are barriers with rooms, teachers, and principals. We are seen as extra in the schools, not partners. Can we work on these relationships before a new partner is brought in?</p> <p>A: we have heard the concerns and continue to work on them. We still have a lot of work to do. Please continue to pass on concerns through Liz and Louise.</p> <p>Q: where can I read the policies approved by the TDSB?</p> <p>A: use the search engine on the TDSB and the Ministry of Education websites</p>
<p>5. Toronto Public Health-</p> <p>Owen Chong, Manager, Healthy Environments provided an update.</p> <p>The Province has released new protocols and guidelines; expecting lots of change to the day nursery guidance document in 2019.</p> <p>New: disclosure of inspection – expected to post results online. Currently in early stages of exploring this new requirement.</p> <p>Would like to send out email updates – need an updated listserv as many returned as undeliverable. Working on a group email list. Suggestion made that CS and TPH work together on listservs.</p>	<p>Q: Clarification needed on what needs to be posted?</p> <p>A: The IPAC inspection will need to be posted – this could be a notice that it was completed. Check the website for further details.</p> <p>Q: Do we require 3 visits because we have an onsite cooking program (i.e. deemed a high risk)? We were told separate visits are needed for preschool and KG/SA – is this required?</p> <p>A: We addressing these situations. In some cases we are considering it one inspection, but others treat it as two different inspections. There are inspectors doing things differently and we are clarifying that even if there are two programs, it</p>

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	<p>should be one inspection, based on address. Risk assessment is done on the food each year, 3x a year if food prepared onsite, 2x a year if catered. Includes preparing food with children.</p> <p>Q: Does food preparation/cooking with children as a program activity raise the risk level for TPH?</p> <p>ACTION: Owen will take this issue back to his team at TPH and seek consultation with the Ministry as well.</p> <p>Q: Any changes to the flu shot requirement?</p> <p>A: Last year we took the position that it was strongly suggested but not required. It will be reviewed yearly.</p>
<p>6. EarlyON: Transition of Child and Family Centres in Toronto</p> <p>Ashley Burger, new Manager for Child and Family Centres, presented on the new Early ON system.</p> <p>Management of Child and Family Centres in Toronto have been transitioned from Province to City, effective January 1st, 2018. Focus is now on strengthening the services and programs under one system.</p> <p>EarlyON is new system that brings together the former Ontario Early Years Centres, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Family Resource Programs, and Better Beginnings Better Futures.</p> <p>Work plan is currently in development, as well as a cohesive communication plan. Strategic Planning Day will be held Feb 22nd with agencies, school boards and community partners.</p>	<p>Q: How will programs be assessed for quality?</p> <p>A: A workgroup is being developed to ensure consistency and quality. Assessment tool will need to be flexible to address various needs/services of programs.</p> <p>Q: Are child and family centres licensed? Are there quality assessments? Is TPH involved? Is funding consistent across the board?</p> <p>A: CFC's are not licensed. There is lots of work to be done. Transition of the system to the City of Toronto is complete. We can now look at what exists and points of alignment and create something that addresses the uniqueness. This will be part of the strategic planning day – we will look at program standards, managing expectations, how to provide capacity building and quality. All is still up for discussion.</p> <p>Q: Are there opportunities for partnerships with child care programs? In the past, child care programs have been able to access resources for teachers, (e.g. toy lending library) at CFC programs.</p> <p>A: This will be discussed at the strategic planning day being held later this month.</p>

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	<p>Q: What about children with special needs? If there a group of families who need a place to go to receive support, to play and meet other parents, that group is being left behind and facing long waiting lists.</p> <p>A: We are looking at expanding inclusion and access. The Every Child Belongs program partners with numerous programs and is looking at expanding.</p> <p>Q: Did programs move from <i>EDU</i> to the City of Toronto?</p> <p>A: Some of the programs were under EDU and the rest were MCYS. They now are funded by the Ministry of Education and managed by municipalities.</p>
<p>7. Children's Services Update</p> <p>7.1 2018 City Capital and Operating Budget</p> <p>City budget was approved, with increase in fee subsidies, general operating funding (already announced), home child care and special needs resourcing. New funding to administer the EarlyON Child and Family Centres and the Journey Together program to develop indigenous child care programs. Also funding to expand licensed child care spaces.</p> <p>7.2 Children's Services reports to Committees</p> <p>Due to the election year, there will not be any Committee/Council reports after July.</p> <p><u>Community Development and Recreation Committee</u></p> <p>Feb 28: update on expanding indigenous-led early years programs and services</p> <p>Apr 12: Authorize recreation and skill building programs: City of Toronto role.</p> <p>June/July: update on Assessment for Quality Improvement review</p> <p><u>Governance Management Committee</u></p> <p>July 3: Standardized occupancy rates for child care centres in City-owned facilities</p> <p>7.3 2018 Operator budgets</p>	

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<p>Budgets were due Jan 26. Outstanding budgets should be submitted as soon as possible.</p> <p>7.4 Provincial Wage Enhancement (PWE) and Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG)</p> <p>2017 reconciliation due Feb 15. Submit cheques for any surplus funding to your Consultant. 2018 application available online Feb 16, closing April 3.</p> <p>7.5 Minor Capital Health and Safety Funding City budget approved \$1 million. Will be a continuous application cycle, with funding approved quarterly. Final applications for 2018 must be received by Dec 5. Extension-contact required for those approved for funding in 2017, or if the approved project is more than 12 months old, and the project has not started. Contact District Consultant for extension contracts. See website: toronto.ca/children/operators.</p> <p>7.6 Placement Directive Placing all ages, all wards. Please update vacancies to support families in securing placements. The Province has a working group reviewing thresholds. The Growth Strategy is also helping to stabilize fees for families. Families can also contact their MPP and MP regarding their concerns.</p> <p>7.7 New Central Office New office opened on November 20 at 700 Lawrence Ave West. Caseloads were realigned and affected operators were notified as to who their Caseworker is. Clients can still receive service at any office.</p> <p>7.8 Upcoming Expression of Interest Opportunity</p>	<p>Q: Will the City be looking at the income level eligibility for families applying for fee subsidy? A: These income thresholds are mandated by the Province, the City does not create the thresholds. The Province has a working group that is reviewing thresholds.</p>

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<p>Advent (Bathurst/Finch) upcoming, for infant, toddler, and preschool age groups. Notice will be e-blasted and posted on Children's Services website.</p> <p>7.9 Growth Strategy Update Currently implementing phase one (2017-2019) of a 10 year plan. Implementation plans help centres plan and document how the increased base funding would reduce fees and/or increase wages. Evening info sessions held on Jan 11 and Jan 16 for operators, bookkeepers and board members.</p>	<p>Q: We want the City to tell our Boards of Directors that they should be starting ECE staff at \$26 with benefits. We want to know the City will support staff salary rates.</p> <p>A: This is a 10 year process. Consultants are working closely with centres to develop salary scales. We understand that when salaries increase, fees must increase to offset the increased expense. We need continued commitment of all levels of government to invest in base funding so salaries can be set at liveable levels.</p> <p>Q: We are concerned about the impact of the new TDSB plan to open extended day programs. These jobs will be full time, no split shifts, no AQL, no licensing requirement, and high salaries. We won't be able to compete and once again, our RECE's will be leaving child care in droves to work in these programs. As it is, we are constantly hiring, it's a full time job. We can't expand because we can't get staff. Now TDSB will march in with more funding and less regulation and take all our good staff.</p> <p>A: TDSB has just approved the plan and there is lots of work to do – many details are not yet determined. The Early Years Advisory Committee is a public meeting – pass along your concerns through your area reps.</p> <p>ACTION: Request to have an item focused on workforce initiatives at a future meeting</p>

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<p>7.10 Children's Services website changes The City's web revitalization project has been a multi-year project aimed to make toronto.ca more engaging, intuitive and service-focused. New website now active.</p> <p>Most child care content found under Community and People tab. Content for Operators, located under '<i>Community Partners</i>', and then '<i>Early Learning and Child Care Partners</i>'. Operator info still accessible under the friendly URL toronto.ca/children/operators.</p> <p>Content for families located under "<i>Children and Families</i>".</p>	<p>Request that the City send out an eblast containing the links to the new website locations for Operators and Families.</p>
<p>8. Open Question Period</p>	<p>Q: Concern raised about growing gap between public fee and per diems.</p> <p>A: The impact of increased base funding is that costs are offset and fees can stabilize or decrease. Base funding is like the foundation; as base funding grows, the amount to be funded through fees and per diems will be less. Therefore yes, per diems will go down as base funding increases-they are intricately linked.</p> <p>Q: Centres need to understand the analysis of their budgets line by line and the impact it has on resulting per diems.</p> <p>A: Numerous reports are available to operators during and after the budget analysis is complete. Communication can always be improved. We will take your comments forward and improve the budget app and our methods of communication. Consultants are always available to operators for help with the budget and explaining changes and outcomes.</p>
<p>9. Closing Next meeting is centralized, on Wednesday May 23, at Metro Hall, 55 John St, Room 308 (3rd floor), 9:30-11:30.</p>	