

Ministry of Education

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Ministère de l'Éducation

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2015: EYCC4b

MEMORANDUM TO: Chiefs of First Nations with Licensed Child Care
Child Care Administrators

FROM: Jim Grieve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years Division
Ministry of Education

Andrew Davis
Executive Director, Fiscal & Financial Planning
Financial Policy & Business Division
Ministry of Education

DATE: **January 23, 2015**

SUBJECT: **First Nations Child Care Wage Enhancement
Implementation**

We are pleased to provide you with information about the 2014 Ontario Budget investment of \$269 million over three years to support wage enhancement in the licensed child care sector. We will be engaging with our First Nations partners in the coming weeks about the wage enhancement implementation.

Providing the best possible care for our children also means recruiting and retaining the best possible Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and other child care program staff. Doing so supports children in their learning and development and enhances the confidence of parents/guardians in the quality of their child care programs.

We are excited that this initiative has given us the opportunity to build a new relationship with your First Nation. The Ministry of Education would like to have a service agreement with you to provide wage enhancement funding to staff working in licensed child care in your community. We look forward to working with you to support children and families.

This memorandum includes information on the 2015-16 wage enhancement funding, as well as the process for entering into a funding relationship with the ministry — such as roles and responsibilities and what you can expect throughout the fiscal year.

The wage enhancement initiative has a number of key goals:

- to close the wage gap between RECEs working in the publicly funded education system and those in the licensed child care sector;
- to help stabilize child care programs by supporting their ability to retain RECEs and non-RECE program staff; and
- to support greater employment and income security.

In order to meet these goals, the wage enhancement initiative is intended to be an ongoing investment. This will support an increase of \$1 per hour in 2015-16, plus 17.5 per cent for benefits, with an additional increase in 2016-17.

The first year of the wage enhancement initiative will be a **transition year** and will allow the ministry to work with First Nations on the delivery of the wage enhancement funding. This transition year will also offer opportunities for feedback and learning to inform adjustments for the second year.

PART I – IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The approach below aligns with the eligibility and capping requirements for all licensed child care program staff in Ontario.

A. Eligibility

Wage enhancement funding will be available to eligible child care program staff whose positions **can be counted toward adult to child ratios** under the *Day Nurseries Act* (DNA); working in all licensed child care centres and licensed private-home day care (PHDC) agencies in First Nations communities including:

- Registered Early Childhood Educators;
- Program staff;
- Supervisors;
- PHDC visitors; and
- PHDC providers.

Non-program staff such as cooks and custodial staff may be eligible for a partial wage enhancement where a portion of their day is spent in a ratio position. For example, a

cook who spends 25 per cent of their time in the preschool room supporting ratio may receive up to 25 per cent of the wage enhancement amount.

B. Capping

As the intent of the wage enhancement is to close the wage gap between RECEs working in full-day kindergarten (FDK) programs and RECEs/child care professionals in licensed child care settings, the ministry has established an **hourly wage maximum of \$26.27/hour** for centre-based staff or an equivalent rate for PHDC providers. This wage cap aligns with the top of the existing school board educator salary matrix for RECEs in FDK.

RECEs, program staff, supervisors, PHDC providers and visitors **earning more than \$26.27/hour will not be eligible** for a wage enhancement. If the wage enhancement brings an employee's wage close to cap, they will be eligible for a partial enhancement to bring them up to \$26.27/hour. The wage cap will be adjusted to align with any future changes to the provincial school board educator salary matrix for RECEs working in FDK.

PART II - SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The ministry will be engaging with our First Nation partners in the coming weeks on the wage enhancement implementation. Below are the accountability requirements for all licensed child care programs in Ontario, including First Nations programs.

A. Accountability

It is crucial that the wage enhancement funding be paid to eligible child care staff and not spent to support other child care operations. This means that First Nations will be required to confirm that 100 per cent of the wage enhancement funds were provided to eligible child care staff, **in addition** to their wage rate. First Nations are not permitted to substitute funding previously provided to staff with ministry funding. Any funding that is not expended by a First Nation, in accordance with the funding criteria for wage enhancement, will be recovered by the ministry.

The ministry will collect data to support accountability and inform future policy and implementation decisions regarding this investment.

B. Administration

To support First Nations with the implementation of the wage enhancement initiative the ministry will provide a one-time grant equivalent to **ten per cent** of the projected 2015-16 wage enhancement allocation. Administration funding will be based on existing licensed child care capacity to reflect the projected administrative effort associated with the enhancement.

Additional details will be available in Spring 2015 as part of the *2015-16 Ontario Child Care Business Practice, Service and Funding Guideline*.

Contract Management:

In the Ministry of Education (EDU), the Early Years Division under Jim Grieve, Assistant Deputy Minister, through the Early Years Implementation Branch (EYIB), Pam Musson, Director is responsible for child care program support and contract management.

Within the EYIB there are six Child Care Advisors who are located in EDU's six regional offices across Ontario: London, Toronto, Barrie, Sudbury/North Bay, Ottawa and Thunder Bay. To support you within this structure, there will be a Child Care Advisor who will work directly with you to provide advice and support on child care contract management.

Barrie Region Maria Saunders, Child Care Advisor 20 Bell Farm Rd. Unit 9 Barrie, ON L4M 6E4 Maria.Saunders@ontario.ca Phone:(705) 725-7629 Fax:(705) 725-7635	London Region Karen Calligan, Child Care Advisor 217 York St. Suite 207 London, ON N6A 5P9 Karen.Calligan@ontario.ca Phone: (519) 667-1654 Fax: (519) 667-9769	Ottawa Region Rachelle Blanchette, Child Care Advisor 11 Beechgrove Lane Kingston, ON K7M 9A6 Rachelle.Blanchette@ontario.ca Phone: (613) 536-7331 Fax: (613) 536-7272
Sudbury/North Bay Region Lina Davidson, Child Care Advisor 199 Larch St. Suite 1103 Sudbury, ON P3E 5P9 Lina.Davidson@ontario.ca Phone: (705) 564-4282 Fax: (705) 564 4233	Thunder Bay Region Kelly Massaro-Joblin, Child Care Advisor 615 South James St. 1st Floor Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6P9 Kelly.Massaro-Joblin@ontario.ca Phone: (807) 474-2982 Fax: (807) 474-2999	Toronto and Area N/A for First Nations

Please confirm with your Child Care Advisor the name and contact information for your First Nation's designated child care representative.

Financial Support:

The Fiscal and Financial Planning, Financial Policy & Business Division, under Andrew Davis Executive Director, is responsible for financial reporting and issuing payments through the Financial Analysis and Accountability Branch (FAAB), Marie Li, Director.

Financial Analysts within FAAB are located in Toronto and are available to provide support to you on financial reporting and cash flow. The Financial Analysts work closely with the Child Care Advisors to support you and ensure seamless alignment between the child care program, contract management and reporting processes. Additional details regarding your Financial Analyst will be forthcoming.

We are excited to work with you on the launch of this important initiative and look forward to establishing a collaborative relationship over the coming year.

Your Child Care Advisor will be in touch to further engage with you regarding implementation of this initiative. In the meantime, if you have any questions related to the child care wage enhancement implementation strategy as described in this memo please contact your regional Child Care Advisor.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

Jim Grieve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years Division

Andrew Davis
Executive Director, Fiscal and Financial
Planning
Financial Policy & Business Division

cc: Social Services Coordination Unit, Chiefs of Ontario
Lawrence Baxter, Social Services Director, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation
Yolanda Fobister, Social Policy Analyst, Grand Council Treaty #3
Stan Cloud, Social Services Director, Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians
Adrienne Pelletier, Social Services Director, Union of Ontario Indians
Diane Maracle-Nadjiwon, Independent First Nations Coordinator
Arliss Skye, Social Services Director, Six Nations of the Grand River
Pam Musson, Director, Early Years Implementation Branch, Early Years Division
Shannon Fuller, Director, Early Years Policy and Program Branch, Early Years Division
Marie Li, Director, Financial Analysis & Accountability Branch
Child Care Advisors, Early Years Implementation Branch
Financial Analysts, Financial Analysis & Accountability Branch