

**Ministry of Education
Early Years and Child Care
Division**

**Ministère de l'Éducation
Division de la petite enfance et de
la garde d'enfants**



315 Front Street West, 11th floor
Toronto ON M7A 0B8

315, rue Front Ouest, 11^e étage
Toronto ON M5V 3A4

2025: EYCC02

TO: Consolidated Municipal Service Managers
District Social Services Administration Boards

FROM: Holly Moran
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years and Child Care Division

DATE: July 3, 2025

SUBJECT: Omnibus Report-Back package related to the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement and updates regarding the Innovation Fund

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) with:

- information and instructions regarding a comprehensive Omnibus Report-Back ("Report-Back") package;
- an update on and next steps for the Innovation Fund; and
- an invitation for CMSMs and DSSABs to connect with the ministry on auspice, as it pertains to the CWELCC system and Directed Growth Plans.

As you are aware, 2025-2026 is the final year of the current CWELCC Agreement. A key component of this Agreement involves reporting back to the federal government and Ontarians on commitments that:

- support accountability;
- demonstrate progress; and
- provide evidence of outcomes achieved at the local level.

In addition, a comprehensive understanding of various CWELCC investments and initiatives currently underway is critical to inform discussions with the federal government regarding next steps for Ontario's child care system.

In recent months, several new updates have been introduced as part of the CWELCC system. These include the release of revised space targets following the recalibration exercise, the provision of funding allocations through the Infrastructure Fund, and the recalculation of Start-up Grant funding allocations. To ensure effective communication on progress towards implementing these measures, the ministry is sharing a one-time Report-Back package.

To support a more streamlined and manageable approach to completing the Report-Back package, the ministry is staggering the deadlines for the various required data reporting tasks.

Please refer to [Appendix 1: Report-Back Package Instructions](#) for details, including timelines. This appendix also provides an update regarding the Innovation Fund, with supplementary information about the Innovation Fund provided in [Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 3](#).

Should you have general questions about the Report-Back templates or the Innovation Fund, please pose these questions via the ministry's [Early Years Support Request](#) form.

Finally, we want to share that the ministry is aware that some CMSMs and DSSABs may have challenges and barriers to achieving their overall CWELCC auspice space creation targets. Should they have concerns about this, CMSMs and DSSABs are encouraged to reach out to the ministry at: earlyyears.branch@ontario.ca.

Thank you again for supporting the ministry in collecting valuable information that will help support discussions with the federal government and for your ongoing support and collaboration.



Holly Moran
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years and Child Care Division

cc: Matthew DesRosiers, Director, Funding Branch
Whitney Wilson, Director, Early Years Branch
Karen Puhlmann, Director, Child Care Branch

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Report-Back Package Instructions
- Appendix 2: Approximate Notional Allocations for the Innovation Fund by CMSM/DSSAB
- Appendix 3: Policy Parameters to Support Potential Projects under the Innovation Fund

Appendix 1: Report-Back Package Instructions

I. In-Year Cost-Based Funding (CBF) Implementation Report (due date: July 23, 2025)

The purpose of the In-Year CBF Implementation Report is to assess the effectiveness of the CBF funding allocations to inform ongoing discussions and negotiations with the federal government.

Instructions: CMSMs and DSSABs are to complete “**Attachment 1 (In-Year CBF Implementation Report)**” and return your completed document to the ministry via email to childcarefunding@ontario.ca by **July 23, 2025**. Detailed instructions are included in the “Instructions Tab” of the Excel file. When sending your document to the ministry, please add the name of the report and your region in the subject line of the submission email (for example, “In-Year CBF Implementation Report - County of X”).

II. Start-up Grant Funding (due date: August 15, 2025)

While the Funding Guidelines set out Start-up Grant reporting requirements that are met through the Education Finance Information System (EFIS) reporting, the ministry is interested in gaining a deeper understanding of Start-up Grant funding in the near-term to support discussions with the federal government on renewed funding.

Instructions: CMSMs and DSSABs are to complete “**Attachment 2 (SUG Report)**” and return your completed document to the ministry via email to earlyyears.branch@ontario.ca by **August 15, 2025**. We ask that you **rename your completed document** so that it **includes your EFIS identification number**. When sending your document to the ministry, please add the name of the report and your service area in the subject line of the submission email (for example, “Start-up Grant Funding Report - County of X”).

III. Directed Growth Plans (due date: August 29, 2025)

The [March 31, 2025 ADM memorandum](#) provided the results of the recalibration exercise that best positioned Ontario to achieve its space creation target of 86,000 net new CWELCC spaces by the end of 2026. This exercise resulted in adjusted space targets for some SSMs which, in turn, may impact Directed Growth Plans.

Instructions: CMSMs and DSSABs are to complete “**Attachment 3 (DG Plans Report)**” and return your completed document to the ministry via email to earlyyears.branch@ontario.ca by **August 29, 2025**. We ask that you **rename your completed document** so that it **includes your EFIS identification number**. When sending your document to the ministry, please add

the name of the report and your service area in the subject line of the submission email (for example, “DG Plans Report - County of X”).

Additionally, all CMSMs and DSSABs are being asked to include, **as an attachment, their most current Directed Growth Plan** when emailing the ministry their completed DG Plans Report.

IV. Infrastructure Fund (due date: September 12, 2025)

Understanding that CMSMs and DSSABs are at various stages of implementing the Infrastructure Fund and that some projects may not be completed until December 2026, as specified in the Funding Guidelines, there are two junctures at which CMSMs and DSSABs must report-back to the ministry about the Infrastructure Fund.

Instructions: CMSMs and DSSABs are to use “**Attachment 4 (Infrastructure Funding Report)**” to briefly describe their proposed projects that would be funded under the Infrastructure Fund.

- The first tab asks questions related to the Infrastructure Fund allocations announced in the March 31, 2025 memorandum;
- The second tabs seeks information to inform potential future funding decisions, should there be additional funding made available for the Infrastructure Fund.

If your application process and/or service agreement finalization related to the Infrastructure Fund is not yet complete, provide the estimated *projected* data points being requested.

CMSMs and DSSABs are to complete “**Attachment 4 (Infrastructure Funding Report)**” and return your completed document to the ministry via email to earlyyears.branch@ontario.ca by **September 12, 2025**. We ask that you **rename your completed document** so that it **includes your EFIS identification number**. When sending your document to the ministry, please add the name of the report and your service area in the subject line of the submission email (for example, “Infrastructure Funding Report - County of X”).

V. Innovation Fund (proposal due date: September 19, 2025)

As announced in the [November 16, 2023 memo regarding Ontario’s Child Care Workforce Strategy](#), the ministry will be making available to CMSMs and DSSABs one-time Innovation Fund funding to establish and build on partnerships with employers, schools, post-secondary institutions, municipalities and school boards to develop local solutions to support students and address early childhood educator (ECE) workforce issues.

While the ministry continues to finalize the Innovation Fund, at this time, the ministry is asking CMSMs and DSSABs to begin assessing local needs, exploring opportunities, and thinking about potential high-impact projects that could be implemented under the Innovation Fund before the end of the current CWELCC Agreement.

The ministry is sharing **notional allocations** with CMSMs and DSSABs for the Innovation Fund (please refer to [Appendix 2: Approximate Notional Allocations for the Innovation Fund by CMSM/DSSAB](#)) to help inform early-stage preparation for potential projects. You will note that the funding being made available under this Innovation Fund is \$9.5M, greater than the \$5M initially communicated for this Fund.

Policy parameters around what CMSMs and DSSABs could spend their Innovation Fund allocation on have been developed to support priorities identified through consultations and the objectives of the provincial Child Care Workforce Strategy. These policy parameters are set out in [Appendix 3](#) and will be the basis of a formal funding guideline for this Innovation Fund, which will be released later in 2025.

The ministry is implementing a **new, one-time approach** to releasing funding to CMSMs and DSSABs which will involve the ministry reviewing and approving high-level project proposals based on the policy parameters and the notional allocations (see instructions below).

Innovation Fund Template Instructions:

Referencing the approximate notional allocations (see [Appendix 2](#)) and the policy parameters for potential projects that could be funded under the Innovation Fund allocations (see [Appendix 3](#)), at this time, all CMSMs and DSSABs are being asked to engage and collaborate with local community partners to begin preparing for potential Innovation Fund projects.

CMSMs and DSSABs are to complete “**Attachment 5 (Innovation Fund Proposals)**” and return your completed document to the ministry via email to earlyyears.branch@ontario.ca by **September 19, 2025**. We ask that you **rename your completed document** so that it **includes your EFIS identification number**. When sending your document to the ministry, please add the name of the report and your service area in the subject line of the submission email (for example, “Innovation Fund Proposal - County of X”).

Technical Briefing

A technical briefing will be hosted by the ministry for all CMSMs and DSSABs on **July 10, 2025**. The purpose of the technical briefing is to provide an overview of the upcoming reporting tasks, how reporting is to be completed, and timelines for various reporting components. Additionally, there will be an opportunity for participants to ask questions.

Please join the **one-hour** technical briefing on **July 10, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.**; an invitation will be sent out by the ministry closer to the date of the technical briefing.

Should you or your staff not be able to attend the technical briefing, note that **it will be recorded and the link to the recording will be shared with all recipients of this memorandum.**

Appendix 2: Approximate Notional Allocations for the Innovation Fund by CMSM/DSSAB

EFIS ID	CMSM/DSSAB	Approximate notional funding allocation
200	City of Brantford	142,000
201	City of Cornwall	126,000
202	City of Greater Sudbury	163,000
203	City of Hamilton	288,000
204	City of Kawartha Lakes	118,000
205	City of Kingston	146,000
206	City of London	245,000
207	City of Ottawa	600,000
208	City of Peterborough	149,000
209	City of St. Thomas	119,000
210	City of Stratford	115,000
211	City of Toronto	1, 158,000
212	City of Windsor	221,000
213	County of Bruce	120,000
214	County of Dufferin	122,000
215	County of Grey	129,000
216	County of Hastings	137,000
217	County of Huron	113,000
218	County of Lambton	134,000
219	County of Lanark	122,000
220	County of Lennox & Addington	113,000
221	County of Northumberland	119,000
222	County of Oxford	119,000
223	County of Renfrew	126,000
224	County of Simcoe	235,000
225	County of Wellington	165,000
226	District Municipality of Muskoka	111,000
227	Municipality of Chatham-Kent	132,000
228	Norfolk County	124,000
229	Regional Municipality of Durham	383,000
230	Regional Municipality of Halton	357,000
231	Regional Municipality of Niagara	206,000
232	Regional Municipality of Peel	496,000
233	Regional Municipality of Waterloo	310,000
234	Regional Municipality of York	619,000
235	United Counties of Leeds & Grenville	129,000
236	United Counties of Prescott and Russell	127,000
300	Algoma District Services Administration Board	110,000

EFIS ID	CMSM/DSSAB	Approximate notional funding allocation
301	District of Cochrane Social Services Administration Board	120,000
302	District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board	127,000
303	District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board	108,000
304	District of Sault Ste Marie Social Services Administration Board	121,000
305	District of Timiskaming Social Services Administrations Board	114,000
306	Kenora District Services Board	113,000
307	Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board	111,000
308	Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board	107,000
309	District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board	128,000

Appendix 3: Policy Parameters to Support Potential Projects under the Innovation Fund

Eligible Expenses	Ineligible Expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a collaborative workforce strategy with local community partners by adding to or enhancing established recruitment and retention initiatives; • creating and sustaining an equity-based workplace by enhancing strategies and incentives to support diversity and inclusion in the child care and early years workforce; • providing retention and recruitment resources (e.g., early childhood educator [ECE] employment opportunities, career maps, etc.); • continuing the promotion and marketing of ECEs as a valued profession and the range of career options available; • establishing innovative partnerships with education/post-secondary institutions, such as local school boards and Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, to increase the number of qualified staff in the early years and child care workforce; • providing financial support in the form of grants (e.g., tuition/travel for education/training) for new ECE students and/or non-ECE program staff who do not meet the criteria for the ECE Qualification Upgrade Program to obtain additional qualifications (e.g., individuals with less than six months of early years and child care experience); • measuring and reporting on the impacts of the recruitment and retention strategies implemented. • professional learning opportunities, resource creation, and/or mentorship opportunities focused on one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ supporting children with special needs ○ early years pedagogy ○ mental health and resiliency ○ diversity, equity, and inclusion <p>For greater clarity, a range of persons may be served by projects/initiatives funded under the Innovation Fund, including but not limited to: students, staff of child care licensees (centre-based and home child care agencies), home child care providers overseen by licensed home child care agencies, and staff employed in EarlyON Child and Family Centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any expenses not set out under “eligible expenses” in the column to the left such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ wage and salary rates; ○ increases to benefits (including vacation); and/or ○ new compensation entitlements such as one-time payments (e.g., bonuses).