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Ministry of Education

**Next Steps in Community Hubs
and School-Based Early Years Programs**

Education Funding Engagement Session | November 10, 2016

Community Hubs

Overview

- ❖ In August 2015, the Premier's Community Hub Framework Advisory Group issued a report entitled *Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan* (Action Plan), which outlined specific recommendations to assist Ontario in promoting more community hubs in existing public properties.

- ❖ In May 2016, the Ministry of Education announced three initiatives in response to the Action Plan to support community hubs, including child cares, in schools:
 1. Amendments to Ontario Regulation 444/98 - *Disposition of Surplus Real Property* (O. Reg. 444/98) to promote more opportunities for community organizations to purchase or lease surplus school properties;
 2. New capital funding for school boards to support community hubs in schools; and
 3. Additional child care retrofit funding.

Community Hubs

Amendments to Ontario Regulation 444/98

- ❖ In Fall 2015, the ministry undertook an extensive consultation process to review potential amendments to O. Reg. 444/98 in support of the Action Plan.

- ❖ As a result of these amendments:
 - The circulation period for notification of surplus property disposition has been doubled from 90 days to 180 days; and
 - The list of entities to receive notification of surplus property disposition has been significantly expanded
 - Among the list of new entities are agencies offering Section 23 programs, CMSMs/DSSABs, LHINs, Public Health Boards, and Indigenous Organizations

- ❖ The ministry has developed an online look-up tool to assist school boards in determining the specific contact information for some of these entities.

Community Hubs

New Capital Funding to Support Community Hubs in Schools

- ❖ The following new capital funding initiatives to support community hubs in school boards were announced in May 2016:
 - \$20 million to create space for new child care and child and family support programs through Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres in schools.
 - \$18 million to retrofit existing space within a school to open up more spaces for children under four years old.
 - \$50 million to renovate available school space to make it available for use by community partners and the public.
 - Funding for school boards to replace space for eligible community partners in schools that are being lost due to closure or sale.

Community Hubs

Minor Retrofits and Accessibility Initiative (\$50 million)

- ❖ The funding can be used to:
 - retrofit available school space into space for use by a new community partner(s) or to expand existing hub spaces in schools, or
 - Improve the accessibility of a school to enable use by a broader range of community partners
 - Funding must be used towards community partners that promote the care and/or development/well-being of children (emotional, social, physical) or promote student success (section 234 of the *Education Act*)
- ❖ Examples of how funding can be used:
 - Renovating 2 available classrooms into a redesigned space
 - Adding security doors
 - Addressing accessibility barriers through the installation of ramps/automatic doors
- ❖ Boards will decide what available spaces and schools provide the best opportunities to meet the needs of the board, the school, and the community partner
- ❖ Capital expenses must be depreciable and qualify for amortization

Early Years

Priorities

- ❖ Modernization of Child Care
- ❖ Creation of 100,000 child care spaces
- ❖ Accessibility, Affordability, Quality and Responsiveness
- ❖ Creation of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres
- ❖ Early Years Capital funding for child care and child and family programs is currently available for: new construction, replacement, retrofit, renovations and 'stand-alone'. Demand continues to exceed current funding.

Early Years

- ❖ System Focus: learning in safe and caring play-based environments, healthy physical, social, emotional and cognitive development, and on early identification and intervention for children in need of supports.
- ❖ Schools-First Approach: where possible, services will be located in or linked with schools to enhance seamlessness for children and families.
- ❖ In 2015-16, 61% of the licensed child care spaces were located in schools.
- ❖ Since the introduction of FDK, licensed child care spaces for four and five year old children located in schools has more than quadrupled from 15,000 in 2010-11 to 74,000 in 2015-16

Early Years

Child and Family Programs

- ❖ Beginning in 2018, CMSMs/DSSABs will be responsible for the planning and management of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (PFLCs, OEYCs, BBBFs and CCRCs).
 - serve children ages 0-6 participating with their parents and caregivers,
 - designed to strengthen adult-child relationships,
 - support parents/caregivers in their roles,
 - offer play and inquiry-based learning opportunities led by Registered Early Childhood Educators, and
 - connect families with specialized community supports as needed.

- ❖ The ministry is continuing to promote that CMSMs/DSSABs work with school boards to establish these centres as community hubs, taking a 'schools-first approach'.

- ❖ A schools-first approach helps to establish schools as community hubs that are located in areas that are easy to access for many families and helps to minimize transitions for young children.

- ❖ CMSMs/DSSABs will be responsible for managing the delivery of mandatory core services and will have the flexibility to determine how these services are delivered and by whom, through local service planning.

Early Years

Accommodation Costs

- ❖ Amended the *Child Care Modernization Act*, the *Education Act* to include regulation-making authority governing the amount or method used to determine the amount that school boards can charge operators of third party programs or child care and early years programs as defined by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.
- ❖ Currently, school boards decide how much to charge third-party providers leasing space in schools, with the policy direction that they must recover costs.
- ❖ Wide range charged to third-party providers across school boards.
- ❖ The Ministry is seeking to engage with school board partners, as well as, municipal and community partners to:
 - Review current practices
 - identify specific challenges
 - seek input into potential approaches
 - ensure transparency and consistency.

Questions: Community Hubs

1. How are the recent amendments to O. Reg. 444/98 working? Are there any further changes or support the ministry should consider making?
2. What other types of capital or other initiatives/programs should the ministry consider to encourage the development of more community hubs and community partnerships in schools?
3. What types of common data or information would be useful in either locating or operating a community hub in one of its schools?
4. How can school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs and early years partners located in schools better collaborate to increase access and affordability to programs, and support the government's commitment to create 100,000 additional child care spaces?
5. What would be the impact to school boards and partners of requiring that space leased to child care and early years providers be guaranteed for a minimum number of years?
6. What initiatives, guidance or regulatory measures could facilitate school boards and early years partners in working together more effectively (e.g., develop common methodology for school boards to recover costs associated with child care and early years)? How can these partnerships be made more transparent?
7. As the government supports the transition towards establishing Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres by 2018, how can we build on the work already undertaken by school boards and community partners offering child and family programs in schools, and enhance connections to community hubs?