



**City of Kingston
Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee
Meeting Number 02-2024
Agenda**

**Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
Hosted at City Hall in Council Chamber**

Please provide regrets to Iain Sullivan, Committee Clerk at 613-546-4291, extension 1864 or isullivan@cityofkingston.ca

Committee Composition

Councillor Chaves, Chair
Councillor Amos
Councillor Boehme
Councillor Osanic
Councillor Ridge
Councillor Stephen

- 1. Meeting to Order**
- 2. Approval of the Agenda**
- 3. Confirmation of Minutes**
 - a) **That** the minutes of Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee Meeting Number 01-2024, held Wednesday, December 13, 2023, be approved.
- 4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**
- 5. Delegations**
- 6. Briefings**

7. Business

a) Child Care and Early Years Review

The Report of the Commissioner of Community Services (ARCP-24-003) is attached.

Schedule Pages 1 – 16

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

8. Motions

9. Notices of Motion

10. Other Business

11. Correspondence

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment



City of Kingston
Information Report to Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee
Report Number ARCP-24-003

To: Chair and Members of the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee

From: Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services

Resource Staff: Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Housing & Social Services

Date of Meeting: February 22, 2024

Subject: Child Care and Early Years Overview

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Corporate business

Goal: 5.4 Support Kingston's economic competitiveness through workforce development and talent attraction

Executive Summary:

The City of Kingston, as the designated Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), plays a primary role in child care and early years services in the City of Kingston and Frontenac County.

The child care and early years sector continues to change dramatically for a variety of reasons such as: the introduction of EarlyON Child and Family Centres in 2019, the impact of the pandemic, the workforce and affordability pressures in the system, the roll out of The Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system and the pending update of funding allocations and guidelines in 2024.

The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with a comprehensive overview of the child care and early years system in the Kingston – Frontenac community and to provide an overview of the changes, system achievements and pressures anticipated.

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Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Major Projects & Strategic Initiatives	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Transportation & Emergency Services	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

The City of Kingston, as the designated CMSM, plays a primary role in child care and early years services in the City of Kingston and Frontenac County. The main funder of child care and early years funding is the Ministry of Education (MOE). As the local service system manager, the City has the responsibility for planning and managing child care and early years (EarlyON) services, administering fee subsidies, the allocation of funding and additional resources to service providers, as well as overall accountability and capacity building within the child care and early years sector in Kingston and Frontenac.

In this report staff provided an overview of:

- Role of the child care and early years programs in the community
- Funding structure
- Child care and early years programs and services supported by the City of Kingston
- Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)
- Workforce Development support
- Community connections

Role and importance of Child Care and Early Years Programs

The Impact of Child Care and Early Years Programs

Child care and early years programs are fundamental in the promotion of healthy child development. Supporting cognitive, physical, emotional and social growth, child care and early years programs aid children in reaching their full potential. Child care and early years programs also improve the quality of life and well-being of families by providing opportunities to fully engage in work or education, connect with services and build social networks. Further to this, access to child care enhances the social fabric, enables increased participation in the workforce, and is essential for the community's economic growth and sustainability.

Pedagogical Framework

The Ministry of Education's vision for child care and early years programs is built on the foundational document [*How Does Learning Happen?*](#) Ontario's pedagogical framework offers an image of children as competent and capable people, who thrive within secure relationships. Early Childhood Educators work in partnership with children's families, offering and expanding a network of meaningful connections, along with engaging and challenging learning opportunities. Early learning programs operating within the Provincial framework hold the core values of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression, for all children, families and educators. Educators observe children closely, noticing their developing skills and interests. Educators also engage with families, learning about children's home lives and cultures, and each family's values and aspirations for their children. Using all this information, educators thoughtfully plan curriculum to offer a meaningful level of challenge, and to encourage children's curiosity and desire for exploration. As children engage, learn and grow, educators document children's

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experiences, carefully noting children's questions and processes of discovery. This emergent and child initiated, adult supported approach allows educators to meet each child's needs and interests and support developing skills, ensuring that children feel seen, valued, respected and cared for, as they learn and thrive.

The Role of the City of Kingston Childcare and Early Years Services (CEYS)

Designated as a CMSM under the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA), the City of Kingston is tasked with the planning and managing of licensed child care services and EarlyON Child and Family Centres in Kingston-Frontenac on behalf of the Province of Ontario. The CEYS team is part of the Housing & Social Services department, and is responsible for the administration, funding and operation of early years programs and licensed child care services, and must develop policies and processes that meet the needs of the community and reflect the provincial interest for child care and early years programs. The MOE oversees the administration of child care and early years services. Service delivery targets are set for the municipality, and reporting to the Ministry is completed annually.

The City of Kingston is additionally designated as a French language service provider under the *French Language Services Act* (FSLA) and is required to submit a French Language Service Plan annually to the Ministry of Education. Staff ensure that French language services are available in all areas of internal service delivery, as well as in the licensed child care sector, special needs resourcing, and EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

Funding Structure

The City of Kingston receives funding from the Province of Ontario's MOE for the delivery of child care programs and services and EarlyON Child and Family Centres. The general allocation is divided into core service delivery and special purpose funding. The provincial formula consists of a prescribed spending flexibility between allocation categories and child care expenses and programs. Staff have the ability to use their discretion with this flexibility in a manner that best responds to the needs of the community.

Examples of funding that may be available to eligible child care operators are:

- General Operating
- Fee Subsidy
- Special Needs Resourcing
- Repairs and Maintenance
- Play Based Material and Equipment
- Wage Enhancement Grant

The municipal cost share varies with the funding purpose. In accordance with the *Transfer Payment Accountability Directive* there are contractual services targets that must be met related to Fee Subsidy and Special Needs Resourcing.

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The MOE launched their updated funding guidelines in late November 2023 and provincial service managers are reviewing the full impacts of these updates. It is expected that the funding formula will change again in the fall of 2024. Staff will update Council on any budget and service delivery impacts after having had the opportunity to further review and understand the full impacts locally.

The province will continue to build on the Wage Enhancement Grant and current workforce compensation under CWELCC through the Ontario Workforce Strategy to improve wages for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) employed by CWELCC participating agencies. In 2024 the wage floor will increase from \$20 per hour to \$23.86 for RECE program staff and from \$22.00 per hour to \$24.86 for RECE Supervisors.

Child Care and Early Years Programs Supported by the City of Kingston

The City is supporting various programs and services in the child care and early years system. What follows is an overview of these services.

Licensed Child Care

Licensed child care centres are the primary resource and preferred choice for families seeking child care.

The benefits of licensed child care centres are:

- children are in programs with other children their age
- qualified educators are employed
- certain standards of care must be met
- activities must be designed for children at different stages of development
- government-regulated and inspected to ensure they meet specific provincial health, safety and program standards
- child care fee subsidies may be available for families

Licensed child care centres operate in a variety of locations, caring for children aged 0 – 12 years, and may offer:

- nurseries
- full-day care
- extended hours care
- overnight care
- before and after school programs

The City of Kingston has Service Agreements with 34 licensed child care operators (20 non-profit organizations and 14 commercial businesses) providing care at 74 sites throughout Kingston and Frontenac. There are 4,969 licensed child care spaces (not including licensed

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home child care); however, the current operating capacity for licensed child care spaces is 1,687 (not including licensed home child care). It is important to note that there are a number of reasons as to why licensed spaces are vacant. Some of the main reasons are licensed spaces within the public-school environment may not be active due to a lack of available space; high parent fees; the quality of care offered does not meet the expectation of the family; and the inability of the child care centre to recruit and retain qualified staff.

The importance of high quality, inclusive child care centres in our community cannot be stressed enough. Staff continue to support licensed child care operators in Kingston-Frontenac to maintain program integrity and build the capacity of early learning programs conducive to the development of healthy and happy children.

Licensed Home Child Care

Licensed agencies contract and oversee individual home child care providers. Agencies offering licensed home child care are inspected by the Ministry at least once a year to ensure they meet specific provincial health, safety and program standards. Each licensed home can care for up to six children under the age of thirteen (including any of their own children under the age of four). Only three children in a licensed home can be younger than two years.

Licensed home child care may offer:

- full-day care
- before and after school care
- extended hours
- overnight care

Some of benefits for families accessing licensed home child care are:

- government-regulated and inspected homes that meet specific standards
- siblings placed together
- small group size
- child care fee subsidies may be available for families
- standards that must be met by providers

It was anticipated that with the introduction of the CWELCC system and the reduction of cost for families accessing care in the licensed sector, more unlicensed homes would look to move under the umbrella of a licensed home child care agency. This has not been the case thus far. As the demand for licensed CWELCC spaces increases, access to licensed care has become more challenging for families. Consequently, unlicensed home child care providers are not experiencing the expected decrease in the demand for service.

Currently, there are three agencies offering licensed home care in Kingston-Frontenac, with an accumulated potential to operate 80 licensed homes. At this time only 16 licensed homes are

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active. Staff continue to support the growth of licensed home child care in Kingston-Frontenac in a number of ways, such as providing information sessions for unlicensed providers and promotional activities.

Fee Subsidy

Fee subsidy is an essential support for many families allowing them to participate in the workforce, pursue education and training, or manage a difficult personal situation; and is available to eligible families across a broad range of income levels. Fee subsidy is subject to the availability of the municipality's subsidy funds, and space availability within a child care program.

Families apply for fee subsidy directly to the City. Eligibility is determined via income testing, and families can be eligible for either full or partially subsidized child care. The income threshold and formula for calculating subsidy eligibility is established by MOE and has not been amended since 2007. Families with an adjusted income of up to \$20,000 are eligible for full fee subsidy with no parental contribution (the "adjusted income" is as defined by the federal government for the purpose of the Canada Child Tax Credit). For families with an adjusted income greater than \$20,000 the (annual) parental contribution is calculated based on 10% of their income over \$20,000. A consequence of the formula remaining unchanged since 2007 is the significant reduction in the number of families eligible for subsidy. Additionally, the introduction of CWELCC fee reductions has contributed to fewer families being eligible for fee subsidy.

File standards for fee subsidy applications are established by MOE, and staff review all decisions and documentation to ensure compliance with MOE guidelines.

Centralized Child Care Registry and Information System (CCRIS)

The CCRIS is a service the City procures from One Human Service Network (OneHSN). CCRIS is a tool provided to child care operators for waitlist management, and to families seeking to register with child care operators for an available space. Families can register with several child care operators for both current and future need. A support service for both operators and parents using the Centralized Child Care Registry is directly provided by OneHSN.

In addition to the benefit CCRIS offers operators and families, the technology provides staff with data that reflects the community's needs and is useful in guiding program development.

In 2023, CEYS engaged OneHSN to provide enhanced training to operators and City staff to maximize the benefits of the technology to full potential. Additionally, a "clean-up" of the registry was undertaken to ensure the accuracy of data. As of December 31st 2023, 272 unique children require child care, with start dates in the immediate through to December 31, 2024.

Special Needs Resourcing (SNR)

SNR supports the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care settings (including licensed home child care), camps and children's recreation programs, and EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

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The service delivery of Special Needs Resourcing must focus on the inclusion of all children to actively participate in child care and early years programs through a class-wide approach which does not separate or exclude children with individualized one-to-one supports. A key component to ensuring there is meaningful engagement for all children is the support for educators to increase their skills and knowledge and build their capacity to effectively foster an inclusive early learning environment. Throughout 2023 staff provided several training opportunities to enhance the skills and build confidence in educators to support children in a diverse and inclusive environment.

Municipalities have discretion in the delivery of SNR and Enhanced Supports. CMSM's can directly deliver services or engage third parties in service delivery. In Kingston-Frontenac services are primarily provided by Community Living Kingston. One child care operator has a Resource Consultant on staff.

The MOE is currently reviewing their SNR policies. In 2022, the MOE surveyed CMSMs on the scope of services being offered through SNR and Enhanced Supports in the municipality. The City's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office assisted in collecting the information needed to respond to the Ministry's queries. A review of services was conducted through interviews with Community Living Kingston, Frontenac Club Day Care, as well as both non-profit and commercial child care operators.

The review identified that a number of the services being provided by Community Living Kingston were out of scope (i.e. family intake, assessments of individual children, one-to-one supports). Subsequently, in January 2023, Community Living Kingston introduced a new model of service delivery aligning with the province's mandate for Special Needs Resourcing where the child care centre is the client requesting a Resource Consultant to assess the classroom; and the need for enhanced support funding is determined through a tiered approach. The change in model speaks to inclusivity and capacity building within the centre and has been well received by child care.

The MOE requires a minimum expenditure of 4.1% of the municipality's funding allocation be spent on Special Needs Resourcing (4.1% = \$457,346 for 2024). The City of Kingston has historically invested a percentage exceeding the mandated 4.1% for SNR. The allocated amount for 2024 is \$1,272,492.

Over 2024 staff will review the current approach to service delivery, direct delivery of SNR, and a combination of both models to establish an approach that meets the needs of child care and early years programs and ensures that funding is maximized.

Capacity Building and Program Integrity

The importance of high quality, inclusive child care for children cannot be stressed enough. Staff continue to support child care operators to maintain program integrity and build capacity to

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strengthen early learning programs that are conducive to the development of healthy and happy children.

Staff offers ongoing professional learning opportunities to early years educators and leaders. Professional learning and Communities of Practice are facilitated by a Program Integrity Officer (PIO) on topics of interest, and often include presentations from local experts (i.e. Family and Children Services-FLFA, KFL&A Public Health). Throughout 2022 and 2023, 69 professional learning sessions were delivered. Highlights in 2022/2023 were “Community Resilience Initiative (CRI) Trauma Informed Training”, and “Inclusion is Essential” a three-part series with Dr. Shelley Moore.

Additionally, the PIO provides on-site engagement with front-line staff and leaders who request individual support with program and policy development, and/or staff specific training needs.

The MOE’s Licensing Branch has also, on occasion, approached City staff to assist child care operators who are in non-compliance. In these situations, the PIO works collaboratively with the MOE and the operator on identified areas for improvement.

The increase in MOE’s engagement with City staff for services related to issues of non-compliance in child care centres is of concern. Over 2024 staff will develop an approach for the implementation of operational reviews to ensure compliance with Service Agreements. Staff will also introduce quality assurance standards that speak to the spirit of the MOE Guideline for Child Care and Early Years programs, and that promotes the City of Kingston’s value of a safe and healthy community.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

EarlyON Child and Family Centres (EarlyON) offer programs for children zero to six years and their families. EarlyON centres engage children in sensory play, creative art, music and movement, active play, dramatic play, science and nature. The program also provides a safe space for caregivers to connect.

EarlyON programs in Kingston are provided by Kingston Community Health Centre (KCHC) and Boys and Girls Club (BGC). In Frontenac County EarlyON programs are provided by Rural Frontenac Community Services (RFCS).

- There are 25 EarlyON program locations in Kingston-Frontenac
- The 2023 average number of visits by children to EarlyON was 3,203 per month

Service providers develop programming in response to community needs. As such, partnerships with community agencies, such as Kids Inclusive have been developed.

EarlyON programs are provided by KCHC and are offered in a designated Francophone space.

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Journey Together Indigenous programs are provided at various locations by Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (MBQ) and are supported by EarlyON service providers.

In 2022, CEYS provided Indigenous Knowledge Sharing for EarlyON educators. The initial series took place over 3 training sessions with Trish Meekins, and staff kept the conversations going throughout 2023 with a further series facilitated by Melissa Hammell.

In 2021 staff introduced KEyON, a digital sign-in system that provides families a quick and simple way to access activity schedules for EarlyON Centres across Ontario. Families are also able to register for On y va and Journey Together in Kingston-Frontenac. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, KEyON was an asset to EarlyON operators during a time when program attendance was restricted. KEyON provides staff with the ability to run analytics on the collected data that can help with programming and track unique visits.

The MOE introduced Mental Health funding for EarlyON programs in 2023. Funding is to be used to support children and families, as well as educators. It is anticipated that this funding will continue in future years. Examples of uses of this fund include programs to build capacity for EarlyON staff and education and support programs for parents.

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System

In March 2022 the Province of Ontario entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada to initiate the CWELCC system. The phased implementation of CWELCC will see parent fees for licensed child care reduced to an average of \$10 per day by September 2025 for children under six years of age. The MOE's vision for CWELCC is to:

- reduce child care fees for eligible families
- increase access to high quality, inclusive, licensed child care programs
- invest in the child care workforce

The introduction of CWELCC saw the MOE set base rates for each municipality. These base rates were based on the average fees charged for child care in Kingston-Frontenac on March 27, 2022; in addition, the fees for licensed operators in Ontario were frozen as of that date. The base rates for Kingston-Frontenac are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1 - Base Rates for Kingston-Frontenac

Infant 0 - <18 months	\$62.91 per day
Toddler 18 – 30 months	\$53.08 per day
Preschool 30 – <72 months	\$48.43 per day
Kindergarten 44 – <72 months	\$47.15 per day
School Age 68 – <72 months	\$47.15 per day
Family Group >24 - <60 months	\$53.08 per day
Before & After School <72 months	
Kindergarten:	\$22.92 per day
School Age:	\$21.58 per day

Child care operators were required to decide as to whether or not they would opt in to CWELCC by October 31, 2022. Operators who chose to opt-out were then permitted to raise fees. For those who chose to opt-in fees would remain frozen.

The province requested municipalities to accomplish phase one of the CWELCC implementation with limited and frequently updated data and within a tight time frame. Staff relied on the MOE’s CWELCC Guideline as the established policy, and used the suggested template documents to direct the application process. Staff held three CWELCC information sessions for child care operators in June 2022. Additionally, several one-to-one meetings were held with operators wanting to discuss the potential impact of CWELCC on their specific business model. In the time since, staff have continued to meet with child care operators as a community and individually to answer questions and address concerns.

The MOE’s target for enrollment in CWELCC is 95% of child care sites, and in keeping with the minimum ratio of 70:30 non-profit versus commercial spaces. In Kingston-Frontenac 90.5% of child care sites are enrolled in CWELCC, with 79% of operators opting-in and 69.4% of spaces are non-profit.

The primary reason licensed child care operators chose to opt-out was that the CWELCC system was not conducive to their business model. Those opting out in Kingston-Frontenac included two private schools which offer a pre-school program, two Montessori programs, two commercial operators, and a not-for-profit organization with a program which is free of charge to families. Additionally, there was one not-for-profit agency that expressed concern that the CWELCC system may have a negative impact on them to continue to provide a high quality early learning programming; and, as such, chose to opt-out and observe for a time. This agency has recently elected to opt-in for December 2023.

Phase one of the CWELCC system saw parent fees reduced by 25% retro-active to April 1, 2022, and workforce compensation funding to an established wage floor of \$18.00 per hour for eligible RECEs, and \$20 per hour for RECE Supervisors. In addition to parent fee replacement

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funding and workforce compensation, municipalities had the discretion to issue additional funds to operators to assist with costs associated with CWELCC implementation. In 2022 staff issued:

- \$2,810,402 - parent fee replacement
- \$277,900 - 10% administration funding to operators
- \$0 - workforce compensation

Starting January 1, 2023, phase two of the CWELCC implementation reduced parent fees by a further 37% for a total fee reduction of 52.75% in comparison to March 2022. Workforce compensation saw the wage floor increase to \$19.00 per hour for eligible RECEs, and \$21.00 per hour for RECE Supervisors, as well as an annual wage increase of \$1.00 for eligible RECEs up to a wage cap of \$25.00 per hour. Additionally, cost escalation funding of 2.75% was introduced. Municipalities continued to have some discretion to assist child care operators with exceptional expenses associated with cost escalation. Staff has continued to assist operators with additional administration expenses such as the completion of audited financial statements. Staff are currently reviewing available CWELCC funding to further assist operators with the financial burden associated with the increase to the minimum wage in October 2023.

Thus far the benefit of the CWELCC system has been limited to families via the reduction of child care fees. Child care operators have been placed in an extremely precarious position with “frozen fees” and escalating costs of operating, with no supporting financial relief as yet provided. It is important to note that the cost of operating child care is not synonymous with the cost of child care for families. The cost of operating high quality child care is high, and the majority of operators express that they struggle to balance their budgets. In addition to parent fees, operators depend on a variety of funding streams to support their programs. Provincial funding, such as general operating and wage enhancement grants, have not been increased to off-set escalating expenses and compensate for the loss of revenue that would have been generated by parent fee increases. Operators have shared that they have had to fundraise to support payroll obligations; that they are unable to offer pay raises; that they have had to make changes to programming that are more cost effective; and that they are constantly seeking creative ways to reduce costs without compromising the quality of care. Many express concern that if financial support is not available soon, they will be in jeopardy of no longer operating. All acknowledge that the financial pressure created by the implementation of the CWELCC system has negatively impacted their ability to retain and recruit qualified staff.

Staff are committed to supporting operators to work through the challenges imposed by CWELCC and are reviewing the current funding methodology, as well as options for change that would enable an increase in the flow of financial support to child care operators.

CWELCC Expansion

In 2022, the MOE introduced the “Access and Inclusion Framework” for the creation of spaces to support affordable child care in communities with populations most in need. The MOE

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provided municipalities with notional space targets and tasked them with the identification of priority neighbourhoods for targeted populations – low income children, vulnerable children, children from diverse communities, children with special needs, Francophone and Indigenous children.

Table 2 - Allocated Space Expansion for Kingston-Frontenac

	School Based Spaces	Community Based Spaces	Total Spaces
2023	122	23	145
2024	0	67	67
2025	0	0	0
2026	0	91	91

CCEYS received \$81,390 for the expansion of CWELCC spaces in both community based and licensed home childcare. CWELCC child care agencies that expanded community based and licensed homes in 2023 are able to apply for CWELCC expansion funding. Funding for school-based spaces is allocated by the MOE to school boards with approved expansion.

Workforce Strategy

In 2022/2023 one-time funding was received from the MOE for municipalities to invest in strategies and sustainable initiatives that would support recruitment/retention and build the capacity of RECEs/ECEs in the community. The workforce strategy included the following initiatives:

- The “Nothing Without Early Learning” conference was held in 2022 and 2023. The conference included international experts in early learning and child care as keynote speakers and breakout sessions with local professionals who spoke about identified areas of interest. In order to provide all ECE’s with the opportunity to attend the conference, each year the event was held on two consecutive days, and each day was identical. This allowed operators to choose to either close their centre(s) for the day, or to remain open and alternate staff attendance over the two days of activity. Participating agencies that closed their centre(s) in order for staff to attend were compensated for lost revenue. Participating agencies that rotated staff were reimbursed the staff wages for attendees. Conference attendance in 2022 was 243; and in 2023 conference attendance increased to 360 participants. Feedback from attendees has been positive, and staff will continue to offer the “Nothing Without Early Learning” conference to educators on an annual basis.
- Expenses were funded for the attendance of Francophone educators at the Francophone ECE’s Conference in Toronto in March 2023.

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- Training opportunities with local and national experts focusing on equity, diversity and inclusion, and building the capacity of ECE's in supporting children with special needs. Participating staff were paid for time spent learning.
- 51 RECEs were sponsored for the SLC Registered Behavioural Technician course, with 26 successfully completing the course and receiving an honorarium.
- A full day excursion for ECEs to attend the Mosaic of Marks presented by the Ontario Reggio Association in Ottawa.
- Mentorship Program – Honorariums were provided to 60 RECE's who volunteered to mentor SLC ECE students during their student placement activity.
- SLC was engaged to develop a Leadership Training Program supporting child care operators in succession planning and the development of future leaders. In addition to the eight learning modules, a series of videos featuring local RECE leaders sharing their knowledge and experiences were also produced.
- Staff engaged Kingston Literacy and Skills in the development of a "Pre-ECE" program designed to prepare students for entry into a post secondary ECE program. This initiative is also inclusive of funding to support work placement opportunities.
- Investment in advertising and promotion directed at encouraging interest in the ECE sector as a respected career opportunity and valued profession.
- Partnered with neighbouring municipalities on professional learning opportunities for Leaders.
- Knowing Our Numbers – This research initiative led by the Atkinson Centre, University of Toronto, is a regional-level child care and early years workforce data collection process whose findings will also be rolled up to provide a province-wide picture. Knowing our numbers will provide staff with valuable information on our local child care system.

City staff continue their work on supporting additional workforce development initiatives and partnerships in 2024.

Community Connections

Staff recognize the importance of building sustainable community relationships and in working collaboratively with child care and early years service providers as well as other community partners.

Staff continue to strengthen the municipality's relationship with child care operators and hosts bi-monthly meetings to share information, provide MOE updates and engage in open discussion on current sector issues. A separate meeting is held monthly for EarlyON leadership. Staff also actively participate in regional CMSM meetings, as well as the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) Children's Services Network (CSN), and are a collaborative member at several community tables and initiatives such as, the Early Learning Operators Network (ELON), the Children, Youth and Family Services Collaborative (CYFSC), ACEs and Resilience Coalition (ARC), Leading the Way – an Infant and Early Mental Health Pathways (IEMHP)

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Initiative, the KFL&A Early Years Planning Committee, and a Great Start for Families: Kahwà:tsire Ronwatiyenawá:se Centre.

The child care and early years community is comprised of dedicated and passionate professionals committed to the health, well-being, and quality of life for children and families in Kingston-Frontenac. Staff remain committed to working hand-in hand with the early years community to promote excellence in child care and early years services.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

None

Notice Provisions:

None

Accessibility Considerations:

None

Financial Considerations:

None

Contacts:

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Heather Mitchell, Manager, Social Services and Early Years, 613-546-2695 extension 4873

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Laurie Dixon, Manger Research and Data, Strategic Innovation and Partnerships

Nayeeda Rao, Data Analysis Coordinator, Strategic Innovation and Partnerships

Exhibits Attached:

None