



Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System Report

To: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

Date: 29 March 2023

Report No.: 03-23-4502

Strategic Directions

- Make every school an effective school

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System Report be received.

Context

This report has been prepared in response to the following motion passed at the January 23, 2023 Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee:

Be it resolved that the spring 2023 CWELCC staff report include an impact analysis and funding necessary to enrol in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program.

This report also reaffirms the decision made by staff to not proceed with converting the Extended Day Program to a Licensed Child Care Program (a requirement to become eligible for the CWELCC system) at this time.

Extended Day Program

The Extended Day Program (EDP) is the Board's directly operated, fee-based before- and after-school program. Established in 2018, EDP has provided greater access to before-and after-school programs for kindergarten to grade 6 students in schools where no program was available or in situations where the existing program discontinued operations.

The EDP operates in 22 schools throughout the Board, with a capacity to serve 855 students. As a directly operated school board program, the EDP operates within the Ministry of Education's requirements for schools and adheres to all TDSB policies and procedures. Led by the Designated Early Childhood Educators (DECEs) who also support the Kindergarten core school day program, EDP aims to provide a seamless learning experience and continuum care

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System

Through the Government of Canada's commitment to investing in a national child care system with all provinces and territories, as well as Indigenous organizations, the CWELCC system was developed to support quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in licensed child care.

CWELCC System Eligibility

Based on the terms of the Federal Provincial-Agreement, only licensed child care programs are eligible to receive CWELCC system funding.

Licensed child care programs that wish to participate in the CWELCC system are required to submit an application to Toronto Children's Services (the Service System Manager) for consideration. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria and funding approval is not guaranteed.

The Ministry of Education process to enrol in CWELCC system has changed from open enrolment in 2022 (licensed child cares opted in or out), to a targeted enrolment approach for 2023 (funds will be directed to identified targets). At this time the Ministry of Education is working with Toronto Children's Services on an approved Access and Inclusion plan that will support targeted expansion of the CWELCC system that aligns with local priorities. At this time it is unknown whether the EDP locations can be supported through CWELCC in this targeted approach.

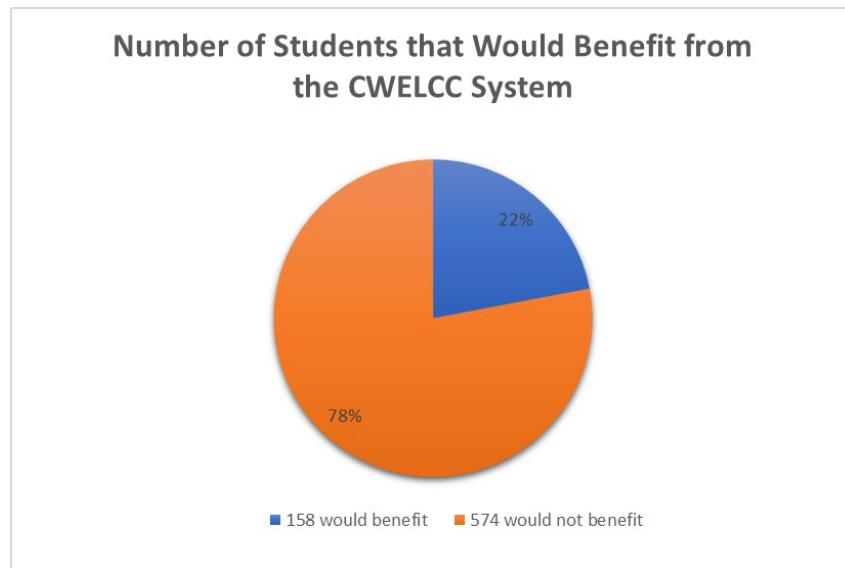
Impacts to Families

At this time, licensed child care programs that are participating in CWELCC system have reduced fees for children under the age of 6 years old (or turning 6 before June 30) by 52.5% for full fee families, and by 50% of their assessed rate for families with a fee subsidy. There are no fee reductions for children who are 6 to 12 years old.

As of February 27, 2023, 158 of the 732 students enrolled in the EDP across all 22

school locations would benefit from CWELCC. Of the 732 students:

- Approximately 22% (158) of students under the age of 6 would benefit from CWELCC. These students meet the age requirement and pay EDP fees that can be reduced.
- Approximately 16% (122) of students under the age of 6 would not benefit from CWELCC. While these students meet the age requirement, they are in receipt of a full fee subsidy and do not pay EDP fees that can be reduced.
- Approximately 62% (452) of students over the age of 6 would not benefit from CWELCC. These students do not meet the age requirements.
- The majority of families in EDP will not benefit from the CWELCC system.



As of February 27, 2023, 158 of the 732 students enrolled in the EDP across all 22 school locations would benefit from CWELCC. Please note that student enrolment is subject to fluctuation and will impact these estimates.

There has been a slight decrease to the number of families that would benefit from CWELCC since the January 23, 2023 FBEC Report.

Additionally, should EDP be converted to a licensed child care program and incur additional expenses associated with operating this type of program, a budget and fee revision would be required. At this time there is no commitment from the Province or City to cover any additional costs necessary due to staffing and other licensing requirements. While some families may benefit from the CWELCC system, the Board would be responsible for the costs associated with converting all of the EDP sites to licensed child care programs. To meet the requirements of a

cost recovery model, higher fees to families would be required.

EDP Budgetary Considerations

The EDP is not a licensed child care program as it is not required by the Education Act. To that end, the EDP is therefore not eligible to apply for CWELCC.

In order to be eligible to apply for the CWELCC system, the TDSB would be required to convert the EDP to a licensed child care program and a number of policy and operational changes would be required to achieve regulatory compliance. The estimated initial cost of converting the EDP to a licensed child care program (e.g., new licensing costs, training development, etc.) is \$252K. The TDSB's projected operating deficit for the 2023-24 school year under a licensed child care program is \$582K. Refer to Appendix A: 2023-2024 Estimated Financial Impact Under CWELCC.

The EDP is a cost-recovery program with parent fees being the sole source of revenue. It is proposed that as of July 1, 2023, the EDP fee rates be set at \$37.73 for

instructional days and \$61.06 for non-instructional days. These rates are based on the current program model and include a 7.5% fee increase to better align parent fees with the cost of program operations.

Should the EDP be converted to a licensed child care program, the fee rates for children under the age of 6 years old (or turning 6 before June 30) would remain \$35.10, as required by the terms of CWELCC system. The CWELCC system will fund an increase of expenses as a result of inflation, up to 2.75%. The TDSB would be financially responsible for any shortfall.

Entering into the CWELCC system would cost the Board \$300K in additional expenses to possibly support 22% (158) of EDP students.

At this time, funding commitments beyond 2023 have not been announced.

Rationale for Decision

The TDSB will not proceed with converting the EDP to a licensed child care program (a requirement to become eligible for the CWELCC system) at this time. This decision is due to the anticipated financial implications and additional

budgetary pressure that would be placed on the Board.

Furthermore, given that converting the EDP to a licensed child care program does not guarantee receipt of CWELCC system funding, there is a risk of incurring licensing related costs without any benefits to families.

This decision is for the 2023-24 school year and the TDSB will have the opportunity to revisit it for future years.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Staff will notify the Ministry of Education and Toronto Children's Services that at this time, the EDP will continue to operate in the current model and will not be converted to a licensed child care program for September 2023.

Resource Implications

Additional resources are not required for this recommendation.

Communications Considerations

Staff will notify the Ministry of Education and Toronto Children's Services of this direction.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- P.022 Early Learning and Care

Appendices

- Appendix A: 2023-2024 Estimated Financial Impact Under CWELCC

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