

HWDSB Protocol for the Expansion of Early Learning and Child Care (EL&CC) Programs

The government of Ontario, through its Best Start initiative, has established a "Schools First" mandate that will create a demand to establish new child care spaces in our schools. While Umbrella Family and Child Centres of Hamilton will continue to be our key partner, Best Start will create opportunities for the Board to partner with other non-profit child care operators. Only licensed child care operators from the non-profit sector will be considered to provide early learning and child care in HWDSB schools.

The following protocol will be used to guide decision-making with regard to child care expansion within HWDSB schools.

1. Operator will contact the Child Care Program Leader (CCPL) to express interest in opening an ELCC program in an identified school.
2. The Child Care Program Leader will discuss the proposal with the potential operator and may ask the operator to send a brief written memo outlining the request.
3. Proposals must be consistent with the Board's long-term accommodation plan, the plan for expansion of childcare within its schools and with the specific school's plan. Any proposal must also fit with in the CMSM's/Consolidated Municipal Service Manager's (City's) Child Care plan.
4. The CCPL will ensure that the above criteria are met and, where the operator wishes to provide service within the school, will confirm with the Principal and the Accommodation and Planning Department that space in the school is available over both the short and long term accommodation period.
5. If the Principal is in agreement, the CCPL will arrange a meeting between the Operator, Principal and the HWDSB Plant Department to look at potential space and discuss any renovation requirements.
6. When space is confirmed and the Principal is in agreement, the CCPL will conduct a needs survey to ensure program viability. If survey results indicate there is a need in the community, the Principal will be contacted and planning will proceed.
7. Once funding is secured, the HWDSB Plant department, in conjunction with the CCPL, will co-ordinate and supervise all renovations, construction or the acquisition and placement of portables relating to EL&CC sites. All contractors working on Best Start construction must be approved by the HWDSB and carry a minimum of \$2M liability coverage.
8. Funding requests to the CMSM and the licensing approval process will be the responsibility of the potential operator.
9. In the event that a contentious issue arises over a request, the request may be referred to Executive Council.
10. The approved operator will enter into an operating agreement with the Board, provide adequate insurance coverage and will hold the Board harmless from events relating to its direct or indirect operations.