

**Ministry of Education**

Minister

315 Front Street West  
Toronto ON M7A 0B8

**Ministère de l'Éducation**

Ministre

315, rue Front Ouest  
Toronto ON M7A 0B8



June 13, 2020

Dear Parents —

During this unprecedented time, we have seen all Ontarians work together to protect each other and our communities. We have taken a similar collaborative approach and are working with all levels of government to ensure that Ontarians have the supports and protection they need.

As Minister, I am committed to ensuring that Ontario's plan continues to put health and safety as our guiding principles, as nothing is more important than protecting our children, staff, and their families.

To date, our actions have focused on supporting parents, the health of our children, and front-line workers. This includes:

- Reopening certain child care centers, with strict health and safety standards, to provide relief to the families of front-line workers
- Ensuring parents cannot be charged for child care fees while centers are closed, while protecting their children's space in the center
- Supporting child care providers to ensure they remain sustainable and ready to open when parents return to work.

Earlier this week, I announced our plan to reopen child care centres across the province to support the next stage of the province's reopening framework. The plan, developed in consultation with Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and medical experts, will require child care operators to follow strict health protocols to ensure the safety of staff, children and parents. The plan's measures include:

- Cohorting — putting children and staff in groups of 10 or less
- Screening — all staff and children must be screened prior to entry to the child care setting. Anyone feeling unwell must stay home
- Enhanced cleaning — child care settings must be thoroughly cleaned before opening and frequently thereafter
- Daily attendance records — child care settings must keep daily records of all attendees in order to support contact tracing
- Restricting visitors — only essential visitors should be allowed entry into the child care setting
- Implementing drop-off and pick-up protocols in a way that facilitates physical distancing
- COVID-19 response plan — all child care settings will be required to have a plan in place if a child, parent or staff member/provider is exposed to COVID-19.

A critical component of this announcement allows for child care facilities to begin preparations for reopening under the new measures, and once met, they will be permitted to reopen. While child care centers can now re-open with strict safety and operational requirements in place, we know that many will take additional time. That is understandable and something we expected, given the importance of getting this right.

**We are providing child care facilities the flexibility to begin reopening, on their own timelines, once all of the strict health and safety guidelines have been met.**

We know the integral role child care plays in the restart of Ontario's economy, especially when it comes to enabling parents to return to work. Together with federal and municipal partnership, we have taken action to support licensed child care providers to enable them to remain sustainable and ready to open when parents return to work. Our plan includes flexible financial support for areas like cleaning and PPE. There is also available funding for enhanced staffing levels as centres reopen. Our direction to operators to maximize all available support under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, including rent supports that the province is co-contributing, enables this approach. Along with this financial support, strict health and safety guidance has been provided to ensure staff and children remain safe.

I'd also like to recognize the incredible work of Ontario's child care professionals who educate and provide safe learning spaces for our province's young ones. I know these past few months have been challenging and I'd like to thank them for their hard work and dedication.

As we move forward, the health and safety of your children, and those that look after them, will continue to drive our decision-making. Thank you for your continued strength during these difficult times.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Lecce', written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Stephen Lecce,  
Minister of Education