

SCHOOL OPERATIONS AND EQUITABLE EDUCATION

Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation Programs

1.0 Rationale

- 1.1 The Durham District School Board (DDSB) supports the engagement of families and children through the provision of high-quality Child Care, Early Years and After-School Recreation programs in its schools through DDSB approved licensed Child Care Operators and partnerships with community and government-based organizations.
- 1.2 The Durham District School Board (DDSB) recognizes that rich early learning and child care programs play a pivotal role in supporting children's learning, development, health, and well-being. Responsive, high-quality, and accessible early learning programs and services contribute to children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth, providing a nurturing environment that supports curiosity and exploration while promoting positive interactions with peers and caregivers. Prioritizing early learning and child care underscores the District's commitment to creating inclusive, accessible, and high-quality experiences that set the stage for the youngest learners to reach their full potential, reach optimal health and well-being, and achieve future success.
- 1.3 The DDSB is committed to fulfilling its statutory responsibilities as outlined in the *Education Act* (1990), the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (2014), and the relevant policies established by the Ministry of Education.
- 1.4 The DDSB acknowledges the leadership role it plays in establishing partnerships that facilitate and support the provision of diverse early learning experiences within schools. The DDSB is committed to building strong partnerships with Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation partners to support the implementation of high-quality programs and services that create successful transitions to school for students, families, and communities. The DDSB is also committed to promoting the healthy development of cognitive and social skills required for later school success and promoting healthy childhood growth, development, and overall well-being.
- 1.5 The DDSB is committed to providing families and communities with quality early learning, Child Care, and After-School Recreation services within its schools, working in partnership with Early Years partners and school personnel. The District recognizes that where space is available, and the need for service has been identified through community/regional planning processes, these programs will provide continuity for children and consistency for families.

2.0 Policy Objective

- 2.1 The objective of this policy is to establish the parameters for Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation programs and services for children from birth to 12 years of age within the DDSB. In doing so, the Board adopts the following principles for all Early Years, Child Care, and After-School Recreation partners in schools:
 - a) The Board values the rich diversity of our communities and strives to uphold rights and promote dignity, respect and inclusion for all individuals and communities that access our schools. To meet the DDSB's responsibilities to provide safe and welcoming environments

free from discrimination, the DDSB shall not enter partnerships or permit space to organizations, groups that do not support human rights principles, whose mandates/objectives conflict with DDSB's values and commitments as set out in section 2.2, or who cannot support the DDSB in meeting its responsibilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code and Occupational Health and Safety Act. Wherever possible, the DDSB will partner with groups and organizations that actively demonstrate their support for human rights and anti-discrimination.

- b) Respect for Roles and Responsibilities – Early Years, Child Care, and After-School Recreation partners respect each other's roles, responsibilities, and obligations to the community and education system.
- c) Develop partnerships with external community agencies and DDSB schools. This will help to strengthen early learning.
- d) Focus on children and families in Durham Region.
- e) Promote the health, safety, and well-being of children from birth to 12 years of age.
- f) Provide high quality early learning experiences and positive outcomes for children using "*How Does Learning Happen*", Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.
- g) Provide Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation programs that deliver high-quality programming, inclusive learning environments, and developmentally appropriate care. Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation programs work in partnership with the school in which they are located to support successful transitions to school and healthy well-being.
- h) Where appropriate, a high degree of parent/guardian/family involvement and participation in Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation programming is essential, including direct involvement in programs, planning, and decision making.
- i) Facilitate a comprehensive and integrated early learning and care program that offers a range of services and support to all families and children, while making the most efficient use of resources.
- j) When possible, collaborate with schools to provide integrated services that prioritize the best interests of children and families.
- k) Child Care and After-School Recreation programs should prioritize children attending the school in their respective catchment areas during registration.
- l) Both elementary and secondary schools can be considered as locations for Child Care programs.
- m) Ensure that early learning and care programs meet the needs of families and children based on data and demographics.

This policy is adopted to develop, foster, and promote healthy, supportive, and equal working relationships with Child Care, Early Years, and After-School Recreation partners for the benefit of DDSB students and families. All partners are expected to engage in courteous and respectful conduct, interactions, communications, and relationships.

- 2.2 This policy is to be interpreted and applied in accordance with the DDSB's commitment to promoting and upholding Indigenous rights and human rights in all its learning and working

environments. This includes anti-colonial, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist approaches and actions to provide services and employment that are safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable, accessible and free from discrimination and harassment consistent with the DDSB's Indigenous Education Policy, the Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy (the "Human Rights Policy"), the Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention Policy and related procedures.

3.0 Definitions

In this policy,

- 3.1 Board refers to the Board of Trustees for the Durham District School Board.
- 3.2 District refers to the corporation entity of Durham District School Board.
- 3.3 Staff refers to any individual employed by the Durham District School Board.
- 3.4 Early Years Consortium refers to the collection of DDSB Child Care, Early Years, After-School Recreation partners, and school administrators committed to working collaboratively in a mutually beneficial, on-going and supportive relationship that benefits children, families, staff, and communities as transitions occur from an early learning program to school and from school to an early learning program.
- 3.5 Before and After-School programs refers to programs in schools serving children 3.8 to 12 years of age before the school day begins, and after it ends, as defined in the *Child Care and Early Years Act (2014)*.
- 3.6 After-School Recreation programs refers to authorized recreational/skill building programs approved by the Ministry for school-aged children six to twelve* years of age (*exceptions are made for four- and five-year-old children who have older siblings in the recreation program and/or if there is no child care on site or the child care is unable to accommodate them). These programs offer learning and recreation activities including sports, outdoor play, special events, creative activities, and homework help.
- 3.7 Child Care refers to licensed early learning and care programs for children from birth to 3.8 years of age. In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (2014), child care means the provision of temporary care for or supervision of children in any circumstance other than in exempt circumstances.
- 3.8 Early Years refers to programs and services specifically designed for children aged from birth to six years of age. These programs involve or relate to the learning, development, health, and well-being of children and families.
- 3.9 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) refers to the service delivery agents for social assistance, childcare, and affordable and social housing.
- 3.10 Child Care Operator/Partner refers to the designated Administrator with decision-making authority who oversees operations for all the programs/centres and directly participates in the DDSB Early Years Consortium.
- 3.11 Families refers to parents/guardians/caregivers and other trusted adults who care for a child outside of the school.

4.0 Policy

- 4.1 The DDSB supports the provision of high-quality Child Care programs and services in its schools through DDSB-approved licensed Child Care Partners.
- 4.2 The DDSB supports the provision of high-quality Early Years programs and services in its schools that support children from birth to six and their parents/caregivers that promote and encourage healthy childhood growth and development, facilitate and foster successful early learning and a seamless transition from the early years to kindergarten, improve school readiness and kindergarten achievement levels, and support Ministry of Education directions.
- 4.3 The DDSB supports the provision of After-School Recreation programs and services for children from 6 to 12 years of age that promote physical fitness, healthy eating, building resiliency, and fostering the development of life-skills and problem-solving strategies.
- 4.4 The DDSB supports working in partnership with the Early Years Consortium to provide quality Early Years, Child Care, and After-School Recreation programs and services to meet the needs of Durham's diverse communities.
- 4.5 An annual analysis and review of community needs, in consultation with the Region of Durham, Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) will be conducted to support the viable expansion of Early Years and Child Care services within Durham schools.
- 4.6 Any new Child Care centres and Early Years programs established on the property of the Durham District School Board shall follow an approval process and meet the requirements set by the Ministry of Education.
- 4.7 Pre-qualified Child Care operators, licensed under the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA), may apply to provide Child Care services by following the Durham District School Board criteria and approval process. Criteria for the Durham District School Board pre-qualified and the approved process for Child Care Operators Early Years Partners are contained in the Child Care Procedure - Application/Pre-Qualification Process.
- 4.8 After-School Recreation programs will adhere to legislative requirements set under subsection 6(4) of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and its General Regulation, Authorized Recreational and Skill Building Programs. Criteria for the Durham District School Board pre-qualified and the approved process for After-School Recreation Programs are contained in the After-School Recreation Program Procedure- Application/Pre-Qualification Process.
- 4.9 Child Care partners will sign and comply with a partnership agreement that spans over five years. Early Years partners will sign and comply with a partnership agreement that spans over three years. After-School Recreation partners will sign and comply with an annual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- 4.10 All Early Years, Child Care, and After-School Recreation programs and services shall confirm in any agreement that they will uphold rights and responsibilities and promote equitable, safe, inclusive and welcoming practices consistent with the [Provincial Code of Conduct](#), the Ontario Human Rights Code, and section 2.2.

5.0 Evaluation

- 5.1 This policy may be reviewed and updated as may be deemed necessary or appropriate, but it shall be reviewed at least every 5 years.

6.0 Reference Documents

6.1 Policies

Indigenous Education Policy
Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy
Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention Policy

6.2 Other Documents (Legislation, Provincial Regulations, Etc.)

Ontario Human Rights Code
Education Act, 1990
Ontario Early Years Policy Framework (2014)
Childcare Modernization Act, 2014
Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014
How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)
The Ontario Early Years Child & Family Centres Guidelines (2015)
The Renewed Ontario Early Years Policy Framework (2017)
Before- and After-School Programs – Kindergarten - Grade 6: Policies and Guidelines for School Boards (2017)
Policy/Program Memoranda: B6 and B9 Child Care Capital Policies (2016-2017)
Child Care and Schools – Working Together in a Shared Space (2017-2018)

Appendix:

None

Effective Date:

2006-08-08

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