Province adds \$1.1 million for local childcare spaces

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EXCERPTS

After pledging to introduce \$10 a day childcare during the last provincial election, the B.C. government has announced \$33 million in funding for childcare spaces, including \$1.1 million in Prince George.

According to a background document released Monday, the funding would create 3,806 new licensed childcare spaces throughout the province, including 145 spaces in Prince George. Three local organizations - the Duchess Early Learning Centre, the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George and the Prince George Montessori Education Society - will be the recipients of the new funding.

The Duchess Early Learning Centre will receive \$95,500 to create 40 spaces - 20 preschool and 20 school-age. The Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George and the Prince George Montessori Education Society will each receive \$500,000 in new funding. IMSS will create 37 spaces in total, including six spaces for infants and toddlers, six for children aged three to five and 25 preschool spaces. The Montessori Education Society will create 68 spaces, with 24 for infants and toddlers, 20 for preschool-aged children and 24 for school-aged children.

The new funding will be allocated to 52 communities throughout B.C., through a total of 103 different projects. Most of the spaces are being administered by non-profit agencies, while 20 per cent are being administered by First Nations communities.

Although a substantial increase in funding for childcare spaces, the funding does not yet bring the government in line with its election promise of \$10 a day childcare. The NDP's campaign platform pledged to spend \$175 million on childcare spaces in 2017-2018, increasing to \$280 million in 2018-19 and \$400 million in 2019-20.

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