

# Pre-primary delays carry expensive consequences for parents in Halifax <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** MacLean, Alexa

**Source:** Global News

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 14 Aug 2019

## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

When school doors close in June, many families don't think about the new year until the end of August. But that's not the case for many families with four-year-old children in the Fairview and Clayton Park areas.

Parents say they've been waiting for clarity on answers regarding the pre-primary program at their elementary schools.

"It's really stressful to see if your kid is starting in September or October, and there's no location and it might be portables," said parent Lynn Liao.

Liao says she only found out this April that pre-primary will be offered at École Burton Ettinger Elementary in Fairview. While her family welcomes the program, she says it's been a waiting game ever since to find out basic information, including location and a start date.

"We didn't know whether to give notification to our current day care as to whether we were leaving in September or not and I was nervous, I didn't want to give them notification, so we never gave them notification so we're still paying for September and if pre-primary does start and we also have to get before and after care than I'm incurring double the fees," Liao said.

Liao says she only found out within the last few days that pre-primary at École Burton Ettinger will begin in September and that it will be offered at a private day care a few addresses up from the school.

Meanwhile, the Duc d'Anville Elementary pre-primary program in Clayton Park is expected to be delayed by at least one month.

"It is hugely inconvenient for parents who don't know what they're going to do with their kids for the month of September," said Patricia Arab, MLA for Fairview and Clayton Park. "So really I do encourage them to contact my office and let us help them try and figure out what we can do if they can't get back in with their childcare providers."

This spring, the province announced it will be expanding the pre-primary program to 56 new schools in September.

This fall will be the third year of the four-year rollout for the program and it's estimated around 1,400 four-year-olds will be enrolled in the program.

"I've had so many conversations and so many people in the area advocating for this program and wanting it in our schools. So, they're all [families] very excited about the program, they're happy to be able to put their kids into it. It's a matter of what are we going to do for this month period," Arab said.

According to the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE), 52 children are currently enrolled in the Duc d'Anville pre-primary program.

The delayed start is due to a lack of space which HRCE says will be accommodated for through the construction of four new portables on school property.

"The portable classrooms traditionally used at other schools cannot be used at Duc d'Anville because of site and space constraints. A different approach was needed and staff are working on designing and building new portables, each with its own washroom facility, that will fit within these constraints, while offering the best programming options for our pre-Primary children," Steve Gallagher wrote in an email, a senior staff advisor with HRCE.

HRCE adds that it will be leasing the private daycare space in Fairview for the pre-primary program to operate for the Burton Ettinger students.

Meanwhile, Liao says she wishes more information was given to parents throughout the summer so they could have peace of mind heading into the new school year.

"Most people need before and after care arrangements which was impossible to do because all of the day homes and pre-schools, they

need to know what the location is," she said.

**Related link:**

**Region:** Nova Scotia <sup>[3]</sup>

---

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/19/08/pre-primary-delays-carry-expensive-consequences-parents-halifax>

**Links**

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/19/08/pre-primary-delays-carry-expensive-consequences-parents-halifax> [2]

<https://globalnews.ca/news/5770761/pre-primary-delays-carry-expensive-consequences-for-parents-in-halifax/> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7853>