

Child-care deal with Ottawa 'may take some time,' Ontario education minister says ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Ontario's education minister says it "may take some time" to reach a deal with Ottawa on \$10-a-day child care.

Stephen Lecce made the comments Tuesday at an unrelated education announcement, where he was asked about the status of negotiations.

Ontario is the only jurisdiction that has yet to sign on to the federal government's \$30 billion plan to cut child care costs to an average of \$10 per day across the country within five years.

Lecce has said repeatedly that the current offer would see Ontarians paying more than \$10 per day, while Ottawa has said Ontario's spending plan lacks details.

Last month, Premier Doug Ford said the province was "very, very close" to a deal.

Lecce struck a slightly different tone Tuesday when pressed on the exact timing, saying he and Ford will keep pressing for the deal they consider fair for Ontario families.

"Look, these negotiations ... may take some time, but as long as we get to a good outcome for families (with) reduced fees and a more accessible system that's available for parents when they need it, that is a good thing," he said at the event in Vaughan, Ont.

He said "very constructive negotiations" are continuing.

"The premier and I will continue to negotiate with one intention, which is delivering that deal as soon as possible, so we can get these fees down and create certainty for all families that are longing to get their kids in a childcare system that's accessible and affordable."

Nunavut became the latest territory to sign on to the federal Liberals' child care plan last month, following all other provinces and territories.

As for Ontario, Ford has also said that he wants to ensure the funding continues beyond five years.

Federal Families Minister Karina Gould, who is in charge of negotiating the child care efforts, has said other premiers didn't have the same issue, and that the five-year timeframe was chosen so the government can assess how the program is working.

Gould has also said there is pressure to ink a deal before the fiscal year ends at the end of March so Ontario can receive more than a billion dollars set aside for this year.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: \$10-a-day child care ^[4]

federal agreement ^[5]

access to child care ^[6]

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Links

^[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/02/child-care-deal-ottawa-%E2%80%98may-take-some-time%E2%80%99-ontario-education>

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