

Quebec election: Liberals would prioritize universal daycare over pre-K ^[1]

"Too many families don't have access to daycare, and too many have to make financial sacrifices to allow their children to (attend) private daycare centres," said Dominique Anglade.

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EXCERPTS

GATINEAU — If elected on Oct. 3, the Liberal Party would not continue the project by the Legault government to have pre-kindergarten spots available to all Quebecers.

Instead, leader Dominique Anglade said Friday she would maintain the pre-K classes now in existence and expand the public daycare system to guarantee a place for all children.

Anglade charged that a blind devotion to creating universal access to pre-K has come at the expense of the province's daycare network, which she said is in crisis.

"Too many families don't have access to daycare, and too many have to make financial sacrifices to allow their children to (attend) private daycare centres," Anglade said, standing in front of a centre de la petite enfance (CPE) in Gatineau. "We can't give up on this challenge, as the CAQ has done. We will offer a real solution to parents throughout Quebec."

Liberal families policy critic Marc Tanguay noted that nearly as many spaces were closed as were opened during the last mandate.

According to the Liberals, the CAQ government's reign has been marked by an "explosion" in the waiting list of families that don't have a spot for their children, while educators have left the public daycare network in droves.

A Liberal government would make access to \$8.70-per-day daycare a fundamental right for all Quebecers, as it is for the public school system.

Anglade said Quebecers would never accept their children being put on a waiting list for a place in a public school, so they shouldn't have to put up with a waiting list for subsidized daycare spots.

Not only is it good for children to attend daycare, she said, but access to subsidized spaces is part of an overall plan to combat unprecedented increases in the cost of living.

To pay for it, Anglade said the province would rely on transfer payments from Ottawa, which are expected to amount to \$6 billion over five years.

The Liberals plan to spend \$1.1 billion per year to finance 67,000 additional spaces.

Region: Quebec ^[3]

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