

Surrey families benefit from child care on school grounds ^[1]

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Excerpts

Investments through ChildCareBC's New Spaces Fund are helping create more than 290 new child care spaces for school-aged children, and enabling more families in Surrey to access licensed child care spaces on school grounds, with more to come.

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The new child care spaces for school-aged children are located at nine elementary schools throughout Surrey. Some spaces are still available. The Surrey School District received approximately \$186,000 through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund to help create the child care on school grounds.

"Schools are the heart of their communities and investments like child care on school grounds help to support families," said Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care.

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Since 2018, the Province has provided funding to create 2,842 new licensed child care spaces in Surrey. In 2022-23, a new ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund provincial funding stream was introduced to support the creation of new, licensed, school-aged care on school grounds.

These funds are available for school districts, First Nations schools, First Nations independent schools and not-for-profit independent schools to ensure child care spaces are built where they are needed most. Parents with children at licensed facilities for school-aged children will save as much as \$145 a month on their child care fees from the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative in September 2023 when the fee reductions expand.

"As a working parent, having access to before- and after-school care at my child's school is invaluable. My child has a great time in the program and is in an environment that they trust and feel safe in," said Supneet Kaur Chawla, parent. "We need more investments like this in our community and I'd like to thank the provincial government for investing in our school and ensuring families in our community have access to child care."

Together, the Province and the Government of Canada are investing nearly \$300 million to fund the creation of new licensed child care spaces in high-need areas throughout the province. Applications for the New Spaces Fund are being taken and applicants can continue to apply to this open intake based on budget availability. Since 2018, the Province has invested \$2.7 billion in the 10-year ChildCareBC plan to build affordable, inclusive and quality child care with more than 30,500 new child care spaces funded for creation.

Quotes:

Jinny Sims, MLA for Surrey-Panorama –

"For too long, investments in child care just weren't a priority. We are making different choices. These new spaces at nine different Surrey schools are an excellent example of our child care investments in action – helping to create quality school-aged child care spaces for Surrey families that are accessible and in convenient locations."

Laurie Larsen, chair, Surrey Board of Education –

"Access to high-quality, affordable child care is critical to many families across our district. These investments will support families with child care needs, build community connectivity, and enhance the overall health and well-being of our community. On behalf of our board, I'd like to thank the Province

and our child care operators for supporting our district in providing this important service for families in our district.”

Cathy Poole, vice-president, Children and Youth Services, YMCA BC (formerly YMCA of Greater Vancouver) –

“The YMCA applauds the Province of B.C.’s ongoing commitment to bring quality child care to deserving families. This is no more evident than through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund, which has enabled the YMCA to grow our child care services across B.C. Through our continued partnership with the Province of B.C. and Surrey School District, the YMCA and our team of professional educators are excited to bring a new child care centre to Surrey, and provide even more children with healthy, happy experiences.”

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