

N.S. has work to do on child-care action plan required to access millions in federal funds ^[1]

'It's not impacting our work at all,' says Education Minister Becky Druhan

Author: Ramesar, Vernon

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 27 Aug 2023

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

Nova Scotia has not submitted an action plan that would give it access to \$123 million in federal funds for child care and early childhood education this year.

Under a 2021 agreement with Ottawa, the province agreed to submit an action plan and progress report at the beginning of the fiscal year in April in order to access federal funds to achieve a goal of a \$10 a day child-care fee for parents by 2026.

...

Kenya Thompson, the co-ordinator of the Nova Scotia chapter of the national organization Childcare Now, which advocates for a publicly funded non-profit child-care system, isn't as enthusiastic about the Houston government's performance.

The province has made progress in fee reductions but not on creating more spaces, Thompson said.

Fell short of target

According to Thompson, the province had a target of achieving 1,500 new regulated child-care spaces last year but only created 400.

She said that goal has now been pushed to the end of this year.

Thompson said she hears government officials say to the media that they inherited a plan and they're working to improve it.

"When we see spaces not being created, when we see a wage grid that's insufficient for ECEs [early childhood educators] to support themselves and it's insufficient to attract workers to the sector, that raises concerns about what that action plan will look like."

Thompson said the bilateral agreement calls for a central organization to be set up to ensure there is inclusive, culturally appropriate and high-quality care provided.

No such organization has been set up, Thompson said, which means a layer of accountability is missing.

Nova Scotia NDP Leader Claudia Chender shares Thompson's view.

...

'In discussions'

"The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia are in discussions regarding the action plan," the email states.

"The first instalment for 2023-24 will be provided to Nova Scotia once the requirements outlined in the agreement are met, including the finalization of the Action Plan for 2023-24 to 2025-26."

Thompson said many children in Nova Scotia are missing out on development opportunities in the meantime, and parents are forced to stay home with them and missing out on income.

"It creates a lot of instability and chaos when you don't have access to child care for your child. A lot of parents across the province are really struggling."

Region: Nova Scotia ^[3]

Tags: expansion ^[4]

public funding ^[5]

CWELCC ^[6]

quality ^[7]

Source URL (modified on 29 Aug 2023): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/ns-has-work-do-child-care-action-plan-required-access-millions>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/ns-has-work-do-child-care-action-plan-required-access-millions> [2]

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/n-s-has-work-to-do-on-child-care-action-plan-required-to-access-123m-in-federal-funds-1.6948186> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7853> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9026> [5]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9139> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9278> [7]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality>