

Manitoba makes a deal on daycare [CA-MB] ^[1]

Author: Mills, Andrew

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EXCERPTS

The federal government has reached an agreement to roll out a child-care program in at least one province, sources say.

It is expected that when Prime Minister Paul Martin visits a Winnipeg daycare centre tomorrow, he'll announce the terms that will govern how a federally funded child-care program will be built in Manitoba.

The daycare deal, the first federal-provincial pact of its kind in the country, will be worth \$25 million, the Winnipeg Free Press reports.

With a federal election seeming closer by the day, the Liberal minority government is under the gun to make some progress toward the national child-care system that was a key promise of their last election platform.

The federal government earmarked \$5 billion to begin building the national system over the next five years.

But before Ottawa would release all but \$700 million of those funds, the government wanted each province and territory to agree on the meaning of the so-called QUAD principles — quality, universality, accessibility and developmental enrichment — that will determine how the system operates.

The provinces couldn't reach a national agreement with Ottawa. So now, Social Development Minister Ken Dryden is going to try to forge individual agreements with each province, his office confirmed yesterday.

Manitoba's deal outlines measures to ensure Ottawa's money will be used for a system that meets the QUAD principles, child-care advocate sources say.

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

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