

Quebec announces new daycare spaces: Province favours non-profit centres ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

The Parti Québécois government unveiled how it will distribute 15,000 new \$7-a-day daycare spaces across the province.

Quebec Families Minister Nicole Léger said every region of the province will get new spaces, including more than 2,000 in Montreal. Another 2,000 will be reserved for the province's underprivileged neighborhoods. And 300 spaces will be set-aside for aboriginal communities, said Léger.

Almost 85 per cent of new spaces will go to non-profit government run CPE daycares, which Léger said offer more consistency across the system.

"We made a choice to favour social equality," she said.

But some private operators say the PQ is making a mistake.

Private centres disappointed

President of The Quebec Private Daycares Association, Sylvain Lévesque, said private daycares are better for parents and tax payers.

"We have exactly the same rules and regulations," said Lévesque. "We develop the spot more rapidly and the spots cost less."

The province will begin taking applications from daycares for the new \$7-a-day spaces on February 14. The application window will stay open for four months, ending on June 14.

The PQ has promised to add 28,000 daycare spaces-including the 15,000 announced Thursday and another 13,000 allocated but not created by the former Charest government-to bring the province's total to 250,000 daycare spaces by 2016.

By then, the added annual cost to taxpayers will be an estimated \$260-million.

Distribution across the province

Bas-Saint-Laurent

Added 396

Total 5,284

Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean

Added 240

Total 7,333

Quebec City

Added 1,433

Total 20,436

Mauricie

Added 439

Total 6,909

Estrie

Added 645

Total 9,667

Montreal

Added 2,241

Total 59,735

Outaouais

Added 680

Total 12,295

Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Added 268

Total 4,797

Côte-Nord

Added 270

Total 3,092

Nord-du-Québec

Added 160

Total 3,049

Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Added 252

Total 2,655

Chaudière-Appalaches

Added 802

Total 12,757

Laval

Added 601

Total 12,909

Lanaudière

Added 1,425

Total 15,309

Laurentides

Added 1,291

Total 17,792

Montréal

Added 3,122

Total 48,077

Centre-du-Québec

Added 361

Total 6,803

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