

# Waterloo Region schools expand popular child care <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

**WATERLOO REGION** — Eight more schools will provide paid child care in September, as school boards expand popular before-and-after school programs for the youngest students.

**Catholic** <sup>[3]</sup> and **public** <sup>[4]</sup> schools provide extended care for a fee that's typically up to \$24.50 a day, per child. Thousands are enrolled.

Extended care programs proved popular with parents of children in kindergarten to Grade 2. This region recently earned **praise** <sup>[5]</sup> as a national leader for developing extended care programs.

It did not happen without controversy, requiring collaboration among school boards, independent care providers, municipal children's services, and child development scholars. Highlights of the September expansion:

- The Waterloo Region District School Board is adding four extended-care programs at Alpine Public (Kitchener), Avenue Road Public (Cambridge), Meadowlane Public (Kitchener) and Queen Elizabeth Public (Kitchener).
- The Waterloo Catholic District School Board is adding four extended-care programs at Monsignor Haller (Kitchener), St. Aloysius (Kitchener), St. Bernadette (Kitchener) and St. Boniface (Maryhill).

With this expansion, 111 Catholic or public schools will be providing extended child care starting in September. Fees operate the programs on a break-even basis. Some schools also have child care for children in Grade 3 and up.

Educators hailed the expansion, in statements Tuesday.

Extended care is "providing a seamless transition to the school day, and creating a solid foundation for student achievement and well-being," said Mary Lou Mackie, executive superintendent of education with the public school board.

"When parents choose (extended care) they know their child will continue receiving the same quality, inclusive, faith-based education they receive during the regular school day," said Michael Schmitt, education director for the Catholic school board.

More than 97 per cent of public school students up to Grade 2 will now have access to extended care at their home school, up from nine per cent who had the same access before 2010.

Online registrations for extended care are already open at [regionofwaterloo.onehsn.com](http://regionofwaterloo.onehsn.com) <sup>[6]</sup>.

**Region:** Ontario <sup>[7]</sup>

**Tags:** affordability <sup>[8]</sup>

accessibility <sup>[9]</sup>

school system <sup>[10]</sup>

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