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March 3, 2020

Urgent Update Labour Relations

Hello Discovery Early Learning & Care Families:

Thank you for your patience with regard to the new labour strike scheduled for **Thursday, March 5, 2020.**

After consultation with our partners, Leadership Team and Chairperson of our Board of Directors, I can confirm that Discovery Early Learning & Care's child care programs serving infants, toddlers and preschoolers will continue to operate during regular day care hours of operation from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Full Day Kindergarten and School Age programs will only operate for the before school program from 6:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and after school from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Due to staffing challenges, we are not able to offer child care during the scheduled strike, between the hours of 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for your FDK or school age child. If you are not going to use before and or after school care on March 5, 2020, please let us know as soon as possible. Adjustments to invoices will be done at a later date.

Our hope is that you will be able to find alternate child care arrangements for your school aged children during these unfortunate circumstances and that the Minister of Education's offer for financial assistance will benefit your family.

Lastly, we hope that this labour action be resolved as quickly as possible. If you have any questions please speak directly to your Program Supervisor at your site for clarification.

Sincerely,

Tracy Saarikoski, RECE

Executive Director

Please reference the information below shared on January 15, 2020.

News Release

Government Stands with Parents and Kids During Union-Led Strike Actions in Schools

January 15, 2020

Minister of Education Offers Financial Assistance to Parents Facing Increased Costs

TORONTO — Today, the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, announced the government's plan to offer parents up to \$60 per day if strike actions close schools or school-based child care centres.

"Our aim has always been to reach a negotiated settlement that keeps kids in class, which we have done successfully with multiple labour partners to date," said Minister Lecce. "We recognize the impact of union escalation on families is real, and unions expect hard-working families to bear the costs of their cyclical labour action. While unions impose hardship on families and students, our government is taking proactive steps to ensure students remain cared for — and families supported — in the event that unions decide to further escalate job action in their fight for enhanced compensation and other demands. The contrast could not be clearer."

A full withdrawal of services could require parents to make alternative arrangements. A strike could also impact the operation of full-day child care centres located in schools — forcing them to close as a direct result of escalating union job action.

To address these potential realities, the Ministry of Education launched its Support for Parents initiative to make sure that child care and other safe spaces are as accessible as possible for any family impacted by strikes. It will also provide support to parents who are facing increased costs.

Financial support will be provided to parents for each day of school that a child misses on account of a labour disruption, or each day of child care that is not available if offered from a closed school.

Eligible parents of children up to age 12 (Grade 7), or up to age 21 for children and youth with special needs, in a publicly funded school, qualify for:

- \$60 per day for children aged 0-6 who are not yet enrolled in school but attend a school-based child care centre that is required to close on account of the strike.
- \$40 per day for students in Junior Kindergarten (JK) and Senior Kindergarten (SK).
- \$25 per day for students in Grades 1 up to and including Grade 7.
- \$40 total per day for students in JK up to and including Grade 12 with a special need(s).

Funding will also be retroactive for qualifying parents to cover costs already incurred due to labour disruptions that have occurred during the current 2019-20 labour negotiations.

More details about this financial support can be found by visiting Ontario.ca/SupportForParents or by calling the **Support for Parents Helpline** at 888-444-3770.

"Our government will continue to support parents and provide predictability during this period of union-caused uncertainty," said Jill Dunlop, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues. "We will always put families and children first."