



Ontario Building New Child Care Spaces for Working Families in Keewatin

Investment will expand access to child care spaces at St. Louis Living Arts School

NEWS

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KEEWATIN —The Ontario government is investing \$400,000 to create 15 child care spaces at St. Louis Living Arts School to help working families in Keewatin. This investment, announced by Greg Rickford, MPP for Kenora-Rainy River, is part of the Ford Government's commitment to supporting affordable and accessible child care in communities across the province.

Once complete, the project will provide 1 family age group room through the province's Early Years Capital Program.

"Today's announcement at St. Louis Living Arts School is great news for our community," said Greg Rickford, MPP for Kenora – Rainy River. "This investment will provide choice and flexibility for families and new opportunities for the children of Keewatin, making our community one of the best places to live, work and play."

The expansion at St. Louis Living Arts School in Kenora Catholic District School Board is part of a provincewide investment of more than \$600 million to support school and child care spaces that were recently announced by Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. The overall investment will support 78 school and child care related projects. As part of this investment, the province dedicated more than \$95 million to create more than 3,000 new child care spaces through renovations and additions at 55 child care centres across Ontario. The investment will provide families with more options for their children.

Across Ontario, the province is supporting the creation of 40 infant rooms (400 new spaces), 59 toddler rooms (885 new spaces), 71 preschool rooms (1,704 new spaces), and seven family age group rooms (105 new spaces).

The announcement supports Ontario's child care plan which focuses on making child care more affordable, providing more choice and availability for families, reducing red tape and administrative burden, improving quality, and effectively delivering high standards of care.

"After years of neglect under the previous government, we are stepping up to support families by investing in affordable and accessible child care that meets their needs," said Minister Lecce. "These investments are key to our economic recovery and further evidence of how our government continues to lead the way when it comes to investing in child care."

As part of this plan to make child care affordable, safe and accessible, Ontario has committed up to \$1 billion to create up to 30,000 new child care spaces over five years. To date, over 23,000 new spaces have been approved and builds upon Ontario's existing and well-established child care infrastructure giving families more choices and flexibility.

"It is a privilege to share the exciting news that we have approval to move forward with a child care capital project at St. Louis School," says Paul White, Director of Education, Kenora Catholic District School Board. "This investment means the Kenora Catholic District School Board will have child

care options at all of our elementary schools, making child care more affordable, flexible and responsive for our families. As a result, our youngest children will have a seamless transition into school and an important early step in their educational journey.”

“We are extremely thankful to the Ministry of Education for supporting and recognizing the child care needs of St. Louis School families and surrounding communities. We look forward to collaborating further with our child care partners as this project proceeds,” said Teresa Gallik, Chair, Kenora Catholic District School Board.

In addition, to support parents with the cost of child care and help them re-enter the workforce, Ontario is providing a 20 per cent enhancement of the Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) tax credit for 2021. This will increase support from \$1,250 to \$1,500 per family, on average, providing about \$75 million in additional support for the 2021 child care expenses of over 300,000 families.

The Ontario government has allocated more than \$600 million to support ventilation improvements in schools across Ontario as part of its plans for a safer return to school. The Kenora Catholic District School Board has benefited from an investment of \$100,000 for ventilation improvements and has 18 HEPA filter units in place.

St. Louis Living Arts School is located at 420 8th Street in Keewatin.

QUICK FACTS:

- On November 4, the province released the [2021 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review: Build Ontario](#). The plan lays out how the government will build the foundation for Ontario’s recovery and prosperity by getting shovels in the ground on projects like new schools and child care.
- Since 2018, the Ontario government has invested over \$1.5 billion in capital projects in education, including 76 new schools, 75 additions and renovations to existing facilities and 4,908 new licensed child care places.
- For 2021-22, the province is also providing school boards with \$1.4 billion in funding to renew and maintain existing schools.
- The governments of Canada and Ontario are providing \$656.5 million in funding for critical infrastructure projects to protect students and staff from COVID-19 in the province’s schools through the COVID-19 Resilience stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- The federal government provides 2.5 per cent of the total cost support for early learning and child care operating expenses in Ontario, with Ontario families, the provincial and municipal governments providing the remainder.
- Ontario has provided emergency child care for the school-aged children of frontline workers, including public safety and health care workers, as well as those working with vulnerable populations, at no out-of-pocket cost. In 2021, at its peak, this program provided over 12,000 children with high-quality child care each day across 717 sites province-wide.
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[Strengthening Early Years and Child Care in Ontario](#)

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