

Project Definition Report: Before and After School Childcare

Frequently asked questions

1. Why is the Burnaby School District getting involved in childcare?

- While childcare is not our mandate, as a District we have been a leader for more than 35 years in enabling space in our schools or on our properties.
- We already have childcare in each of our four educational zones in the District, but many providers continue to have significant waitlists. Due to the importance of this issue to families, the Burnaby Board of Education directed staff in January of 2019 to take a first step to explore if the District could be a greater part of the solution for childcare in our community.
- The *Feasibility Study – Before & After School Childcare* was presented to the Board in March of 2019 and confirmed a strong need for more before and after school programs. Trustees directed staff to take the next step of a Project Definition Report.
- Increasing the number of before and after school childcare programs operating in the District is one of the objectives in the [Burnaby Board of Education Strategic Plan](#).

2. Will the proposed additional childcare use educational funds?

- No. The report recommends pursuing a full cost recovery model with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the City of Burnaby.

3. Who runs the childcare centres?

- Service providers are responsible for operating and managing existing and proposed facilities.

4. How is the District working with government on childcare?

- In relation to additional before and after school care spaces, the Project Definition Report proposes working with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Additionally, we continue to work with the provincial government to find opportunities to include childcare spaces in school construction projects (through Neighbourhood Learning Centre grants). For example, our Burnaby North Secondary school replacement will include a childcare centre.
- We are partnering with the City of Burnaby, which is taking a lead in our community on spaces for children who are not yet school-aged. A number of possible joint opportunities with the City are identified in the Project Definition Report.

5. What is the Project Definition Report and how was it created?

- The report sets out the plan for childcare opportunities within the District. It was created after extensive consultation with parent groups, childcare providers and other stakeholders. It examines the current environment, needs, and anticipated future needs of childcare in our District. The way forward ties in with our long-range facility plan, as we consider what space is needed for classrooms.

6. What are the main findings and locations identified in the report?

- Our plan will add 773 spaces. It lays out three phases, as well as locations for recommended childcare expansion (pages 2 and 3). A thoughtful criteria, as outlined in the report, was used. Our existing and projected student enrolment were among the factors we considered when determining where we might be able to add childcare. Our staff also considered the information they gathered during an extensive consultation process with parent groups, childcare providers, and other stakeholders.

7. Is there an impact on waitlists for childcare spots?

- A common theme that emerged during the consultation process was an interest in changing the placement priorities of children attending childcare centres on school district sites. Under the existing “school-based placement priority” model childcare operators register children and maintain wait-lists for those attending the school where the childcare is located.
- The report recommends a change to a “childcare community hub placement priority” model, which provides equal access to all children attending any of the schools in the childcare community hub. The idea is that multiple schools feed into the nearby childcare centre, instead of just the school fortunate enough to have the facility. Hub locations are defined in the report (page 11). Moving forward, existing or new childcare operators that obtain a licence from the school district must comply with those guidelines. The District will work with childcare operators to honour existing waitlists.

8. Why is my child’s school not among the additional expanded options?

- Many factors, outlined in the report, were considered when determining locations for expansion opportunities. In an effort to support families where the school doesn’t have childcare, a “hub” approach was developed (as indicated above), such that neighbouring schools have equal access to the childcare centre within their hub on district property. All 41 elementary schools have either access to a hub or a centre on their property.

9. What happens next now that the report is done?

- The Board approved the plan in the Project Definition Report at their October 15, 2019 meeting. As the plan involves a full cost recovery mode, it will now go to the City of Burnaby and Government of BC for their review, as they determine what they will fund.

10. Where can I learn more?

- The entire [Project Definition Report](#) can be found on our website.