



Ottawa ON K1A 0J9

Brittany Rier
Deputy Clerk
595–9th Avenue E
Owen Sound ON N4K 3E3

By email: brittany.rier@grey.ca

Dear Brittany Rier:

On behalf of the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, I am responding to your letter of July 21, 2025. You wrote to highlight your concerns regarding the recent recalibration of directed growth spaces under the Canada-Ontario Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement and its impact on Grey County.

The Government of Canada made a transformative investment in 2021 of up to \$30 billion, over five years, to establish a Canada-wide ELCC system in collaboration with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners. When the *Canada ELCC Act* received Royal Assent in 2024, it cemented the Government of Canada's long-term vision for a Canada-wide ELCC system in which families have access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care, no matter where they live and for generations to come. This is a plan to drive economic growth; increase parents' participation in the workforce, especially mothers; and offer each child in Canada the best possible start in life.

Through bilateral agreements, federal, provincial and territorial governments continue to work toward this shared vision for ELCC, which includes the creation of additional spaces that are responsive to the varying needs of children and families in Canada. Together with our partners, we have announced the creation of over 166,000 spaces to date, with families of approximately 900,000 children already benefiting from affordable and high-quality child care.

Under the Canada-Ontario Canada-wide ELCC Agreement, the Government of Canada is providing more than \$10.2 billion over five years, from 2021–2022 to 2025–2026 to the Government of Ontario. As part of this agreement, the Government of Ontario is committed to creating 86,000 new licensed child care spaces by the end of 2026. This includes over 750 child care spaces to be created in the County of Grey.

Average child care fees have already been reduced by more than 50% in the province of Ontario for licensed child care operators participating in the Canada-wide ELCC system and who provide care for children under the age of six. For more information on the Canada-wide ELCC system in Ontario, I invite you to consult www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario-early-years-and-child-care-agreement.

We greatly appreciate the support from Grey County Council in working toward ensuring the success of the Canada-wide ELCC system. The Government of Canada continues to work closely with the Government of Ontario to support the successful implementation of the Canada-Ontario Canada-wide ELCC Agreement. As its detailed implementation falls under provincial jurisdiction, the Ontario Ministry of Education, which you have also reached out to, is best positioned to provide further details.

I appreciate your taking the time to raise this important matter as we continue to work with the provinces and territories to implement a Canada-wide ELCC system that meets the needs of children and families across the country.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Vallon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Vallon
Director
Programs, Engagement and External Relations
Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care
Income Security and Social Development Branch
Employment and Social Development Canada