

## Pre-primary Program Out of Catchment Process 2019–20

### Background

The Pre-primary Program is an important support for Nova Scotia children and families. Quality early learning helps children develop and learn in healthy ways. As we implement the Pre-primary Program across the province, unfilled enrollment spaces are available in some programs. All regional centres for education (RCEs) have received enquiries from families who reside in catchments where Pre-primary is not yet offered and wish to enroll their child in Pre-primary in a neighboring school which offers the program.

Establishing a process to allow children who do not have access to Pre-primary in their catchment school to register at an out of catchment school that offers the program will increase the number of children accessing Pre-primary and will create efficiencies in low enrollment classes.

Such a process will not increase the number of ratio staff and/or number of physical classrooms required. Where unforeseen circumstances arise, which result in the need for an additional staff or an additional classroom, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will provide the necessary supports.

### Directive to RCEs

- Increase the number of children accessing the Pre-primary Program in schools where Pre-primary enrollment is available, for children who currently do not have access to the program in their catchment school.
- Ensure out of catchment registration will use existing classroom spaces and staff based on current complement (e.g., exceeding 10 children in an existing class of 5 where there is one early childhood educator (ECE), would require a second staff).
- Determine the number of available spaces by school, considering classes with less than 7 children and one ECE, and classes with 11–14 children and two ECEs, to maximize space and create efficiencies.
- Ensure consideration is given to the number of age-eligible children in the catchment who could register at any time throughout the school year and adjust space availability to provide a 'buffer'.

## **RCEs will ensure:**

- Out of catchment process will launch on October 7, 2019 and will continue until no more spaces are available.
- Schools with available space and the number of spaces available will be made public.
- Children must be age-eligible and do not currently have access to Pre-primary in their catchment school.
- Children must not have already attended a Pre-primary Program.
- Applications are on a first come, first served basis until there are no more spaces available.

Original signed by

***Hon. Zach Churchill***

Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development