Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I make changes to my child(ren)'s program registration?
EXCEL requires two weeks notice to withdraw your child(ren) from the program and/or make changes to their participation level. Please note that the opportunity for part-time participation is not available. Participants may choose from Before-5 days/week, After-5 days/week or Before & After-5 days/week.

If you are currently enrolled in the EXCEL Program, you can request a change of enrollment by visiting the EZChildTrack Parent Portal at: https://ca.ezchild(ren)track.com/excel/parent. In the Registration section of the Parent Portal home page, click the [View/Enroll] button. Next, click on the [Change Enrollment] button. Then click on the [Change Schedule] button. You may check or uncheck boxes to select the desired set of activity enrollments. You may also change the effective date or Site. When all selections are made, click the [Save Enrollment] button. You can see all selected changes by clicking on the [Revised Schedule] button. When finished, click on the [Review Schedule] button. After reviewing all details, you can submit the Change Enrollment application. You will receive an "Enrollment Submission Successful (Change Schedule)" message as confirmation of your submission. Please contact the EXCEL Registrar at 902-464-2000 ext. 2787 or by email to excelregistrar@hrce.ca if you are having difficulty submitting your change of enrollment request through the Parent Portal. The official date of notification of the change will be the date of initial contact.

2. When do I receive my Income Tax Receipts?
Income tax receipts are issued in February in the name of the Primary Account Holder (this includes Cost-share account holders). They can be accessed by signing into the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchild(ren)track.com/excel/parent). In the Payments and Statements section of the Home Page, click on the View Statement button. From the Statements page, you can print tax statements for the last completed financial year. To generate this tax statement, click on the Print button.

3. When does EXCEL operate?
EXCEL operates on the days that schools are open for instruction, with the exception of the last day of school when there is early dismissal. EXCEL does not operate on Professional Development or Assessment & Evaluation days.

4. What do parents/guardians do when EXCEL is not open? (storm days, PD days, holidays, March/December break)
The HRCE school calendar is released in late Spring each year for the subsequent school year which provides families time to plan for school and EXCEL closure dates. EXCEL also recommends that families have a pre-arranged back up plan in place for unforeseen closures such as storm days.

There are no refunds issued for storm days. If school has been cancelled prior to the start of the school day, EXCEL is also cancelled. If schools are delayed in opening by 2 hours, the EXCEL **Before** school program is cancelled but the After school program will take place. Check the HRCE website or call 902-464-INFO for cancellations prior to the start of the day. If schools are

cancelled after the children are in attendance and are to be sent home, EXCEL is also cancelled from that point on. For after school programming, EXCEL staff will contact you or an emergency contact person in the event that the children are to be sent home due to inclement weather. Parents/guardians are advised to discuss with their child(ren) where they should go in the event of early dismissal due to inclement weather.

EXCEL will also not be able to operate during times of power outages and water shut-offs. When possible, the school and EXCEL coordinate with the utility companies to arrange any planned service disruptions during periods when EXCEL is not operational. Should emergency utility interruptions arise that conflict with our program times, EXCEL will contact parents/guardians to arrange for immediate pickup of their child(ren) due to the inability of our program to operate.

5. Why doesn't EXCEL operate when the school is closed?
It is a matter of school policy. When the school is closed for any reason, no one may operate programming within the school.

6. What is the process for registration and acceptance?
Registration for the EXCEL Program occurs in the Spring of the current school year for the next school year and is completed online through the EZChildTrack Parent Portal at: https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent.

Families with a child(ren) enrolled in the current year's EXCEL program or NS BAP (Springvale Pre-primary only) at the time of registration are provided with an advance opportunity to register their current participants and siblings (who will be starting school) for the next school year using the email address on file in EZChildTrack. This will provide the primary account holder exclusive access to the online registration system during this period. Registration procedures are sent to registered families by email and posted on the EXCEL pages of the HRCE website. We encourage families to apply early as there is no guarantee of re-enrolment for returning students. Any applications received from parents re-registering after this advance re-enrolment period will be regarded as new enrolments and will be processed based upon the date and time of receipt. Please note: *overdue* account balances must be paid in order to register for a program.

Simply sign into the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent) using your email address and password. In the Registration section of the Home Page, click on the program's Register button. You will be taken to the My Account page where you can review and update your account information as necessary. Then click on the My Children button at the bottom of the page. Here you can register children or skip registration. To register a child, click on the Register button. Review information and make any necessary changes. If you wish to add another child, click on the Add Child button. Please note: **Only when all desired children have been registered should you move on to the Terms and Conditions section of the application.** Continue to complete each step of the online application process as outlined in the Application Guidelines document found on the EXCEL Registration page of the HRCE website (https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/excel-child-care/registration).

At the completion of the early registration period, the general registration period begins. Registration procedures are posted on the EXCEL pages of the HRCE website. New families

will be unable to access the online registration system prior to the opening of the general registration period.

New families can register by visiting the EZChildTrack Parent Portal (https://ca.ezchildtrack.com/excel/parent) and clicking on the Register button in the "New Parents Open Account" icon. The option to set up an account and register for the 2021-22 school year will not be available until the general registration period begins.

Application Guidelines are available on the EXCEL Registration page of the HRCE website (https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/excel-child-care/registration) to assist with using the online registration system.

7. My child(ren) have been attending for the past 3 years. Why do I need to fill out another form and why aren't they guaranteed acceptance?
There is no automatic re-enrolment of students in EXCEL. Parents are responsible to submit a new application each school year identifying their interest for the upcoming school year. Parents are responsible to make note of the applicable registration dates and to submit their new application in a timely manner. All applications are treated equally. Applications are processed based on the date and time of receipt of the application by the EXCEL office.

8. Why do I have to fill all of my information in the application each year, can't your system remember the details?

While your EZChildTrack account stores all information provided through the previous year's application process and any changes made during the program year, applications are considered contracts between the individual and EXCEL and, as such, must be submitted each year. Submitting an application each program year ensures that authorization in relation to the financial transactions of monthly fees as well as contact information of parents/guardians and other individuals authorized to have access to your child(ren) is accurate and up to date.

9. Do you save a number of spots for Pre-Primary/Primary students, students who may require additional support to participate, and/or new students to the community?
All applications are treated equally. Applications are processed based on the date and time of receipt of the application by the EXCEL office.

10. I'm not sure which school my child(ren) will be attending as we are currently selling our house. What should I do?
Given the demand for our programs, parents/guardians may only submit an application for one school during the registration period. Should there be factors resulting in a change of schools following the submission of the initial application, parents may contact the EXCEL office to request a transfer of their application from one EXCEL program to another. The date of the request to transfer the application would become the new date/time for acceptance consideration.

11. Why do siblings of current participants have eligibility to apply during early registration?
In an effort to show appreciation to our current participants, we offer these families the

opportunity to submit new registrations for all eligible family members during the early registration period each year. It is incumbent upon these families to submit their application during this period in a timely manner each year.

12. How will I ever get into the program when the program is full year after year with current participants?

The opportunity for new students to be accepted into EXCEL occurs for a variety of reasons which include: students moving on to Junior High; individuals moving out of the school community; change of jobs; and parental leave etc. Unfortunately, it is impossible for EXCEL to know each year how many spots may be available for new registrants until current families are provided the opportunity to register for the coming school year. When and if programs reach capacity, waitlists are established and further applicants will be advised of the program availability status.

13. The program at my child(ren)'s school is full and we weren't accepted. Why can't you just hire more people?

EXCEL program capacities are established in consideration of the availability of appropriate and consistent space from which to offer the program. Capacities are not established as a factor of the number of staff being hired. Work within a school does not end with the end of the school day bell. EXCEL works with schools to explore access opportunities during the non-school hours that would enable EXCEL to consistently provide a quality experience for our participants throughout the school year. EXCEL is offered as an option within a community. Parents/guardians are encouraged to explore and consider alternative options within communities for their families.

14. Who do I talk to about getting more EXCEL program space at my child(ren)'s school?

All HRCE employees are committed and interested in serving the needs of families within our school communities. Capacity decisions are formed as a result of significant discussions and explorations between EXCEL supervisors and school administrators.

15. What are my chances of getting into a program once my child(ren) are waitlisted?

Individuals on waitlists will be contacted when and if there are withdrawal requests from current participants. Withdrawals occur for a variety of reasons which include: families moving outside the school community; change of jobs; and parental leave etc. Unfortunately, it is impossible for EXCEL to know when and if such notices may be received but are committed to immediately notifying the next individual on the waitlist should an opportunity become available.

16. Why aren't the waiting lists carried over to the following school year(s)?

EXCEL cannot assume what a family's needs and interest will be from school year to school year. All individuals are responsible to submit applications for subsequent years in a timely and complete manner.

17. Why can't the Before program start earlier or the After program remain open later than 6:00 pm?

The scheduled access to school buildings each morning is the determining factor for EXCEL program starting times. In the interest of safety, HRCE staff must be provided adequate time to

complete the school opening procedures, which include checking and/or beginning mechanical and operating systems, snow removal etc. before parents/guardians and students can be permitted on the premises. EXCEL programs conclude at 6:00 pm each evening at all sites as HRM and private groups frequently book the school space used by EXCEL for alternate community programs and sporting activities.

18. Why is the monthly amount the same, am I paying for PD days/holidays?
As a convenience to clients, we have taken the total annual EXCEL fee and divided it into 10 equal monthly payments. Annual fees are calculated by the number of actual program days and do not include in-service, professional development days and holidays.

19. Why isn't EXCEL available in all schools?
The EXCEL program is offered based on the needs of the school community and the availability of appropriate program space within a school. With an invitation from the school's Principal, EXCEL will survey the school community to determine the need and support for beginning a new EXCEL program.

20. I only need the before program a few days/month, why can't I just register my child(ren) for when I need it?
EXCEL does not offer drop-in participation opportunities. In the interest of providing a quality experience for our participants, full-time registration is required to ensure staff can prepare and plan appropriately, and ensure safe and consistent attendance procedures.

21. Do I need to send a snack with my child(ren) each day?
Yes, parents/guardians are responsible to provide a snack each day for their child(ren)'s consumption during our scheduled daily Nutrition Break. These snacks must abide by the food guidelines communicated by the school with respect to life-threatening allergies etc. We also encourage students to have a water bottle for hydration throughout the afternoon program.

22. Will my child(ren) be able to complete their homework during EXCEL?
EXCEL provides participants the opportunity to complete homework during the HRQ (Homework/Reading/Quiet) time, 5:30-6:00 pm time-period of our program. If a child does not want to complete their homework or does not have homework to complete, there will be other activities occurring during this time-period for them to participate in.

23. What do participants do in the EXCEL program? What does the afternoon look like?
EXCEL is dedicated to providing a high quality, unique, and engaging before and after school experience for elementary aged participants. Our dedicated staff members work as a team to provide participants a safe, fun program that supports social, physical, cognitive, and emotional development. The program includes a variety of physical activity and recreational opportunities to encourage healthy lifestyle. Every day is a little bit different! We also give our participants the opportunity to grow and learn through participation in science, art, guest presentations, and club activities.

24. What type of training do your staff receive?
Our staff receive a variety of training courses and opportunities. These courses include First Aid,

High Five Principles of Healthy Child Development, Behaviour Management, and Fundamental Movement Skills.