

## Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care AGM

*Report submitted by Margaret McGovern, Toronto Caucus.*

On September 28 and 29, 2023 I attended the Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care on behalf of Ontario Council, CFUW via Zoom.

Much of the concern of members present was focused on adequate salaries and benefits for qualified Early Childhood Educators (ECE) and the pressing need for many more child care spaces. The Ministry of Education has not come forth. Of note, Ministry of Education staff who are invited to attend the AGM each year and usually attend, declined to this year.

Current wage examples: North West Territories \$15.20/hr; Ontario \$19.00/hr; Yukon \$32.08/hr . Of concern, Ontario has the third lowest salary rate in the country.

Much action is required. Two of their strategies have been initiated and are being implemented. They are funded separately.

1. " Creating an anti-racial child care system in Ontario".

[www.childcareontario.org/wage-project](http://www.childcareontario.org/wage-project)

It has been observed in some centres that there seems to be a racialized bias. With our increase in immigration there is a greater need for child care spaces for other races. it has been noted that some centres have "White only spaces' for "cultural safety"!

2. "Organizing a Parent Network" , funded by the Atkinson Foundation.

Establishing 4-6 person groups in interested childcare centres. Interested parents with strong leadership abilities are encouraged to participate. The main message? "Child care is more than babysitting!"

There is a need for more funding.

Sharing across the province.

- Some centres working together to share strategies are having success bargaining.
- With a new mayor in Toronto who is known to be supportive of child care there is some hope! In early stages of meetings with Councillors.

Morna Ballantyned, the Executive Director of Child Care Now, the national advocacy organization, shared details of a three year project to expand Not-For-Profit Child Care across the country. It is funded by the National Early Learning and Child Care program. At present the program is in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Manitoba. It will expand to the other provinces in 2024.

The demand is great across the country. An observation by Ms. Ballantyne? Some governments do not know how to increase the capacity. Focus of Child Care Now will be addressing the workforce crisis and the funding plan.

Sample letter for the clubs to use to write to their MPPs

I am forwarding a copy of the letter that the Toronto Caucus is recommending be sent to our MPPs. We would like to suggest that the other clubs in the province consider a similar one. Since the national bill recently received its third reading at the national level we believe this is a significant time to nudge the provincial government.

As well we understand the Ontario government has drafted a "strategy"

Margaret McGovern  
Toronto, Caucus

For a copy of the letter to MPPs, click [here](#). A reminder that as per CFUW OC policy, all letters such as these must be signed by and sent out by the Club's president.