Recommendation

1. That SSR-CW-04-18 be received and that a By-law be prepared authorizing the Warden and Clerk to execute the 2018-2019 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Service Amending Agreement (No. 1) with the Ministry of Education.

Executive Summary

The Ministry of Education provides funding for Grey County Children’s Services through the following two separate Ontario Transfer Payment Agreements:

1. Child Care Service Agreement (approved by Grey County Council January 25, 2018 SSR-CW-02-18)

On January 17, 2018 the Ministry provided an amended service agreement which included funding for Journey Together, a new initiative from the Ministry of Education, which supports capital improvements to the OEYCFC operated by M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre.

Journey Together

On December 04, 2017 the Ministry of Education advised that the jointly submitted proposal by Grey County Children’s Services and M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre was approved. The funding allocation is as follows:
Operating | 2018 | 2019
--------- | ----- | ----- 
$ 90,493 | $ 87,221
Community Based Capital | $ 621,800 | $ 90,000
Total Budget | $ 712,293 | $ 177,221

The Journey Together program goals are to:
- Increase access to culturally relevant programs and services.
- Enhance Indigenous control of service design and delivery.
- Foster greater opportunities for Indigenous children to be immersed in their culture and language from an early age.
- Support improved outcomes for Indigenous children including healthy child development, parent and family supports, and greater participation in employment and training for parents.
- Funding is intended to support programs that are flexible, culturally responsive, reflective of communities and supportive of Indigenous children and families.

2018-2019 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Service Amending Agreement (No. 1)

Grey County Council’s approval of the 2018-2019 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Service Amending Agreement (No. 1) will result in the following benefits:
- Commitment from the Ministry of Education for a two year funding cycle for 2018 and 2019. Previously Ontario Early Years Child and Family Service funding was issued annually by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.
- $ 1,053,703 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres annual budget for 2018 and 2019. In comparison, the 2017 budget was $ 804,755. This is an increase of $ 248,948 in each calendar year for 2018 and 2019.
- $ 712,293 Journey Together funding in 2018. These are capital dollars to be used to develop an appropriate space for the delivery of culturally relevant licensed child care and/or early years programming for Indigenous children and families off reserve;
- $ 177,221 Journey Together funding in 2019 to support culturally relevant licensed child care and/or early years programming for Indigenous children and families off reserve;
- Journey Together funds are 100% provincially funded. No municipal levy is required.

Background and Discussion

As part of the May 30, 2016 release of *The Journey Together: Ontario’s Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples* (The Journey Together), the Province is working with...
partners to increase access to child care spaces and culturally relevant early years programs for Indigenous children and families off reserve. These programs are to be delivered by Indigenous-led organizations, working with service system managers.

In November 2016 the Ministry of Education released a call for interest in one-time capacity funding. To facilitate this planning process, each CMSM could apply to the Ministry of Education for funding.

On January 12, 2017 Grey County Council approved the application for planning funds (Report SSR-CW-02-17 Journey Together – One-time Off Reserve Capacity Funding). This application for funding supported a literature review and identification of relevant data; a facilitated engagement; and a report to identify local needs and goals. Between January and June 2017, the Indigenous Engagement process occurred.

On July 27, 2017 Grey County Council approved the submission to the Ministry of the What We Heard – Engagement with Indigenous Community on the Early Years Child Care Plan (Report SSR-CW-09-17 Journey Together – One-time Off Reserve Capacity Funding).

As a follow up to the What We Heard – Engagement with Indigenous Community on the Early Years Child Care Plan a joint proposal by Grey County Children’s Services and M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre was submitted to the Ministry on September 29, 2017.

The Ministry of Education advised on December 04, 2017 that the jointly submitted proposal by Grey County Children's Services and M'Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre was approved. This proposal provides M'Wikwedong over two years (2018 - 2019), $ 177,714 in Operating funds plus $621,890 in Capital funds.

As 2018 is the first year of implementation for the Journey Together, the ministry will work with CMSMs and Indigenous partners to support the implementation of the approved projects.

Working in partnership with applicable agencies, Children’s Services staff has begun collecting the necessary information required to disperse the funds. Upon council approval, these funds will be dispersed as per Ministry directives.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

The Ministry of Education provides funding to Grey County Social Services under the legislative authority of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

Financial and Resource Implications

This will be the first time that Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres will have a guaranteed two year funding cycle with the Ministry of Education. Historically, funding had been provided in one year cycles by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

The 2018 – 2019 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres budget for Grey County Children’s Services will increase as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original Budget</td>
<td>$ 1,053,703</td>
<td>$ 1,053,703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SSR-CW-04-18

February 22, 2018
The 2018-2019 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Service Amending Agreement No. 1 includes Journey Together funding of $712,293 for 2018 and $177,221 for 2019. This funding is 100% provincial and has no required municipal contribution.

The new Children’s Services Supervisor position approved by Grey County Council on November 09, 2017 will be the primary contact with the M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre on the Journey Together project.
Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal
- Grey County Finance Department
- Grey County Planning Department (Planning Data Analysis Coordinator)

☒ External
- M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre
- Licensed child care centres in Grey County
- Bruce County Children’s Services

Attachments

*Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement Amendment (2018 EarlyON and Journey Together Funding)*

*What We Heard - Engagement with the Indigenous Community on the Early Years and Child Care Plan*

Respectfully submitted by,

Barb Fedy, Barb Feddy, Director of Social Services
Barbara Arbuckle, Children’s Services Manager
ONTARIO TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT AMENDMENT

This Amending Agreement No.1 effective as of the 1st day of January, 2018.

BETWEEN:

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF ONTARIO
as represented by the Minister of Education

(the "Province")

- and -

The Corporation of the County of Grey

(the "Recipient")

BACKGROUND

1. The Province and the Recipient entered into an agreement effective as of the 1st day of January, 2018 (the “Agreement”).

2. The Parties wish to amend the Agreement in the manner set out in Amending Agreement No.1.

IN CONSIDERATION of the mutual covenants and agreements contained herein, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the Parties hereto agree as follows:

1. Schedule “B” of the Agreement is deleted and replaced with Schedule “B”, attached to Amending Agreement No.1.


3. Schedule “D” of the Agreement is deleted and replaced with Schedules “D” and “D1”, attached to Amending Agreement No.1.

4. Schedule “E” of the Agreement is deleted and replaced with Schedule “E”, attached to Amending Agreement No.1.
5. Amending Agreement No.1 shall be effective as of the date set out at the top of the Amending Agreement No.1.

6. Except for the amendments provided for in Amending Agreement No.1, all provisions in the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

The Parties have executed this Amending Agreement No.1 on the dates set out below.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF ONTARIO
as represented by the Minister of Education

Name: Julia Danos  
Title: Director Early Years and Child Care Programs and Service Integration Branch  

Date

The Corporation of the County of Grey

Name:  
Title:  

Date

I/We have authority to bind the Recipient.
SCHEDULE “B”  
PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Funds</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 1,765,996</td>
<td>$ 1,230,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount for the purposes of section A5.2 (Disposal) of Schedule “A”</td>
<td>$ 1,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$ 2,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Contact information for the purposes of Notice to the Province | Ministry of Education  
24th Floor, Mowat Block, 900 Bay Street,  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2 | Attention: Julia Danos  
Director, Early Years Child Care Programs and Service Integration Branch | Fax: 416-314-7836  
Email: Julia.Danos@ontario.ca |
| Contact information for the purposes of Notice to the Recipient | The Corporation of the County of Grey  
595 - 9th Avenue East,  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3 | Attention: Ms. Barb Fedy  
Fax: 519-376-5640  
Email: barb.fedy@grey.ca |

**Additional Provisions:**  
The Recipient will provide services in accordance with the policies, guidelines and requirements of the Province, as communicated to it.
Expense Name(s): The Journey Together

Legislation: Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

People Served:
- Specified licensed child care centres, licensed home child care agencies, and/or EarlyON Child and Family programs delivered by Indigenous organizations.

Specific Service Provided:
- Funding is provided to the Recipient to support approved projects for:
  - Culturally relevant Licensed child care and/or early years programming for Indigenous children and families off reserve; and,
  - Programming delivered by urban Indigenous organizations.

Program Goals:
- Increase access to culturally relevant programs and services.
- Enhance Indigenous control of service design and delivery.
- Foster greater opportunities for Indigenous children to be immersed in their culture and language from an early age.
- Support improved outcomes for Indigenous children including healthy child development, parent and family supports, and greater participation in employment and training for parents.
- Funding is intended to support programs that are flexible, culturally responsive, reflective of communities and supportive of Indigenous children and families.
SCHEDULE "D" - BUDGET

The Corporation of the County of Grey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocation Summary</th>
<th>Funding Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ontario Early Years Child Care and Family Centres</em></td>
<td>$ 1,053,703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure Benchmarks</th>
<th>Funding Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration – Maximum Allowable Expenditure (10% of total allocation maximum allowable expenditure)</td>
<td>$ 105,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care and Early Years Planning and Data Analysis Services – Minimum Expenditure Requirement</td>
<td>$ 96,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(minimum based on 2017 allocations for early child development planning and data analysis services)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2018 allocation must be fully spent within this calendar year, and cannot be carried forward to 2019.*
SCHEDULE D1

THE JOURNEY TOGETHER BUDGET

The Journey Together
2018 Calendar Year Allocation

The Corporation of the County of Grey

Funding provided for the Journey Together must only be used for the project and expenses specified in the approved applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type: Child and Family Program(s)</th>
<th>2018 Allocation</th>
<th>2019 Allocation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project: M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre (NCRC)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
<td>90,493</td>
<td>67,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Based Capital</td>
<td>621,800</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>712,293</td>
<td>177,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure Benchmarks - Administration - Maximum Allowable Expenditure (10% maximum operating only)</td>
<td>9,049</td>
<td>17,722</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Journey Together Allocation</strong></td>
<td>$ 712,293</td>
<td>$177,221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Totals may not add due to rounding.*
SCHEDULE “E”
PAYMENT

As identified in the Ontario Child Care Service Management and Funding Guideline, monthly cash flow percentages will be based on the total 2018 maximum funds divided by 12 months. If approved, capital funding under The Journey Together will be paid upon receipt of the signed service agreement and Estimates submissions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Month</th>
<th>Amount of Maximum Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January*</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February*</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March*</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April*</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May*</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June*</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Payments may be based upon the prior year’s Revised Estimates (Interim Report) submissions until the signed service agreement is received. The Province automatically adjusts entitlement and the resulting cash flow to reflect forecasted or actual under-spending that is reported in financial submissions.
What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Community on the Early Years and Child Care Plan

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS
Engagement #1 - March 10, 2017
Engagement #2 - April 7, 2017
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Context

Purpose

Context

Ministry of Education is transforming early years and child care in Ontario. In February 2016, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to create the system of services and supports known as Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OECFCs). The intent of OECFC is to transform Ministry-funded child and family programs into an increasingly integrated, cohesive system of services and supports for children ages 0 to 6 and their parents and caregivers.

In Bruce County and Grey County, planning around the OECFC is happening in conjunction with the preparation for the Province’s Journey Together program. The Ministry of Education developed a vision, guiding principles, and goals for the OECFC. This information can also be found online here.

The vision of the OECFC, is to support children, parents, and caregivers in learning, growing, and connecting together.

The OECFC’s guiding principles are:
- Child and family-centred
- Welcoming
- High-quality
- Inclusive
- Integrated
- Community-led

The goals of the OECFC are:
- High quality services that support parents and caregivers as children’s first teachers
- Children have access to play and inquiry-based learning opportunities
- Opportunities for parents and caregivers to strengthen their relationships with their children
- Indigenous children and families have access to culturally responsive programming
- Parents and caregivers provided with timely, relevant and up-to-date information about community and specialized programs
- Local service providers collaborate and integrate services to meet community needs in an efficient and accessible way
- Access to French language programs and enhanced knowledge about language and identity acquisition

What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
Role of Bruce County and Grey County

In terms of working with the Ministry of Education to build a better early years and child care system, Bruce County and Grey County are the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers responsible for:

- Conducting local needs assessments and facilitating meaningful engagement with community partners, parents and caregivers
- Enhancing, relocating and/or reconfiguring OEYFC programs and services to meet community needs
- Managing provincial funds and third party contracts

Engagement

The purpose of the Bruce County and Grey County engagement with the Indigenous community is to continue to build meaningful and lasting relationships between Bruce County and Grey County and the Indigenous community which will lead to the co-creation of plans to enhance access to culturally relevant, Indigenous-led early years programs and services, including child care and child and family services.

Two community roundtables occurred during this initial engagement and consultation process to meet the Ministry of Education's May 31, 2017 deadline for submission of a joint planning program proposal. The first engagement took place on March 10th and the second one took place on April 7, 2017. Since our second engagement, the Ministry of Education extended their submission deadline to September 2017.

---

1 Grey County and Bruce County are used throughout this report to reference the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager responsible for the program, also commonly referred to as County of Bruce and County of Grey.
Outcomes

The following are the desired outcomes of the engagement process:

**Sharing and learning**
- To share information on changes in the delivery of early years and child care programming
- To share preliminary information on community needs for early years and child care programming in Bruce County and Grey County
- To share preliminary information on community needs as identified by members of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
- To hear about the role the Indigenous community has played in delivering early years and child care services and the services that currently exist

**Identifying need**
- To hear from the Indigenous community about the challenges and gaps in services
- To share successes in delivering early years and child care services in the community, including on-reserve

**Looking forward**
- To develop plans to enhance access to culturally relevant, Indigenous-led early years programs and services in Bruce County and Grey County
- To continue to build meaningful and lasting relationships between the Bruce County, Grey County, and the Indigenous community

During this process, we consulted with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres' Response to Child Care and Early Years Act: Phase 2 Regulations. The report can be found online here.
Engagement 1

The first engagement took place on March 10, 2017. A list of participants is included in the Appendix. An overview of changes in the delivery of early years and child care programming and preliminary information on community needs was shared with participants.

The session asked participants to share the following:

1. Their role in early years and child care services in Bruce County and Grey County
2. Things that are working well on- and off-reserve in delivering early years and child care services
3. The needs they are seeing in the community and the challenges faced in delivering the programs

An inventory of agencies, contact information, and the early years and child care services they provide is being developed based on the information shared by participants of Engagement #1. This document will be shared with community.

The following section provides a summary of the most commonly-stated responses and feedback received.

What’s working well

On-reserve

Child care services
- Licensed Saugeen and Nawash child care services
- Transportation to-and-from the child care
- Many on-reserve child care centres operating well

Networks and collaborations
- First Nations Child Care Supervisors Network, meeting once a month
- Great collaboration in Saugeen with programs and services for a continuum of care
- Programming strength that can help meet the needs of different families; traditional, Western, and blend
- Healthy Babies, Healthy Children collaborates with other groups (such as the Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC))
- Linking and networking with community resources and outside agencies
- Partnerships with food banks
- Programs that can augment access
• Flexibility of services; Council of the Haida Nation (CHN Saugeen) can adapt to the needs of the community
• Flexibility in accessing programs with Western and traditional focuses
• Collaboration between on-reserve programs and services
• A focus on the continuum of care and on improving the transition between services
• Collaborations with local schools for transition between early years programming and elementary school programming

**Early years services**
• Culturally-relevant early childhood education
• Opportunities around immersion in traditional language; language programming available where children on-reserve get language instruction four days per week and hoping to expand further
• Art therapy for children
• Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program
• Access to traditional teachers
• Access to literacy programs and historical education
• Language teacher at G'Shaw-da-Gawin Day Care Centre
• Language immersion programs

**Health and wellness services**
• Eye clinics and vision consultants
• Oral hygiene
• Other specialized services such as play therapy and speech pathology
• Access to nurses, child care staff, and mental health
• Community health programs through Council of the Haida Nation
• Mental health services
• Wellness Centre
• Acknowledgement of Jordan's Principle, prioritizing access to health care for children, ahead of jurisdictional disputes

**Other programs and services**
• Nawash Native Child Welfare program, including family and child supports
• Opportunities for traditional teachings, parenting, and mentoring
• Working through historical trauma
• Nawash food bank lunch program
• Family services support for emergency assistance, providing rent support and utilities support
• Seamless case management
• Parent support groups
Youth and child workers

Off-reserve

Child care services
- M’Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre (NCRC) services are very successful

Networks and collaborations
- Connecting families with services
- Advertising and promotion (using social media and spreading the word through outreach)
- Partnerships with other agencies and centres (Georgian College Early Childhood Education program)
- Growth of the Friendship Centre including increased capacity and knowledge-sharing
- Nawash services, including dental clinic, legal clinic, lunch program, and reading program
- Collaboration across service providers within centres
- Using social media to create connections and increase awareness of programs
- Efforts to connect families with services through advertising and promotion, using social media, and making connections with schools, agencies, and other centres
- Collaborations for capacity-building

Early years services
- Culturally-safe programming
- Routing programming of the OECs: rotation of themes to reach various interests and learning needs
- OECs provide welcoming spaces

Health and wellness services
- SOAHAC provides holistic off-reserve services
- Parent Mutual Aid programs for parents with families who are experiencing stress, often due to transportation costs
- Good Food Box

Other programs and services
- Moms and Tots program
- Cultural awareness and access to M’Wikwedong information
- Connections to other cultural programs
- Georgian College’s Early Childhood Education (ECE) program and apprenticeship for culturally-relevant programming

What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
Community needs

This section summarizes the most significant Indigenous early years and child care service needs, from the perspective of workshop participants.

Accessibility and affordability

Capacity
- Lack of child care spaces off-reserve, including before and after school programs
- Lack of Indigenous early years off-reserve
- Limited physical space for programs; M’Wikwedong space is limited
- Not enough Registered ECEs to cover capacity needs

Funding
- Lack of flexibility of jurisdictional boundaries and funding mandates
- Lack of flexible child care; on-reserve or program-specific
- Underfunding of licensed child care

Affordability
- Participants having to make trade-offs to afford food and housing
- Need for household income security
- Unaffordable fees for space
- Need for free space for programs or funds to pay for rentals

Accessibility
- Need for improved accessibility to buildings, including wheelchair access, for children and caregivers accessing services

Transportation
- Need for mobile services to overcome distance and lack of transport
- Lack of affordable transportation to address the unique needs of rural communities spanning vast geographies
- Need affordable transportation to and from before and after school programs
- Address issue that outreach workers (those providing health care and other services) are not always within reach geographically
Responsiveness

Awareness, communication, and collaboration
- More awareness of programs and resources off-reserve; uptake is not always at 100%
- Lack of contacts and information; need for a directory of services for on- and off-reserve
- Need to improve communication among service providers and families
- Need teachers in schools to share information on how children are doing back to the early years system
- Need to de-stigmatize access to services

Data needs
- Limited and out-dated data for understanding of need, planning and funding
- Challenge maintaining data records required for funding due to capacity and other issues

Program types
- Need more programs that support experiences of the Indigenous populations
- Need more outreach programs
- Require services that are inclusive to all family dynamics
- Need programming and services that recognize and are sensitive to inter-generational trauma
- Need for mental health services for 0-6 years
- Lack of programs for healing
- Lack of programming and services for children 5-8 during summer months
- Need programming for parents with isolation, addictions, and mental health illness needs (including care for their children)
- Enhanced service for children with special needs in child care centres

Quality

Culturally-relevant
- Would benefit from more culturally-relevant programming
- Need to acknowledge the three separate cultures within Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis)
- Need for on-reserve traditional language instruction for early years
- Lack of awareness of Indigenous diversity rights
- Need for enhanced professional development (self-care)
- Consider that children having to move away from communities to access school creates a loss of identity

What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
- Need culturally relevant supports for children with special needs
- Need consistent culturally-safe trauma-informed programs and services
- Need more opportunities to safely identify

Quality assurance
- Need to use the same quality assurance across all programs

Staffing
- Lack of qualified staff and teachers and Registered ECES
- Challenges with recruitment and retention of Registered ECES possibly due to low wages, over-work / hours and over capacity
- Need for more / ongoing cultural sensitivity training
- Lack of professional development specific to Indigenous child care
- Insufficient time to understand the system because of day-to-day pressures of running of programs and services

Obstacles

This section summarizes the most significant obstacles to meeting the Indigenous early years and child care service needs, from the perspective of workshop participants.

Funding
- Lack of funding in general for early years and child care
- No specific funding available to provide Indigenous off-reserve early years programming
- Challenges to long-term planning due to lack of stable funding; funding that is not annualized results in challenges for planning and paying for sustainable programming
- Need awareness and knowledge of what it costs to run child care centres

Connections and collaborations
- Lack of connection to the education system
- No shared list of contact information for early years and child care providers in Bruce County and Grey County
- Lack of promotion of First Nation and Inuit and Métis
- Lack of inclusion of Indigenous knowledge for mainstream services
- Need to align municipal policies to create a shared lens for addressing the needs of Indigenous communities

What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
Accelerators

This section summarizes the most significant accelerators to meeting the Indigenous early years and child care service needs, from the perspective of workshop participants. These ideas will be explored further during Engagement #2.

**Funding**
- Long-term stable funding commitment
- Tool or approach to facilitate gathering accurate and up-to-date data to assist with planning and funding request

**Capacity**
- Online training and webinars
- Child care space off-reserve
- More Indigenous RECES
- Collaborative recruitment of more RECES
- Leveraging existing resources for use by all
- Professional learning institute

**Connections and collaborations**
- Building and fostering relationships and partnerships
- Partnering on- and off-reserves and out of community (e.g. university students)
- Partnering with school board to support teachers on-reserve
- Developing a directory/inventory of services available for Indigenous on-reserve and off-reserve, including contact list with emails and phone numbers
- Networking and elimination of silos
- Not just a warm hand-off, but consistent communication without gaps
Hopes for the future

We asked participants to tell us their hopes for the future of early years and child care services for the Indigenous communities in Bruce County and Grey County. Here were some of their responses:

“In the future, I hope early years and child care services are...”

- Culturally-sensitive and fully-staffed with registered ECEs
- Easily available, with fewer waiting lists
- Easy to access for all families
- A real option available to all families, and not something we have to advocate for
- Accessible, affordable, and play-based
- Culturally-safe and supportive of the needs of changing families
- Allowing for more child-driven and needs-focused programming
- Seamless and co-delivered
- Providing funding to implement language immersion, culture, and history
- Valued at the biggest capacity, where funds are allocated and society understands the value
- Accessible to more rural communities
- Affordable and accessible to single parents who work evenings and night shifts
- Valued as significant contributors to family wellness and economic prosperity
- A bigger priority in the community
Engagement 2

The second engagement took place on April 7, 2017. A list of participants is included in the Appendix. The engagement began with an overview of the findings and discussions that unfolded in Engagement #1.

The session asked participants to discuss the following:
1. The relevance of the OEYCFC vision and guiding principles, as developed by the Ministry of Education
2. Validate the community needs identified in Engagement 1
3. Objectives for Grey County and Bruce County
4. Desired outcomes to address the objectives
5. Ideas around how we might reach the desired outcomes
6. Prioritization of outcomes

The following section provides a summary of the action planning discussion.

Overview

Vision

The vision of the OEYCFC developed by the Ministry of Education, is to support children, parents, and caregivers in learning, growing, and connecting together.

The engagement participants supported the vision as articulated by the Ministry of Education.

Guiding principles

The following guiding principles were developed by the Ministry of Education. While these principles do resonate with the group, participants in the community engagements expressed an interest and need for spending more time to develop and refine these guiding principles to reflect the Bruce and Grey communities.

Child and family centred: All programs and services are designed and delivered to meet the unique needs of parents, caregivers, and young children to support their developmental health and general well-being.

Welcoming: OEYCFCs provide a warm and welcoming environment based on the

Inclusive: Programs and services are accessible and responsive to children, parents and caregivers with varying abilities and cultural, language, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious backgrounds.

Integrated: Programs and services are developed, coordinated and delivered in a
foundational conditions for supporting growth and long term success (belonging, well-being, engagement and expression).

**High-quality.** Programs and services are designed to foster positive outcomes and support nurturing relationships for children, parents and caregivers based on the latest evidence and research.

**Community led.** Communities, educators, parents and caregivers are engaged in designing OECFC programs and services that embrace and build on their strengths, address identified gaps and meet their unique needs.

**Feedback from participants**

During the group discussion, participants provided feedback on the Ministry of Education’s existing guiding principles and how they might be amended to reflect the needs in Bruce and Grey.

The engagement participants emphasized four common themes during the discussion:

**PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**

Participants discussed the importance of incorporating safety into the design of every program and service geared towards Indigenous populations. This includes increased safety and sense of comfort for women, especially victims of domestic violence and other forms of trauma. For participants, safety also means creating more culturally relevant programming.

**TRAINED STAFF**

Another key element of success was having an adequately trained RECE staff. There are many barriers for Indigenous women interested in pursuing early childhood education (ECE) training. This might mean providing more opportunities for alternative class schedules for mothers with children interested in becoming trained RECE workers. Participants also expressed a need for trained RECE staff with specific Indigenous knowledge and experience. There is also an opportunity to provide incentives for further training.

**LANGUAGE**

Participants placed an emphasis on teaching language at an early age. Currently, Indigenous language teaching begins in Grade 4. There are few Indigenous language teachers within child care centres. There is also a need for language teachings at the kindergarten level.

**COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

Finally, the group talked about the potential for developing a community of practice where individuals in the early years and child care centre might share information, collaborate, and work on improving the Indigenous early years and child care system in Bruce County and Grey County.
Action planning

The section outlines the key themes, desired outcomes, and potential ideas brought forward by Engagement 2 participants. The outcomes are clustered according to common themes. The potential ideas are organized into two categories: local ideas and provincial ideas. Local ideas include ideas taken on by the CMSMs and other community partners. These groupings offer a suggestion for which group or jurisdiction might take on exploring the potential idea. For Bruce County and Grey County, local stakeholders might support or advocate to the Province on ideas that reach outside their mandates.

Accessibility

**Theme 1:** Increase capacity in early years and child care programs

**Outcomes**

- Space
  - Adequate funding for more spaces

- Programs
  - More Indigenous programs off-reserve
  - Shared space among service providers
  - Expanded M’Wikwedong services to Bruce
  - Alternative ways to reintegrate culture identified and implemented (need an understanding of where we come from to move forward in a positive way)

- Staffing
  - Adequate RECES to meet needs
  - Child-minding on site for education and parenting programs

- Partnerships and collaboration
  - Improved partnership and collaborations, possibly through ECE training programs

**Potential ideas**

**LOCAL**

**Advocacy**

- Advocate to Provincial Government for increased funding

**Partnerships and collaboration**

- Identify who in the community might provide Indigenous knowledge within early years and child care services

What we heard

Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
Hold further discussions with the Bluewater District School Board, Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

**Staffing**
- Consider succession planning for RECE teachers
- Identify and secure expertise and training to provide off-reserve programming
- Offer more culturally-based ECE programs and cultural courses
- Purchase surplus public buildings (like schools)
- Collaborate with Georgian College

**PROVINCIAL**

**Staffing**
- Allocate more funding to ECE training
- Make ECE education more attainable for more people (remove barriers, especially for mothers with children wanting to further their education)

**Theme 2: Address the funding gap to maintain, improve and create new programs and services**

**Outcomes**

**Flexibility**
- Flexible options for moving from on-reserve to off-reserve and vice-versa
- Options for on-reserve families to access off-reserve childcare

**Funding**
- Stable funding
- Better awareness of costs and expenses

**Partnerships and collaboration**
- A strong network of practitioners
- Native and non-Native elders working together and learn from one another

**Programming**
- After school programming and summer time programming

**Potential ideas**

**LOCAL**

**Partnerships and collaboration**
- Build a network across the sector to disseminate information and learnings to potential partners

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*What we heard*

*Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community*
• Work with First Nation child care supervisors and Ministry to achieve the desired outcomes
• Put forward a proposal with the Ministry of Education, CMSMs, First Nations, and M’Wikwedong and other community partners
• Engage in conversations with the two CMSMs and First Nations
• Secure conversations with funders

Funding
• Review budgets and community needs to understand what programs might be introduced
• Advocate to province for additional funding

PROVINCIAL
Funding
• Provide new funding to support a language teacher in the child care centres
• Early years and education programming should incorporate funding for cultural sensitivity training into their budgets

Theme 3: Make early years and child care programming affordable to all
Outcomes
• Adequate funding for programs
• Family programming is affordable to all
• Families on- and off-reserve can access fee subsidies (e.g. Saugeen families cannot access fee subsidies for before and after school programs at GC Huston because it’s off-reserve)
• Universal child care

Potential ideas

LOCAL
• Collaborate with First Nation child care supervisors and Ministry of Education

Theme 4: Make early years and child care programming accessible to all
Outcomes
• All programs are accessible to all families
Potential ideas

LOCAL
- Review spaces for accessibility standards

Theme 5: Remove transportation as a barrier to accessing early years and child care programming

Outcomes
- No outcomes were identified during the engagement

Potential ideas
- No potential ideas were identified during the engagement

Responsiveness

Theme 6: Increase awareness of programs and communication and collaboration between service providers

Outcomes

Partnerships and collaboration
- A community of practice
- Ongoing reciprocal knowledge sharing
- Connections with other groups, e.g. Public Health

Programming
- A strong focus on healing; acknowledging that people are at different places in their journey

Potential ideas

LOCAL
- Continue to meet and dialogue with the goal of collaboration
- Communicate with each other in the system
- Have students create and maintain a website to share information on events

What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
Theme 7: Ensure programs support and reflect cultural needs of Indigenous communities

Outcomes

- Increased accuracy in referring people to the right programs
- Improved awareness of mental health needs in the community (this should happen first, before we can address the issues)
- Enhanced programming funding for cultural programming
- More space

Potential ideas

LOCAL

Programs and service

- Have information available to be able to refer people to the right programs
- Investigate the possibility of one cultural centre where everyone can come together (Indigenous and non-Indigenous)
- Consider developing a community garden and community food preparation programming (can use kitchen facilities at child care centres)
- Consider creating programming to address basic needs
- Incorporate culture and storytelling into programming
- Incorporate mind, body, and spirit into programming
- Introduce programs on weekends or evenings for families
- Introduce land-based activities and water-based activities
- Make sure materials are available at all centres for children to explore (e.g. not just a museum piece, should be able to experience it)

Space

- Consider using child care space after hours for programming for school-aged children
- Use school space for more “summer camps” focused on literacy and numeracy (grades 1-3); include younger and older children as well
- Use school space on Nawash for school-aged programs in evenings and summer

Staffing

- Introduce apprenticeship programs to become an ECE
- Introduce co-op placements for ECE
- Develop training for RECEs on how to incorporate Indigenous words, materials into physical environment and curriculum
- Develop a “cultural resource bank” of people, information, and resources that can be shared

What we heard

Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
**Theme 8:** Improve access to data records for early years and child care programs

**Outcomes**
- No outcomes were identified during the engagement

**Potential ideas**
- No potential ideas were identified during the engagement

**Quality**

**Theme 9:** Ensure programs support and reflect cultural needs of Indigenous communities

**Outcomes**

**Programs**
- Programming that is culturally relevant is offered
- Programming is holistic and organic
- Seamless transition between programs
- Children who are not living with their families, who are off-reserve who do not have access to language instruction, receive culturally relevant programming

**Staffing**
- Have a teacher within the child care system to be able to pass on language to Indigenous children

**System structure**
- Programs have a maternal structure
- Programs are community-based
- Programs include children who have been taken away from their families; allow them to come back to their cultures
- Programs are provided for Indigenous children apprehended by CAS

**Potential ideas**

**LOCAL**
- Ensure non-stigmatizing programming
- Train traditional teachers
• Set up programs that encourage the knowledge of the elders and make the culture come alive
• Develop partnerships with CAS

PROVINCIAL
• Consider de-colonizing programming

Theme 10: Maintain quality assurance practices and standards across all programs

Outcomes
• Families receive the same standard of care, regardless of where they access care

Potential ideas

PROVINCIAL
• Province-funded quality assurance

Theme 11: Ensure programs provide safe and enjoyable working environments for all staff

Outcomes
• Expanded programming on professional development/bad weather/holidays
• Community involvement with elders
• Certified academic programs
• Safe environment

Potential ideas

LOCAL
• Improve marketing and communication for programs and services
• Designate elder roles within programs
• Seek provincial supports
• Designate resources to help people complete training
• Develop comprehensive tool kits to implement changes; designated training sessions

PROVINCIAL
• Provide enhanced funding to support pay stabilization and secure long-term jobs for RECE staff and increased access to academic programs for prospective RECE staff

What we heard
Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
Next Steps

This engagement process marked the beginning of a new journey towards improving Indigenous early years and child care services in Bruce County and Grey County. Municipal staff and many community members in attendance were motivated to continue the work in several ways:

- To work together on further refining and building on the action planning exercise, identifying key themes, outcomes, and ideas for Bruce, Grey, and community partners;
- To work on submitting a proposal to the Journey Together funding opportunity;
- To continue the dialogue by forming an Indigenous-led working group or planning committee to carry out the work; and
- To continue to communicate with and engage local partners in hopes of building a community of practice for ongoing learning, collaboration, and excellence in Indigenous early years and child care services. This would include continuing the work to build out the agency inventory with contact information and other details of local early years and child care providers, to be distributed to community partners.
# Appendix

## Engagement Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organization or Agency</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amie Foster</td>
<td>Addictions Counsellor</td>
<td>Hopegreybruce Mental Health and Addictions</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barb Fedy</td>
<td>Director of Social Services</td>
<td>Grey County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Arbuckle</td>
<td>Children's Services Manager</td>
<td>Grey County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Blowes</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Wilton</td>
<td>Social Services, Children's Services Manager</td>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy McGirr</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Bruce County Museum</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine MacDonald</td>
<td>Director of Social Services and Housing</td>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Tanner</td>
<td>Fee Subsidy/Home Child Care Supervisor</td>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Van Wyck</td>
<td>Early Years Coordinator</td>
<td>MWikwedong NCRC Ontario Early Years Centres</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Borrows</td>
<td>Wellness Centre</td>
<td>Chippeawas of Nawash</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Sells</td>
<td>Director of Service for Community and Prevention Programs</td>
<td>Keystone Child, Youth &amp; Family Services</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimelda Johnston</td>
<td>Family Well-being Worker</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Besito</td>
<td>Supervisor Binoojihin Gamig Day Care Centre</td>
<td>Saugeen First Nation</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaeli Goldman</td>
<td>Family Support Worker</td>
<td>Métis Nation of Ontario - Community Wellness Program</td>
<td>✔</td>
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*What we heard*

Engagement with the Indigenous Early Years and Child Care Community
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karen Sweiger</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Grey Bruce Public Health Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy Johnston</td>
<td>Early Years Supervisor</td>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie Clarke</td>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>Grey Roots Museum and Archives</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Jones</td>
<td>Acting Supervisor</td>
<td>Nshlime Child Care Centre</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Woodward</td>
<td>Early Learning Coordinator</td>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren Ellis</td>
<td>Education/Outreach</td>
<td>Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa George</td>
<td>Integrated Care Manager</td>
<td>Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Saunders</td>
<td>Child Care Advisor</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Sylver</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Millar</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Salvation Army, Wiarton</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa McCulloch</td>
<td>OW Manager</td>
<td>Grey County</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melissa Root</td>
<td>Library Program</td>
<td>Saugeen First Nation</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Parkin</td>
<td>Early Years and Child Care Program Advisor</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalka Pucan</td>
<td>Native Language Teacher</td>
<td>St. Joseph School, Port Elgin</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patty Kelly</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>The Women's Center</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renee Abram</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>M'Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robyn McKenzie</td>
<td>Community Action Plan for Children Program</td>
<td>M'Wikwedong NCRC</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stacey Wesley</td>
<td>Health Centre</td>
<td>Chippeawas of Nawash</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Schular</td>
<td>Program Supervisor</td>
<td>Grey Bruce Public Health Unit</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Coburn</td>
<td>Indigenous Education Lead</td>
<td>Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Root</td>
<td>Healthy Babies Healthy Children</td>
<td>Saugeen First Nation</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracey Shilvock</td>
<td>Preschool Resource Supervisor</td>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vallee Trudeau</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bluewater District School Board</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Deiter</td>
<td>Supervisor G'Shaw-da-Gawin Day Care Centre</td>
<td>Saugeen First Nation</td>
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