



The Honourable Stephen Lecce, MPP
Ministry of Education
5th Floor
438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

January 5, 2022

BY EMAIL: Stephen.Lecce@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Lecce,

RE: Emergency Childcare for emergency service workers

We are writing to express our disappointment in the January 4 announcement that emergency childcare for school-aged children of front-line workers would only be available effective January 10, 2022. This is a change from the January 3 announcement, in which it was stated that this emergency childcare would be available for the period of remote learning, which began today – January 5.

This leaves thousands of front-line workers without access to childcare for several days. Our members have been working hard throughout the pandemic to keep the community safe, often putting themselves at risk. Not having emergency childcare available adds to an already high stress level and makes it extremely difficult for our members to do their jobs – this at a time when stress and COVID-related absences are at an all-time high.

While the offer for free childcare is greatly appreciated, the important thing is that our front-line workers have a safe space for their children to go while they are at work. Leaving them to fend for themselves is unfair. Our members had relied on your promise of access to childcare today.

We appreciate that moving back into Step 2 of the Roadmap has many moving parts; however, this three-day lack of childcare is a significant blow to an extremely important sector of our community.

We urge you to do whatever you can to instate emergency childcare for school-aged children immediately in order for front-line workers to get back to work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Baxter, President, PAO

Carmen Santoro, President, OPFFA

CC: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General