



RESPONSE TO PETITION

No.

7-18(2)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Petition tabled by Ms. Julie Green on March 09, 2017

Response by the Honourable Alfred Moses
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

Funding for Junior Kindergarten and Other Options for Families

Junior Kindergarten (JK) is expected to cost \$5.1 million to implement across the remainder of the communities in the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has committed to fully funding the ongoing costs for JK implementation beginning in the 2017-2018 school year and into the future. The GNWT will also fund the one-time expenses associated with purchase of play-based equipment and for classroom modifications.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) will continue to maintain funding levels for Inclusive Schooling, and Aboriginal Language and Culture Based Education. Children with exceptionalities entering JK will have access to existing supports and resources that currently exist within the school. The specific needs of JK students will be met through the school-based support team.

The Department recognizes the need for supporting multiple options for parents of children between 0 and 5 years old. JK is an important part of the government's support for early childhood development in the NWT, but it is not the only action ECE is taking.

ECE has been working with licensed child day care facilities and family day homes child care providers to help them adapt to the territory-wide implementation of JK, and has made wide ranging improvements to the Early Childhood Program (ECP) funding model. Recent changes include:

- Revised ECP Operating Subsidy model;
- Consolidation of licensing and funding applications into a single application form and the possibility of multi-year funding agreements;
- Increased funding for operators within government buildings;
- Increased ECP Operating Subsidy rates; and
- Streamlined licensing and funding application process.