

EDUCATION/EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT--Before and After Program,
Busing Coming for Pre-primary

Families will have more opportunities to access pre-primary in September with the expansion of the Nova Scotia Before and After Program and bus service.

"Families told us that before and after programming and transportation would make it easier for them to access pre-primary," said Zach Churchill, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. "Removing these barriers will help make sure families can access this important early learning opportunity."

The province will expand the on-site, Nova Scotia Before and After Program to 40 sites this fall, with continued expansion in 2020, where needed.

This physical activity-based program will be delivered by approved regulated childcare or recreation providers. It will be aligned with the province's Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia action plan.

"Ensuring all Nova Scotians have opportunities to enjoy an active lifestyle is a government priority," said Attorney General and Minister of Justice Mark Furey, on behalf of Communities, Culture and Heritage Minister Leo Glavine. "Daily physical activity is proven to help in the classroom. With the expansion, more of our children and families can take advantage of this great program."

The Nova Scotia Before and After Program is open to all children from pre-primary to Grade 6.

A list of Nova Scotia Before and After Program locations and more information about the program is available at <https://novascotia.ca/BAP>.

Bus service will also be available for eligible pre-primary children at 56 sites this fall.

Sites receiving busing this September are in areas where all eligible pre-primary children in a class could be accommodated on existing buses and in some cases, where participation was low.

Karin Rawding's daughter will attend pre-primary this year. She will be one of the first pre-primaries to be bused to the program.

"In a rural community, transportation can make or break your ability to attend the program. I know other families who wouldn't be able to attend the program without this option," said Ms. Rawding. "Access to busing means my daughter will get used to being on a bus, it allows for my older children and youngest to all be in the same school and it allows us to balance work and family."

The remaining pre-primary sites will receive busing in 2020 when pre-primary is available to all children across the province. Currently, pre-primary is available in 201 school communities.

For more information about busing, pre-primary and a list of locations that will receive busing in September visit <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/pre-primary>.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

The province is expanding the Nova Scotia Before and After Program and introducing bus service for pre-primary children in September.

Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development Zach Churchill says removing these barriers will help make sure families can access this important early learning opportunity.

The Nova Scotia Before and After Program is a fee-based program delivered on-site at the school by approved childcare or recreation providers.

Open to all children from pre-primary to Grade 6, it will expand to 40 sites this fall, with continued expansion into 2020, where needed.

Bus service will also be available for eligible pre-primary children at 56 sites this fall. Remaining pre-primary sites will receive busing in 2020 when pre-primary is available to all children across the province.

-30-

Media Contact: JoAnn Alberstat
902-424-8095
JoAnn.Alberstat@novascotia.ca