

Play & Learn Program (2020-2021 School Year)

FAQ's For Schools and Families

1. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ATTENDING THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM IN ADDITION TO KINDERGARTEN?

Medicine Hat Public School Division (MHPSD) believes in the importance of building a solid foundation in the early years. To enhance our strong early childhood programs, we offer the **optional** Play & Learn program, in addition to kindergarten. The Play & Learn program engages children in holistic play-based activities through playful exploration and problem solving to develop literacy skills and physical well-being in an inclusive environment.

2. DO ALL KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN HAVE TO ATTEND THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM?

No, Play & Learn is optional.

3. WHAT WILL IT COST FOR A CHILD TO ATTEND THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM?

The cost is \$275 per month. This fee does not apply to children accessing supports through Program Unit Funding.

4. WHY IS THERE A COST TO ATTEND?

The fee will support the additional staff costs associated with running this optional program in addition to kindergarten. Alberta Education provides funding for a half-time kindergarten program only. MHPSD has chosen to invest additional time and resources into extra play-based programming to support the critical period of development for young children.

5. WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PAYING MONTHLY FEES?

Fees will be collected through a Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) agreement taken directly from the designated bank account on the first day of each month. The PAD agreement will include all the necessary information for fees to be processed.

6. IS THERE A SUBSIDY AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES?

This program does not qualify for the childcare subsidy. Low income families will be invited to complete an application to have fees waived if applicable. Families will be notified prior to the Play & Learn start date if their application has been successful.

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7. WILL A RECEIPT BE PROVIDED FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES?

A receipt will be provided only to the families who request one; however, this program is not an eligible for childcare expense on your income taxes.

- [Government of Canada – CRA Child Care Expenses Information](#)

8. CAN A CHILD WHO ATTENDS PLAY & LEARN AND KINDERGARTEN ACCESS THE YMCA BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM?

Yes. The YMCA runs the before and after school care programs for the Medicine Hat Public School Division. They also offer flexible childcare options on professional development days. Contact the YMCA about camps available during school holidays. A subsidy program is available to families that qualify.

- [YMCA Before and After School Care Program](#) - REGISTER

9. HOW CAN FAMILIES REGISTER FOR THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM?

Families should contact their neighbourhood school to register for the optional program or follow the prompts to register online.

- MHPSD.ca/registration - Online registration

10. IS THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM AVAILABLE AT ALL OF THE MHPSD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS?

Yes, it is our intention to provide an additional program option at all schools on a first-come first-served basis. If we are not able to accommodate a Play & Learn program at the in-area school, we will offer an alternative option.

11. WHO WILL INSTRUCT THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM?

A Play & Learn staff member will be assigned to work with each class for the Play & Learn portion of your child's day.

12. WHAT IS A PLAY AND LEARN STAFF MEMBER?

A Play & Learn staff member is an individual with a certificate or diploma from a recognized post-secondary institution that may specialize in early childhood development or a related field.

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13. HOW OLD DO CHILDREN HAVE TO BE TO ATTEND PLAY & LEARN?

Children enrolled in kindergarten are eligible to attend. Children need to be **five years old by December 31, 2020** to attend kindergarten in September 2020.

Please note: The kindergarten entrance age is changing for the 2020-2021 school year. In September 2020 children will have to be age 5 by December 31, 2020 to register in kindergarten based on changes to the Education Act.

14. WHAT ARE THE HOURS FOR THE PLAY & LEARN PROGRAM OPTION?

Each school has a unique bell schedule. Children attending the Play & Learn program will attend in the morning or the afternoon – opposite of their kindergarten program. The children will be at the school all day.