

Construction of new elementary school in Caledon completed, government provided \$16.1 million in funding

By Rob Paul

With the Government of Ontario's ongoing effort to build and improve schools, the province has approved Peel District School Board's request to build the new Private Buckam Singh Elementary School in the amount of \$16.1 million.

Construction of the project is now complete and is open for the 2021-22 school year. Private Buckam Singh Elementary School is located at 12175 Bramalea Road in Caledon.

This will provide a new, quality learning environment for the children of Caledon, as well as four new childcare rooms and an EarlyON Child and Family Centre to the school. This project is part of the province's capital investment program to support students with better learning spaces.

"Our government is proud to support the children of Caledon by providing updated classrooms with modern ventilation and their parents with safe and affordable childcare opportunities," said Minister of Education Stephen Lecce. "By building the new Private Buckam Singh Elementary School, our government is ensuring that local children have access to modern learning environments and quality childcare options."

Highlights from the project include 662 elementary student spaces, 73 new licensed childcare spaces, four new childcare rooms, and one EarlyON Child and Family Centre room.

"I'm elated that parents and caregivers with young children can now participate in the free activities offered through the school's EarlyON Child and Family Centre," said Rashmi Swarup, Director of Education for Peel District School Board. "This is such a welcomed benefit for the community. As a result of this investment, parents, caregivers, and their young children can connect with others and learn together for years to come."

In November, Lecce announced that the Ontario government is making major investments to build and improve schools and create more licensed childcare spaces across the province to create the foundation for a modern learning environment for hundreds of students across the province through 78 school and childcare related projects.

Capital Priorities Program projects will create 19,700 new student spaces, and 1,525 new licensed childcare spaces in schools. These new spaces will be supported by an investment of \$565 million, which will see 26 new schools and 20 permanent additions and renovations built.

The Ontario government has allocated more than \$600 million to support ventilation improvements in schools across Ontario as part of its plans for a safer return to school.

The Peel District School Board has benefited from an investment of \$31.2 million for ventilation improvements and has almost 2,500 HEPA filter units in place.

The Ontario Government is working with school board partners to invest in capital projects that advance safe and accessible learning opportunities for students. To create new opportunities for Ontario's families, the government is investing up to \$1 billion to create up to 30,000 new childcare spaces in schools over five years.

Over the next ten years, the Ontario government is investing \$14 billion in capital grants, including allocating \$550 million in 2020-21 for new schools, additions and major renovations. This investment will build new schools and help existing schools after a decade of closures and maintenance backlog.

Ontario has announced additional funding of \$25 million to further improve ventilation in schools as students return for in-person learning this fall. This additional funding brings the net new investments in school ventilation to \$600 million.

The province is also providing school boards with a historic \$1.4 billion in funding to renew and maintain existing schools. This funding could be used to replace aging heating or air conditioning systems, repair roofs and windows, and install important accessibility features like elevators and ramps.

?In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have made safer schools a priority, which is why we continue to invest in modern and accessible learning spaces with improved ventilation,? said Minister Lecce. ?This investment is part of our multiyear plan to build, expand, and update schools and childcare spaces across our province. It will leave a lasting legacy that benefits working families for years to come.?