What is your party's plan to make quality out of school care available to all families, in all communities?

Supporting an Integrated Approach to Childhood Development

- OOSC programs operating within schools, face inconsistent leasing terms across Alberta, and uncertainty about the availability of space from year to year. This forces many programs to operate within community center or retail spaces, where high lease rates can make the program prohibitively expensive for some families.

- In 2016 there were 46,368 OOSC spaces available in Alberta. At the same time, there were a total of 415,700 children enrolled in grades K-6, meaning that ***no more* than 11.2%** of Alberta's school age children could access a quality OOSC program.

- Program Unit Funding (PUF) is only available to approved ECS operators and school authorities for children who are between 32 months and 6 years of age. Relatively few supports are available to children with higher needs in OOSC programs.

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What is your party's plan to make out of school care affordable for all families?

Supporting an Integrated Approach to Childhood Development

- The average OOSC fees in Alberta are $476.00 per month, in addition to the cost of summer camp(s), which are typically even more expensive. Even for a single parent making Alberta's new minimum wage, this constitutes approximately 19% of their **gross** wages, *per child*.

- Child care subsidy amounts have gone largely unchanged since the program's inception in 2008. One of the biggest challenges for families, is that subsidy is based on income tax data from the year previous, which does not always reflect the family's present financial situation, especially considering Alberta's current economic state.

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How does your party plan to support the development of a more highly educated, and appropriately remunerated, out of school care workforce?

Supporting an Integrated Approach to Childhood Development

- In 2017, the average wage for a child care professional was as little as $15.29 per hour, depending on level of education. In the same year, Calgary's living wage was approximately $18.15 per hour.

- There are relatively few post-secondary options for those who wish to become child care professionals, and the cost of tuition can be prohibitive. The programs that do exist often have long waiting lists, and may not offer part time, evening or online delivery. Child care diploma and degree programs also include only a small amount of content specifically related to working with school age children, if any at all.

- Public spending on quality, licensed child care has consistently proved to be a good economic investment. In Toronto, for example, it was concluded that every $1 spent created an economic return of $2.27.

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How does your party plan to increase the frequency of cross-ministerial conversations and initiatives, as they pertain to out of school care?

Supporting an Integrated Approach to Childhood Development

- OOSC programs are responsible to several branches of Provincial and Municipal government, whose requirements are sometimes at odds with one another. For example, an accredited program is expected to incorporate natural materials into the environment, but Alberta Health Services discourages this practice.
- Throughout the province there are inconsistent requirements for development permits when operating inside of a school.
- There is a great deal of unrealized potential for collaboration between the Ministry of Children's Services and the Ministry of Education, among others. Likewise, opportunities exist for collaboration and continuity of care between OOSC providers, and the schools in which they most frequently operate.

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