



**Manitoba Child Care  
Association**

Our mission is to advocate for a quality system of child care, to advance early childhood education as a profession, and to provide services to our members.

August 3, 2017

Hon. Brian Pallister, Premier  
Room 204, Legislative Building  
450 Broadway Ave  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3C 0V8

**COPY**

Dear Hon. Brian Pallister:

On behalf of the Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA), I am writing to advise that the gap between supply of licensed child care spaces and demand for the service continues to be a problem in need of a plan. As of June 30, 2017, there are 16,861 children on the Online Child Care Registry waiting for a licensed child care space, of which 1,047 are children not yet born. The waiting list has grown by 1,783 children since June 30, 2016. According to an MCCA/Probe Research survey (2016), parents report an average 14-15 month wait time for a child care space, which hinders their ability to work or attend school. 30% report they have turned down a job, 41% report they have delayed returning to work, and 24% have declined an education opportunity because they lacked child care.

On June 14, 2017, the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers signed an agreement that includes a long term vision, principles, and objectives that will help child care move forward. Provinces and Territories must now submit their action plans to the federal government. Manitoba's share of federal funds is estimated at \$15M in each of the next three years. MCCA is writing to request your assistance to ensure Manitoba, long regarded as a national leader in early learning and child care, is one of the first to submit an action plan to the federal government, so funds can be released and put to work building the high quality, not for profit, affordable, and inclusive child care system that Manitoba parents are waiting for.

Since being elected 16 months ago, your government has made several positive announcements about child care spaces, including funding for 15 community based capital projects that helped establish 739 new licensed child care spaces, the opening of 74 new spaces in Donwood School, a new intake for community based capital projects that will create up to an additional 739 new licensed spaces, and a stand-alone 74 space centre at the new Neepawa Area Collegiate. Capital, start up, and operating grant funding, along with skilled Early Childhood Educators are all key to creating new spaces, and must be part of a comprehensive action plan for Manitoba.

MCCA has identified priorities for new investments to strengthen and enhance our child care system which include:

1. Access – for example, increase the number of licensed spaces by providing capital grants to support new infrastructure, and also start up and operating grants for currently unfunded and

new not for profit child care spaces. To ensure equitable access for children with varying abilities, a funding increase for the Inclusion Support Program is urgently needed.

2. Affordability – for example, index subsidy eligibility for low income families.
3. Funding – provide an annual increase to the operating grant to child care centres and licensed homes that reflects inflationary increases to operations including wages and benefits, children's program, occupancy, and administration costs.
4. Quality – make an educated, experienced child care workforce a priority for all licensed facilities, by improving access to affordable ECE diploma and degree training across the province, and providing incentives to Child Care Assistants and Family Child Care Providers to upgrade their qualifications.
5. Strengthen governance & administration: for example, through a cost and time effective method of providing affordable resource, guidance, training, and support to the board of directors of child care centres.

Thank you for your commitment to quality early learning and child care. We look forward to future initiatives to enhance and strengthen child care services in Manitoba.

Sincerely,



April Kalyniuk, President

cc Hon. Scott Fielding, Minister of Families  
Michelle Stephen-Wiens, A/Director, Early Learning and Child Care Program

Encl: MCCA/Probe Research Infographic: Child Care in Manitoba: Priorities & Preferences