



**Manitoba Child Care  
Association**

April 8, 2020

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

Dear Hon. Brian Pallister,

The Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) acknowledges the coordinated efforts of the provincial and federal government during these challenging and unprecedented times. As an association, we also fully understand the need for health care and emergency service workers to be available for duty and for all Manitobans to be a part of the solution to flatten the curve.

MCCA respects and supports all of its members and the individual decisions of Boards of Directors and home based programs based on their unique and personal situations. We recognize the legitimate fear that the early learning and child care sector has regarding their safety, health and well-being as well as that of the children, families and all Manitobans. Centres and home providers that have remained open or closed during the pandemic should not be shamed or penalized.

MCCA recognizes that your government is under tremendous pressure for financial assistance and wants to be a partner with you to support all Manitobans during this time. In order for early learning & child care programs to operate during the COVID-19 crisis, the MCCA is recommending:

**Consistent and Adequate Funding –**

It is imperative that the financial viability of programs be considered post-COVID-19. All early learning and child care programs (centres and homes) must be supported regardless of the decision to remain open, operating grants should continue indefinitely for all programs.

For centres or homes that remain open, additional funding allocated to:

- increased remuneration for all educators (both centres and homes) who are providing care for essential service workers
- funding to offset incurred operational costs for programs who will have a significant reduction in parent fee revenue

- match the child care needs of essential service workers with available capacity in existing, licensed, insured spaces in centres and homes
- consider the redistribution of any unallocated funds from the \$18 M (administered by the Winnipeg and Manitoba Chambers of Commerce) towards existing centres and homes that are providing care to essential service workers

### **Enhanced Ratios & Reduced Group Sizes –**

The Provincial Chief Health Officer has recommended that public gatherings do not exceed 10 persons. The approved limit of 16 children with a minimum of 2 ECEs is in violation of this order. To protect the safety, well-being and health of the ECE workforce, the children and their families, the approved number must be reduced to, at maximum, 7 children with 3 adults. The responsibilities of an ECE have dramatically increased as they continue to provide nurturing care, while sanitizing and disinfecting toys and high touch areas, and encouraging social distancing in young children.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

For facilities that remain open, in addition to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Early Learning and Child Care Practice Guidance, MCCA is recommending:

- the centre or home has direct access to a coordinator for questions, support and timely information
- all ECEs, CCAs and home-based providers receive training specific to the protection, health and well-being of staff, children and families
- Dr. Roussin offer a training session with the early learning & child care sector on protocol and procedures for maintaining a safe and healthy environment

The recovery of our province's economy is dependent on the existence of an early learning and child care system. We must ensure that the system is supported now and has a workforce post-pandemic to meet the child care needs of Manitobans who will be ready to go back to work.

Sincerely,



Tracy Cosser  
**President, MCCA**



Jodie Kehl  
**Executive Director, MCCA**

c.c. – Hon. Heather Stefanson, Minister of Families  
Deputy Minister, John Leggat  
Assistant Deputy Minister, Sarah Thiele  
Michelle Stephen-Wiens, A/Director ELCC Program