

MEDIA RELEASE

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SUPPORT THE CHILD CARE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT MANITOBA FAMILIES

As the Canada-Wide Child Care plan rolls out funding to Manitoba to deliver on the promise of affordable child care for families, the centrepiece of the plan will also need to encompass a workforce strategy. Without this, Manitoba will not build the transformative system of Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) needed to sustain quality child care in the province for years to come.

Today's announcement, which prioritizes affordability for families, is an important element of system building and is welcome news for many Manitoba families. Manitoba's child care agreement, as a part of the Canada-Wide Child Care Plan, comes with clear targets for fee reductions for helping Manitoba's families. However, in order to truly succeed, it is essential that there be a specific child care work force strategy to support, compensate and educate Manitoba's ELCC workforce.

Meaningful discussions and collaboration with the Minister's Consultation Table and ELCC experts must take place to achieve the system Manitoba needs, through an evidenced-based system building approach – one that includes a comprehensive and intentional workforce strategy.

Manitoba's ELCC sector is in distress, scrambling for immediate support and direction in handling the new waves of the pandemic. With critical shortages of staff, pleas for PPE, better ventilation and protocols for children and educators, child care programs can't quash the fears of parents, nor can they give them any certainty in continually providing reliable and high-quality care and education for their children. It is a sector that is being held together by the goodwill, dedication and perseverance of an overburdened and neglected workforce.

Early Childhood Educators and providers—the people—are the foundation of the child care services and investing in them will guide the system to success. We have to make child care a desirable profession and not a stop over job that currently sees one of the highest staff turnover rates compared to other professions. "Manitoba has the historic opportunity to transform its child care sector and meet the needs of families in both hard and good economic times," said Lynda Raible, MCCA's President Elect. "We look forward to the much-needed announcements from the Province of Manitoba that will show their investment, support and stabilization of the ELCC workforce."

The Manitoba Child Care Association is a membership funded organization that advocates for a quality system of child care and works to advance early childhood education as a profession.

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