

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### THANKS TO CHILD CARE, MANITOBA CAN WORK

With the Covid-19 pandemic continually revealing how essential and critically important early learning and child care (ELCC) is for Manitobans, in Budget 2022, Manitoba has to further its investment in the province's ELCC sector, supported by the Canada-wide child care plan, and specifically, needs to prioritize robust and inclusive support of the ELCC workforce.

The historic Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Child Care Agreement provides the opportunity to transform and modernize ELCC in Manitoba. However, to achieve the system that Manitobans deserve, a comprehensive and intentional workforce strategy will need to be put in place. Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and providers are the engine of quality in child care services. Families also rely on ECEs to work in partnership to support children's development, well-being and care, for future success.

As space expansion rolls out for families, child care facilities across the province are unable to attract and retain qualified staff to work in their programs, which ultimately reduces the quality-of-care children need to thrive and what families deserve.

MCCA's recommendations for a comprehensive workforce strategy are:

- An immediate increase to operating funding to licensed child care programs whose funding has been frozen since January 2016, supporting fair wages and benefits for ECEs and providers
- The adoption of MCCA's Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale 2022-23, which recognizes ECE education and experience
- Improved accessibility for children with additional support needs
- Increased spaces to meet the growing needs of Manitoba families

"High quality early learning and child care is only achievable with an educated, supported and fairly compensated workforce", said Caryn LaFlèche, President of MCCA. "If we truly wish to develop a high-quality, affordable, accessible, inclusive ELCC system in Manitoba, the child care workforce must be prioritized as part of Budget 2022."

Thanks to child care, Manitoba can work.

*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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