

## **Question responses from The Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba:**

### **If elected will your party commit to funding MCCA's Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale and a benefit package for all certified ECEs?**

We are committed to supporting the success of Manitobans, and for many success hinges upon the availability of high-quality childcare. One of the first things that we did when we were looking at implementing \$10 a day childcare, was to negotiate with the Federal Government to include wage supplements in the initial funding. We are committed to continuing to work with the industry to meet the needs to educators, so that they can provide the care that they are trained to.

### **What is your plan for developing a comprehensive workforce strategy to address the current shrinking ECE workforce?**

The last few years have been transformational for Early Childhood Education in Manitoba. We have made great strides towards ensuring that all families have access to affordable quality childcare, and now we need to redouble our efforts to support those that provide that care.

That is why we have implemented a robust tuition reimbursement program, to date over 600 Manitobans have begun to either train in the field or to expand upon their existing certification. We understand that investments in these individuals play dividends long into the future. Combined with our partnership in the form of a \$24 million training Expansion Plan, we now have almost 1,000 new training seats for ECEs and Child Care Assistants.

Combined with wage supports and benefits, such as Tax-Free Savings Account contributions we want to support those that are there for Manitoba families each and every day. This is part of a three-pronged strategy of Retain, Train, and Recruit. We will continue to work with the industry to best meet the needs of Manitoba families.

## **Affordability/Funding**

### **What is your plan to ensure high quality early learning and child care services are affordable to all families in Manitoba?**

Our government committed to an average daily childcare rate of \$10 a day by 2024. Instead, we delivered on a maximum rate of \$10 a day as of this year. That means that many will in fact pay lower than this. We will continue this policy, and rates will be maintained.

**What is your plan to ensure that families of School-age children (7-12 years) will pay a maximum of \$10/day year long?**

Right now, families do see increased charges for days in which school is not in session corresponding to the great need on facilities. We are committed to working with facilities to first target supports for Manitobans in need, recognizing the balance of equity and equality.

**What is your plan to ensure licensed not for profit facilities receive annual and adequate operating grants to make up for the frozen funding over the years?**

Stable and predictable funding is necessary for facilities to plan long term. That is why we recently signed a three-year action plan with the Federal Government, which gives that long-term stability to funding. We are investing \$2.3 million to provide an increase to base operating funding in addition to this partnership between the Federal and Provincial governments. In addition to this we have made funds available to facilities for a variety of cultural and equity-based programming.

**Accessibility**

**What is your expansion plan to ensure the growth of high-quality child care for all Manitoba families throughout the province?**

We have dedicated \$445 million towards the expansion of spaces throughout Manitoba., including \$120 million for Ready to Move units, in cooperation with Municipalities and First Nations Communities. We have committed to 23,000 new regulated childcare spaces by 2026, this will represent the largest expansion to the sector ever. To date almost 12,500 of these spaces are either operating or are funded and committed. We have also made it a matter of policy to include space for childcare in all new school construction.

**What is your plan to support existing facilities ability to expand through planning grants, adequate funding and necessary resources?**

The needs of Manitobans will be met not just with new and expanded spaces, but by also growing and maintaining those that already exist. That is why we have locked in multi year funding so that administration can plan beyond just one year's budget and take into account the needs to the centre and community on a wider scale. We have made grant funding available for a wide variety of programs, and encourage all childcare centers to participate.