

2019 - 11 Early Learning & Child Care

Mover: Childcare Coalition of Manitoba

Whereas: Investments in early learning and child care stimulate the local economy and create jobs, while also supporting children and families, and promoting women's equality. National data shows that childcare has one of the highest GDP multipliers and the highest employment multiplier of all major industries. Research shows that for every dollar invested in ECEC the estimated net present value of benefits is \$2.54, and the estimated net hourly benefit for children and mothers is \$4.27.

Whereas: Accessible and affordable childcare is a major factor in helping women access education, employment and alleviating child and family poverty.

Whereas: High quality early learning and child care services promote healthy child development, help identify children with additional support needs to provide enhanced early intervention programs, and assist parents in their important role as their child's first teacher and caregiver.

Whereas: Manitoba has a licensed childcare space for less than one in five children.

Whereas: There are over 16,000 names on the Manitoba Online Child Care Registry, a sign of unmet childcare need. Parents in Manitoba wait an average of 15-20 months in order to access a licensed childcare space. Much of Manitoba is a childcare 'desert,' a neighbourhood where few childcare spaces exist.

Whereas: Although Manitoba's childcare fees are low in national comparison, they are still too expensive for many families, and fee subsidies are inadequate. A family has to be well below the poverty line to qualify for a childcare fee subsidy, and even when a very poor family does qualify, they are usually charged a \$2 per day fee for each child.

Whereas: Inadequate provincial operating funding means that it is difficult to recruit and retain qualified early childhood educators, or pay them adequate wages. Estimates are that one-third of Manitoba childcare centres are operating with an exemption to their license because they do not have the required share of qualified early childhood educators.

Whereas: There is a pressing need for culturally and linguistically appropriate and inclusive child care services for Indigenous, Francophone and minority communities. Closing this gap requires more resources and training supports for Indigenous, Francophone and other minority groups to enter the child care profession. The Université de Saint-Boniface (offering the francophone Early Childhood Education diploma program) remains the only public post-secondary institution without its own childcare centre.

Whereas: Many currently operating childcare centres do not receive full operating funding to sustain their services.

Whereas: Manitoba will receive an additional \$47 million federal dollars between 2017 and 2020 under the Bilateral Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care.

Whereas: The Province of Manitoba has committed to updating and launching a provincial poverty reduction strategy, of which early learning and not-for-profit childcare must be an essential part.

Be It Resolved That: CCEDNet – Manitoba urge the Province of Manitoba to work with the early learning and child care sector to:

- a. Create at least 16,000 new funded not-for-profit childcare spaces, while also investing resources to ensure all existing spaces receive ongoing operating funding. Operating funding should be increased to fairly compensate and retain Early Childhood Educators and to enable the delivery of sustainable, community-based, and culturally-relevant early learning and child care programming for families in high socio-economic needs areas.
- b. Invest in initiatives to recruit and train enough early childhood educators to meet the legislated requirements for trained staff in existing centres and homes, as well as the 16,000 new spaces.
- c. Immediately eliminate the \$2.00 daily childcare fee for subsidized families, and increase the income level at which families are eligible for a full fee subsidy, with annual indexing to ensure low income families have effective access to childcare services.
- d. Establish 30 community-based Indigenous head start programs in and around high-needs schools across Manitoba by 2020.