

2016 – 9 Early Learning & Child Care

Mover: Child Care Coalition of Manitoba

Whereas: Investments in early learning and child care stimulate the local economy and create jobs. Every \$1 invested in childcare in Manitoba returns \$1.58 to rural and northern economies and \$1.38 to the Winnipeg economy. For every childcare job created, 2.15 other jobs are created or sustained. Child care affects over 12,700 households in Winnipeg alone, allowing mothers and fathers to work or study, and to earn an estimated \$715 million per year. Accessible and affordable childcare is a major factor in helping women access education, employment and alleviating child poverty. Wages for child care assistants and Early Childhood Educators brings money to their families and the local economy.

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

Whereas: The Online Child Care Registry indicates demand for child care services by age and by community. According to the Registry, there are at least 12,000 children on the wait list for child care spaces. Wait times range from months to years across all age groups. The distribution of childcare services tends to advantage higher-income neighbourhoods with greater social capital and newer infrastructure (i.e schools and community centres) and disadvantage lower-income neighbourhoods. Beyond that, low income families are even less likely to access quality childcare because of the \$2 per day fee for each child in fully subsidized child care unless the family is receiving social assistance.

Whereas: It is difficult to attract and retain a diverse and qualified child care workforce which creates an imbalance between the number of new spaces and the availability of the childcare workforce. Recruitment of employees with the qualifications required by the Community Child Care Standards Act continues to be a challenge in Manitoba, especially in rural and Northern regions. Some centres are less capable of recruiting and retaining staff due to higher operational costs, including rent and maintenance.

Whereas: There is a pressing need for culturally and linguistically appropriate child care services for Aboriginal, Francophone and other minority communities. This requires more resources and training supports for Aboriginal, 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 child care services.

Whereas: The Government of Manitoba is committed to reducing poverty through the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act*. The *ALL Aboard: Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy* has identified Early Childhood Development and Parenting Supports as a priority area that the strategy will focus on between 2012-2016.

Be It Resolved That: CCEDNet – Manitoba urge the Province of Manitoba to work with the early learning and child care sector to follow the recommendations from *The View From Here 2015*:

- a. Add 12,000 new licensed and funded not for profit child care spaces while also investing resources to ensure existing spaces are sufficiently funded. Operating funding should be sufficient 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 proportion of trained staff in the 12,000 new spaces.

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- c. Immediately eliminate the \$2.00 daily child care fee and increase the income level at which families are eligible for a full fee subsidy, with annual indexing to ensure families do not unfairly lose out on subsidies in the future.
- d. Establish 30 community-based Aboriginal head start programs in and around high-needs schools across Manitoba by 2020.