



## Early Learning and Child Care

### MONTHLY E-NEWS

**FEBRUARY 2023**

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## Early Learning and Child Care Division Update

### Staffing Updates

We are continuing to welcome new staff into our division to support Manitoba's priorities for early learning and child care, and wishing well to those who are moving on to new opportunities:

- **Abi Awofisan** started in the role of Administrative Assistant for the Financial Accountability and Reporting Branch. Abi has over 11 years of professional experience in general office administration and management in the public sector. Abi obtained a bachelor's degree in English Language in 2008 and recently graduated from the Administrative Assistant Certificate Program in Red River College Polytechnic.
- **Ken Obi** joined the team as an Administrative Assistant for the Policy and Planning Branch. Ken studied business administration at the University of Regina and has worked in the communications unit of the Public Service Commission of the Government of Saskatchewan.
- **Jason Booth** will be supporting our communications and stakeholder relations work in his position of Engagement Specialist. Jason is a Creative Communications graduate from Red River College Polytechnic and brings with him over 11 years in the marketing, advertising and communications sector, most recently with the Manitoba Securities Commission.
- **Carla Fleury-Charles** most recently held the position of Committees Coordinator in the Continuous Improvement and Engagement Unit, and has transitioned into a new position of Policy Analyst in the Workforce Development unit. Carla brings with her 16 years of experience working for the province and certification in business administration and project management.
- **Kelly Punzalan** has returned to the department from her maternity leave. Kelly will be resuming her role as a Systems Analyst for the Continuous Improvement and Engagement unit supporting our IT systems and solutions, as well as working collaboratively with other members within the team supporting communications and engagement work.
- Farewell to **Taylor Moore** and **Nicole Kirkham**. Taylor has accepted a new position with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada as an Economic Analyst. Taylor was a Policy Analyst in Workforce Development with ELCC division. Her last day with the division was February 3, 2023. Nicole has accepted a new position with the Department of Families as Help Desk Support Analyst. Nicole has been with the Continuous Improvement and Engagement unit for over one year as a System Clerk. Nicole's last day with the division is March 3, 2023. We wish them both all the best in their future roles!

## Moving Forward on Child Care Priorities

A webinar on the Quality Enhancement Grants will be hosted on February 28, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. for home-based providers, centre directors and boards. To register, please click here: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_D87KNiiPToGDy3SMpRbOpg](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_D87KNiiPToGDy3SMpRbOpg).

The department has appreciated the sector feedback on the need for more flexible and targeted investments to support inclusive, quality programming and workforce recruitment and retention strategies. In response to these needs, the Manitoba government recently announced new Quality Enhancement Grants: three one-time grant funding streams made available through investments by both Canada and Manitoba.

The Quality Enhancement Grants, totalling \$60 million, are available to licenced non-profit child care centres (including infant, pre-school, nursery and school-aged programs) and all licensed home-based (group/family) facilities:

- **Quality Early Learning Environments Grant — For Centres and Homes**  
\$875 per licensed space — Intended to help address aging infrastructure, equipment and materials.
- **Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant — For Centres and Homes**  
\$500 per licensed space — Intended to help ensure children of all backgrounds and abilities feel a sense of belonging and have the ability to meaningfully participate in the program through enriched curricula, space adaptations, and professional development opportunities for staff.
- **Recruitment and Retention Grant — For Centres only**  
\$200 per licensed space -Intended to help child care centres implement creative and innovative strategies to recruit, retain, and support qualified child care workers and educators.
- **Retirement Enhancement and Retention Benefit — For Homes only**  
\$500 RRSP top-up -Intended to help provide recognition for home-based license holders for their dedication to the child care sector through a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) top-up.

Eligible facilities will have to opt-in to receive these grants by March 13, 2023. The funding will be disbursed to those who have opted in before mid-April 2023, and facilities will report back on outcomes.

For more information, visit the grant funding section on the department website at: [www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/centres\\_homeproviders/providers\\_resources/grants.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/centres_homeproviders/providers_resources/grants.html).

## Spotlight on Success

**Starting Blocks** is a preschool and school age centre located in Stonewall with 26 staff and 150 licensed spaces across three locations.

The Centre's Circle of Security (COS) Facilitator recently implemented the eight-week COS sessions with all staff. This led to the creation of a new Assistant Director of Staffing / Program Mentor position, with time committed to training and mentoring staff, including teaching COS parenting sessions, funded through the local parent and child coalition.



**“It was so beneficial to have a facilitator that worked directly with the children and within the Centre programs to model the COS concepts. We feel more connected to the children we care for and with each other as a team.”** – Starting Blocks ECE

Starting Blocks reports their staff are even more committed to building secure relationships and supporting children's needs all around the circle. The investment has reduced challenging behaviours and increased security and confidence within the Centre, and they are already observing growth in the children's social skills, peer relationships and expression of emotions.

Introduced to Manitoba in 2018, COS has been integrated as part of the ELCC Inclusion Support Program, providing training to staff to work with children with additional behavioural and emotional support needs focusing on attachment and addressing the reason behind the behaviour not the behaviour itself. Over the last five years, more than 120 COS groups have been completed, including more than 800 participants in the child care sector.

To learn more about Circle of Security, visit [www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/](http://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/) or contact the ELCC Diversity and Inclusion unit at [ELCC-ISP@gov.mb.ca](mailto:ELCC-ISP@gov.mb.ca).

## Announcements and Reminders

### Newcomer Employment Event

The Manitoba government, together with the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the WCC Newcomer Employment Hub, and many community partners, is hosting an in-person, targeted hiring event to connect newcomers looking for work with employers who are actively recruiting for current job openings. The event will take place Tuesday, March 7, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg.

The event is designed to meet job seeker and employer needs, including the opportunity for on-the-spot interviews and job offers. Details, including registration information, are available to employers [here](#) and job seekers [here](#).

### Capital Expansion with Municipal and Indigenous Partners

On February 16, 2023, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning announced an additional 14 capital projects in addition to the 9 previously announced in the fall, for a total of 23 new facilities. Partners in this latest round include Baldur, Dauphin, Kleeferld, Lake St. Martin First Nation, La Salle, Lorette, Melita, Morden, Morris, Norway House Cree Nation, Oak Lake, St. Adolphe, Stony Mountain and Tyndall. For more information, please visit <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=58197&posted=2023-02-16>.

### Interested in learning more about ELCC indicators?

The 2021–22 Early Learning and Child Care Division Statistics and Indicators are available on the annual report section of the Manitoba Education and Early Learning and Child Care department website at: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/annualreports/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/annualreports/index.html).

#### For general inquiries about the Early Learning and Child Care Division:

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