



Early Learning and Child Care

MONTHLY E-NEWS

MAY 2023

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Early Learning and Child Care Division Update

Staffing Updates

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

- **Jenessa Balala** joined the Licensing and Compliance team on May 1 as a Child Care Coordinator. Jenessa began her career in the child care sector in 2012. Throughout her 10+ years of experience in the field, she has worked with all ages from infant to school age. For seven of those years, Jenessa served the community in her role as an Acting Director and a Director. In 2016, she obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree (Developmental Studies) from the University of Winnipeg and her Early Childhood Education Diploma from Red River College. Jenessa is a mother of two.
- **Paige Mason** joined the Strategic Policy and Intergovernmental Relations Unit as a Policy and Program Analyst on May 29. Paige's experience in research and public policy includes work as an assistant to a City Councillor and as a researcher with the non-profit organization Sara Riel. Paige has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science.
- To support the division and learning opportunities for youth, we welcome the following university students who joined our team in May under the Step Student government workplace program. **Haifa Grefalda** will be working closely with the Continuous Improvement and Engagement Unit and **Milina Dueck** will be working closely with the Capital and Space Development Branch.
- This month we bid farewell to Policy Analyst **Lauren Bresch** who will take on a new role as a Researcher with the Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Authority. Lauren's last day with the department is Friday, May 19, 2023. While we are saddened to see Lauren leave, we are also incredibly proud of her for securing this exciting new opportunity. We know that she will excel in her new role and make a significant impact in her field.

Moving Forward on Child Care Priorities

In November 2022, Manitoba and Canada announced the creation of nine new child care facilities across Manitoba constructed through the RTM child care project to expand the number of infant and pre-school spaces under expedited timelines and in areas of demonstrated child care need. Communities selected in Phase One included Portage La Prairie, Headingley, Stonewall, Peguis First Nation, and more. Phase Two, announced earlier this year, adds an additional 14 RTM facilities in communities that include the RM of Taché, Morris, Dauphin, Norway House Cree Nation, and others.

To see just how quickly RTM structures can be built, watch this time-lapse video of the construction of a Phase One RTM child care centre being installed in Île-des-Chênes which condenses a two-day installation of the exterior walls and roof into just two minutes!

<https://pretiumprojects.egnyte.com/dl/vAOOdH1PH7>

The department is expecting that construction of eight new RTM child care buildings, accounting for 592 new spaces, will be completed by September 2023. All of them have secured child care operators and are working with the ELCC child care coordinators to get licensing in place by the time construction is complete.

For more information, visit: www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/resources/rtm.html.

2023/2024 Early Learning and Child Care Wage Grid

In April 2023, the governments of Canada and Manitoba announced a new investment in the child care workforce to provide another increase in starting wages, beyond the initial investment in 2022. In early May, the department released the 2023/2024 Wage Grid, effective July 1, which allocates \$56.1 million to increase ELCC sector wages.

A well-compensated ELCC workforce is essential to delivering high-quality ELCC services. By introducing wage targets, child care facilities are provided with a framework for fair compensation that they can integrate into their facility salary scale, helping to support staff retention and recruit new individuals for a career in early childhood education.

Facilities will receive a Wage Grid Supplement, as additional funding included in the operating grant to support an increase to the starting wages as of July 1, 2023, and to help facilities provide employees with the starting wage or higher as outlined in the Wage Grid for each position and classification. This supplement is calculated by providing an increase to the overall revenue generated per space using the unit funding model.

Over the past few weeks, the department has worked with child care facilities and their boards to offer further information about the 2023/2024 Wage Grid and increases in the operating grant they will be provided beginning July 1, 2023 to support the increase in wages. Work is also underway on a request for proposals for a consultant to help develop a comprehensive framework for early learning and child care sector wages beyond the current wage grid. This work will include stakeholder consultations to understand how we can best implement ongoing wage supports that reflect the unique considerations of facilities.

For more information, visit news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html or view the 2023/2024 Wage Grid at: manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/wage_grid.html.

Spotlight on Success

Seven Oaks: A Safe Haven for Ukrainian Kids

Since its inception, Seven Oaks Sadok Daycare has welcomed many generations of Ukrainian children through its doors. Founded in the 1970s, the centre has been based in R.F. Morrison School since 2003. But in the winter of 2022, everything changed.

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation announced a “special military operation” in Ukraine. According to a United Nations report, more than one million Ukrainians fled the country in the first week. By April, the first refugees began arriving in Manitoba, many of them women and children.

“We started getting calls every day,” said Cynthia Minsky-Vincent, Director of Seven Oaks Sadok. “Refugee parents looking for full-time day care so they could look for work. At that time, we only had five spots. In September of 2022 we took in more.”

Today, approximately 50 of the 67 children in care have emigrated from Ukraine in the past 12 months.

“They’ve been uprooted,” says Minsky-Vincent, “They miss their friends and family. Some of them have seen and heard war. It’s quite sad. One family I met had just bought an apartment in one of the cities now under siege, which was totally destroyed. They’re starting all over again in Canada.”

Both parents and children are forming new friendships, and coming together to learn about the community. Because of Winnipeg’s strong Ukrainian cultural heritage, many families are surprised at the familiarity of the city and area. And thanks to R.F. Morrison’s Ukrainian-immersion program, many staff speak Ukrainian themselves, meaning that language differences are less of a barrier.

“Parents will say, ‘We can’t believe you speak Ukrainian—that you follow the customs and go to church like we do. We just weren’t aware.’ The children speak predominantly Ukrainian, with a mix of Russian—which is common in the eastern half of the country—and some English. They mix all the languages, but it doesn’t matter what languages the kids speak, they all understand one another.”

Learn more about Seven Oaks Sadok Daycare at [www.7oaks.org/school/rfmorrison/Pages/SadokNursery.aspx#/="](http://www.7oaks.org/school/rfmorrison/Pages/SadokNursery.aspx#/=).



Listening to Manitoba’s Early Childhood Educators: Marie (ECE II, Parkland Region)

“What keeps me motivated as an ECE? The children...our interactions with each other differ day to day. Whether they’re showing excitement about an activity they’re doing; sad that they had to leave a toy behind; or wanting to have conversations with me. Those types of interaction show they’re comfortable with me.

What also motivates me is knowing I have a group of strong coworkers. We laugh together, we can be serious together; we just overall support each other. It’s like a family. It’s a nice feeling being able to walk into work knowing whatever life is going to throw at us, I have these individuals with me for the ride.”

Announcements and Reminders

ELCC Spring Meeting Brings Inspiration, Understanding, and Insight

On May 2 and 3, Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care staff from around the province gathered for two days of reflection, learning, and collaboration at the division’s Spring 2023 Provincial Meeting—*Looking Back, Moving Forward*. Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Wayne Ewasko and Deputy Minister Dana Rudy brought greetings, shared insights, and joined in the discussion, which included perspectives on our organization, the future of early learning and child care, policy design, mindfulness practices, and the new *Mamāhtawisiwin* Indigenous Education Policy Framework.

Attendees were very grateful for the wise words and blessings shared by Grandmother Myra Laramee, Doctor of Education at the University of Manitoba, and long-time advocate for Indigenous knowledge application in teaching practices. ELCC staff also took part in the Kairos Blanket Exercise, which provided a fascinating and deeply moving experience in learning about Indigenous history in Canada.

The Division would like to thank all those who presented as well as the Child Care Subsidy Program and Education and Early Childhood Learning staff who joined us.



Clockwise from lower left: Ann Gable, Child Development Worker, ISP; Maxine Lam, Policy Analyst; Mario Gordon, Director, Policy and Planning; Theresa Courchaine, Child Care Coordinator; Isabelle Raharijaona, Bilingual Child Care Coordinator; Robyn Frost, Child Care Coordinator; Melissa Shapiro, Policy Analyst; Larissa Zacharuk, Policy Analyst, seated at table during the Early Learning and Child Care 2023 spring meeting.



Childcare coordinators Terry Smith (left) and Terri Tretjak (right)



Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Wayne Ewasko (left) with Early Learning and Child Care Bilingual Financial Analyst Peter Mubiayi during a staff appreciation presentation.



Top left to right: Carla Kernersted, Senior Policy Analyst; Abi Awofisan, Administrative Assistant; Jane DelosReyes, Financial Analyst; Joanna Flores, Senior Policy Analyst; and Ola Kuewumi, Clerk

Bottom left to right: Elaine Olais, Financial Analyst; Eden Tomczyk, Child Care Coordinator; and Jennifer Faulder, Executive Director, Quality Assurance and Program Support. Eden holds the sign for Team PIVOT that won the afternoon’s Policy Design challenge.



Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Wayne Ewasko (left) and Assistant Deputy Minister Sarah Whiteford (right) pose with ELCC Senior Program and Policy Analyst Tracey Lewis (centre) during a staff appreciation presentation.



Clockwise from Left: Education and Early Childhood Learning’s Helen Robinson-Settee, Director, Indigenous Inclusion Directorate; Dina Ducharme, Child Care Coordinator; and Grandmother Myra Laramee, Doctor of Education at the University of Manitoba and Indigenous Advocate.

Facility Report Monthly Timelines: Child Care Subsidy Program

A reminder to all child care facilities to submit [Facility Child Attendance Reports](#) and/or discrepancies on the Facility Payment Summary within 30 days.

If facilities anticipate that a report may be late, please let your Subsidy Advisor know as soon as possible.

If you have questions about how to complete and submit your *Facility Child Attendance Report* through Child Care Online, please email cdcsubsidy@gov.mb.ca or call the Child Care Subsidy Program at 204-945-8195 in Winnipeg or 1-877-587-6224 (toll free).

We Value Your Ideas!

Would you like to share some of your facility's ECE Week photos? Quality enhancement grant ideas? A quote about why you love being an early childhood educator? Email us at CDClInfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line "ELCC Newsletter" and you could be featured in our next edition!

For general inquires about the Early Learning and Child Care Division:

Website: www.manitoba.ca/childcare

Email: cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca

Phone: 204-945-0776

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