

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning

Fall
2024



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Update



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Message from the Deputy Minister

With the changing leaves, shortening of the days, and cooling temperatures, fall offers a time for pause, a time to reflect. The change in season also offers us time to explore future goals and new opportunities.

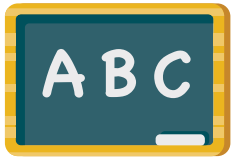
Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning continues to work on numerous initiatives focused on advancing our commitment to improve educational outcomes for all of Manitoba's children from the earliest years. The universally accessible school nutrition program will roll out this fall in publicly funded schools and school divisions. This program will remove a significant barrier to school attendance that was previously identified by students and stakeholders, and have a positive impact on students' academic success and well-being. The launch earlier this month of the Manitoba Framework for Learning website will also support our educators, providing a single, modernized, online access point for curriculum, assessment, evaluation, reporting, policy, and curriculum implementation resources for all four provincial school programs.

The department continues to work in partnership with the Government of Canada to increase the quality, accessibility, and affordability of early learning and child care across the province. The importance of this work is highlighted by long-term research that links the benefits of investments into early learning and child care with healthy children, families, communities, and, more broadly, society. We have opened and committed more than 9,200 new spaces for children aged 0 to 6, added flexibility for recipients of the retirement benefit, and continued to provide tuition reimbursement for early childhood educators.

As we transition into the fall season, I wish you all the best as you embrace new goals, and explore and seize new opportunities.

Brian O'Leary
Deputy Minister
Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning





Benefits of a High-Quality Early Learning and Child Care System

Long-term research demonstrates that investment in early learning and child care supports healthy children, families, communities, and societies.

Access to high-quality early childhood education positively impacts the crucial window of opportunity for brain development from ages 0 to 8. It creates a more robust foundation for future learning and pro-social behaviours. Children who attend high-quality early childhood education programs have increased school readiness, reduced grade repetition and dropout rates, and eventual greater academic achievement. In addition, early childhood education improves overall family and child welfare and long-term health outcomes. Participation in early childhood education benefits families by reducing home environmental risks and enriching out-of-home experiences for children.

Investment in early childhood education also shows an overwhelmingly positive return on investment. In rural and northern Manitoba, every \$1 spent on early learning and child care generates \$1.58 in economic activity.

Taking a broader lens, research shows the return on each \$1 invested in early learning and child care can be upwards of \$7 through increased educational attainment, reduced justice and social services expenditures, and better health outcomes.

Affordable and accessible child care also improves women's employment opportunities, increasing business productivity, reducing employee attrition costs, and bringing the benefits of greater diversity to the workforce.

Children who attend high-quality early childhood education programs demonstrate improved cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes. Cognitively, they show enhanced literacy, numeracy, and executive functions such as processing speed, problem solving, memory, and attention. Non-cognitively, they demonstrate better motivation, persistence, self-regulation, and adaptive behaviours.

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to increase the quality, accessibility, and affordability of early learning and child care for children across Manitoba. We look forward to sharing the milestones of our collective progress in the weeks and months to come.





Growing and Supporting ELCC Professionals

More Flexibility Added to Retirement Benefit

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning offers a retirement benefit to eligible employees who work in a licensed, non-profit child care centre or a licensed family or group child care home in Manitoba. The employee or licensee is eligible for a one-time payment equal to four paid days for each year they have worked in licensed child care, up to 10 years (maximum of 40 days).

Previously, the retirement benefit had a condition that the retiree could not return to work at the same facility for at least six months after retirement. In response to sector feedback, effective July 1, 2024, this condition has been removed, allowing child care professionals to continue to support the children and families in their programs following retirement, should they wish to do so.

Recipients of the retirement benefit can now return to work at their centre at any time after retirement. This applies retroactively to any staff who received the retirement benefit after January 1, 2024.

Manitoba was the first province outside of Quebec to introduce pension and retirement benefits for the early learning and child care workforce. This change not only supports recruitment and retention efforts but enables smoother leadership transitions, with former directors able to provide mentorship following their retirement.

Learn more about the early learning and child care retirement benefit by visiting the departmental website section “Registered Pension Plans and Retirement Supports” at www.gov.mb.ca/education/childcare/centres_homeproviders/providers_resources/rpprs.html.

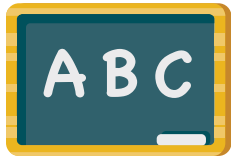
ECE Tuition Reimbursement

In partnership with the Government of Canada, Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning provides a reimbursement of up to \$5,000 per school year to help cover the tuition-related costs of recognized early childhood education programs offered at post-secondary institutions in Manitoba that lead to certification as an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) II or ECE III.

The ECE tuition reimbursement makes early childhood education programs more accessible to individuals entering the early learning and child care workforce and those working to obtain or upgrade their certification.

For complete information on eligibility, a list of recognized educational programs, and more, visit manitoba.ca/childcarecareers.

Application deadline for the academic year 2024/25 is March 1, 2025.



Manitoba's Space Expansion Update

Manitoba has delivered 40 per cent of its 23,000 new child care spaces, with over 3,200 spaces opened and 6,000 committed spaces for a total of over 9,200 new spaces for children ages 0 to 6.

In partnership with the Government of Canada, the Manitoba government has approved funding to create more than 950 new, affordable child care spaces: more than 200 spaces at three newly opened Ready-to-Move (RTM) facilities in Lorette, St. Adolphe, and Stony Mountain; more than 300 expansion spaces opened through new start-up and operating grants; and a commitment for another 400 expansion spaces in existing facilities through the new Child Care Renovation Expansion Grant.

The governments of Canada and Manitoba previously distributed over \$3.4 million to child care centres through the Child Care Renovation Expansion Grant to create new spaces through facility expansion. Going forward, the grant will award more than \$14.5 million to 14 facilities to create an additional 400 spaces for children under age 7.

The rural municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies' [Ready-To-Move Child Care Project](#) is an innovative partnership between the governments of Canada and Manitoba that rapidly constructs high-quality child care centres. The project will create a total of 1,970 new child care spaces in 25 rural and First Nations communities between 2022 and 2026.

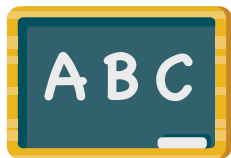
[Click here to read the full news release.](#)



An interior shot of a mini kitchen station and locker space at the new RTM facility in Tyndall.



Exterior of the new (unfinished) facility in St. Adolphe (Protective covering is still visible on the support pillars in the entranceway.)



Early Learning and Child Care Update *(continued)*

Child Care Sustainability Trust – Deadline September 30

The Child Care Sustainability Trust is an endowment fund managed by [The Winnipeg Foundation](#) that supports one-time grant opportunities for early learning and child care facilities to undertake infrastructure and innovative programming improvements.

The maximum amount of grant funding available per facility includes \$5,000 for family/group homes, \$20,000 for child care facilities with 50 spaces or less, and \$25,000 for child care facilities with 51 spaces or more. All licensed, non-profit early learning and child care facilities are welcome to apply.

The application deadline is **September 30, 2024**.

To learn more about the Early Learning and Child Care Sustainability Trust, obtain an application, and review the frequently asked questions, visit the [ELCC Grant Funding page](#).

Upcoming Events/Reminders

Observed Holidays

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning offices will be closed on the following dates:

- **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**, Monday, Sept. 30
- **Thanksgiving Day**, Monday, Oct. 14
- **Remembrance Day**, Monday, Nov. 11

Licensed child care facilities *may* observe these dates as holidays, as per ELCC's posted [2024 Closure Days schedule](#). To verify closure dates for a specific child care facility, please contact the facility directly.

\$10-a-Day Child Care for School-Age Children for Non-school Days

As per Budget 2024, \$10-a-day child care for school-age children on non-school days will be implemented in 2024/2025. Implementation details, including the timing, processes, and supports, are forthcoming this fall.

As a reminder, the [Child Care Subsidy Program](#) continues to be available for eligible families to ensure that cost is not a barrier to quality early learning and child care.



K–12 Education Update

Universally Accessible School Nutrition Program – Fall Implementation

The department is pleased to [announce](#) that the historic \$30 million investment in school nutrition rolled out this fall for the 2024/25 school year. Approximately \$21 million in funding has been allocated to public schools within the 37 school divisions, with \$6 million earmarked for 50 schools in communities with the highest socio-economic need. School divisions are planning for the distribution of these funds based on local needs.

Access to healthy foods is essential for student learning, well-being, and academic success. This program supports schools and school divisions in addressing severe chronic absenteeism by providing barrier-free access to nutritious foods. Students who attend school regularly are more engaged in learning, have greater opportunity to access school and community resources, and feel a stronger sense of belonging.

The remaining funds will support increased funding for the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba. Additionally, grant funding will be provided to community organizations, family outreach programs, and school divisions to support after-school, summer, and school break nutrition initiatives that will feed school-age children. The department will be looking at data to identify ways to further enhance program delivery in future years.

Routine Practices: Ensuring the Safety, Health, and Well-Being of Children, Students, and Staff

As the flu (respiratory illness) season approaches, please refer to *Routine Practices: Guide to Creating a Healthy Environment and Preventing Infections within Child Care Facilities and Schools* for guidelines and information on how to reduce the spread of communicable diseases. While the risk of transmission is never zero, it can be significantly reduced by implementing infection prevention and control measures outlined within. The consistent applications of these measures can help to keep children, students, and staff safe.

Please visit the [Routine Practices](#) webpage on the department website for the document, video, and resources, including hand hygiene and cleaning posters developed to help reduce the risk of spreading communicable diseases in child care facilities and schools.





K–12 Education Update *(continued)*

Framework for Learning Launches This Fall

The [Manitoba Framework for Learning website](#), which launched on September 3, 2024, serves as Manitoba's single, modernized online portal for Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K to 12) educators to access curriculum, assessment, evaluation, reporting, policy, and curriculum implementation resources for the four provincial school programs. This easy-to-navigate, intuitive website situates Manitoba's global competencies as an integral component of all provincial curricula, along with guiding principles to support educators as they design learning experiences and assessment practices within K to 12 classrooms.

The launch of the Framework for Learning includes the introduction of a new consistent curriculum format and structure for all K to 12 curricula. Within the new structure, each curriculum begins with a discipline overview that articulates the foundations of the discipline from K to 12, includes the provincial global competencies within the lens of the particular discipline, as well as K to 12 enduring understandings, a grade-specific course overview, and specific grade-level learning outcomes.

Updates to the site will be ongoing as curriculum development and renewal progresses.

Enhancing Usability of Education Information System (EIS) Collection

Each fall, school divisions and independent schools use the EIS Collection application to validate EIS data files prior to submitting them to the department. To contribute to making the EIS data submission process easier for users, the following updates have been made to the application and its related resources:

- developing accessible reference and training documents related to the application
- creating a French website for EIS Collection, including all reference and training documents
- updating training videos with French subtitles and ensuring they are accessible
- releasing the 2024 version of the EIS Collection application and implementing enhancements focused on making validation messages more descriptive

If you have any questions related to EIS Collection, you can reach out to the support team at AppSupportEISCOLL@gov.mb.ca.



K–12 Education Update *(continued)*

Coming Soon

Provincial Code of Conduct

This fall, the department will be sharing the updated policy directive *Safe and Caring Schools: Provincial Code of Conduct—Behaviour Intervention and Response Using a Student-Centred and Strengths-Based Approach* (2024).

The updated policy directive expands upon existing legislation and regulation for the purpose of strengthening school-wide approaches to support prevention, intervention, and response to student behaviour. A future email communication will announce its official release, along with the offering of department-led information sessions to support its implementation.

Release of 2023/24 Student Advisory Council Report and Welcome for 2024/25 Student Advisory Council

On August 27, 2024, the Student Advisory Council had the fabulous experience of an in-person meeting at the Legislature. The meeting was attended by Minister Nello Altomare, who had the opportunity to welcome the incoming 2024/2025 council members and thank the outgoing 2023/2024 members.

The students were engaged in various activities throughout the day including relationship-building exercises, exploration of the Legislature's history, and place-based and land-based learning at The Forks, led by Indigenous Excellence staff. The land-based learning provided ways to support student reflection and celebrate progress toward an Indigenous-inclusive education system that will foster Indigenous student success. At the meeting, the council also delivered its 2023/2024 annual report to Minister Altomare.

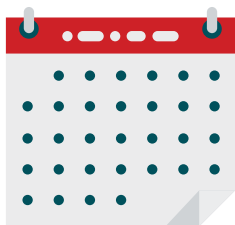
The council was established in 2021 to provide the Minister with student-centred insights and advice on issues related to Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in Manitoba. During the 2023/2024 year, students provided input on topics including poverty in education, school nutrition, emergency preparedness, smartphone and pronoun usage, classroom sizes, youth leadership, and an anti-racism framework.

This new 2024/25 council will be represented by 30 Manitoba youth, aged 14 to 18, from across Manitoba, who have diverse interests, identities, backgrounds, and perspectives. The Manitoba government remains committed to ensuring the council closely reflects the diverse student demographics throughout the province.

For more information on the Student Advisory Council, visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/studentadvisorycouncil/index.html.



Minister Nello Altomare addressing students' questions during the Student Advisory Council meeting at the Legislature Building.



Department Announcements

Leadership Updates

René Déquier Joins Bureau de l'éducation française as Assistant Deputy Minister

We are pleased to formally welcome René Déquier, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF), to Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning.

As a former teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent with the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM), René brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership experience for teaching and learning within a minority language context. René's appointment as the Assistant Deputy Minister of BEF demonstrates government's commitment to advancing French language education. As a valued member of the department's executive senior leadership team, his leadership and expertise will serve to advance French language education—provincially, nationally, and globally. Bienvenue, René!

Indigenous Excellence Updates

Message from the Assistant Deputy Minister

I hope you've all had a relaxing and safe summer. I am excited to share some staffing and portfolio updates with you, including plans for the fall.

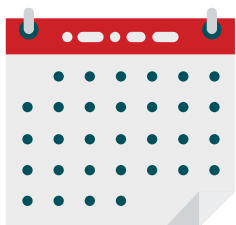
Since beginning my role in February, it has been my pleasure to meet with many of your divisions and learn about the work you are doing to support Indigenous students, staff, and communities. I look forward to continuing school division visits and conversations this fall to further strengthen our partnerships and explore new opportunities for collaboration. I know that, together, we can continue to build equitable, culturally safe, and responsive environments that support success for Indigenous learners.

You can reach our team at IE@gov.mb.ca.

Sincerely,

Jackie Connell

Assistant Deputy Minister of Indigenous Excellence



Department Announcements *(continued)*

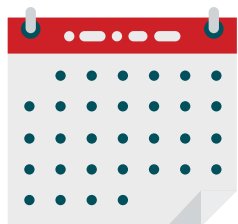
Expanding Team

Sarah Gazan, Bobbi-Jo Leclair, Wade Houle, Kim Shier, and Brett Schmall joined the Indigenous Excellence team in September 2024.

- **Sarah Gazan** is joining Indigenous Excellence as Acting Director. She is providing leadership and overseeing the Indigenous Education Policy Framework, Treaty Education, Indigenous teacher recruitment and retention, Indigenous education curriculum, Indigenous languages, and Elders and Knowledge Keepers in schools. Sarah comes to us from the Manitoba Teachers' Society where she was a staff officer in the Professional and French Language Services and Teacher Welfare departments. She has experience working within and outside of the education field in the areas of program and policy development. A leader in Indigenous education, anti-racism education, and equity work, Sarah brings with her vast experience working with schools and staff from across Manitoba.
- **Bobbi-Jo Leclair** is leading the development of a provincial strategy for the recruitment and retention of Indigenous teachers, Northern teachers, and Indigenous language teachers in Manitoba. Bobbi-Jo was previously the divisional vice-principal of Indigenous education for the Louis Riel School Division.
- **Wade Houle** is leading the development of a curriculum framework for Indigenous languages and Indigenous land-based education (for credit). Wade joins us from Mountain View School Division in Treaty 2 territory where he was the Indigenous Education Facilitator.
- **Kim Shier** has joined us as the Community Schools Mental Health Consultant, providing support and resources around mental health services to school divisions and support personnel to ensure the successful operation of the Community Schools Unit. Kim has worked in the Winnipeg School Division with the Clinical Support Services team.
- **Brett Schmall** is providing leadership, education, and training for initiatives related to Treaty Education. Brett will also lead the Catalyst Teacher Network by providing support to school divisions. Brett comes to us from Hanover School Division in the role of Indigenous Learning and Assessment Coach.

New Community and School Relationships Unit in Indigenous Excellence

The Community and School Relationships Unit (CSRU) was created on August 12, 2024, with the merger of the School and Community Support Unit, within the Inclusion Support Branch, and the Community Schools Unit within the Indigenous Excellence Division. Under the leadership of Dawn Wood, Assistant Director of Indigenous Excellence, the move aligns and strengthens the work of both units, while supporting internal alignment responsive to government's priorities and commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. The CSRU will continue to support schools in promoting and advancing student, family, and community well-being and engagement with the vision that all children and youth matter, belong, and are respected, successful, and safe.



Department Announcements *(continued)*

Recent and Upcoming Proclamations

September

Peace Days – September 10 and September 21, 2024

The United Nations recognizes September 15 as the International Day of Democracy and September 21 as the International Day of Peace. These days recognize the importance of responsible citizenship. The Peace Days focus on the important duties of citizens in our evolving multicultural democracy and on how understanding, kindness, non-violence, and compassionate action are essential for a healthy, diverse, and democratic society.

School Support Staff Recognition Week – September 30 to October 4, 2024

School Support Staff Recognition Week encourages people from across Manitoba to express gratitude towards all school support staff. School support staff are acknowledged and thanked for their contributions and their commitment to the education of students.

October

Dyslexia Awareness Month – October 2024

Dyslexia Awareness Month highlights the department's commitment to strengthening student literacy achievement through building educators' awareness and skills in meeting the needs of students who struggle, including those with dyslexia.

Manitoba School Library Day – October 28, 2024

Manitoba School Library Day recognizes the role of school libraries as active learning centres, as safe and inclusive spaces for students to explore and learn, and as spaces that provide access and a wide range of resources that enhance learning, support curriculum implementation, and create a lifelong love of learning.

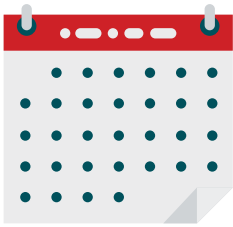
November

Financial Literacy Month – November 2024

Financial Literacy Month raises awareness for teachers to infuse financial topics into classroom discussions and learning experiences as part of a transdisciplinary teaching and learning approach. Financial Literacy Month recognizes the importance of financial literacy in one's overall well-being and ability to confidently navigate financial matters in life.

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week – November 10 to 16, 2024

In Manitoba, schools, families, and communities work together to prevent bullying by promoting healthy and safe environments for children, youth, and adults. By working together, we continue to strengthen our capacity to create school communities where all students are safe, respected, valued, and belong.



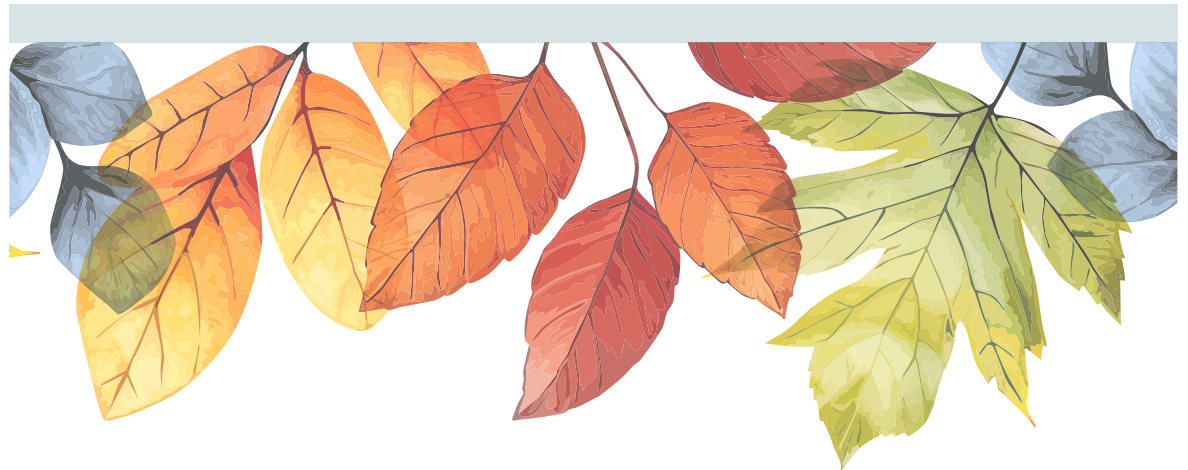
Department Announcements *(continued)*

Events

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – September 30, 2024

September 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Early learning and child care providers and schools in Manitoba are encouraged to take time to think about, learn about, honour, and remember those who attended residential schools and those who did not come home. The Manitoba government commemorates the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation during Truth and Reconciliation Week (the last week of September). This day is also recognized as Orange Shirt Day, a day to have meaningful conversations about the legacy of the residential school experience, to honour the healing journey of residential school Survivors and their families, and to commit to Truth and Reconciliation.

Check out Indigenous Excellence's webpage, [Truth and Reconciliation Week and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, September 30](#), for more information about the day and week, along with additional resources.



The *Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Newsletter* aims to provide our education and early childhood learning partners with access to information about departmental initiatives and leadership updates, and to highlight some upcoming plans/important dates. More detailed information can be found by visiting www.edu.gov.mb.ca/.

The newsletter is published in summer, fall, winter, and spring. Please email questions and feedback on the newsletter or the material covered to SRUnit@gov.mb.ca.

Thank you.

