

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning

Spring
2025



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Update



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Message from the Deputy Minister of Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning

This spring, we take a moment to remember and honour the life and work of Nello Altomare, our late Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning. Minister Altomare was a passionate educator who cared deeply about connecting with and improving the learning experiences of all students and children. He also had a passion and commitment to growing a high-quality early learning and child care system in the province. Among his many contributions, Minister Altomare oversaw the development and implementation of Canada's first universally accessible school nutrition program, which ensures that students in publicly funded schools have access to nutritious food, so they can focus on learning and reach their full potential.

While we continue our work towards creating the conditions for every child in Manitoba to achieve success, we also take time to welcome our new Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, the Honourable Tracy Schmidt, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Rossmere. Minister Schmidt is familiar with the portfolio, having served in an acting capacity since last October.

I am proud to share updates on several important initiatives that are helping to shape the future of education and early childhood learning in our province. Work continues in the early learning and child care sector at the national and provincial levels to develop a workforce strategy focused on recruitment, retention, and recognition, while supporting the long-term stability of the Canada-wide system. To this end, Manitoba was recently made the provincial co-chair for the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Forum of Ministers Most Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care. The current early learning and child care Canada-Manitoba agreements have recently been extended through 2031, and added funding has also been committed to create additional child care spaces in schools, health care facilities, and post-secondary institutions.

On the Kindergarten to Grade 12 side, we have launched the Education Data Dashboard to summarize and visualize provincial student achievement data, amended The Education Administration Act to formalize changes to the process for addressing teacher and school clinician professional misconduct, and released details on schools funding for the 2025/2026 school year.

These efforts, along with many others, are a direct reflection of the ongoing dedication and commitment from everyone involved in education and early childhood learning. Let us continue to be inspired by the late Nello Altomare and carry forward the vision of providing every child with the opportunity to succeed.

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



Ministers Gather to Discuss Multilateral Workforce Strategy and Strengthening the Long-Term Sustainability of the Canada-Wide System

On November 28, 2024, the Honourable Tracy Schmidt, Acting Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, and Sarah Whiteford, Assistant Deputy Minister of Early Learning and Child Care, visited the birthplace of Confederation—Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island—for the third meeting of the [Federal, Provincial and Territorial Forum of Ministers Most Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care](#).

Established in 2022, the Forum serves as a table for early learning and child care ministers to share information and best practices, and to set priorities for multilateral collaboration. For the last two years, Prince Edward Island has held the role of co-chair; however, in November, upon the conclusion of this most recent meeting, this responsibility has transitioned to Manitoba, which will share this responsibility with the Honourable Steven MacKinnon, Minister of Jobs and Families.

At the meeting, ministers emphasized that a strong workforce is vital for quality early learning and child care. They reviewed a draft multilateral workforce strategy that is centred around three pillars: recruitment, retention, and recognition.

The early draft highlights efforts already underway in each province and territory to strengthen the workforce, such as by improving wages and benefits. Ministers explored opportunities to further collaborate to stabilize and support the workforce, noting that additional consultation and engagement are essential to developing a robust strategy.

During the meeting, ministers reflected on the significant work that has taken place to strengthen early learning and child care across Canada, and the critical importance of continuing to build on this important work with long-term, sustainable funding. As stated in the Canada Early Learning and Child Care Act, the Government of Canada is committed to maintaining long-term funding for early learning and child care programs and services.

The ministers also used the meeting as an opportunity to mark the collective achievements of the past year, highlighting that the families of over 750,000 children across Canada are already benefiting from affordable, high-quality child care. They also discussed the critical importance of meeting the unique needs of local communities, including Indigenous communities, in their early learning and child care systems.

For more information about Manitoba's agreements with Canada and its commitments, read our [Plan for Action](#).



Child Care Space Creation and Investments in Professional Training and Curriculum

As of February 2025, Manitoba has opened nearly 8,300 spaces and committed to another 6,650 spaces, for a total of almost 15,000 new spaces since 2021 for children twelve and under throughout the province.

This includes 4,300 spaces opened and over 5,750 spaces committed for children under seven, moving Manitoba closer to the 23,000 spaces goal outlined in the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. Additionally, through provincial

investment, nearly 4,000 school-age spaces have opened and over 900 school-age spaces have been committed for children ages seven to twelve.

To support the growth in spaces, continued investments under the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement are being made to support workforce growth, including additional programming for newcomer and Indigenous learners, grant funding to enhance outdoor early education, and tuition supports for early childhood education career seekers.

Where are the child care spaces being created?

In February 2025, the governments of Manitoba and Canada completed negotiations for an action plan under the infrastructure funding annex to the Canada-Wide ELCC Agreement, detailing how Manitoba will invest \$20.9 million in federal funding over three years to support the creation, through the [Health and Child Care Infrastructure Project](#), of approximately 324 quality and flexible child care spaces in three health care facilities across the province.

Last month, Manitoba also announced the creation of an additional 256 new child care spaces in partnership with school divisions and 128 new child care spaces in post-secondary institutions for children under the age of seven.

- For school divisions, these investments will provide new infant and preschool child care spaces through six new initiatives under the [School-Based Child Care Expansion Project](#), in addition to the 36 previously announced projects.
- For post-secondary institutions, the additional investments will create new infant and preschool spaces at Red River Polytechnic and University College of the North's Thompson campus through the [Post-Secondary Child Care Expansion Project](#), in addition to the nine previously announced projects.



Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Hon. Jenna Sudds, announces the creation of new, affordable child care spaces in Manitoba.

Continued on the next page.



Early Learning and Child Care Update *(continued)*

A Request for Proposals was issued in October 2024 to develop, over the next two years, 29 stand-alone child care centres to be located on school property, leveraging modular building technology. A similar development method has been used to construct 22 high-quality child care facilities across the province through the municipalities' and Indigenous governing bodies' Ready-to-Move Child Care Initiative. These Ready-to-Move child care centres have been constructed in an average of nine months, from piles being poured to occupancy. An information session with participating school divisions will be organized in spring 2025 to kick off the next phase of the School-Based Child Care Expansion Project.

For more information, see the [news release](#).

To learn about investments in child care space creation, visit the department website at www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/resources/spacecreation.html.

To learn more about training and careers in child care, visit the department website at www.manitoba.ca/childcarecareers.

Canada Announces Additional \$36.8 Billion for Child Care and Launches National Child Care Workforce Campaign

Over the past two months, Manitoba has worked closely with our federal partners on a plan to extend our current early learning and child care agreements. On March 6, 2025, the Government of Canada announced it had reached agreements with 11 of the 13 provinces and territories, including Manitoba, resulting in an additional \$36.8 billion invested in child care across the country until 2031. Beginning in 2027/2028, provinces and territories will also receive a 3 per cent funding increase every four years. For Manitoba, this will mean an additional \$1.9 billion in child care funding that will continue to support important investments in increased access to affordable, quality child care and a stronger child care workforce.

To support recruitment of the future child care workforce, Economic and Social Development Canada has launched a national advertising campaign that will run most of March and again in late spring to promote the early childhood education profession as a career of choice and to support workforce recruitment into the early learning and child care sector.

For more information, see the [news release](#).

To learn more about the Early Childhood Education: Careers That Matter campaign, visit www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/early-childhood-education.html.

Further reading:

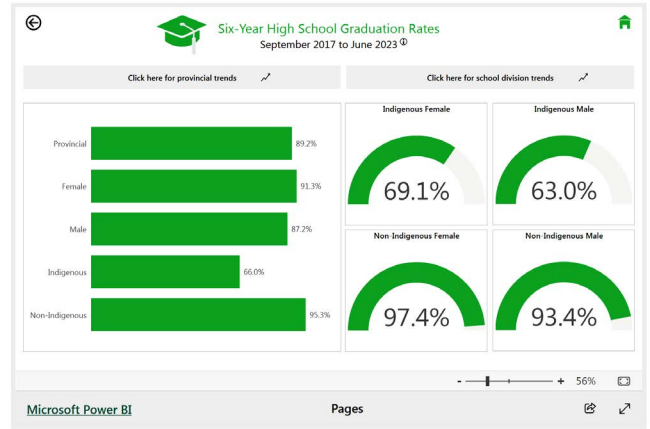
- [Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements](#)
- [Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework](#)



Manitoba K to 12 Education Data Dashboard

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is pleased to announce the launch of the Manitoba K to 12 Education Data Dashboard, honouring the government’s commitment to public reporting and transparency. The Dashboard summarizes and visually displays disaggregated provincial student achievement data in a modern, intuitive platform.

We invite you to explore the Dashboard by visiting www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/grad_rates/index.html.



Changes to the Process for Addressing Professional Misconduct of Teachers and School Clinicians

On January 6, 2025, amendments to [The Education Administration Act](#) came into force to implement a new process for addressing teacher misconduct and for publicly sharing related information. The purpose of the amendments is to transition away from the process involving the Certificate Review Committee, which provides recommendations for the Minister’s decision regarding a teacher’s or clinician’s certificate status, and to establish a more transparent and accountable process for teachers and school clinicians by allowing for citizen representation on hearing panels, public hearings of misconduct cases, and public reporting of misconduct decisions. The new process includes the appointment of an independent commissioner to receive and investigate complaints from individuals and employing authorities regarding professional misconduct of teachers and clinicians. It will also create a roster of members that will form panels to hear matters referred to them by the commissioner, and [establish a public registry](#) that contains specific information about each teacher and clinician certified in Manitoba after January 1, 1960, and any record of suspension or cancellation of a teacher’s or clinician’s certificate since January 1, 1990. The amendments also set out the powers and duties of the Director of Certification.

Bobbi Taillefer is Manitoba’s inaugural [Commissioner of Teacher Professional Conduct](#). She has served in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 sector in a variety of capacities, including as a teacher, a principal, and in roles with the Manitoba Teachers’ Society, including general secretary. She has also served as Deputy General Secretary of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario and, more recently, as Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation. We welcome Bobbi to her new role and look forward to working with her!



Schools Funding for the 2025/2026 School Year

On February 10, 2025, the department [announced](#) an increase of \$67.0M in Kindergarten to Grade 12 school funding for the 2025/2026 school year, with an increase of \$59.2M to public schools and \$7.8M to independent schools. Public school funding includes an increase of \$53.1M or 3.4 per cent in operating funding and a \$6M increase in capital support (primarily to address an increase in principal and interest payments). The \$30M for the universal nutrition program, announced in 2024/2025, has been continued with an additional \$6.7M in federal funding. The \$3M for smaller class sizes has also been continued from 2024/2025. For 2025/2026, there will also be an additional five community schools to ensure that students from high needs areas have the support they need.

Starting in the 2025/2026 school year, funding will be based on the best of the most current three years of actual eligible enrolment. This change provides predictability and responsiveness to growing school divisions, and protection to school divisions experiencing declining enrolment. To continue to make incremental improvements to the funding formula, the department will be reconstituting the Stakeholder Advisory Committee on School Funding to identify further opportunities to improve the way Kindergarten to Grade 12 public education is funded in our province.

This year's announcement builds on last year's progress, which enabled school divisions to lower Early Years class sizes, increase support to students, and add additional staff positions. The department is committed to predictable and stable funding increases to ensure that the sector has the funding necessary to support all students.

Community School Gathering March 2025

The Community and School Relationships Unit of Indigenous Excellence is hosting a **Community Connector Gathering** on March 20, 2025, at 1577 Dublin Ave.

The Community Connector Gathering will provide an opportunity for Community Connectors from the 48 participating community schools to come together for a day of learning, networking, and relationship building.

Using the [community school philosophy](#) and model, Community Connectors work in conjunction with the school to support students and families utilizing the school as a community-level hub. Community Connectors identify, facilitate, and coordinate services, programs, and activities to support students, families, and the community.

The Community Connector Gathering will be led by community schools coordinator Melissa Brown and community schools mental health and wellness consultant Kim Shier.



The Universally Accessible School Nutrition Program

The Universally Accessible School Nutrition Program was [announced](#) in January 2024 and formally launched this past September in time for the 2024/2025 school year. The program aims to ensure that, regardless of perceived needs, students in publicly funded schools in Manitoba have access to nutritious food at no cost, so they can focus on learning and reach their full potential.

In January 2025, Indigenous Excellence organized online meetings with school division superintendents, in collaboration with the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. To ensure that all invitees could attend, the meetings were virtual, and discussions were facilitated by Indigenous Excellence staff.

The sessions provided the opportunity for a joint review of the 2024/2025 universally accessible school nutrition program design and rollout, allowing school divisions to share their experiences, provide feedback on the program, and help the department plan for program implementation in the 2025/2026 school year.

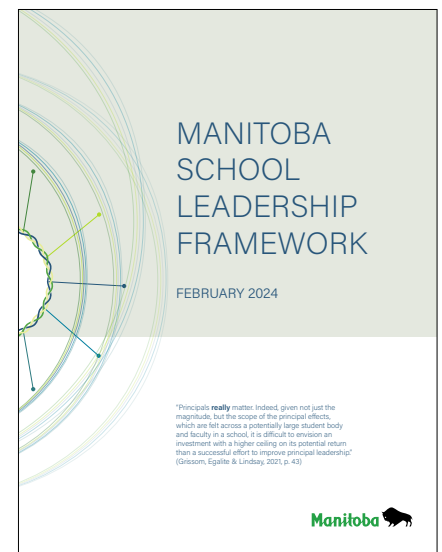
Implementation Support for the Manitoba School Leadership Framework Has Begun

We are pleased to announce that full- and partial-day overview presentations are now being held across Manitoba to help school and school division leaders gain a deeper understanding of the [Manitoba School Leadership Framework](#).

The sessions provide ideas on how the Framework and supporting resources can be used to build leadership capacity and development with current and aspiring school leaders.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the implementation working group for their continued guidance as we progress with the provincial implementation of this important work.

Rob Fisher is available, upon request, to collaborate with senior school division administration regarding professional learning sessions on the Framework. Questions regarding the Framework and/or implementation learning sessions can be sent to Rob.Fisher@gov.mb.ca.





Capital Investment in New Kindergarten to Grade 8 Schools and Child Care Spaces

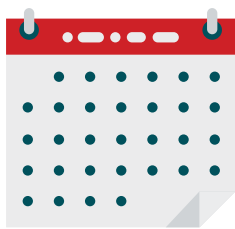
The department is excited to announce the building of three new Kindergarten to Grade 8 schools: one in [southwest Winnipeg](#), one in [northeast Winnipeg](#), and one in [West St. Paul](#). The locations were selected based on growth in student populations. Each school will be designed with future expansion in mind to account for continued enrolment growth, while also including infant and pre-school child care spaces.

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2026, with targeted opening dates in time for the start of the 2027/2028 school year.

Updated Educational Assistants in Manitoba Schools Publication Now Available

The department is pleased to announce that the updated [Educational Assistants in Manitoba Schools \(2024\)](#) document is now available. This renewed document provides educators, school administrators, and school division senior administrators with provincial guidance to build a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of educational assistants in Manitoba schools.

Please contact isbinfo@gov.mb.ca with any questions.



Department Announcements

Coming Soon

ELCC at Upcoming Fairs/Events

As part of the ongoing Become an Educator campaign, the department has continued to refine and improve outreach efforts at various career and employment events across the province to create awareness about [careers in early childhood education](#), training, and employment opportunities.

Look for the Early Learning and Child Care booth at upcoming events, such as the Brandon Career Symposium on March 18 and 19, the Assiniboine College Career Fair on March 20, and Kildonan-East Collegiate Career Fair on May 2.

If your school/organization would like to request the attendance of department representatives at your upcoming career fair or event, please email the Early Learning and Child Care Division at cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca.

Early Learning and Child Care Publications

A series of publications are available for organizations, schools, and resource centres to help create awareness about early learning and child care and a career as an early childhood educator, including current tuition benefits and flexible training pathways at Manitoba post-secondary institutions. These documents can be printed and posted in common areas and shared with students, parents, and families.

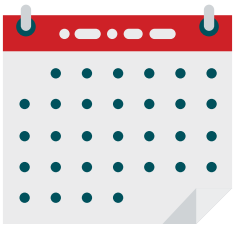
- Become an Early Childhood Educator – [Poster](#)
- Tuition Reimbursement – [Poster](#)
- ECE II Training Pathways – [Poster](#)
- Manitoba Child Care Search – [Poster](#)
- Manitoba Child Care Subsidy Program – [Poster](#)

Accessible Information and Communication Standard

The [Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation](#), under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, builds on existing requirements of Manitoba's Human Rights Code and requires organizations to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that exist digitally, in print, or through interaction with technology or people. It also adopts globally recognized web content accessibility guidelines as a minimum requirement.

All licensed early learning and child care centres, including nursery schools, as well as family and group child care home providers with one or more employees (including casual staff), are required to comply before May 1, 2025.

For more information, including a recent webinar, visit the [Notices, Circulars and Webinars](#) web page. Additional information and resources are also available on the [Manitoba Accessibility Office](#) website.



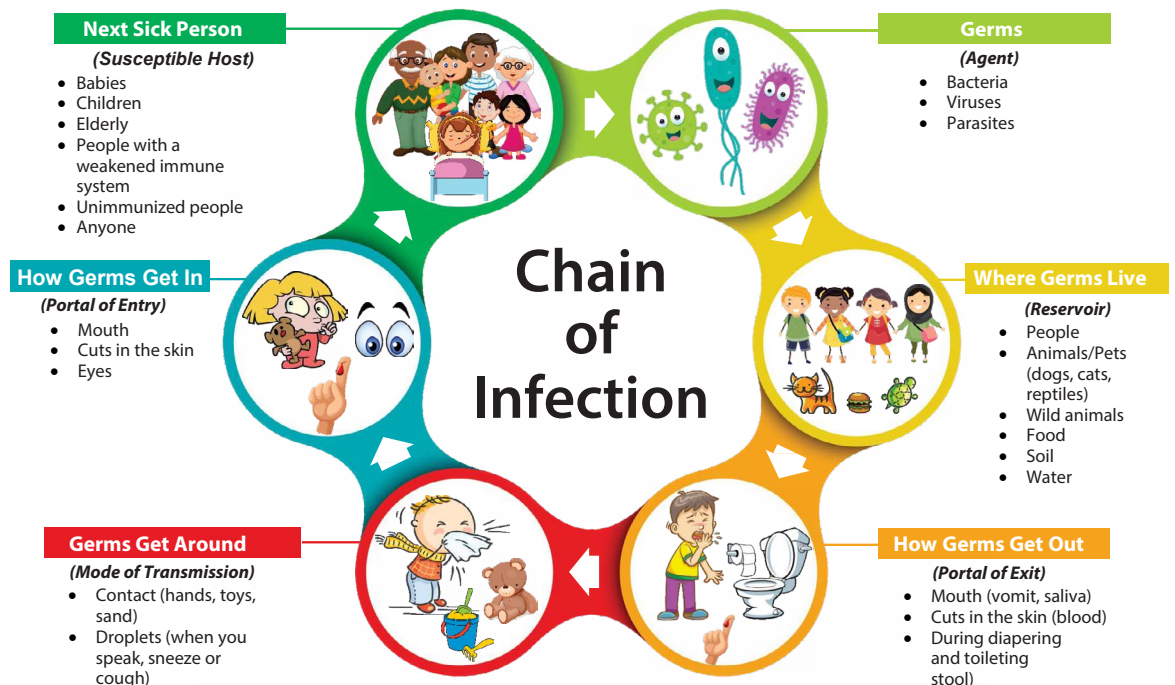
Prevention of Infection Within Child Care Facilities and Schools

Infection prevention and control measures are important to prevent the spread of infection in child care facilities and schools. The [Routine Practices: Guide to Creating a Healthy Environment and Preventing Infections within Child Care Facilities and Schools](#) document was developed to outline fundamental infection prevention and control measures in these environments. This document has many helpful tools, some of which are highlighted below.

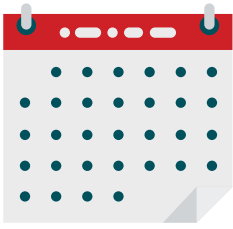
Understanding what causes infection and disease is the first step to prevent and control its spread. For an infection to occur, a series of events need to take place, often referred to as the “chain of infection.” Breaking any one of the six links in the chain will prevent infection from occurring.

Examples of breaks in the chain of infection:

- Stay home when sick, such as if you have a respiratory (coughing, sneezing) or gastrointestinal (vomiting, diarrhea) infection. This prevents germs from getting around (see “Germs Get Around” in the chain below). This is highlighted in the poster “You Can Help Prevent the Spread of Respiratory Illness.”
- Practising cough etiquette helps break the chain of infection in how germs get out, germs get around, and how germs get in. See “How Germs Get Out,” “Germs Get Around,” and “How Germs Get In” in the chain below. This is highlighted in the poster “[What Do You Do When You Go Achoo?](#)”



Chain of Infection: Reproduced with permission from Ottawa Public Health. All rights reserved.
www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/chain-of-infection.aspx.



Be Aware! Increased Malicious Emails and Phishing Attempts

The department is aware of recent phishing attempts made to some of our sector stakeholders and partners.

Phishing attempts often involve a generic mass message, but it appears to be legitimate and typically contains a link or an attachment to download. The recent cases are emails that are represented as coming from various program areas in Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning.

This is a reminder to continue to be wary of phishing scams. Make it a practice to check email addresses in order to verify the sender's email address before clicking on any links or downloading attachments. Legitimate correspondence from the department will end with the domains @gov.mb.ca or @manitoba.ca. If an email address does not have one of these domains, the communication is not from us. Also look for red flags like urgent requests and spelling errors.

If a communication does not have a government domain, it is not from the department. Do not click on the link, do not download the attachment, report it as suspicious to your IT area if applicable, and delete.

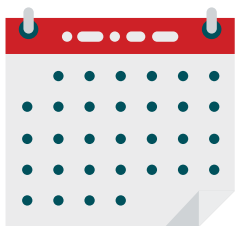
Leadership Updates

New Director of Funding Design and Analysis in the Funding and Financial Assistance Branch in the Early Learning and Child Care Division

Abdul Azeez Shaik has joined the Funding and Financial Assistance Branch as Director of Funding Design and Analysis. Abdul has a Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and a Master of Business Administration. Abdul has previously worked with General Electric Healthcare, HCL Engineering Research and Development, and most-recently as a business consultant with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. Abdul will lead the design and review of new and existing funding strategies, development and alignment of key performance indicators, and data analysis to provide strategic insight for current and future work within the child care sector.

Jordan Hall Joins the Policy and Planning Branch in the Early Learning and Child Care Division

Jordan Hall has joined the Policy and Planning Branch as Manager of Strategic Policy. Jordan holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in international development studies and a Bachelor of Commerce in finance from the University of Saskatchewan. Jordan comes to us from the Manitoba Department of Municipal and Northern Relations, where he has held the position of Acting Manager, Policy and Legislation, with the Community Planning Division. Prior to this, he has worked with the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program in the Department of Labour and Immigration since 2015, including overseeing program operations as a manager since 2019.



Department Announcements *(continued)*

Learning and Outcomes Branch in the Student Achievement and Inclusion Division Welcomes a New Senior Years Technology Education Program Unit (SYTEPU) Coordinator

The department is pleased to welcome **Connie Korchak** as Coordinator of the SYTEPU. Connie has spent her life working in the career development field and was a key member of the Manitoba government's Career Development Initiative.

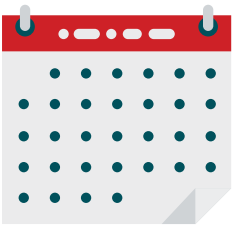
She joins us from the University of Manitoba Career, Community, and Experiential Learning Centre. Previously, she was a charter member of Manitoba's Career Development Conference advisory board and has taught at the University of Winnipeg in both the faculties of Arts and Education. Recently, Connie was honoured with the Manitoba Career Development Awards of Excellence, Bill Schulz Lifetime Achievement Award.

Andrew Reimer Joins Governance and Policy Branch in the System Performance and Accountability Division

Andrew Reimer joined the Governance and Policy Branch as Director of the Legislation Office in February 2025. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in history and cultural studies, Magistère and Master's degrees in French literature, and a Certificate in Public Sector Management. Andrew brings a wealth of experience and expertise, having worked in various policy and leadership roles within the Manitoba civil service since 2011. In 2020, Andrew joined the Bureau de l'éducation française, where he held positions including Manager of Knowledge Mobilization, Acting Director of Official Languages Programs, and, most recently, Coordinator of Administrative Services. Before joining the Manitoba civil service, Andrew worked for the City of Winnipeg and taught English in Japan.

New Coordinator of Student Services in the Inclusion Support Branch of the Student Achievement and Inclusion Division

The department is pleased to announce **Kelly Ring-Whiklo** is the new Coordinator of the Student Services Unit in the Inclusion Support Branch. Kelly joined the Student Services Unit in 2023 as a consultant for speech and language pathology. The previous incumbent for the position, Louise Duncan, retired on December 31, 2024. Kelly is now the branch's representative on the Provincial Executive Committee of the Student Services Administrators' Association of Manitoba.



Department Announcements *(continued)*

Recent and Upcoming Proclamations

March is Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month

March is Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month, a national celebration to share Canada's rich agriculture and food story with students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Agriculture literacy supports young people as they learn where our food comes from and how it is produced, which in turn promotes connection to the natural world, good citizenship, and understanding of the agricultural sector.

Celebrating Education Week, April 14 to 18, 2025

Education Week acknowledges the importance of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education and educators' crucial role in ensuring all children and youth have a sense of belonging and are able to succeed in reaching their full potential.

Week of the Early Childhood Educator, April 28 to May 2, 2025

The 34th Annual Week of the Early Childhood Educator in Manitoba highlights the province's commitment to the critical role that child care professionals play in the lives of tens of thousands of children and families across the province. This week serves as an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the profound impact that early childhood educators have in supporting the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of children, from the youngest infants all the way through school age and beyond.

A large percentage of department staff are certified early childhood educators, and all of us share in a commitment to ensure access to high-quality, affordable child care for all Manitobans.

May is Celebrating Music in Manitoba Schools Month

Music Month celebrates the important contributions of musicians, music educators, and music education programs in Manitoba schools and communities. While music is an important part of the Manitoba school curriculum throughout the year, its role in education is highlighted during Music Month and gives us an opportunity to celebrate our province's rich musical heritage and appreciate the artists and educators involved in music programs.

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

Thank you.

