

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning

Winter
2025



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

As the year ends, it is important to think about lessons learned, but it is also a time to celebrate. It is good to remind ourselves of what has been accomplished through our hard work and efforts, and to continue to hope and dream for successes.

Both the Early Learning and Child Care and K to 12 sectors have been busy enriching the learning experiences for all children and students. In the Early Learning and Child Care program, I am happy that we have taken steps to improve affordability and accessibility by extending the \$10-a-day child care fees to include school-aged children on non-school days. I am also pleased to celebrate the achievement of 35 early childhood educator (ECE) professionals who received their ECE II certification and are setting new career goals. We continue to build our workforce in the sector through our investments in ECE Tuition Reimbursement and Staff Replacement grants, and with the launch of the *Become an Educator* multimedia campaign.

On the K to 12 side, I find it motivating to read the Stories of Practice that are now available on the Framework for Learning website. The stories represent experiences that all can learn from and adapt within our own learning contexts. Please take the time to read the updates about implementing Treaty education by the Catalyst Teachers' Learning Network, information about Bill 21: The Public Schools Amendment Act, and the other exciting initiatives happening within our schools.

It is good to focus on events in our lives that inspire and strengthen us. The commitment from everyone to continuous improvement and growth is essential to creating enriching learning experiences for all children and students.

In celebration of another successful year, here is to new beginnings and continued success. In the words of the late Honourable Murray Sinclair, "Keep trying. Dream."

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





Extension of \$10-a-Day Fees to Include Care of School-Age Children on Non-school Days

In 2023, Manitoba reduced the fees that parents/caregivers pay to \$10 a day for regular periods of child care. Budget 2024 committed to investing in extending the \$10-a-day fees to non-school days to further improve affordability and accessibility.

With the passage of Budget 2024 on November 7, 2024, the extension of \$10-a-day fees for the care of school-age children on non-school days, including in-service days and school holidays, comes into effect on December 8, 2024. This means that all funded facilities are required to charge no more than the new maximum regulated fees. Additional funding will be provided to offset the fee reductions, equivalent to the difference between the previous and new fees.

To help prepare for implementation, licensed and funded child care facilities were encouraged to communicate with families about the changes to child care fees. For more information, including a printable FAQs flyer, visit [\\$10-a-Day Child Care](#).

ECE II Assessment Program Graduates Celebrate Certification

[The ECE II Assessment Program](#) is a pathway to achieving the Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II) classification in Manitoba. This program supports individuals who already have the necessary knowledge, skills, and judgment required to work as trained and qualified staff in a child care facility. There are four ECE II Assessment Program streams that follow Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) practices, and participants can take from six to 24 months to complete the program.

On Thursday, Oct. 3, 2024, the department celebrated and congratulated 35 new early childhood education professionals who received their ECE II certification through the program this year. The department invited the recent graduates to be honoured and to receive their certificate at the ECE II Assessment Program graduation ceremony held in Winnipeg.

We were honoured to have Renée Cable, Manitoba’s Minister of Advanced Education and Training, join us to provide opening remarks and heartfelt congratulations on behalf of the Manitoba government.

Clockwise from top left:

Minister Renée Cable with ECE II graduate **Jinyu Lu**; **Minister Cable** providing opening remarks; **Carmen Zubin**, Supervisor, Licensing and Compliance, ELCC with graduate **Anita Goel**; **Carmen Zubin**, graduate, **Ana Maria Vasquez Gutierrez**, graduate, **Mario Gordon**, Director, Workforce Development, and **Marcia Desmedt**, Child Care Coordinator; centre: graduate **Givenjot Kaur** with **Mario Gordon**; bottom photo, top row, left to right – **Givenjot Kaur**, **Simarjit Mann**, **Smrutiben Patel**, **Ana Maria Vasquez Gutierrez**, **Anita Goel**, **Anita Rani Choudhary**, **Amritpal Saond**, **Lesya Yatsevych**, **Irene Agawin**, **Olha Drogalchuk**, **Iuliia Shenderiva**, **Cherie Untalan**, **Elenie Lumbres**; bottom row, left to right – **Lishan Li**, **Priya Maini**, **Jinyu Lu**, **Erika Schulz**, **Prativa Phuyal-Adhikari**, **Thilini Fernando**.





Growing and Supporting ELCC Professionals Building Career Awareness – *Become an Educator Campaign*

Early childhood educators are the backbone of our early learning and child care system. They bring a wealth of knowledge and skills, developed through their academic and practical experience, that they put to use by creating high-quality caring and learning environments. They employ best practices and use emergent curriculum to support the cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and children at a critical time in brain development.

In recognition of this critical role, Manitoba has been working in collaboration with the Government of Canada to improve wages, benefits, and working conditions for child care professionals. We know there is more to do, and we are committed to continuing to work on initiatives that will support recruitment, retention, and recognition of early childhood educators.

To help facilitate this work, the department launched a *Become an Educator* multimedia campaign earlier this year, using a combination of print, radio, and social media advertising, and attended over a dozen career fairs.

The department continues to build on this campaign and is offering outreach

activities, adding additional targeted print, radio, and social media advertising opportunities across the province and in communities with new child care facilities that are set to open soon.

In addition to the suite of publications currently available to build awareness about the benefits of a career in child care (see below), the department has developed a new publication that will help to highlight the various recognized ECE II training options and the post-secondary institutions across the province offering them.

The following publications are available for download/sharing from the [department publication page](#) and are also distributed at outreach activities:

Become an Early Childhood Educator – [Poster](#) / [Card](#)

Tuition Reimbursement – [Poster](#) / [Card](#)

Manitoba Child Care Search – [Poster](#) / [Card](#)

Department representatives in the *Become an Educator* booth recently attended career fairs at R.B. Russell Vocational School, Louis Riel Arts and Technology Centre, and the RBC Convention Centre, and will be at career fairs throughout December and January.

For more information about careers in child care, visit www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/careers.html.

Workforce Training Highlights

Since April 1, 2024:

- The Early Childhood Educator Tuition Reimbursement has provided over \$1.3M to more than 370 individuals.
- The Staff Replacement Grant has successfully provided over \$1.5M in funding to support the replacement and continuity of staffing for workplace training.
- The Training Grant has successfully provided over \$137K in funding to support the professional development and upskilling of the workforce.
- The ECE II Assessment Program currently has 69 participants enrolled, with a wait list of 18 new participants expected to begin programming in January.



Early Learning and Child Care Update *(continued)*

Upcoming Event/Reminders

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

- Christmas Day – Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024
- Boxing Day – Thursday, Dec. 26, 2024
- New Year’s Day – Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025

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.



K–12 Education Update

Framework for Learning – Stories of Practice

Launched in fall 2024, the Manitoba Framework for Learning website creates one access point for educators to find curriculum and curriculum implementation resources. Newly added to these resources are Stories of Practice. The stories highlight the work of educators from across Manitoba who have intentionally and explicitly infused the global competencies into learning

experiences within their classrooms. The stories further illustrate the guiding principles for the design of learning experiences and assessment practices and how best to put them in action.

Intended to serve as an inspiration for educators, the Stories of Practice are available on the Framework for Learning website. They can be filtered by both *competency* and *guiding principle* to meet educators’ needs. The stories may illustrate multiple competencies and/or guiding principles beyond those under which they are designated, and the learning experiences can be easily adapted to focus on different competencies or guiding principles. View the Stories of Practice collection at [Framework for Learning - Stories of Practice | Education and Early Childhood Learning](#). The Stories of Practice will be refreshed frequently. Watch the website for updates.

To support educators in continuing to deepen their understanding of the Framework for Learning, Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is also offering ongoing implementation sessions in both English and French. The sessions are designed to support divisional liaisons in enhancing their understanding of the Framework for Learning, including the global competencies, and sharing that knowledge with their divisional colleagues. For more information on these sessions, please contact curr_impl@gov.mb.ca or bef@gov.mb.ca.

Framework for LEARNING
ENGLISH Program

Cardboard Arcade
Learn about simple machines by designing arcades.

Grade 5 learners were met with the driving question, "What makes a successful arcade?" Before jumping into the design process, learners were introduced to the concept of simple machines through learning experiences such as discovering simple machines that were present in their school building. Books and videos were used to reinforce and expand upon learners' knowledge acquisition.

Learners then worked in small groups to complete design challenges that required the design and construction of a specific simple machine to successfully complete a task. Throughout each of these six challenges, learners accessed collaborative strategies to reflect on and revise their designs. Each challenge offered opportunities for communication within the group and across groups to meet a common goal, time for collaboration to test and adjust their designs, and opportunities to think critically about how to effectively use materials to create a working device.

Once the exploration was complete, and learners had a deeper understanding of simple machines and how they make work easier, they were introduced to the story of *Caine's Arcade*. This story is

Curricular Focus: Science, English Language Arts
Level: Grade 5
Time Frame: 6 weeks (frontloading of the design project is 4 weeks and the arcade design project takes approximately 2 weeks)

Screenshot from one of the Stories of Practice



Bill 21: The Public Schools Amendment Act

On November 7, 2024, Bill 21, [The Public Schools Amendment Act](#) was passed. The Act will contribute to a more equitable and inclusive public education system and support the success of all Manitoba learners. Specifically, the amendments will revise the ages that children will access school to reflect common practice across Canada. The bill ensures a child has the right to attend school at age five rather than six, and changes the compulsory school age from seven to six.

The bill expands the definition of “resident pupil” to ensure that children can attend school in the division where they reside, provided they are living with a responsible adult. This recognizes the multitude of family and care arrangements in our province and prioritizes children being in school, regardless of who is caring for them. It also ensures temporary residents’ and refugees’ rights to send their children to a public school.

The changes to residency requirements came into force on November 7, 2024, while the amendments to the age when children start school will come into effect for the next school year (September 2025). While it is anticipated that these changes will have a minimal impact on enrolment numbers, the department is working with school districts and divisions to prepare for a smooth transition next fall.

Accessible Transportation Standard

The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation has been enacted under [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#). It comes into force January 1, 2027.

The regulation addresses aspects of accessible public transportation, including transportation to daily activities, school, and more. It is meant to help conventional and paratransit service providers create a system of transportation that is more inclusive for all Manitobans, regardless of their abilities.

It’s important to note that this standard does not apply to early learning and child care facilities, as they are not required to provide transportation services. Additionally, the impact on school divisions is expected to be minimal, as most divisions are already in compliance with accessibility requirements for their school buses.

Detailed information on the regulation is available at the following web pages:

- [Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation | Manitoba Accessibility Office](#)
- [Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation, M.R. 151/2023 \(gov.mb.ca\)](#)

Questions can also be directed to the department:

Education Administration Services at 204-945-0201 or EASAdministration@gov.mb.ca.

Early Learning and Child Care at 204-945-0776, 1-888-213-4754 (toll-free), or cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca.



Five-year-old boy boards a school bus using a bus lift for his wheelchair.



Catalyst Teachers’ Learning Network

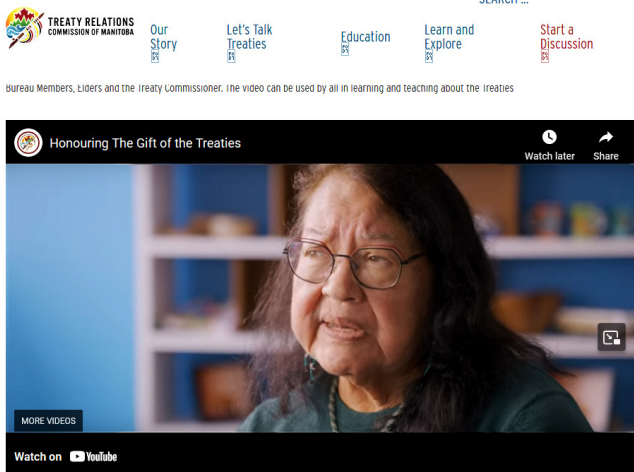
IE and TRCM Partner to Empower Treaty Catalyst Teachers

In June of 2023, the province released Manitoba’s [Treaty Education for All](#) plan. This plan tasked school divisions to complete Treaty education (two days for teachers, one day for all other staff) with all employees by December 31st, 2025. In addition, school divisions were to identify catalyst teachers (CTs) to lead the delivery and implementation of Treaty education in their respective divisions.

To support this work, Indigenous Excellence (IE) partnered with the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM) to host a learning session with catalyst teachers from across the province at the Prince Charles Education Resource Centre in Winnipeg on October 17th.

This blended gathering (online and in-person) brought catalyst teachers together to share successes and challenges specific to their work of implementing Treaty education. While some divisions continue to invite the TRCM team to facilitate the required day(s) of Treaty learning, others felt equipped to design their own unique day(s) of Treaty learning.

Catalyst teachers came inspired with ideas ranging from land-based learning, to interactive lessons, to spending time listening to Elders and Knowledge Keepers, as well as a variety of other approaches that they use to support further learning by their colleagues about the spirit and intent of the Treaties. Part of the day also included viewing the TRCM’s most recent teaching video, [Honouring the Gift of the Treaties](#).



Notable challenges included providing Treaty education to new teachers in divisions (as well as to substitute teachers), and for some divisions the ability to access and partner with Elders and Knowledge Keepers. There was also discussion around ensuring that Treaty learning remains a priority in divisions beyond the required day(s) and beyond the 2025 deadline.

Teachers talking to teachers continues to be one of the best forms of expanding our learning and enhancing our practice. Recognizing that relationship is at the heart of the Treaties, this networking opportunity was, and will continue to be, a rich time of connecting “head learning” with “heart learning,” subsequently benefiting all.

Screenshot of Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba site featuring a video called “Honouring The Gift of the Treaties.” <https://trcm.ca/start-a-discussion/videos/>



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.

The first key principle outlined in the document is hand hygiene. In schools and child care facilities, germs are most commonly spread by the hands of children, staff, students, parents, and others. Hand hygiene is the single most important way to prevent the spread of germs and includes cleaning hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

The second key principle is regular cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched and/or commonly shared items or surfaces, such as toys or containers used for storage of commonly used items, or food surfaces. Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting these items and surfaces on a regular basis can prevent the spread of germs and the transmission of infection.

Please visit the [Routine Practices](#) web page 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.

Digital Assessment Library Update: Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen Available to School Divisions

The Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen is available to all school divisions in Manitoba as part of the [Pearson Canada K-12 Digital Assessment Library \(DAL\)](#). The Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen is

- a tool for early identification of Kindergarten to Grade 3 students, adolescents, and adults who may be at risk for dyslexia
- a valid and reliable measure of phonological, linguistic, and academic performance
- available in the Screener Library of the DAL

The Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen gathers information through teacher observations or adolescent/adult self-ratings, and can be used for universal, targeted, or individual screenings.

The DAL supports school divisions in meeting the [Standards for Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba](#) by improving equitable access to screening tools and assessments in areas such as ability, achievement, behaviour, cognitive/executive functioning, developmental, mental health, motor and sensory, and speech and language.

Each school division has a divisional DAL champion who receives support from Pearson Canada to understand the system's potential. Please contact your divisional champion with any questions you may have, or contact isbinfo@gov.mb.ca if you have additional questions.



Access to Menstrual Products Initiative

“Period poverty” has been a longstanding global public health issue that has often been overlooked. For many people, insufficient access to menstrual products, appropriate education, and sanitation facilities may create physical, emotional, and social challenges. For example, stigmas associated with menstruation can often lead individuals not to talk about it or to access the resources needed to manage their menstrual health and hygiene.

In 2022, the Manitoba government reached an agreement with Shoppers Drug Mart to provide \$3.3 million worth of menstrual products to public, independent, and First Nations schools, as well as domestic violence agencies. The goal of this initiative is to address issues of period poverty by increasing access to menstrual products, thereby positively impacting learner engagement, health, and well-being.

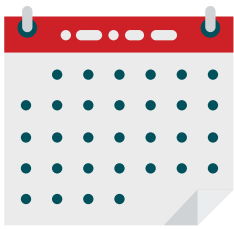
This initiative is ongoing, and public, independent, and First Nations schools can still place orders. A list of agencies where menstrual products are available outside of schools is available at [Access For All | Women and Gender Equity Manitoba](#).

Providing free menstrual products helps to address equity issues within public education, supports learner engagement, and helps to ensure holistic supports are available to address their needs.

Questions about the program can be sent to ie@gov.mb.ca.



Access For All. Period. Free pads and tampons are now available throughout Manitoba as part of the Access for All Period program, led by the Manitoba government. <https://gov.mb.ca/wage/access-for-all.html>



Department Announcements

Coming Soon

Educational Assistants in Manitoba Schools

The department is pleased to share that the document *Educational Assistants in Manitoba Schools*, originally released in 2009, has been updated and will be available later this school year. The update reflects our collective progress towards meaningful inclusion by advancing inclusive language and orienting inclusive practices within the context of Manitoba classrooms and schools. An email will be sent to schools and school divisions when the updated document is released.

Leadership Updates

Larissa Zacharuk joins ELCC's Capital and Space Expansion Branch

Larissa Zacharuk joined Early Learning and Child Care's Capital and Space Expansion Branch as Senior Capital Projects Manager in the Capital Development Unit in late September 2024.

Larissa began working with Early Learning and Child Care as a policy analyst in spring 2022. Larissa has taken on a lead policy role in advancing space expansion initiatives. Her knowledge and skills will be a great asset for the branch, shepherding project success and ensuring more families have access to licensed care.

David Yeo joins Teacher Certification and Standards (TCS)

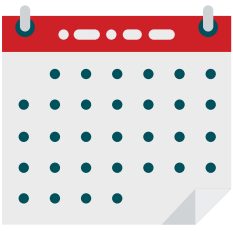
We are pleased to announce that **David Yeo** is back at Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning! David joined TCS as the new Manager of Policy in September 2024.

David has had previous roles with the department, including Assistant Deputy Minister of both the Corporate Services Division and the former K-12 Division. David also holds particular expertise in teacher certification; he was previously the Director of Education Administration Services, which then included Teacher Certification and Standards' current portfolio. We're excited to have him join Teacher Certification and Standards at such an important time for our branch, as we implement the new framework for addressing teacher misconduct and introduce further changes to the requirements for teacher certification.

Brittany Kurz joins ELCC's Intergovernmental Relations

Brittany Kurz joined the Early Learning and Child Care Division as Manager of Intergovernmental Relations in November.

Brittany comes to the division from Manitoba Justice, where she served in an assistant director role. She will support Early Learning and Child Care in working with federal, provincial, and territorial governments on implementing the Canada-wide early learning and child care system. Brittany holds a Master of Public Administration degree.



Department Announcements *(continued)*

Recent and Upcoming Proclamations

Black History Month – February 2025

Black History Month highlights the richness of Black culture and the ongoing struggles for equality and justice. It is a time to reflect on the local/global contributions and achievements of Black individuals and communities.

Inclusive Education Month – February 2025

Inclusive Education Month highlights Manitoba's commitment to the Philosophy of Inclusion, where every child and student is afforded the right to education with respect and integrity. The education community is encouraged to celebrate this important occasion by continuing to cultivate and nourish a culture of respect, inclusion, empathy, and understanding for all learners.

I Love to Read Month – February 2025

The month of February is designated as I Love to Read Month, acknowledging the importance of reading and literacy and celebrating reading in the classroom and beyond. I Love to Read Month brings public attention to the joys and benefits of reading, and it highlights the importance of literacy learning at all stages of life.

International Development Week – February 3 to 7, 2025

International Development Week puts citizenship in action in Manitoba. The proclamation is intended to inspire school communities to work collaboratively to address and alleviate social, political, and environmental inequities, and to commit to supporting the United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week – February 9 to 15, 2025

Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week celebrates the hard work and contributions of Manitoba teachers and staff to the well-being and success of Manitoba students. Parent(s)/caregivers(s) and community members are encouraged to reflect on the importance of teachers and staff to the well-being of students, and to thank and honour the teachers and staff in their communities for their continued dedication.

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.

