



Manitoba Early Learning
and
Child Care Commission

FINAL REPORT

Kathleen Flanagan and Jane Beach

January 2016

Kathleen Flanagan and Associates, Inc.

January 6, 2016

Dear Minister Kerri Irvin-Ross,

On behalf of Kathleen Flanagan and Associates, Inc., we are pleased to provide you with the final report of the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission.

The challenge of moving toward a universal approach to early learning and child care provision is significant, and has required a systemic approach addressing quality, affordability, and accessibility. These components of a “system” of early learning and child care are inter-related and inter-dependent. It is not possible for any government to put forward a system of early learning and child care that does not simultaneously meet these three criteria:

- **Affordability:** If parents are not able to afford the spaces available to them, the system is not effective.
- **Accessibility:** If parents can afford the spaces – but there are no spaces available – the system is not efficient.
- **Quality:** An affordable and accessible system of early learning and child care that does not provide high quality early learning experiences for children is not in the best interests of the child.

The plan presented to you is, in our professional opinion, the most reasonable option for Manitoba to move forward toward a universally accessible system of ELCC, and to meet government’s target of creation of 12,000 new spaces by 2021.

Our work could not have been accomplished without the significant support from the Director and staff in the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Office. Their patience, responsiveness and insights have been key to our work. As well, we have benefitted from the expertise and experience of the members of the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission Advisory Committee. The commitment of the members has been impressive, and their energy and deep understanding of the ELCC sector has inspired us.

We are honoured to have provided leadership to this work, and we submit this report to you with appreciation and humility for your trust in us.

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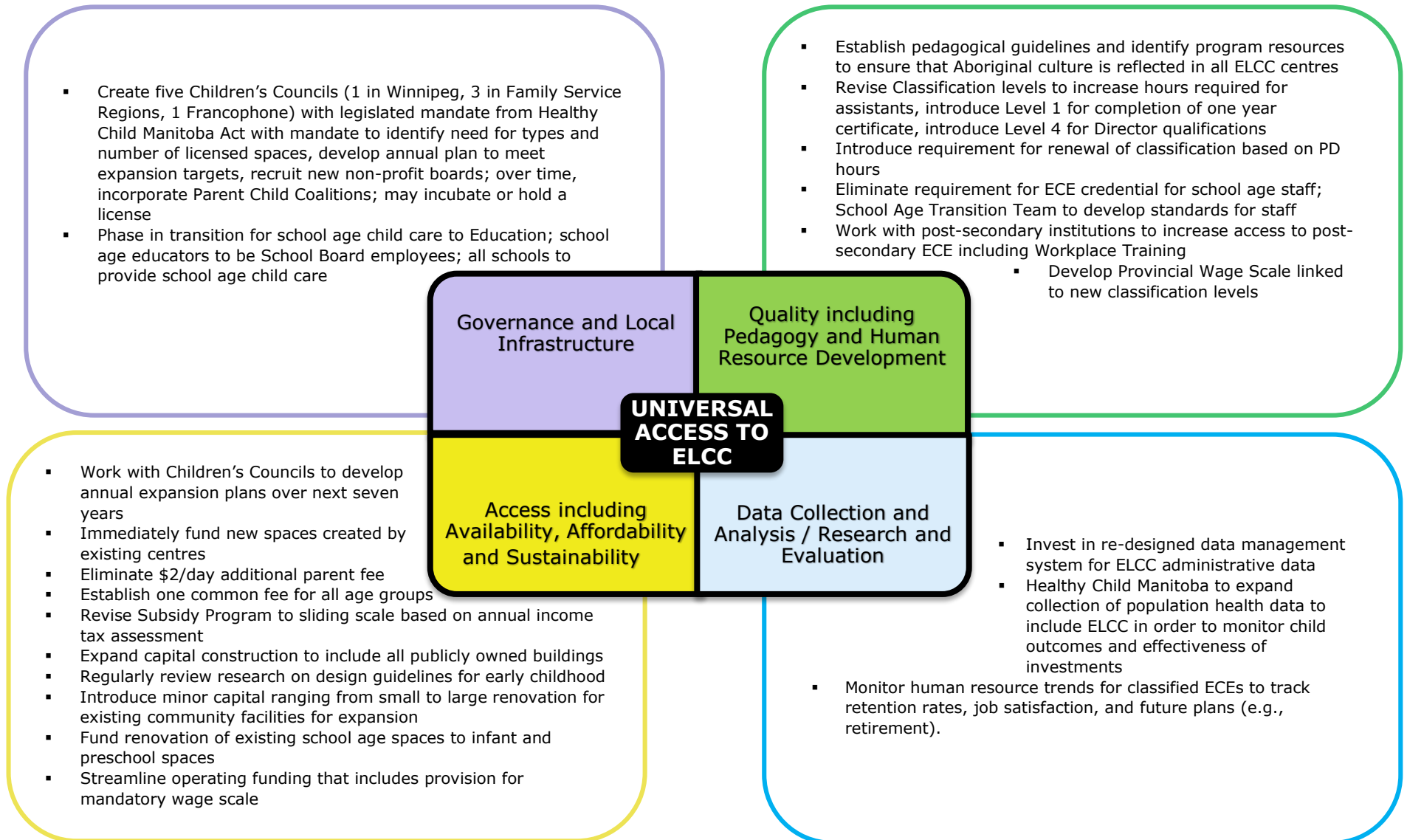
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PROPOSED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND SYSTEMS CHANGE: AN OVERVIEW



PREAMBLE

In March 2015, the Government of Manitoba established the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission in order to move towards implementing a universally accessible system capable of growing to meet the needs of all families looking for a licensed child care space, inclusive of centre- and home-based child care services. In pursuing this objective, the Commission was instructed to support the highly valued community-based, non-profit model, better integrate the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) and education systems, and maintain and improve quality of care within the ELCC system.

Following a Canada-wide competition, Manitoba contracted with Kathleen Flanagan and Associates (PEI). The work of the Commission has been carried out by Kathleen Flanagan and Jane Beach. The Commission has been supported by the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care branch of Manitoba Family Services, as well as an appointed Advisory Committee of community and government representatives.

The ELCC system is complex, and any strategies to address long-standing issues are necessarily complex in themselves. Proposed approaches are not linear nor singular in their design. The proposed approaches themselves are complex, are inter-related, and are part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide their implementation.

The Commission acknowledges that there is no silver bullet – no single solution that is feasible, and that will address all concerns. The Commission also acknowledges that there has been an enormous amount of effort from researchers, organizations, educators, and government officials in studying, analyzing, and working toward efforts to build a quality, affordable, and sustainable ELCC system for Manitoba. The proposed plan presented in this paper builds on those efforts, and is intended to reflect informed discussion with Manitobans, especially those who have worked for decades in the ELCC sector; a review of relevant research; and discussions with officials in other jurisdictions in Canada and internationally regarding the viability of moving toward a universally accessible ELCC system.

The proposed *ELCC Policy Framework and System Changes* recognize the Government of Manitoba's decision in November 2015 (See Throne Speech: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/thronespeech/>) to invest in the creation of 12,000 new ELCC spaces by 2021. The proposed approaches outlined in this plan are ambitious, will require new investments, and have been carefully constructed so as not to compromise quality for expanded access.

Over the ten months of work carried out by the Commission, an October 2015 national election in Canada has significantly changed both the political landscape and public policy directions for Canada, as Canadians elected a new federal government led by the Liberal Party of Canada. In preparing this report, the Commission was aware of a federal promise for a National Early Learning and Child Care Framework supported by financial transfers to provinces and territories, but specific knowledge regarding parameters of such a national program, or the scope of funding available to Manitoba for early learning and child care, was not yet available in December 2015. Details regarding the national program may impact some of the suggested time frames in this final report, either by delaying or expediting the implementation of new approaches.

1 INTRODUCTION

In March 2015, the Government of Manitoba established the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission in order to move towards implementing a universally accessible system capable of growing to meet the needs of all families looking for a licensed child care space, inclusive of centre- and home-based child care services. In pursuing this objective, the Commission was instructed to support the highly valued community-based, non-profit model, better integrate the ELCC and education systems, and maintain and improve quality of care within the ELCC system.

In carrying out these objectives, the Commission has informed its work through:

- Key informant interviews
- On-site visits to licensed child care centres in rural and urban communities in Manitoba, in both school and community-based settings
- Meetings with child care providers, parent boards, school board staff, school principals
- Discussions with key organizations including the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Child Care Association, the Manitoba Child Care Coalition, Family Child Care Network, Winnipeg School District Superintendents, University of Manitoba, the Child Care Education Program Approval Committee, and representatives of the Manitoba School Boards
- Literature and administrative document searches
- Review and analysis of administrative data
- Consultation with Provincial Government staff in Departments of Family Services, Education and Advanced Learning, Finance and Child and Youth Opportunities' Healthy Child Manitoba
- Discussions and consultation with members of the ELCC Advisory Committee.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This report focuses on identifying a strategy for Manitoba to move toward a universally accessible system of Early Learning and Child Care. As outlined in the Request for Proposals that guided the work of the Commission, the research has focused on the licensed ELCC system, including both centre-based and home based programs for children from birth to 12 years of age.

Proposed directions for system change are based on the understanding that in order to move forward on Government's plan to create 12,000 new spaces by 2021, it is imperative that this work be guided by a clearly articulated policy framework supported by principles, and a plan that considers early learning and child care as a "system" rather than a collection of related initiatives. As such, this plan is guided by a proposed ELCC Policy Framework and informed by evidence about best practice.

Even so, this report is somewhat limited in scope as it does not specifically consider:

- *First Nations (on-reserve) Child Care*: It is the understanding of the Commission that early learning and child care programs on-reserve are not licensed or funded by the province. As noted in the Auditor General's 2013 report on Early Learning and Child Care, the Department of Family Services "was working with First Nations and the federal government to clarify Manitoba's role in on-reserve First Nations child care." (Office of the Auditor General, 2013, p.120)
- *The range of exclusive types of child care, including emergency care, overnight care, workplace child care, and non-standard hours of child care*: Manitoba is one of only a few provinces to provide additional supports for early learning and child care programs whose hours of operation fall outside the traditional Monday to Friday schedule. Across Canada, estimates of the precise need for such non-traditional types of programs vary from one

jurisdiction and one community to another. The Commission believes that decisions regarding unique local needs for specific types of ELCC programs – whether traditional or non-traditional – are best made at the local level. In this plan, those decisions will be made by Children’s Councils – each of which is mandated to develop an expansion plan based on the local needs identified.

MANITOBA’S APPROACH TO HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Manitoba has long been held in high regard across Canada and internationally with respect to public policy decisions regarding early childhood development, including a strong regulatory framework, high quality post-secondary ECE education programs, a progressive approach to funding for child care, and an exceptionally well developed system for integrated services for children through the creation of Healthy Child Manitoba¹. Supported by legislation and the first Cabinet level integrated committee in Canada, Healthy Child Manitoba is a government wide initiative focused on a simple vision: *The best possible outcomes for all of Manitoba’s children*. Healthy Child Manitoba provides integration to programs and services for children, including early learning and child care, with the goal of helping families and communities raise children who are healthy, safe and secure, successful at learning and socially engaged and responsible.

Government’s current strategy for early childhood development – Starting Early, Starting Strong – identifies a key objective to *strengthen universal access to quality early learning opportunities*. The Strategy is led by Healthy Child Manitoba and outlines key principles for policy and program development on behalf of children living in Manitoba, focusing on efforts that are:

- *Community based*: recognize local capacity and value community diversity and indigenous knowledge. Decision-making, service delivery, and evaluation will be done in collaboration with community-based partners, stakeholders and service organizations.
- *Evidence based*: reflect proven and promising evidence that encompasses quality, play-based and developmentally appropriate standards. Evidence will range from the wisdom of elders to leading- edge science.
- *Culturally based*: value, honour, and promote culture and language as integral components of programs, supports and services.
- *Responsive and Inclusive*: respond to the differing needs of families through an appropriate mix of universal and targeted approaches and inclusive and accessible models that recognize and address the needs of vulnerable populations.
- *Integrated, Co-ordinated and Comprehensive*: integrate and co-ordinate across sectors and communities to maximize efficiencies within the service system, bring together the best from each system, and complement federal, aboriginal, municipal and community initiatives.
- *Partnership-driven*: maximize outcomes through government-community-business partnerships. To the greatest degree possible, these partnerships will be collaborative, co-operative and consensus-driven.

¹ Healthy Child Manitoba Act (2007) provides for a Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet, a provincial advisory committee, and a Healthy Child Manitoba office. The Act also provides for the establishment of Parent Child Coalitions to identify needs and priorities of children and their families, enhance and develop community based programs and services, and to implement and evaluate those programs and services in collaboration with the HCM office. (See <http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/about/index.html>)

- *Measurable*: continually measure and monitor programs and services to ensure they are achieving meaningful outcomes, targets, and indicators of success.
- *Fiscally-sound*: demonstrate sound potential for favourable returns on investment. On-going cost- benefit analyses of early childhood investments will be done to ensure continuous fiscal responsibility.
- *Sustainable*: produce solid results and favourable returns on investment sustained with a long-term funding and capacity building approach.
- *Accountable*: investments and outcomes will be regularly and publicly reported to Manitobans.

These principles have guided the work of the Commission.

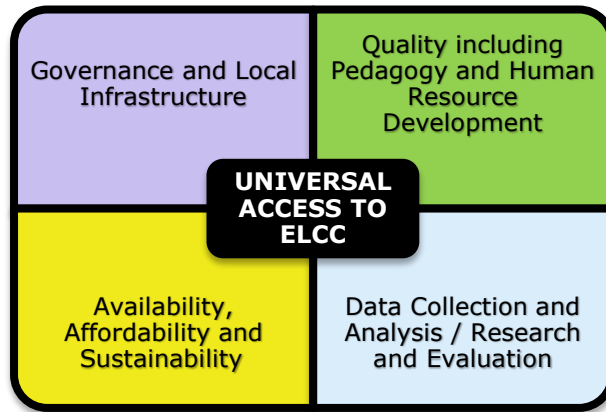
A NEW POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

ELCC policies are statements of standards and principles that provide direction to government in the ongoing administration and management of early learning and child care. The purpose of an ELCC *policy framework* is to provide a structure to guide policy development, and to articulate the values and principles that support public policy. An ELCC policy framework ensures that policies are developed, applied, and reviewed consistently; and provides a single point of reference for information relating to ELCC provision. A policy framework provides high level direction, and is different than program policies, which describe how specific program features are delivered, e.g., how to apply for subsidy. A policy framework provides the basis for ongoing evaluation, and should reflect current knowledge and evidence about high quality early learning and child care. And finally, a policy framework should allow government the flexibility to adjust its priorities based on concrete evidence about what is needed to support the provision of early learning and child care for children and families in Manitoba.

Manitoba's intention to move toward a universally accessible early learning and child care system requires a strong over-arching ELCC policy framework to support and sustain such a significant shift in public policy direction. Government's commitment to create an additional 12,000 licensed spaces by 2021 requires a coordinated, comprehensive, multi-sectoral and well-resourced effort.

To this end, the Commission proposes a policy framework for Manitoba that creates a coordinated and responsive systems approach to achieving the goal of universal access to quality early learning opportunities. Figure 1 describes a proposed Policy Framework.

Figure 1. Proposed Policy Framework

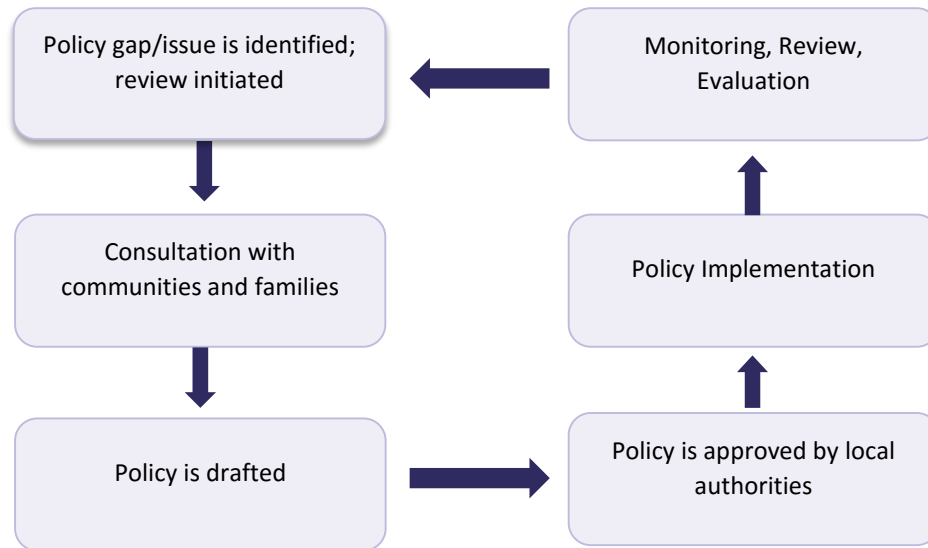


The proposed ELCC Policy Framework for Manitoba is built on the principles of:

- *Focus on the child* - as the primary purpose of ELCC programs is to provide high quality early learning experiences for children
- *Equity* – for all children, regardless of income, family status, culture, language, ability, or where they live
- *Quality* – with special emphasis on qualifications and remuneration of Early Childhood Educators, pedagogical approaches, and indoor and outdoor physical environments
- *Non-profit provision* – a model that is valued by the early learning and child care sector, its professional organizations, and the provincial government, and may include public delivery
- *Accountability* – to government, funding agencies, and children and families in Manitoba through ongoing data collection and analysis, research and evaluation, program monitoring, and public reporting.

The ELCC Policy Framework builds on a continuous cycle (Figure 2) of policy development, implementation, and review that involves families, communities, professional organizations, research, and regular monitoring:

Figure 2. Continuous cycle of planning and policy development



DEFINING UNIVERSALITY

Policies and accompanying strategies to achieve “universal access” to ELCC require a clear definition of what “universal access” means. In Manitoba's Request for Proposals for the Early Learning and Child Care Commission, the first objective outlined states: “Explore how Manitoba can move towards implementing a universally accessible system capable of growing to meet the needs of all families looking for a licensed child care space, inclusive of centre- and home-based child care services.” (RFP, Section 2, 1.3)

Manitoba is one of only four jurisdictions in Canada (others include PEI, Quebec, and a number of municipalities in Ontario) that has implemented a centralized registry and wait list to identify and track the unmet need for additional child care spaces. With approximately 12,000 children on the current wait list, the November 16, 2015 Throne Speech announced the creation of 12,000 new licensed early learning and child care spaces in a commitment to work toward universal access for all families looking for a child care space.

Key informant interviews with officials across Canada suggest that there continue to be challenges with the accuracy of centralized wait lists, especially with monitoring the list, managing parents’ expectations, and keeping names and requests current. Even so, it is generally acknowledged that a centralized wait list – with all of its shortcomings - is a much more accurate approach for determining the level of need for child care, and to determine how many parents need or want a licensed child care space for a child, the age of the child, and in what part of the province.

Approaches to “universal access” - examples from other countries

Other countries have defined “universal” access in different forms of legislation or as parameters to early childhood education and care initiatives. A few examples:

- In **Australia**, a national commitment to universal access to ECE for children in the year before full-time schooling had its roots in the 2006 commitment by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to improve early childhood development outcomes as part of a collaborative national approach. (Harrington, 2014) The current commitment under the National Partnership Agreement is to “Maintain Universal Access to quality early childhood education program(s) for all children in the year before full-time school for 600 hours per year, delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher who meets the National Quality Framework requirements with a focus on participation by

vulnerable and disadvantaged children. (National Partnership Agreement, 2008)

- In **Ireland**, “universal provision” takes two forms:
 - Early School Enrolment (before age 6) – provided in schools for all children 5 years of age and approximately 50% of 4 year olds
 - Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme – popularly known as the “free preschool year”; introduced in 2010 and provides one year of part time care and education for preschool (3-4) year old children.
- **Denmark** has not only the most generous package of parental leave policies among all countries in the European Union, but also provides universal access to high quality child care. Municipalities are responsible for ensuring that all children from the age of 26 weeks up till 6 years are offered a full-time place in a day care. Approximately 91 % of children at the age of 1-2 years and 97 % of children at the age of 3-5 years are enrolled in child care in Denmark. High quality child care is an important factor in helping mother’s return to employment. However, universal access does not mean that child care is free. Parents’ fees for child care must not exceed 25 % of the average gross operational cost for the specific type of day care in the municipality. Operation cost can vary from one municipality to another.

As well, the required parent fee is adjusted based on family income. Parents with an income below a certain limit may receive an extra subsidy from the municipality to reduce their own payment. It is possible that the cost of child care may be free for parents with low incomes. If more than one child in a family is enrolled, full price must be paid for the first child in the most expensive space and a 50 % discount is given on payment for all other children in the household, including biological siblings, adoptive siblings and children of different marriages living in a household.

Universal vs Targeted Approaches

The debate concerning universal vs targeted approaches to investments for children and families has been carried out for decades. There is a body of research to suggest that the relationship between participation in high quality early learning and child care programs and skills, readiness for school, and early school performance is especially true for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Given this knowledge, it has been questioned as to whether investments in these types of programs should be targeted to disadvantaged children. The argument has always been that in times of scarce resources, should we not target what we have to those children who need it the most?

The question then becomes “how do we define the term ‘disadvantaged?’” Typically, provinces and territories have defined income status as an indicator that specific supports (e.g., subsidies) should be available for children and families. However, according to data from Canada’s National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth, we know that although the percentage of children in low income families who demonstrate one or more types of difficulties is higher than the percentage for children in families with middle or high incomes, the actual **number** of children in middle income families who demonstrate difficulty is actually higher. Income testing misses these children.

W. Steven Barnett (2004) economist and chair of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) claims that the cost of failing to serve children who could benefit is far higher than the cost

While the poor are more statistically likely to be vulnerable, the majority of vulnerable children in BC reside in the more populous middle-class. Early vulnerability is a middle-class problem.

Dr. Paul Kershaw, et al August 2009

saved by targeting. Using models developed in evaluating the 40th-year High Scope/Perry study, (but using far more conservative assumptions about what economic gains would be), Barnett estimated that the economic gain over a 40-year period derived from having children of all socioeconomic groups in quality preschool would have been far greater if the program had been available to all. (Barnett, 2004)

Proportionate Universality

The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) program at University of British Columbia proposes that "A system that incorporates the principle of proportionate universality for children in their early years would create and maintain a platform of universal services organized in a way that would eliminate the barriers to access that affect populations in the highest need." (HELP, 2011) Proportionate Universality is defined as: "...programs, services, and policies that are universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage."

Clyde Hertzman (2005) noted that barriers to access may be related to infrastructure (program or service is not available; cost; lack of transportation; time that program is offered; language spoken; lack of information) or due to relational or value based barriers such as conflicting expectations, social distance, or parental awareness.

There are two realities in Manitoba that suggest that additional attention needs to be given to achieving the goal of "universal access":

A universal approach has the potential to improve things for children in all SES ranges. But in practice, children in higher SES ranges tend to benefit more than those in lower SES ranges. This is because lower SES families are more likely to face obstacles to accessing services – these might be physical, cultural, or social. Using a universal approach without addressing barriers to access, one that provides the same service to all, can actually steepen the gradient, and create greater differences in child outcomes between SES ranges.

Human Early Learning Partnership, University of British Columbia

1. There are significantly fewer spaces available for children younger than two years of age – also known as "infant child care spaces". There are also proportionately more children in this age group who are registered on the Child Care Registry. While this is the case in all jurisdictions across Canada (because of the additional expense of providing infant child care, due to higher staff:child ratios for this age group), there will need to be considerations given as to the nature of new spaces created in order to address this gap.
Data from the September 2015 report on Manitoba's Online Child Care Registry suggests that there are 4831 children between 0-2 years of age listed on the Child Care Centralized Wait List. This accounts for 40% of all children on the current wait list. According to administrative data, only 10% of licensed centre spaces are currently designated for children in this age group.
2. There are many children in Manitoba living in conditions of risk, and data shows that the more elements of risk, the higher the likelihood of difficulty. Data from Healthy Child Manitoba suggests that:
 - One out of four babies in Manitoba are born into toxic stress, but that two out of three Aboriginal babies are born into these conditions
 - This represents 3 out of 4 children born in First Nations and 1 of 2 babies born in Metis and Inuit families
 - One in four children in Manitoba are not ready for Kindergarten, but 1 in 2 Aboriginal children are not ready.

The above figures are consistent with figures for other jurisdictions across Canada, but clearly demonstrate that there needs to be an enhanced focus on children living in conditions of risk in order to ensure that there is adequate access to early learning experiences and opportunities.

2 GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Early Learning and Child Care is a complex phenomenon. Although the *Community Child Care Standards Act*, Regulations, best practices, funding, and policy provisions provide a context for the design and delivery of ELCC programs, licensed programs are operated by a variety of entities, including volunteer parent boards, community boards, Church/faith based organizations, Aboriginal organizations, commercial corporations, and individuals (family child care).

There is a substantial body of compelling evidence to demonstrate that good quality early learning and child care programs are good for children, while programs of questionable or poor quality have the potential to do harm. Across Canada, provinces and territories have sought to mitigate any adverse effects of participating in child care programs through licensing and monitoring, and careful regulation of the structural elements (including, but not limited to child to staff ratios, group sizes, qualifications, early learning curriculum frameworks) that are known to influence the level of quality of the early learning and child care program.

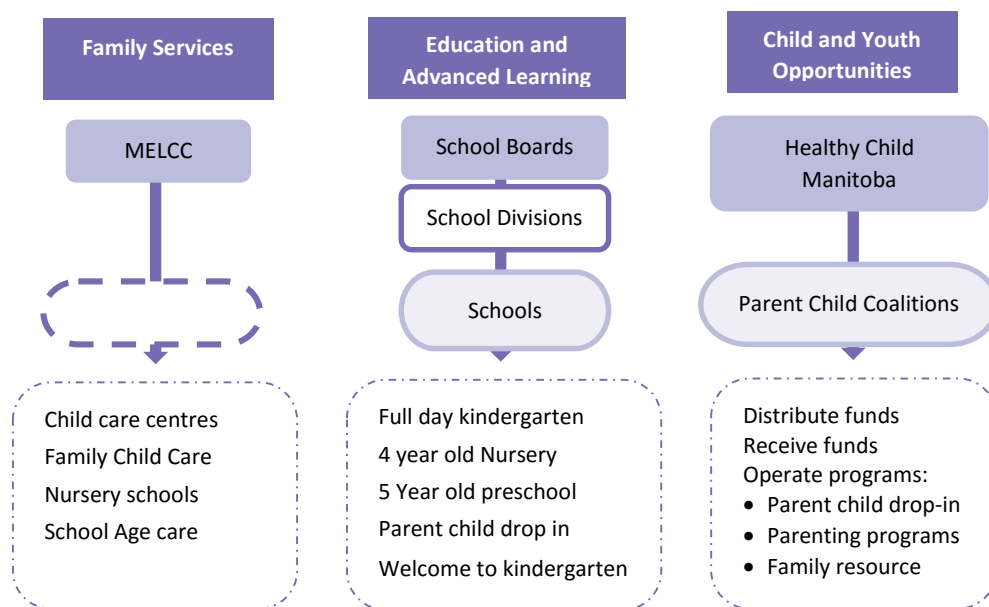
As well, numerous researchers and organizations have emphasized that the availability of child care is essential to healthy child development, literacy, women's equality, social integration of newcomers to Canada, job creation, economic strategies, poverty reduction, family support, early intervention... and the list goes on. The importance of child care has been touted by educators, employers, economists, bankers, and social policy experts. The ongoing development and expanded provision of early learning and child care is applauded by governments, educational authorities, health professionals, economic think tanks, municipalities, and parents as being vital not only to children's development, but to the social and economic health of society. Everyone agrees that access to child care is needed, and in almost every jurisdiction across Canada, that the level of access – meaning that parents must be able to find a suitable space and be able to afford it – needs to be improved. Many have wondered at the reason for the growing gap between "what we know" and "what we do".

In Manitoba, there are other early childhood programs with similar objectives operated by school boards, parent child coalitions, the federal government (both on- and off- reserve) and other community-based groups that may or may not be licensed under the *Community Child Care Standards Act*.

However, in North America there are very few publicly managed and supported efforts to provide the *local infrastructure* necessary to plan for, establish, and support the type of expansion called for, and to monitor and evaluate the results. In Manitoba – as well as in other provinces and territories – the responsibility for providing such local infrastructure falls to parent volunteers who are often ill equipped to organize and coordinate the level of effort needed to create an early learning and child care system. Although there are numerous types of local infrastructure established in Manitoba to manage other programs for children and families (e.g., school boards, health authorities, child welfare authorities, recreation commissions, and to some extent, parent child coalitions) there is no such infrastructure in place for early learning and child care.

Figure 3 shows the lack of local infrastructure for the ELCC sector compared to the Education system of program delivery and Healthy Child Manitoba's network of Parent Child Coalitions:

Figure 3. The current ELCC landscape in Manitoba



Linkages with Education

Across Canada, a number of jurisdictions have assigned responsibility for ELCC to Education ministries. This trend began almost twenty years ago in NWT, followed by Nunavut. In 2005, Saskatchewan moved ELCC to Education, followed by PEI in 2006. In the last ten years, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador have shifted responsibility for ELCC to Education.

The involvement of the Education sector in ELCC appears, however, to be limited to provincial level policy developments rather than operational practices regarding the delivery of licensed ELCC programs. A few examples:

- New Brunswick is the only jurisdiction that has considered delegating responsibility for licensed ELCC programs to the school district level; to date, this has not yet been finalized.
- In Nova Scotia, “early years centres” have been established in eight schools across the province, managed by local school boards in partnership with a local community advisory committee. Schools involved in the initiative provide for an early childhood program (free of charge) for 4 year olds, a family resource program, and a full time child care program. The child care program is only operating in four of the eight schools, and is operated by a third party contract.
- In Prince Edward Island, a new non-profit organization has been established to oversee (and hold the licences for) Francophone Early Years Centres. The French Language School Board has two representatives on the Board of the new organization, and provides in-kind services for administrative matters.

In Manitoba, a number of school divisions are providing various programs for young children, beyond part-day kindergarten, which are not funded by the Department of Education:

- Some school divisions are providing full-day every-day kindergarten in select schools, usually in disadvantaged communities
- Winnipeg, Frontier, Evergreen and Swan Valley school divisions and Division scolaire franco-manitobaine provide part-day 4-year old nursery programs
- Some school divisions operate infant and child development centres.

What We Heard

Manitoba is unique in having a Cabinet level committee of Government that focuses on an integrated approach to issues related to children, including early learning and child care. Healthy Child Manitoba is supported by provincial legislation, coordinates exemplary research, and actively supports local community efforts through its parent child coalitions. Healthy Child Manitoba involves ten ministries and provides leadership to Manitoba's *Starting Early, Starting Strong* initiative, which outlines the province's vision and principles related to children.

There is interest in new governance model, but there is no consensus on the approach. Although ELCC is a component of Healthy Child Manitoba's integrated approach, there appears to be a "disconnect" between ELCC and this integrated work. There appears to be a lack of coordinated planning between Healthy Child Manitoba's Parent Child Coalitions, School Divisions, Aboriginal Head Start programs, and ELCC programs with regard to start-up of new spaces, programs, etc.

In reality, however, there are numerous programs that are created at the local level without the benefit of collaborative planning to identify what types of programs may be needed, and to identify where duplication may occur. For example, half day programs for 4 year olds in schools, developed and operated by school boards, are generally not established in consultation with ELCC programs that may already exist, and at times, in the same building. The Commission was advised of numerous instances where parents used both programs, leaving a full time child care space unoccupied for part of the day while other children are on a wait list for that very space. Parent Child Coalitions have developed programs – usually part time – for children in the community that at times have duplicated programs offered either by the school or by a parent board of a licensed ELCC centre.

There is some support for better integration of ELCC and Education, but there is a perception that no-one is in charge of defining/leading the process or facilitating discussions between schools and child care programs. There is not a clear vision as to what such integration would involve in terms of scope, areas of responsibility and oversight, or funding. Some have expressed concerns that ELCC will be overshadowed by the needs and priorities of public schools. There is strong support for ELCC within some school divisions, but varying opinions on roles and responsibilities. There appears to be interest among a number of school superintendents for a greater role in provision of school age child care, but not for child care for younger children.

While very strong standards and best practices are identified and monitored in licensed ELCC centres, the same level of oversight does not exist for other types of early childhood programs. The recently released (April 2015) *Starting Early, Starting Strong* document *A Guide for Play-Based Early Learning in Manitoba: Birth to Six* appears to be an effort to provide some consistency in the quality and pedagogical approaches taken in all types of early childhood programs. The resource is intended to guide the development and delivery of all early learning programs in the province, and complements legislated requirements.

And finally, there is considerable concern about the capacity for governance at the centre level. It was noted that some boards have delegated decision making and authority to the centre director, others become involved in the day to day operations of the centre, often without the training or capacity to manage effectively, that there is considerable turnover on the parent boards, and that many parents feel unprepared for the level of responsibility and required management skills placed on board members.

There is little relationship between the socioeconomic status ... and the provision of child care spaces. This is not unexpected given that child care spaces have evolved largely in response to need based on parental employment, rather than on the need for enriched early childhood development.

Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, 2008, P.245

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Universality and Public Management

The concept of universal access to early learning and child care implies an aspect of public management, as reliance on the private sector does not ensure an agreed upon level of coverage, targets for increasing coverage, and monitoring success in achieving those targets. In European countries, public policy is developed at the national level, but municipalities/local governments make decisions regarding the availability, management, and quality of early childhood education and care.

Across Canada, there are small pockets of examples of public delivery, primarily by municipalities in selected provinces. However, there are no jurisdictions with province wide public delivery of licensed early learning and child care in North America, even though public agencies (such as MELCC) provide public oversight in terms of inspections, monitoring, and complaint investigation. Preschool programs operated by school boards are not licensed. Some school boards – including those in Manitoba – offer school based programs for 4- and 5-year old preschool children, although these are typically offered on a half day basis for 4 year olds. British Columbia’s Strong Start program is a half day program for children from birth to 4 years old where parents or responsible adults are required to attend with a child.

Public Management in Prince Edward Island

With respect to licensed programs, Prince Edward Island describes its provincial Early Years program as “publicly managed, community-based”. The province regulates fees, regulates wages, and determines the number, size, and location of Early Years Centres. Early Years Centres are required to meet standards above those required for licensing, including more stringent requirements for staff qualifications, indoor and outdoor physical environments, quality of programming. Early Years Centres are also required to have parent advisory committees, must provide infant care, must provide space for children with special needs, submit quarterly financial statements, participate in research, etc.

Prince Edward Island also requires that Early Years Centres follow acceptable business practices, and may refuse to allow a centre to expand, depending on each situation. For example, with a ratio of one adult to three children for infants, the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture may refuse a request to offer an additional infant space if there is only one space to be added, since that would require an additional staff person (The same practice is in place in Manitoba). This would not be seen as “good business practice” and approval would not be given unless there were three additional infants registered.

And finally, legislation in Prince Edward Island establishes a licensing board, and delegates responsibility for licensing from the Minister to the Chair of the licensing board. Unlike most provinces and territories, in PEI, there has been an oversupply of licensed spaces, and legislation allows the licensing board to limit the number of licences that are issued, if it is deemed that there is not a need for additional spaces in a particular region. The rationale is that with too many spaces, the oversupply dilutes the viability of existing centres. There have been numerous rejections of licence applications based on this analysis.

Experiences in other Jurisdictions

In European countries broad policies governing early learning and child care are developed at the national level, and local bodies are responsible for the planning, delivery, and management of programs. In Australia (similar to Canada in that it is a federation), there is national agreement on such things as curriculum; programs and services are developed and delivered at the state level.

In Canada, there are some examples of innovative approaches:

- In Ontario, municipalities have a long history in holding responsibility for early learning and child care. Provincial legislation and regulations guide the operation of ELCC programs, but

provincial funding is directed to municipalities who then share in the costs associated with delivery of licensed programs (e.g. subsidy, operating grants, etc.) Eligibility and funding levels may vary from one municipality to another, and a number of municipalities directly operate some of the child care centres and family child care agencies in their jurisdiction.

- The City of Vancouver plays a role in planning, coordinating, and advocating for child care and early learning programs, even though it has no legislated mandate to do so. The City recognizes that child care is a public amenity intended to support working families and regularly sets targets for expansion. City Council and staff partner with non-profit organizations to delivery quality, affordable and accessible child care; facilitate the development of infrastructure to support integrated child care services, including licensed group care and other family support services; use financial tools to leverage facilities and land, and offset some operating costs. Council recognizes that accessible, affordable child care is essential to the health and well-being of Vancouver's children and families, and has endorsed an Early Care and Learning plan. The City helps create high quality, licensed child care facilities and early childhood hubs throughout Vancouver, by working with developers, architects, landscape architects, and early childhood educators. The City has developed design guidelines, best practices, and provides grants to support child care.

MOVING FORWARD: GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Local Infrastructure

Public Management in Manitoba

The proposed option regarding Governance and Local Infrastructure suggests an approach that gives Manitoba a “publicly managed, community based” approach to ELCC. The Commission does not intend to create unnecessary infrastructure or authorities, and has considered the viability of existing infrastructure to assume the responsibilities and tasks of the proposed Children’s Councils. For many reasons, none of the existing models – including very careful consideration of attaching local infrastructure to school divisions and school boards – were considered appropriate.

The re-design of the ELCC system in Manitoba has the potential to further strengthen and support the province’s long-standing efforts to integrate services and programs for children and their families. Broadening the scope of responsibility for local infrastructures for early learning and child care would enhance the equity and scale of efforts for all community-based services and programs for children.

PROPOSED: LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ELCC

Building on lessons learned from other types of regional and local infrastructure in the province, create local infrastructures (Children's Councils) for early learning and child care that have a broad mandate for collaboration on community-based early childhood programs and services.

Structure

- Legislated mandate from Healthy Child Manitoba Act
- Five "Councils" – with one for City of Winnipeg, three in other regions based on Family Service areas, and one provincial Francophone Council
- Membership to include 8-10 representatives for each Council, appointed by the Minister, and with representation from:
 - Parents
 - ELCC organizations
 - School Divisions
 - Aboriginal organizations
 - Francophone organizations
 - Newcomer organizations
 - Healthy Child Manitoba's Parent Child Coalitions
 - Other community members to be determined.

Mandate

- Expansion and Development: Work with government on development of 12,000 new spaces:
 - Assess need for new spaces by location, age group, and hours of operation
 - Develop an annual plan for expansion, including capital investments
 - Actively recruit non-governmental / non-profit organizations as license holders and boards of directors for new programs
 - Be able to hold a licence for early learning and child care centres, either in the long term or in order to incubate new programs before the community takes the licence
- Maintain data and information according to a provincial format, and provide regular reports to MELCC
- Support Licensed ELCC programs
 - Provide administrative resources to licensed ELCC centres as required, particularly with regard to human resources, legal services, and accounting
 - Identify opportunities for business practices where economies of scale would support the operation of licensed ELCC centres and homes
- Incorporate Parent Child Coalitions
 - Create local hub models of programs and services
- May assume other levels of responsibility as the new strategy unfolds, including:
 - Supports to boards of directors for administrative and financial support, including centralized payroll, substitutes, etc.
 - Administrative responsibility for centralized payment structures, subsidy applications, etc.

Required Resources

- Honorarium for Board members as appropriate (e.g., parents)
- Staffing and administrative support, as appropriate for the size of the region, including a management position, responsible to implement the Council's annual plan
- Program support and advice from MELCC Child Care Coordinators responsible for each area
- Program support from coordinators from Parent Child Coalitions

MOVING FORWARD ON GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE 1

The Commission proposes that the first step in introducing a new governance model and the infrastructure to support a move toward universality is to establish the Councils themselves, with clear terms of reference for the councils, and a mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities:

Establish Councils

- Confirm the number of Councils needed to ensure adequate representation across the province²
- Develop terms of reference for Councils (MELCC), including roles and responsibilities for Councils and existing professional organizations (e.g., MCCA), as well as geographic boundaries
- Appoint chair of each council
- Through the Agencies, Boards, and Commissions Office, develop a process for self-nomination from interested citizens to participate as members of the Council, including criteria (skills, experience, affiliations) for desired qualifications for members
- Establish a review committee that includes MELCC, HCM, appointed Chairs and others
- Finalize list of members of each Council, and appoint others as appropriate (to round out the balance of skills/expertise).

Prepare Legislation to Support Councils

- Work with Healthy Child Manitoba re supporting legislation
- Begin process to incorporate Councils as non-profit organizations.

Determine staffing needs

- Develop job descriptions and recruit staff
- Finalize workplace decisions (location, etc.).

Establish a Committee of Council Chairs, and establish formal linkages with Provincial Healthy Child Advisory Committee

Develop an evaluation framework to establish baseline data and define targets for measurement

MOVING FORWARD ON GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE 2

Develop a 5-year plan for expansion according to MELCC provincial targets for 12,000 new spaces

- Review and analyze current capacity for full and part time spaces in centres and homes
- Work with school divisions to determine plans for expansion of school based school age child care, and to analyze expected increase in infant / preschool spaces as a result
- Assess need for new spaces to meet unmet need
- Assess need for ECE staff for proposed new centres/spaces
- Develop targets and timelines for expansion, including projected capital investments and location for new spaces/centres.

² While school division boundaries may not align with Family Services regions, it will be important for each school divisions to relate to only one Council

Recruit new boards of directors for licensed ELCC centres

- Develop information package for recruiting members for boards of directors of new centres
- Develop communication strategy to engage community members.

Begin license application process

- If a Council holds the licence, establish a parent advisory committee for the centre.

MOVING FORWARD ON GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE 3

The Commission recognizes that different Councils may reach Phase 3 at different times, depending on the progress in establishing new centres and/or spaces. When appropriate, the Commission envisions that each Council will:

Broaden responsibility for children's services

- Existing Parent Child Coalitions to be absorbed into Councils
- Identify broader ELCC/ECD capacity in the Council's region – this may include consideration of Aboriginal Head Start, Family Resource Programs, Early Literacy, Parenting Support Programs, and unlicensed school based programs
- Determine how to integrate licensed ELCC programs with other services.

Explore Feasibility of expanding role of the Council to:

- Provide for administrative functions for licensed ELCC centres (e.g., centralized payroll, staff recruitment, substitutes, etc.)
- Provide for other levels of responsibility for ELCC as the new strategy unfolds, including responsibility for centralized payment structures, subsidy applications, etc.

Participate in MELCC evaluation

- MELCC to evaluate the performance and role of Councils according to evaluation framework established in Phase 1, including effectiveness in meeting targets and responsiveness to communities.

The new Governance and Infrastructure model is intended to support, not replace, existing boards of licensed ELCC programs. The Councils are intended to fill the current gap of supportive infrastructure for the ELCC system as noted in Figure 3. The Commission acknowledges that in any new governance model, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined and understood. The Commission proposes the following for consideration as terms of reference are being developed for the new Councils, and that roles and responsibilities be considered as a component for reflection in the evaluation framework:

Government

- Is responsible for legislation, and development of broad public policy regarding the ELCC system and related programs
- Manages and monitors the on-line centralized wait list/registry to determine need for child care
- Establishes Children's Councils, and appoints Chairperson; through the Agencies, Boards, and Commission Office, coordinates a community nomination process to invite Manitobans to participate on Councils
- Sets targets for expansion, and advises Councils of provincial targets; reviews five-year expansion plans developed by Councils
- Issues licences to eligible applicants; monitors adherence to regulations through regular inspections; reviews inclusion plans, safety charters, etc.; investigates complaints
- Reviews qualifications and classifies early childhood educators; reviews renewal applications for maintaining classification (new)

- Provides program support through child care coordinators (MELCC)
- Develops, monitors, and administers subsidy program for parents
- Administers operating grants to centres and homes, reviews and revises funding as appropriate
- Manages inclusion funding
- Manages capital funding for expansion
- Works with post-secondary institutions regarding ECE program requirements, including access, funding, expansion, etc.
- Develops and maintains data strategy in partnership with Councils, with ongoing data collection and analysis; prepares regular reports on the ELCC system through public reporting
- In collaboration with Healthy Child Manitoba, initiates research on the ELCC system, including monitoring child outcomes.

Parent Boards

- Continue to be the licence holder for child care centres and/or nursery schools. with all of the associated responsibilities, e.g., recruitment and hiring staff, applying for funding, adhering to regulations, administration, etc.

Children's Councils

- Develop five-year plans for expansion, as per targets established by MELCC:
 - Review and analyze current capacity for full and part time spaces in centres and homes
 - Work with school divisions to determine plans for expansion of school based school age child care, and to analyze expected increase in infant / preschool spaces as a result
 - Assess need for new spaces to meet unmet need
 - Assess need for ECE staff for proposed new centres/spaces
 - Develop targets and timelines for expansion, including projected capital investments and location for new spaces/centres
- Recruit new boards of directors for licensed ELCC centres; new centres may be initiated by a community group, an existing non-profit, or by the Council
- May "incubate" a program and hold the licence until the program is well established, or Council could operate it for the long term
- In situations where a centre is not operated by a parent board, a parent advisory committee would be required to ensure opportunities for parent input into the program (as is current practice in multisite organizations in Manitoba)
- In certain circumstances where service may be disrupted, the Council would work to maintain stability of the child care program by working to amalgamate the centre with another non-profit, or they may assume the licence themselves
- The Councils would be responsible for ensuring all centres and homes had appropriate HR and financial management policies and practices in place, and in partnership with professional organizations, would support centres experiencing difficulty in these areas. (For example, MCCA has developed a Human Resource Management Guide and Councils may work with MCCA to provide the necessary support to centres.)
- Over time, will absorb current parent child coalitions into the Council structure and expand the range of ELCC/ECD programs within its mandate.

School Boards/Divisions

- Beginning with two school divisions in 2016, will assume responsibility for the delivery of school age child care for children attending school on a full time basis
- Divisions will consult with and work with existing school age child care providers to develop a plan for transition
- School boards/divisions, through their involvement in Children’s Councils, to develop a five-year plan for expansion and transition of school age child care to school operation
- Until school divisions have a majority of school age child care in their mandate, fees would remain the same between school operated and community operated school age child care programs; children would continue to have access to subsidy
- Once all of school age child care is moved to school board operations, boards/divisions set maximum fees for children in consultation with MELCC (re linkage to subsidy)
- Responsible for hiring staff for school age child care programs
- Responsible for establishing standards, program of activities, and monitoring/maintaining quality in school age child care programs
- Responsible to interact with parents regarding spaces, registration, etc.
- Responsible to identify and maintain appropriate space within schools, as well as appropriate play/recreation materials
- Responsible to provide full day school age child care on PD days, school holidays, March Break, and through summer months
- Will be represented on Children’s Councils for both input on school age child care as well as unlicensed school based programs for preschool children, e.g., 4 year old nursery, parent-child drop in programs, etc.

2.1 A ROLE FOR EDUCATION

THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Licensed school age child care for children between 5-12 years is provided in school age only centres, centres that are licensed for multiple age groups and in family child care homes. Close to 10,000 spaces are in centres and approximately 800 in family child care homes.

- 32.8% of the total number of centre-based spaces are school age
- 68.7% of the centre-based school age spaces are located in schools
- 73.8% of the school-based school age spaces are in centres that serve school age and other age groups.

Table 1 shows the distribution of licensed centres and centre-based spaces by type of setting and program.

Table 1. Centres with school age spaces, March 15, 2015

	Centres	Spaces
TOTAL CENTRES WITH SCHOOL AGE SPACES	315	9,971
Located in schools ³	195	6,846
Located elsewhere in the community	120	3,125
Total centres and spaces that are school age only	66	2,338
Located in schools:	49	1,794
Located elsewhere in the community	17	544
Total centres and school-age spaces in centres with more than one age group	249	7,633
Located in schools:	146	5,052
Located elsewhere in the community	103	2,581

In 2014, funded school age spaces received an annual operating grant of \$1,479/space. Effective January 2015, the grant increased to \$1,557/year. Operating grants for school age programs totaled \$13.58 million for the 2014/2015 fiscal year.

As of March 2015:

- 9,060 spaces (94.2% of all non-profit school age spaces) were funded
- 560 spaces (5.8% of all non-profit school age spaces) were unfunded
- 366 spaces (3.66% of the total number of school age spaces) were commercial and not eligible for funding.

The percentage of school age children for whom there is a licensed child care space in Manitoba is considerably lower than for other age groups. In 2014 MELCC estimated that were licensed spaces for:

- 24.4% of preschool children
- 10.9% of school age children

The actual demand for school age child care is not known, but there are approximately 2,000 school age children on the Online Child Care Registry. Most of the school age spaces – 80.5%- are located in Winnipeg.

School age child care centres operated by non-profit organizations and commercial operators must follow the *Community Child Care Standards Act* and its regulations.

School age programs require:

- A staff to child ratio of 1 to 15 for children 6-12 years
- A staff to child ratio of 1 to 10 for children 5-6 years
- 50% of staff and the director to be classified as an ECEII or ECEIII
- Maximum parent fees of \$10.30/day for 3 periods of attendance and \$20.80/day for 4-10 hours/day on in-service days and school holidays.

When public or private schools take responsibility for the operation of school age programs or nursery schools, a licence is not required. Many schools across the province provide nursery programs in addition to part-day kindergarten, but not school age child care.

³ Includes 35 school age spaces in two nursery schools located in schools

Transitioning school age care from MELCC (then the Manitoba Child Care Program) to the Department of Education was one of the 42 recommendations on a 2005 comprehensive report on school age child care in Manitoba.

There has been considerable support for ELCC expressed by the Manitoba School Boards Association and the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. To date, there has not been formal position taken by school boards on assuming responsibility for child care for preschool age children, but support for managing school age care has been expressed by a number of school superintendents as well as numerous stakeholders both inside and outside government.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although there are no jurisdictions in Canada where school boards operate and deliver province-wide ELCC programs for preschool age children, there are some notable exceptions in the delivery of school age child care.

In **Quebec**, child care for children 0-4 is the responsibility of the Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés (MFA); school age child care is the responsibility of the Ministère de l'éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) and is delivered by school boards. Where 15 or more children in a school require child care, the school board must offer it. More than 90% of Quebec elementary schools provide school age care for children ages 5-12, and in communities where there is part-day 4-year old kindergarten, from the age of four. Staff members in the school age child care programs are school board employees and are unionized. Until recently parent fees during the school year were the same as fees for regulated child care. As of 2015 fees for school age child care are no longer linked to child care fees, and are currently set at \$8/day.

In schools where there is not enough demand for a school age program, the CPE or a family child care home may provide care to school age children.

In **Ontario**, responsibility for child care rests with the Ministry of Education. School boards are required to provide before- and after-school programs for children attending full-day kindergarten and Grade 1 where there is a demand for more at least 20 children in a school. School boards may directly offer this "extended day" directly, or they may contract to a third party to deliver it. Some schools may also offer programs for older children.

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) offers two types of school age programs: extended day for children in Grades JK - Grade 2 and youth development programs for children in Grades 3 - 6.

- With few exceptions, the extended day programs for younger school age children are operated directly by the school board, and all but two of the 55 elementary schools in the region provide extended day programs. They are not licensed but staff are early childhood educators employed by the school board and children are eligible for fee subsidy. The few programs that are contracted to a third party are licensed and regulated under the Child Care and Early Years Act. All extended day programs operate in the kindergarten classrooms.
- Youth development programs for children in Grades 3-6 combine student interest with developmentally appropriate activities. The children have a home base, usually in either an unused classroom, or one that has regular classes during the day. They also have full access to other spaces in the school, such as the gym, the library and the computer lab.
- The demand for youth development programs is less than for extended day programs, and approximately half of the elementary schools offer them.
- Youth development programs are contracted to third party operators.
- The programs have common fees across schools and run on a cost recovery basis.

- Each school board has one administrator who has general oversight of the school age programs, and there is also a supervisor of the ECEs working in the kindergartens and extended day programs.
- Parents of children requiring a space in either an extended day or youth development program, register online through the centralized OneList Waterloo Region. There are no waiting lists, and parents are able to select the school where they want care and the days of the week they need it. They can change the days they wish their child to attend every two weeks. The Region generates invoices, which are emailed to parents.
- School boards set a common fee for the programs they operate, and the Region collects the fees on behalf of the Board, on a fee for service basis. Eligible families can receive a fee subsidy.
- The board operated programs do not operate in the summer. Third party operators provide programs in the summer in a number, but not all of the schools.

MOVING FORWARD: A ROLE FOR EDUCATION

There are number of arguments to be made for school boards in Manitoba to assume responsibility for school age child care, and over time, for most school age programs to be delivered in schools by school boards. For example:

- School boards have a mandate and legislated responsibility to educate and care for school age children.
- Relying on individual parents and community groups to initiate, develop and operate child care programs results in inequitable distribution of services and inadequate supply.
- Younger school age children may benefit from having fewer transitions during the course of the day if child care and school are in one location, and the need to transport children to a community facility would be eliminated.
- Older children may benefit from greater opportunities for age appropriate recreational and social activities and to participate in special interest groups.
- Parents would have one drop-off and pick up point for their school age children.
- Greater opportunities for communication between child care and school staff would likely result in increased coherence between school and child care, and the ability to identify and address any concerns about individual children.
- The current variations among school district lease arrangements and occupancy conditions for child care programs would be reduced or eliminated.
- Administrative efficiencies could be realized with a single body responsible for school age children and fragmentation of services eliminated.
- Some school age staff may be employed in other positions within the school during the school day, reducing the number of split shifts and part-time jobs, and increasing networking opportunities with other school division employees.
- Expansion of new spaces would likely be able to happen at a faster rate than working with a third party, establishing a board of directors and negotiating lease agreements and other conditions of occupancy.
- As school boards increased the supply of school age programs in schools, using surplus or shared space, school age spaces in community-based centres could be replaced with preschool spaces, with limited requirement for capital funding.

- School boards are likely to be able to operate with a greater degree of flexibility that potentially make it easier to respond to changing community need. Physical standards would be consistent with those in the school, eliminating the difference in standards that currently exist between schools and child care centres.
- Since school boards could hire staff with a range of educational qualifications, some ECEs who prefer to work with younger children may choose employment in in preschool or infant programs. This would begin to help address the shortage of ECEs in child care centres.

Through the course of its work the Commission met with a number of school officials including principals, school superintendents, representatives from the Manitoba School Boards Association, the Metro Winnipeg Superintendents, the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, and officials from the Department of Education. For the most part there was a keen interest in ELCC in general, and strong support for school boards to play a greater role in school age child care, including assuming responsibility for the management and delivery of school age programs within their schools. There was also significant support from a range of stakeholders from the child care community for the responsibility for school age child care to transition to school boards.

PROPOSED: A ROLE FOR EDUCATION IN SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE

The Commission proposes that, through a multi-phase transition period, legislative responsibility for school age child care move from the Department of Family Services to the Department of Education. Operational and management responsibility would move from non-profit operators to school divisions. The Commission proposes that:

- School boards assume responsibility for all school age child care located in school buildings or on school premises, under the authority of the Department of Education and Advanced Learning
 - School age child care currently includes children in Grade 1 and up. It could be extended to children attending full day kindergarten (every day or alternate days). Spaces for children attending half-day kindergarten would continue to be licensed as preschool spaces, unless the school had adequate vacant space and appropriate staffing to accommodate kindergarten children for the balance of the day.
 - School age child care would operate before and after school when school is in session, on professional development days, school holidays and during the summer. If demand does not warrant a summer program in every school, some combined school locations could be considered.
- MELCC staff work with non-profit operators to replace school age spaces with infant, preschool and nursery school spaces as feasible.
- School divisions expand delivery of school age programs to all schools with a demonstrated need.
- Need would be determined by expressed interest from families of at least 15 children attending the same school.

Initial considerations and activities are outlined in three phases.

MOVING FORWARD: A ROLE FOR EDUCATION PHASE 1

The Commission proposes that the process begin with the establishment of a multi-stakeholder transition team, that include superintendents from at least one urban and one rural school division interested in participating in the initial implementation phase. Seven Oaks School Division and Seine

River School Division have both expressed an interest in being part of the early planning, implementation and testing phase of the transition.

Establish a transition team

At a minimum a transition team should include representatives from:

- MELCC
- The Department of Education
- The participating school divisions
- MSBA
- MASS
- MCCA
- A non-profit school age operator from each of the participating divisions

Responsibilities

- Prepare an inventory of existing school age programs in the division in schools and in other locations, and assess options for shared space in all schools
- Consult with school age operators, parents and other partners on proposed changes
- Assess need for school age child care across divisions
- Confirm first schools for Board operation of school age programs in participating divisions and prepare for start up
- MELCC institute a moratorium on funding to any new licensed centre-based school age spaces in participating school divisions
- Develop an implementation plan that will address
 - Program policies, standards and operating procedures for board operated programs
 - Qualification requirements for staff working in board operated school age programs that may include a variety of appropriate credentials, including a diploma or degree in Child and Youth Care or Recreation.
 - Operating budgets, mechanisms for fee collections, HR policies
 - Program guidelines, ensuring that they are appropriate for the ages being served, and that they are recreational and social in nature
 - Mechanisms for fee collection and for eligible families to pay fees comparable to and on the same basis as community-based programs
 - Responsibility for supervision and oversight of board operated programs, and for parent and community liaison
 - Policies and practices for parent involvement and engagement
 - Mechanisms for data collection for evaluation purposes
 - A Process for issue identification and resolution.

MOVING FORWARD WITH EDUCATION PHASE 2

Phase in delivery of board operated programs in participating school divisions

The implementation plan will determine whether some or all schools begin to operate school age programs at the same time.

As participating school divisions begin to operate school age programs, numerous policy and operational issues will have to be addressed. Among the issues, school boards, in collaboration with the transition team will need to:

- Determine how to best serve kindergarten age children. Where preschool programs operate in schools the needs of children attending half day kindergarten, especially where vacant space is

not available during school hours, and any children attending 4-year old nursery may be better served in the preschool program than in a school age program.

- Take into account current and planned wages in the early childhood sector in developing wage scales for school age staff who are school board employees. It will be important not to destabilize the early childhood sector by offering wages significantly higher in board operated school age programs than elsewhere.
- Consider ways to make programs as accessible as possible regardless of parental labour force participation. Under the current subsidy system parents must meet social as well as income eligibility criteria. Many children in low income families whose parents are not employed or attending a training/education program are not eligible for subsidy (under current criteria) and who would receive significant benefit from extracurricular activities, may not be able to participate or have access to other forms of recreational activities.
- Consider what dedicated space may be available for school age programs. While shared use of multi-purpose rooms, gyms and libraries and classrooms may provide opportunities for a range of activities, a "home base" is important to support quality, particularly for younger children.

Evaluate phases 1 and 2 of the transition

Before province-wide implementation begins,

- Assess:
 - The impact of the program on families, children, schools and the child care community
 - The costs of implementation
 - Challenges, solutions and benefits
 - Recommendations for roll out to other school boards.
- Communicate the findings, future plans and timeline to stakeholders
- Finalize plan for province-wide implementation.

MOVING FORWARD WITH EDUCATION: PHASE 3

Province-wide implementation

- All new centre-based school age programs would be located in schools and operated by school boards. No new funding would be provided to community-based school age programs.
- Over time, school boards would have responsibility for all school age programs for children from Grades 1- age 12 located on school premises.
- Under certain conditions, non-profit organizations could continue to operate school age spaces in centres in the community, where the centre also cares for children of other age groups. For example, if the demand is not adequate for a viable school-based centre, a community-based centre of family child care home may be able to accommodate them. Any community-based school age programs would continue to be operated by non-profit entities, be licensed under the Community Child Care Standards Act and funded in similar manner to other community-based child care programs.

School divisions will be members of the new Children's Councils and planning for school age child care will become part of the overall mandate of the Councils, to ensure a comprehensive and cohesive approach to the development and delivery of the broad array of ELCC services for children and their families.

3 ACCESS

3.1 AVAILABILITY

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

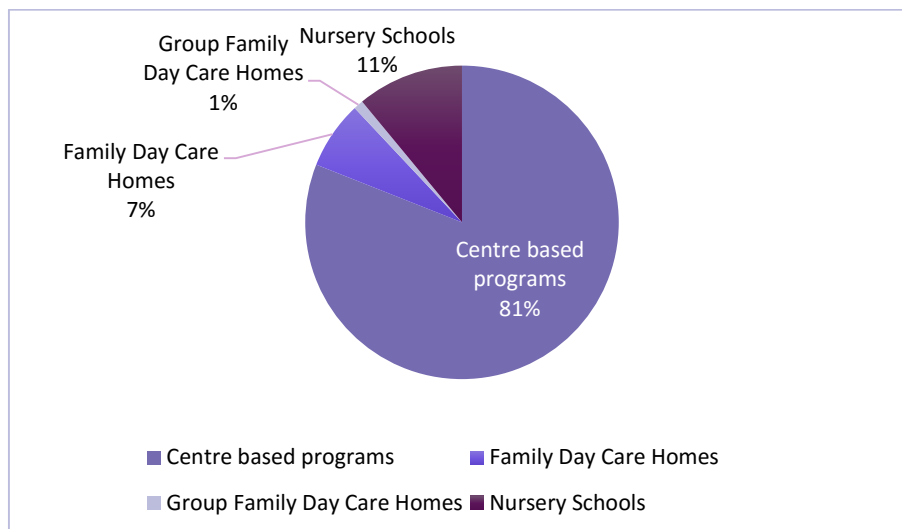
One of the key challenges to achieving universal access to ELCC is the current level of availability of licensed ELCC spaces for children in Manitoba. Using 2015 data, current availability for ELCC in Manitoba for children from birth to 12 years of age provides coverage for:

- 19% of children from 0-12 years old, with 33,500 licensed spaces
- Approximately 26% of children from 0-5 years old, with 22,414 centre-based and family child care spaces
 - The above number does not include Kindergarten spaces.
 - The above number does not include preschool programs operated by school boards, community drop-in or family resource programs, library programs, or Aboriginal Head Start Program off-reserve.

As noted previously, the available spaces are predominantly available for children between the ages of two and five years old with 44% of all available full day spaces currently licensed for this age group. However, it should be noted that if half day nursery school spaces are added in this calculation, there are spaces for 55% of preschool children. This figure does not include family child care spaces, which are not tracked by age group. The next largest percentage of designated spaces are for school age children, with 30% of all licensed spaces. Only 7% of licensed spaces are available for infants (children from birth to two years of age), although this age group makes up 40% of children on the centralized wait list.

Figure 4 shows that as of March 2015, the vast majority of available spaces are in full day centre-based programs:

Figure 4. Percentage of spaces by type of program



For the past 15 years, Manitoba has consistently planned for the ongoing development of its provincial early learning and child care system. In 2001, the Manitoba Child Day Care Regulatory Review Committee's report *A Vision for Child Care and Development in Manitoba* envisioned a "universal, accessible, affordable, quality" child care system in order to provide for optimal development of

children and support to families throughout Manitoba. The vision focused on six policy and program components of Standards/Quality Care; Funding; Training and Professionalism; Governance; Integrated Service Delivery; and Public Education in order to achieve the four elements of the vision.

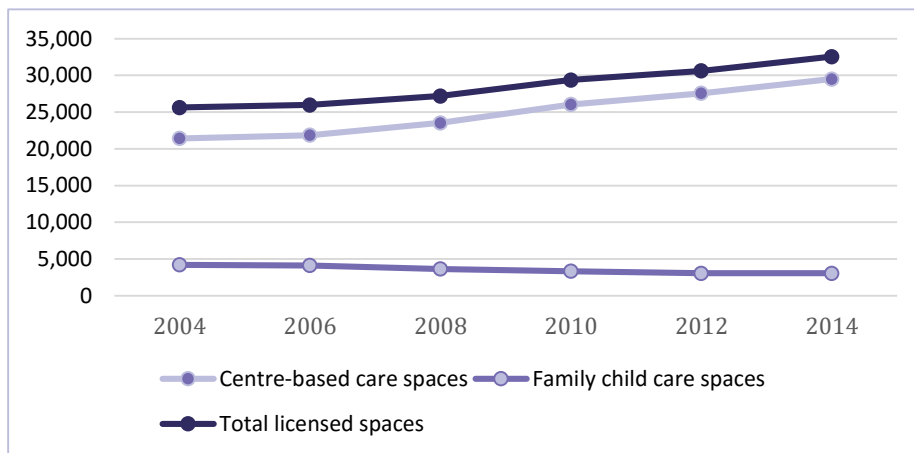
In the ensuing provincial consultation, over 24,000 Manitobans overwhelmingly (eighty-two percent) fully supported the four elements of the vision and the six components outlined to achieve the vision. Many others supported elements of the vision, and presented alternative options as a way to move forward.

The 2000 Vision paper, along with the feedback from public consultation, resulted in the development of a five-year plan for child care; subsequently, two additional multi-year ELCC strategies have been consecutively launched in order to systematically work toward that vision:

- 2002 – 2007: Manitoba’s Five Year Plan for Child Care
- 2008 – 2013: Family Choices: Manitoba’s Five Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care
- 2014 – 2019: Family Choices: Manitoba’s Plan to Expand Early Learning and Child Care.

Figure 5 shows that over the past 10 years the overall number of regulated child care spaces has increased by 27%, or an average of 692 spaces a year.

Figure 5. Number of centre-based and family child care spaces in Manitoba 2004-2014



Over this period, there has been an increase of 8,077 centre-based spaces (37.7%) and a gradual but steady decrease in the number of family child care spaces, with 1,156 fewer spaces in 2014 than in 2004 (a decrease of 27.5%). This means that over the previous ten years the average annual increase in centre-based spaces has been 808, and the average annual decrease in family child care spaces has been 116.

- In 2004, 16.4% of all licensed spaces were in family child care
- In 2014, 9.4% of all spaces were in family child care.

There is considerable variation in changes to supply by the type of care. The percentage increase in centre-based infant spaces over the last 10 years was considerably higher than for preschool spaces; however, more than five times as many centre-based preschool spaces were created than infant spaces.

Unlicensed Programs

Across Manitoba, there are also numerous unlicensed early childhood programs for children and at times, their families. While there is little data to note the number of children who participate in these programs, they include:

- *Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities* (off-reserve): AHSUNC sites typically provide half-day pre-school programs that prepare young Aboriginal children for their school years by helping to meet their spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs. All sites provide programming in six core areas: health promotion, nutrition, parental involvement, Aboriginal culture and language, social support, and education. There are currently fifteen AHSUNC sites across Manitoba, with five sites (+ satellite) in Winnipeg.
- *School Division Programs*, including:
 - Nursery programs for four-year-olds – for all children in Winnipeg and Frontier School Divisions; limited in selected other divisions
 - Extended day Kindergarten – Seine River
 - Welcome To Kindergarten – ranges from a few weeks to 8 months
 - Parent Child Drop-In – selected schools
 - Library Programs.
- *Family Resource Centres*, which typically require parents or guardians to be on-site with their children. FRP Canada lists more than 50 family resource centres in Manitoba as members, and MELCC estimates that there are many more.

How Many Spaces are needed?

In order to determine need, it is important to consider the purpose of child care. If it is primarily to serve working parents, the need for spaces would be considerably lower than if it is considered a positive early development program, from which all children can benefit. At the present time, fee subsidies for full-time care are usually limited to parents working, looking for work or studying, for children living in conditions of risk, or in other extenuating circumstances. However, fee subsidies for part-day licensed nursery school programs are based solely on family income and not a reason for care.

Access to child care is often considered only within the context of the number of spaces and the percentage of children in a given age group for whom there is a space. However, to be accessible to a family, a child care space needs to be available, affordable and appropriate, with consideration given to the questions noted below.

- **Availability:** Is there a space for me when I need it? Are there eligibility criteria that I have to meet? Is there priority admission for some families over others?
- **Affordability:** If there is a space for my child, can I pay for it? How easy is it to apply for and receive a fee subsidy?
- **Suitability:** Do the hours meet my needs as a working parent? Are there adequate resources for my child with additional support needs? Is the centre/home reasonably convenient to get to? Do I need to prepare lunches everyday or are meals provided? Is the program (staff, environment) a good match for my own values as a parent, and does it support my philosophy of child development?

Jurisdictions across Canada struggle with determining the number of child care spaces needed, and how to determine what types of spaces are needed and where. Key informant interviews across Canada suggest that:

- Despite space creation initiatives, some jurisdictions report that certain areas of the province have high coverage and centres/homes tell government that no new spaces are needed
- Some jurisdictions use information from centralized wait lists to determine need.
- Some jurisdictions have used EDI scores, and are working with local community organizations to determine the types of spaces and populations that need special attention
- Some jurisdictions are using geo-mapping to determine where centres are “full”, where spaces are needed, and what types of spaces.

Centralized Wait Lists

Manitoba is one of only four jurisdictions in Canada (others include PEI, Quebec, and some municipalities in Ontario) that has implemented a centralized registry and wait list to identify and track the unmet need for additional child care spaces. Manitoba's registry is similar in design (and based on) that used in Ontario. In Quebec and PEI, the on-line registries were developed specifically for each jurisdiction. Manitoba is the only jurisdiction that manages its on-line registry/centralized wait list within the provincial government itself; in the other three jurisdictions, third party organizations manage the registry⁴.

The Manitoba Online Child Care Registry is managed by the provincial government, and reports quarterly on numbers of children/families in need of licensed child care, by age group and region of the province. Table 2 provides information as of September 30, 2015 regarding the number of families looking for a licensed child care space.

Table 2. The number of active registrants the Online Child Care Registry as of September 30, 2015

	Children under one year of age	Children ages one to two years	Children ages two years and over	Total children (born)	Children not yet born	Total (all children)
REGION						
Westman	196	143	401	740	63	803
Parkland	55	29	116	200	13	213
Northern	74	59	197	330	18	348
Interlake	131	106	324	561	31	592
Central	116	87	243	446	35	481
Eastman	201	133	530	864	59	923
Winnipeg	2,006	1,844	5,914	9,764	615	10,379
Less registrants in multiple areas	(177)	(170)	(619)	(966)	(44)	(1010)
Total unique children province wide	2,602	2,231	7,106	11,939	790	12,729

With approximately 12,000 children on the current wait list, the November 16, 2015 Throne Speech announced the creation of 12,000 new licensed early learning and child care spaces in a commitment to work toward universal access for all families looking for a child care space.

Across North America, licensed child care centres and homes have used "wait lists" to manage requests for service, and to plan for future service needs. For decades, centres have maintained their own individual wait lists – and this is still the approach taken in the majority of provinces and territories in Canada. Anecdotal evidence from provincial/territorial government officials, as well as directors of child care centres, suggests that this practice is fraught with difficulties leading to inaccurate assessments of need for child care spaces:

⁴ In Ontario, the on-line registry/centralized wait list is specific to each municipality. Currently there are approximately 14 municipalities with on-line registries and centralized wait lists.

- Generally, parents put their names on wait lists at multiple centres, in hopes of finding at least one space available.
- Sometimes parents put their names on a wait list at their preferred choice, while using a space at a different centre until a different space becomes available.
- Unless a centre regularly monitors and manages its wait list, parents' names may be on for months before it is noticed that the family no longer needs a space.

The above difficulties have encouraged jurisdictions to explore the feasibility of centralized wait lists for child care, in similar fashion to how provinces and territories have approached the need to organize the number of people waiting for physician services. As noted, only four jurisdictions have moved forward with this approach, but others are either in the process of developing such systems or about to launch. Almost all have on-line listings of centres and contact information. All jurisdictions with centralized registries use an on-line registration process although provision is generally made for telephone contact for parents without access to internet.

Key informant interviews with others suggest that there continue to be challenges with the accuracy of centralized wait lists, especially with monitoring lists, managing parents' expectations, and keeping names and requests current. Discussions with some centre directors in Manitoba would suggest some of the same challenges, as some directors noted that they often need to contact several people before finding a person who still needs the child care space. Even so, it is generally acknowledged that the centralized wait list – with all of its shortcomings - is a much more accurate approach for determining the level of need for child care. Government's plan to create 12,000 additional spaces is in line with the number of children's names on the current centralized wait list.

The Child Care Coalition of Manitoba target

The Child Care Coalition of Manitoba has a position that there should be enough child care spaces for 50% of all children, regardless of the labour force participation of their mothers. Under that scenario, there would need to be:

- 44,700 spaces for children 0-5 years, an increase of 22,922 spaces
- 59,650 spaces for children 6-12, an increase of 38,873 spaces.

What is the coverage in other jurisdictions?

Across Canada, there are enough full- and part-day centre-based spaces for an average of 24.1% of children 0-5. The highest levels of coverage are in:

- PEI, with enough centre-based spaces for 32.4% of children 0-5. The supply of licensed child care in PEI meets the current demand.
- Quebec, with enough centre-based spaces for 30.3% of children 0-5. It should be noted that the coverage is actually higher in Quebec, if family child care spaces are taken into account; however, the actual number of children 0-5 in family child care is not known.

In Europe, the availability of high quality, affordable child care facilities has been long identified as a priority for the European Union, including day nurseries and other daycare centres, family child care, professional certified childminders, pre-school education or equivalent, and centre-based services outside school hours. In 2002, the Barcelona European Council set objectives for coverage, known as the Barcelona Objectives (although often referred to as the Barcelona Targets), to remove disincentives to female labour force participation and take into account the demand for child care.

Targets were set to provide child care by 2010 or at least 33% of children under 3 years, and at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age. By 2010, of the 28 member states, the following had met the targets (European Commission, 2013):

- 10 achieved the target of 33% coverage for children under 3 years

- 11 achieved the target of 90% coverage for children 3 years to mandatory school age; the overall average across all states was 86%
- 7 states achieved the targets in both categories

It is important to note that both the coverage above includes both full-time and part-time arrangements. Most of the states that achieved the 90% target for children 3 years to mandatory school age had a considerable percentage of children were in an arrangement on a part-time basis. In 2011, the states with the highest total coverage, only Denmark had fulltime participation by more than 66% of children.

It is not possible to determine the level of Manitoba's coverage for all children 3 years to mandatory school age, as there is no readily available data on the number of children who attend kindergarten full- and part-time, the number of 4-year olds who attend school-based nurseries and the number of children who attend multiple programs, such as kindergarten and child care.

Manitoba's existing commitment

In *Family Choices: Manitoba's Plan to Expand Early Learning and Child Care* (2014), the provincial government committed to funding and creating 5,000 spaces over the next five years, with a priority for school-based centres. An additional 5,000 spaces would bring the overall coverage for children 0-12 to about 19.9%, based on today's population.

In the November 2015 Speech from the Throne, government enhanced their plans, announcing a commitment to the creation of 12,000 new spaces by 2021.

- If the 12,000 new spaces are applied to the 0-12 child population, this would increase coverage from approximately 18% to just over 24%.
- Given that the Commission has recommended that school age child care be moved to the Education sector over time, if all 12,000 spaces were designated for the 0-5 child population, coverage would increase from the current 25% to 41.35%

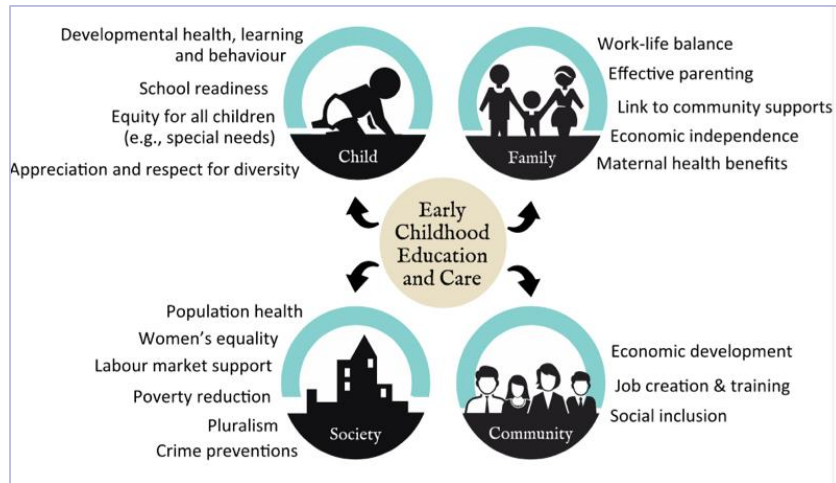
As the proposed plan for moving school age child care to school divisions is phased in, the resulting conversion of those school age child care spaces to infant and preschool spaces would significantly increase the coverage yet again for the younger population, at the same time that access to school age child care would be increasing across the province.

The Commission emphasizes, however, that expansion is critically dependent on significant expansion of the human resources available to staff the new and expanded programs.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is generally accepted in academic literature that the availability (and financial access to) of licensed early learning and child care contributes to female labour force participation, alleviates child poverty, provides a community-based point of integration for newcomers (in this case, to Canada), and provides for early learning experiences for children that increase their likelihood of success in school. (Lowe-Randall & Ramanan, 1992; National Research Council, 2001; Committee for Economic Development, 2008; Fairholm, 2009; Van Lancker, 2013).

Figure 6. Benefits from participation in early childhood education and care programs



Source: Atkinson Centre, OISE, University of Toronto

Specifically, Fortin (2015a) has noted that in Quebec, increased availability of (and access to) spaces has a net financial gain to the province and federal government. Table 3 shows the net financial gains, based on increased revenues from income tax:

Table 3. Net financial gains based on increased income tax revenue

	Gross Benefit	Cost of Program ⁵	Net Benefit ⁶
Quebec	\$1450 (M)	\$1200 (M)	\$250 (M)
Ottawa	\$650 (M)		\$650 (M)
Total	\$2100 (M)	\$1200 (M)	\$900 (M)

Fortin (2015a) also reports that the increased availability and affordability of child care resulted in significant increases to female labour force participation in Quebec (See Figure 7) and significant decreases in the number of lone parent families receiving social assistance (See Figure 8).

⁵ The cost of \$1,200 M is the difference between the actual cost of the new system (\$1,800 M) in 2008 and what the previous system would have cost in that year (\$600 M).

⁶ For each additional dollar invested, there is a net return of \$.55 for Ottawa and \$.20 for Quebec.

Figure 7. Changes in labour force participation of women 25-44 years old - Quebec

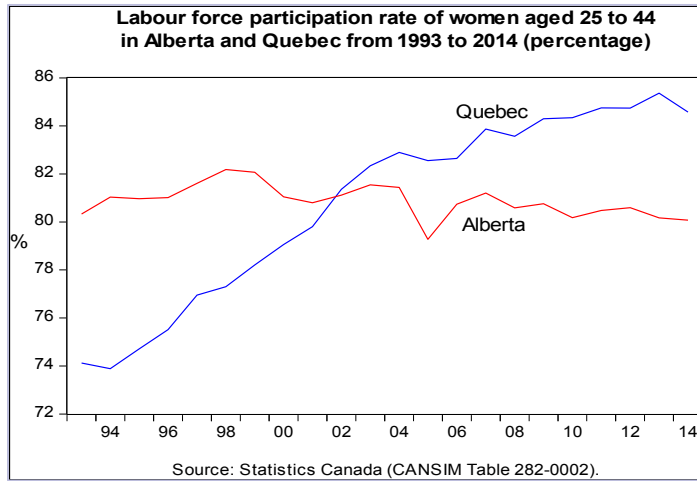
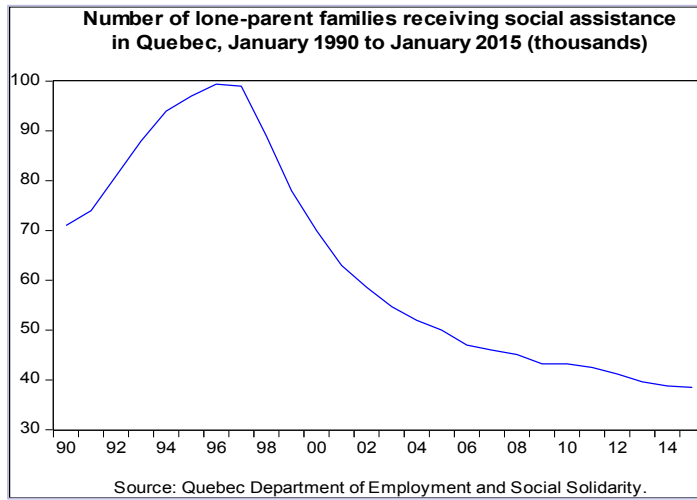
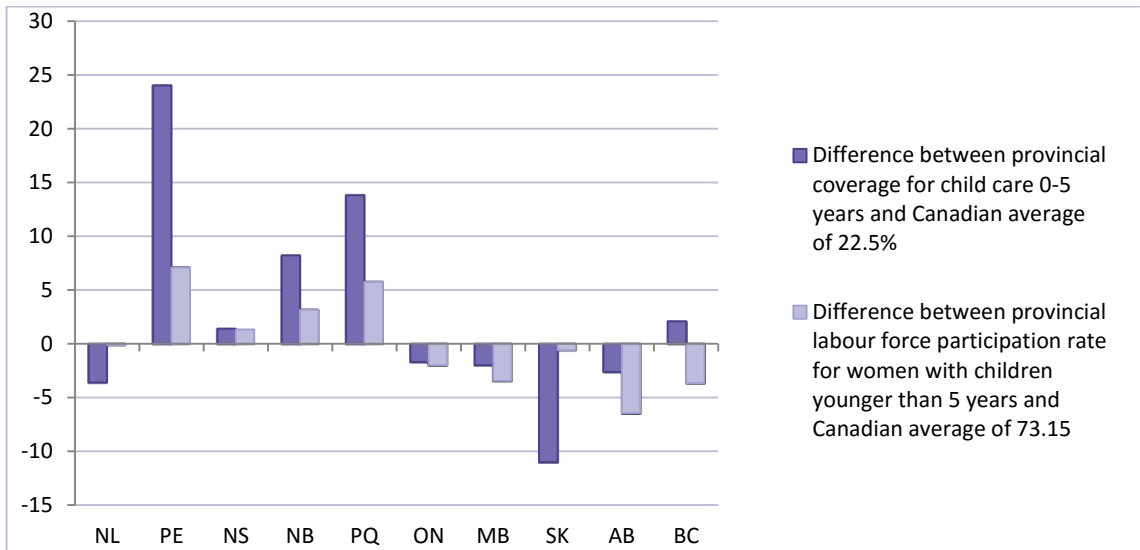


Figure 8. Lone parent families receiving social assistance – Quebec



Analysis of data using provincial rates of coverage for children 0-5 years as compared to labour force participation rates for women with children in the same age grouping shows a correlation between rates of coverage and labour force participation. Figure 9 uses 2012 data and shows the difference between the Canadian average (set at 0) for rates of access and labour force participation:

Figure 9. Relationship between percentage rates of child care coverage for children 0-5 and percentage of labour force participation for women with children younger than 5 years old, 2012 – as compared to Canadian averages for both (Canadian average is set at 0)



Calculations by Commission, data sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (2012 annual), CANSIM Table 282-0211 and Friendly et al, 2013.

CAPITAL EXPANSION

Ensuring an adequate supply of suitably located, well-designed and secure facilities for child care centres is essential to ensure availability, quality and sustainable services.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Manitoba has a long history of co-locating child care in schools. The child care in schools policy requires child care to be considered in any new school construction or major renovation. Child care also has priority for surplus school space. As of March 2015, almost half of licensed child care centres (see Table 4) – 318 of 681 child care centres - across the province are in schools.

Table 4. Licensed centres and spaces in schools or on school property by type

	Number of centres	Infant spaces	Pre-school spaces	Nursery spaces	School-age spaces	Total spaces
Total in schools	318	538	4,462	2,002	6,846	13,848
Child care centres	245	538	4,462	596	6,811	12,407
Nursery schools	73	0	0	1,406	35	1,441

Manitoba provides two types of major capital funding to support the expansion of child care spaces:

- 100% funding for renovation to school buildings or construction of new child care facilities on school property
- Up to 40% funding to a maximum of \$600,000 for renovation or new construction of community facilities.

MELCC has developed design guidelines and sample templates for centres of different sizes and age groups to guide the planning and construction of new spaces. As Table 5 shows, by 2014, 3,325

spaces have been created or are under development with this funding, excluding facilities built in new schools.

Table 5. Major capital development: spaces created and average development costs to March 31, 2014⁷

Location		Approved projects	Anticipated spaces	Total provincial commitment	Average development cost per space
School-based	Surplus space development	28	581	\$7,890,000	\$13,580
	Stand alone new construction	8	408	\$15,068,673	\$36,933
Community-based	All projects	71	2,336	\$14,232,700	\$6,093 ⁸
Total		107	3,325	\$37,191,373	

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Historically many child care centres have been located in less than optimal space, and organizations have undertaken major fund raising efforts for necessary renovations and space expansion. Capital grants can facilitate planned growth of child care spaces, and eligibility criteria and design requirements can support quality provision and have an impact on children’s daily experiences.

A number of provinces provide minor capital grants for start-up costs, for repairs, or for expansion, but Manitoba is one of only a few provinces to provide major capital funding for the creation of new child care spaces.

In its 2015 budget **Ontario** announced \$120 million to build 4,000 child care spaces in schools where there is high demand. School boards can apply to the ministry of Education for funding. (Government of Ontario, 2015)

Centres can apply for capital retrofit funding to renovate existing space to serve younger children as 4- and 5-year olds enter full day kindergarten. Minor renovations may include:

- Adding a wall to create an infant sleep room in a previous kindergarten room
- Renovating a playground space
- Renovating washrooms for toddlers.

Funds may not be used to create new spaces. Funds are allocated to Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) who are then responsible for processing applications and funding centres.

For example, in 2015 the City of Toronto received \$1.2 million in transitional funding. The City’s Children’s Services division developed Early Learning and Child Care Transitional Planning Funding Guidelines to guide investment. (City of Toronto, 2015a). Transitional funding applies to projects that require between \$5,000-\$50,000 for renovation and start-up costs to reconfigure the space.

⁷ Totals do not include facilities built in new schools

⁸ This figure primarily reflects the development costs prior to March 2014, when spaces were funded at 33% to a maximum of \$400,000.

In 2012 Children's Services developed the *Child Care Design and Technical Guideline*. (Levitt Goodman Architects 2012) It outlines best practice design choices to create functional, child-friendly, developmentally appropriate and inspired spaces for children. It contains both design and technical recommendations with example solutions.

Children's Services has developed a 2015-2019 capital strategy to guide capital funding decisions. It identifies a number of challenges, including the issue that capital projects can be long term and slow to address immediate service needs. It estimates the capital costs of building a 62-space child care centre at \$3.9 million. (City of Toronto Children's Services, 2015b) The document indicates that planning for future capital investment will explore all opportunities to increase licensed capacity within current programs; with community partners, will identify opportunities to develop child care as part of a larger development project; and will purchase land and develop child care only when no other partnership offers are possible.

British Columbia has provided major capital in some years and not others, and the priority areas and eligibility criteria have changed from time to time. As of 2015, non-profit child care organizations, including non-profit societies, local government including school boards, public institutions and First Nations governments may apply for up to \$500,000 and commercial child care organizations may apply for up to \$250,000.

- The percentage that the province will pay up to the maximum amounts vary by type of project:
 - 90% contribution for the creation of child care spaces on school grounds
 - 80% contribution for the creation of child care spaces co-located with other family support programs
 - 75% contribution for the creation of child care in other settings
- Volunteer labour may be included in the organization's financial contribution up to 15% of total project costs. Accepted rates for various types of volunteer labor are established by the province.
- Depending on the amount of the project costs, the applicant must demonstrate a commitment to continuing the child care operation for between five and ten years. If the applicant owns the land, restrictions may be placed on the sale or transfer of the property.

For many years the City of Vancouver has supported the creation of child care facilities. They do this in a number of ways:

- The City plans for, negotiates and oversees the development of new city-owned and community child care facilities as part of the land use planning process, through development cost levies and community amenity contributions.
- The City provides space to non-profit organizations to operate child care in a number of City-owned facilities, such as community centres, Neighbourhood Houses and libraries. Operators pay a nominal fee for the space.
- In 1993 the City developed child care design guidelines to be applied where child care facilities were required as a condition of re-zoning and in development applications involving child care. The guidelines are for use by architects, developers and City staff, and address site selection, site planning, and indoor and outdoor space considerations and requirements. (City of Vancouver, 1993) In 2012 the City released the *Childcare Technical Guidelines*, which provide technical guidance for the construction and renovation of child care facilities.
- Non-profit organizations can apply for small capital grants of up to \$50,000 to assist with the capital costs of retrofitting rooms in schools for licensed school age care. (City of Vancouver, 2015). Applications are assessed in order of established priority:
 - Projects in underserved neighbourhoods

- Projects that will expand an existing program by 20 spaces or more, or create a new program
- Projects that will serve vulnerable children, according to specified criteria
- Projects likely to create stable, long-term child care.
- The City tracks child care supply by neighbourhood and regularly sets child care targets for the growth of child care spaces, with particular attention given to underserved areas of the city.

MOVING FORWARD: CAPITAL EXPANSION

The degree to which Manitoba wishes to set targets and timetables for expansion will have an impact on the provincial budget; in addition to the capital costs, consideration will have to be given to the long-term operating funding required to sustain centres, parent fee support for those paying less than the maximum regulated fee, expansion of training seats and infrastructure costs. Experiences with capital expansion in both Manitoba and other jurisdictions suggest that schools are a priority location for capital funding. In addition to school-based programs, co-locating child care with other community services, and broader ELCC programs, as well as in a range of publicly owned buildings has proven effective.

The creation and quality of child care facilities will be tied to broader policy development and the implementation of system change, and as such does not require the identification of specific phases of its own. Two key considerations are noted below that should be incorporated into targets and timetables for expansion.

PROPOSED: CAPITAL EXPANSION

Expanding provision

Capital construction and small to major renovations need to be part of long-term expansion planning, and will be informed by the targets and timetables established by the province in collaboration with the Children’s Councils. Availability cannot increase substantially without additional facilities, and new spaces should be created to established quality standards.

In addition to continuing the creation and expansion of spaces in schools, further options for 100% funding could be considered. Even though the expense is higher than funding community programs at 40% to a maximum of \$600,000, creating child care in publicly owned buildings means that the province, school board or municipality retains ownership of the facility.

- In schools without infant and/or preschool child care, work with school boards to develop stand-alone infant and preschool centres on school property wherever there is enough space
- Work with post-secondary institutions to create on-campus child care facilities
- Include child care in all new Manitoba Housing projects, where demand warrants
- Conduct an inventory of vacant space in provincially owned buildings to determine the feasibility of co-locating child care
- Assess the feasibility of collaborating with local government to co-develop child care in municipal buildings, such as libraries and community centres
- Consider construction of child care centres on publicly owned land
- Look for opportunities to co-locate child care with other ECD services
- Develop requirements for long-term lease and operating commitments when capital grants are provided to non-profit organizations
- Consider capital funding for centres who wish to convert school age spaces to preschool spaces, where renovations may be necessary.

PROPOSED: CAPITAL EXPANSION

Responsibility for planning and development will transition over time to the Children's Council. Where necessary or desirable the Council may hold the licence for a new program.

MOVING FORWARD: QUALITY OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Well-designed and situated purpose-built child care or renovated space can serve a number of purposes. It can:

- Support children's physical, social and cognitive development
- Support the implementation of curriculum and program philosophy
- Provide supportive work environments
- Provide opportunities for parent engagement
- Demonstrate the commitment to quality early childhood provision.

There is an ever increasing body of knowledge about child care architecture and children's environments, and about the impact of both the indoor and outdoor physical environments, and the relationship between the two, on children's behavior. Manitoba's commitment to capital expansion provides an opportunity to create exemplary spaces for children and families.

PROPOSED: ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Ensure current research findings and appropriate resources are available for the Children's Councils on best practice in child care design, to support them in their planning and development role, for example, on the importance of contiguous indoor and outdoor space, information on optimum layout and types of materials for outdoor play spaces, optimal orientation on the building site, etc.
- Regularly review and update as necessary the Child Care Design Guidelines and sample templates for architects and developers
- Provide professional development opportunities for child care staff and directors increase awareness of the impacts of effective space design and enhance design literacy.

FAMILY CHILD CARE

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Licensed family child care has been an important component of the child care landscape in Manitoba for many years. In some small communities the population may not be adequate to make centre-based child care a viable option. Some parents prefer the smaller, home-like setting of family child care, and for siblings to be together in their child care arrangement.

In Manitoba family child care providers are individually licensed and they may care for up to eight children, including their own children younger than 12 years. Manitoba also licenses group family child care homes, in which two providers may care for up to 12 children. Family child care providers are required to complete an approved 40-hour course within the first year of operating.

Over the past 10 years the supply of family child care spaces has been steadily decreasing. Since 2014 the number of family child care spaces decreased by 27.5%, while during the same period centre-based spaces increased by 37.7%.

- In 2004, 16.4% of all licensed spaces were in family child care

- In 2014, 9.4% of all spaces were in family child care

Turnover rates among family child care providers appear to be high. Recent turnover rates among family child care providers are not readily available, but in 2004, 95 new licences were issued and 101 providers ceased providing care and in 2006, 66 new licences were issued and 67 providers ceased providing care (Friendly et al, 2004 and 2006).

Funded family child care homes receive annual operating grants that vary according to the age of children in their care. Table 6 shows the rates as of 2015.

Table 6. Family child care operating grants 2015

Age group	Annual operating grant
Infant	\$1,766
Preschool	\$1,262
School age	\$739

Maximum fees in funded family child care homes are provincially regulated. Providers may charge daily rates of:

- \$22.50 per infant
- \$18.20 per preschooler
- \$10.30 per school age child (for three periods of attendance).

Providers classified as an ECEII or ECEIII may charge the same rates as centres. In 2015 approximately 20% of family child care providers (both funded and unfunded) had either an ECEII or III classification.

An increasing number of family child care providers are choosing not to be funded. Some may choose this option because unfunded providers may set their own fees. The information on rates charged in unfunded homes is not collected, but the Family Child Care Network indicated that the average fee was approximately \$35/day. At that rate, an unfunded provider would receive \$2,000 year more for each preschool child than a funded provider would receive from the regulated fee and the operating grant combined. Unfunded providers are not required to enroll subsidized children, but if they choose to do so, they cannot charge subsidized families more than the regulated fee. In 2014, 27% of providers were not funded. Table 7 shows the number of family child care homes and spaces as of March 2015.

Table 7. Family child care and group family child care homes and spaces 2015

	Family child care		Group family child care	
	Homes	Spaces	Homes	Spaces
Funded	282	1,941	21	237
Unfunded	120	835	7	83
Total	402	2,776	28	320

In recent years MELCC has examined ways to support and enhance family child care.

- MELCC and stakeholders have considered a range of approaches to family child care, including an agency model.
- In 2014, with support from MELCC and Manitoba Jobs and the Economy, Family Dynamics, a Winnipeg community agency, launched the "Family Child Care Project" to recruit and train individuals who were interested in becoming licensed family child care providers. The majority of participants in the program are recent immigrants to Manitoba. Participants receive a 40-

hour introductory course in family child care, workshops in business development, support through the licensing process, and ongoing resource support.

The Commission heard mixed views about how and where family child care fits into Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care system. Some viewed family child care as an important part of the system, especially for rural areas and for parents who needed more flexible child care arrangements. Others felt family child care was important, but needed to be strengthened. Some who were supportive of ELCC being more closely aligned with the school system could not envision how family child care would fit in that arrangement.

While there has been some interest in an agency model, family child care providers that met with the Commission were not supportive of this model, indicating that the control and autonomy of their own businesses were motivating factors in their decision to provide family child care.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Canada there are two main models of regulated family child care: one in which providers are licensed or approved individually and monitored directly by the province or territory, as in Manitoba, and the other in which approved family child care agencies are responsible for recruiting, supporting and monitoring providers' compliance with provincial regulations.

Providers affiliated with agencies are usually considered to be independent contractors; however, there have been numerous challenges to this status. In May 2009 providers in Quebec were granted the right to unionize.

In a few jurisdictions family child care providers have employee status. For example, in Denmark, family child care providers are employees of local municipalities. Most communities have local centres for providers to gather, to reduce isolation, provide opportunities for children to have contact with other children and adults, and provide ongoing training. Providers are entitled to benefits, vacations and sick leave, and the local authority provides a replacement provider during those absences.

With the exception of Quebec, family child care across Canada has seen little growth in recent years. Excluding Quebec, regulated family child care accounted for 20% of all regulated care in 1998; by 2008, the percentage had dropped to 10.7%.

Research literature suggests that opinions regarding family child care vary considerably. Research conducted in 2010 for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council included specific focus on family child care. Key informants noted the following observations:

- There is a lack of clarity as to if and how family child care fits into an "early childhood education" framework; there was a perception that the care is often custodial.
- There is a lack of formal training required; what is offered is not credit bearing.
- The lack of monitoring of individually licensed providers (in some PTs monitoring/licensing visits are annual or less frequent), the lack of peer support and oversight, and providers working in isolation for 10-11 hours per day is not in the best interests of children.
- Family child care providers are isolated from each other as well as the rest of the child care profession. Recruitment and retention is an ongoing issue, with very high provider turnover in some communities; access to benefits (or lack thereof) remains an issue and contributes to high turnover. (Beach & Flanagan, 2010, pp. 19-20.)

Lanigan (2011) reports that parents often prefer family child care for its advantages of "having a single caregiver, the potential for a long-term relationship, the home-like atmosphere and the mixed-age grouping that allows siblings to be cared for together." (p.399) However, she also notes that these advantages (including lower cost, convenience, etc.) are often challenged by concerns regarding inconsistent quality, turnover, varying levels of qualifications, and limited regulations and oversight.

You Bet I Care! (Doherty et al, 2000) examined quality in regulated family child care in seven provinces and territories. The study found that just over one-third of providers in the sample provided stimulating care that would encourage children's development. Recommendations included increased provider preparation and professional development, increased infrastructure supports and income enhancements, and public awareness strategies about the importance of children's early experiences and the value of people who work in child care.

A 2006 study found that intentionality was a key predictor of quality. Researchers found that data "...are unequivocal that intentionality matters; in our study, higher-quality care was predicted by providers who are committed to the occupation and take a professional approach to their work. Pushing or requiring people to provide family child care as part of a work-for-welfare program when they have no interest in working with young children is incompatible with providing care that will enhance children's development." (Doherty et al, 2006, p.310)

Although the work of the Commission is specifically focused on increasing access to licensed child care in both centres and family child care home settings, there is an ongoing concern in all provinces and territories about the quality of care in unregulated family child care, in particular, illegal family child care, where the number of children exceed the maximum allowed without a licence. Provinces and territories have typically addressed illegal child care through complaint driven actions. The 2013 Manitoba report of the Office of Auditor General states that this type of response to illegal child care is not sufficient, and that government needs to be more proactive in identifying and dealing with such programs. While data are not available on the unregulated family child care sector, it can be assumed that a substantial number of children in Manitoba are cared for in both unregulated and illegal family child care arrangements.

MOVING FORWARD ON FAMILY CHILD CARE

Family child care remains an important component of child care delivery, particularly in very small communities where there may not be the population density to support a centre. Ensuring the availability of licensed homes can help reduce the number of children in unlicensed and illegal care arrangements. However, the high rate of provider turnover places an increased administrative and program support burden on officials, as new programs require more guidance and increased levels of support and monitoring. The continual licensing and monitoring of individual providers requires considerable investment of financial and human resources by MELCC, with little or no net gain in supply of licensed homes.

Manitoba regularly sets goals for expansion of spaces; however, they are only considered within the context of centre-based programs.

The Commission proposes no specific systems-wide changes to family child care at a provincial level, but that individual Children's Councils consider family child care within the overall context of the needs of their communities.

PROPOSED: FAMILY CHILD CARE IN A REDESIGNED CHILD CARE SYSTEM

The Commission proposes that each Children’s Council determine the most appropriate mix of centre-based and family child for their communities and determine the most appropriate approach for their region, according to local demand, geography and circumstance. It further proposes that:

- In collaboration with MELCC, Councils have the flexibility to develop additional models of family child care, including family child care agencies, and family child care homes as satellites of child care centres. Children’s Councils may wish to directly operate a family agency. Different operating structures could increase support for providers, through regular peer interaction, mentoring, resource lending and professional development.
- Any new models of family child care reflect Manitoba’s strong commitment to non-profit delivery, as the current model of family child care and an independent business is not entirely consistent with that principle.
- In an effort to reduce turnover, Children’s Councils consider supporting new family child care providers through mentoring by experienced providers and/or child care centre directors during their initial years of operating.
- The needs of family child care providers be taken into account when changes to system-wide funding, access to resources, and requirements for training and ongoing professional development are made.

3.2 AFFORDABILITY

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Manitoba has long committed to affordable child care with regulated maximum fees and unit funding to non-profit child care centres and licensed family child care homes to cover the balance of costs. One of the three principles in Family Choices: Manitoba’s Five Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care is Affordability – is keeping fees low.

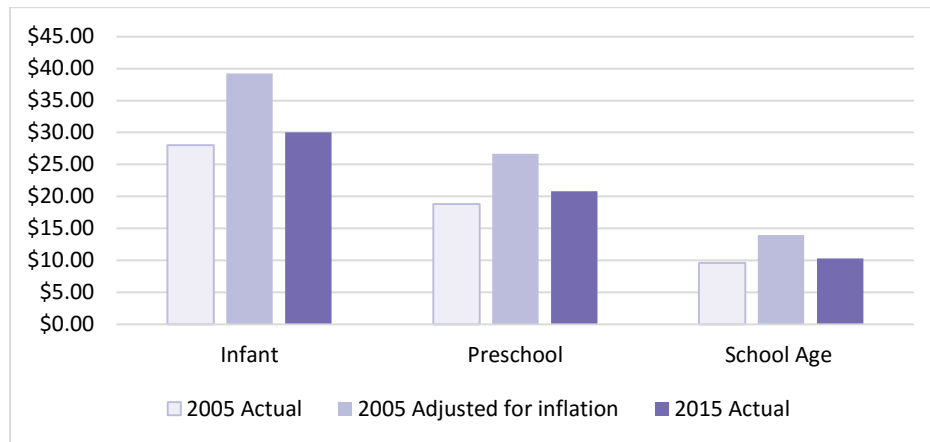
Family Choices commits Manitoba to maintaining the second lowest fees in Canada, after Québec. A successful child care strategy must be affordable.

In many ways, the province of Manitoba has historically taken a somewhat universal approach to ELCC by subsidizing the cost of licensed ELCC for all families by regulating parent fees, and subsidizing the balance of the cost of providing ELCC through operating grants to licensed centres and homes.

Canadian research (Flanagan, Beach, & Varmuza, 2013) has noted that after adjusting for inflation, child care fees increased across Canada between 1998 and 2012 in all jurisdictions except in Manitoba and Quebec.

Figure 10 shows that increases to parent fees over the past 10 years in Manitoba have been well below the rate of inflation. The fees are shown for each age group in 2005, what those fees would be today if they had been adjusted for inflation, and the fees in 2015.

Figure 10. Regulated daily centre fees 2005 and 2015, in actual and adjusted dollars



Key informants and focus group participants consistently mentioned the importance of maintaining a policy of affordable and regulated fees in any system redesign. Many also noted that while the fees are affordable compared to most other provincial and territorial full fees, they are not necessarily affordable for low and modest income families.

For the most part, provincial and territorial governments provide child care fee subsidies to families that meet both financial and social eligibility criteria that still follow the rules of the now defunct Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), and as such were designed as welfare assistance or welfare services for families.

In many jurisdictions, the income levels for subsidy eligibility are not regularly adjusted for inflation, and in Manitoba eligibility for full subsidy remains below the poverty line. The current subsidy program is administratively complex, with onerous requirements for parents. Manitoba is the only province that still retains an unfunded portion of subsidy⁹, and low income parents may find themselves eligible and ineligible for subsidy as their work situation or schooling changes throughout the year.

In addition, the current subsidy structure:

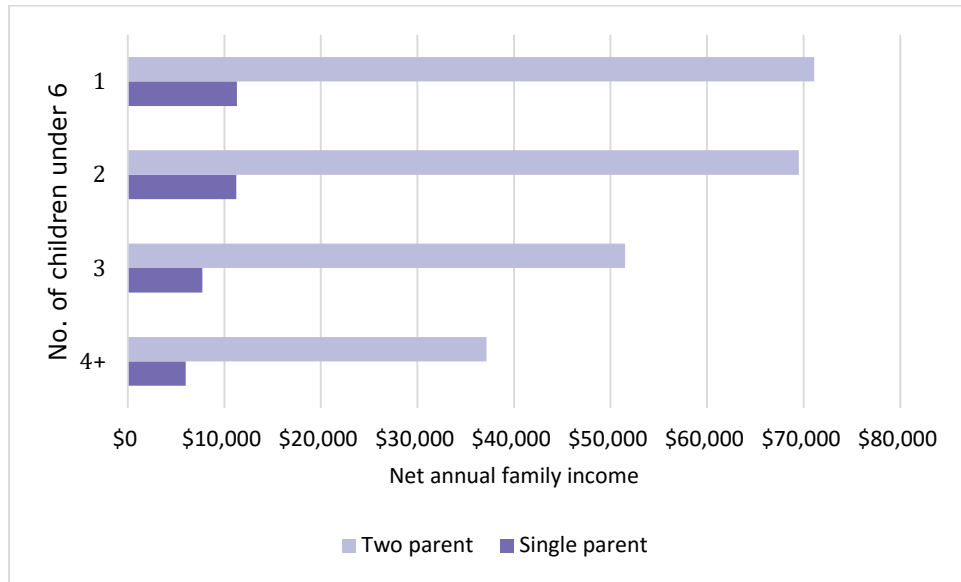
- May provide a disincentive to work (restrictive income tests mean that many parents are financially better off on social assistance than to be employed and incur high child care costs)
- Does not allow children to maintain and develop relationships and friendships when access to subsidy changes on a regular basis (since children must give up their space when subsidy ends, and often when subsidy is reinstated the space is not available, and so they must start over again in a different centre). It is common for low-income parents to have irregular hours of work or pay, or other unstable work or home situations. (Adams et al, 2002; Washington Department of Early Learning, 2008).

Using data provided by the Department of Finance, Figure 11 shows the 2014 median net income of single and two-parent families in Manitoba with children under the age of six, who received the Universal Child Care Benefit. As the figure shows, the median income of single parent families is extremely low. Even at these income levels, families receiving a child care fee subsidy would be

⁹ It should be noted that in many other provinces, the difference between maximum subsidy available and the average fees at licensed centres means that parents, in effect, are charged a difference. In PEI, maximum fees for subsidy are matched to regulated fees for parents. In Quebec, fees are linked to income levels through the income tax system.

required to pay \$2/day/child. This means that a single parent family with 2 children in full time child care would have to pay \$1,040/year of a median net income of \$11,252.

Figure 11. Median net family income in Manitoba for single and two parent families with children under 6 years



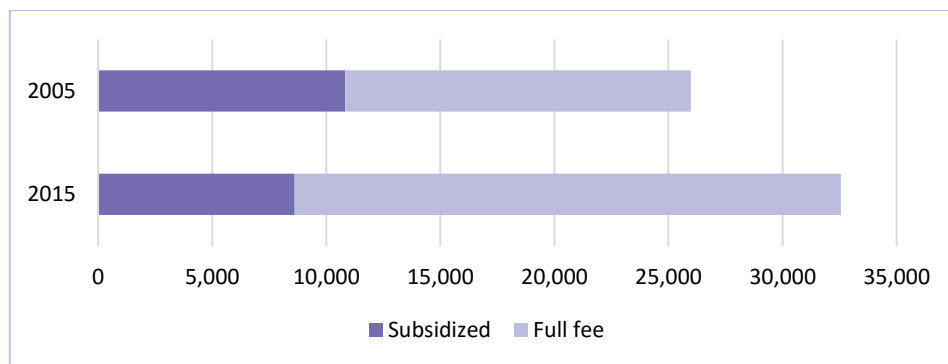
According to the data provided:

- 76% of parents with children under six years are in two parent families, and 24% are in single parent families
- Of all families with children under six years, 59% of two parent families and 67% of single parent families have one child under six. 32% of two parent families and 24.5% of single parent families have two children under six years.

The household composition and income data will be important considerations in planning for a more universal approach to service delivery, with both equitable and affordable fees.

The relatively high cost of the unfunded fee for low income families in Manitoba may be part of the reason for the steady decrease in the number of subsidized children. Figure 12 shows that while there has been a substantial growth in licensed child care in Manitoba over the last 10 years, the number of subsidized children has declined. In 2015, 26% of all children in child care were receiving subsidy, compared to 42% in 2005.

Figure 12. Number of subsidized and full fee children 2005 and 2015



CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

While there is no agreement on what constitutes affordability, some jurisdictions consider it as a percentage of family income.

- In Sweden, parents pay 3 percent of their income for their first child, to a maximum fee of \$195/month, 2 percent of their income for a second child, to a maximum fee of \$130 and 1 percent of their income for a third child, to a maximum of \$65. There is no charge for a fourth or any additional children. The maximum a family with three children would pay is 6% of their income to a maximum of \$390/month. (Korpi 2007)
- A recent commission on child care reform in Scotland recommended that:
The net cost to parents should be on a sliding scale that takes account of income to ensure affordability for all families. In the long term, no family should spend more than 10% of their net household income on the costs of their 50 hours of childcare entitlement. Depending on their circumstances, some families may need support to reduce costs below 10% of their net household income. (The Commission for Childcare Reform June 2015, p.71)
- The United States Department of Health and Human Services considers 10 percent of a family's income on childcare to be the benchmark of what is affordable. (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2013)

Two provinces have taken an approach to affordability that differs from the typical CAP-based subsidy system, and is described below.

Quebec is the only jurisdiction in Canada that no longer uses any form of fee subsidy to assist with affordability. Since the implementation of its child care reform over a four-year period beginning in 1997, Quebec replaced its full fees and fee subsidies with a flat rate for all families regardless of family income, parental employment status, or the child's age. The government sets maximum fees for all children in centres de la petite enfance (CPEs), family child care, school-age care and funded garderies (reduced contribution centres). The fee was initially set at \$5/day/child, rose to \$7/day/child in 2003, and recently to \$7.30. By January 2016, this will increase to \$7.55. In 2014, 46% of all children 0-66 months attended a reduced contribution child care program. (Fortin 2015b)

In addition to reduced contribution spaces, there are also full fee commercial centres that are indirectly subsidized through a refundable tax credit that can be claimed by parents. In 2014 10% of all children 0-66 months attended full fee centres. In 2009 the tax credit was enhanced, so that the net cost to parents would be comparable to the cost in a reduced contribution space. However, as fees in unfunded centres were left to market forces, they rose over the years, so parents were paying more than in reduced contribution centres.

Effective April 2015, Quebec implemented a number of changes to its fee structure:

- All parents in reduced contribution spaces continue to pay the base rate of \$7.30/child, which is paid directly to the child care facility.
- An additional graduated fee, based on family income, was introduced. This rate, which is payable when parents file their income tax returns, is in addition to the rate of \$7.30.
 - Parents with a combined income up to \$50,000 pay no additional fee.
 - Parents with a combined income of between \$50,000 and \$75,000 pay \$8/day/child, or an additional \$.70.
- On family incomes of \$75,000 or higher, the fee is calculated on a sliding scale to a maximum of \$20/day/child (an additional \$12.70), reached at an income of \$155,000.
- The additional fee is applied to the first and second child in the family; the fee for a third child remains at \$7.30/day.
- Both the base and additional fees are to be indexed for inflation.

- Fees for school age child care are no longer linked to child care fees, and have now been set at \$8/day.

A limitation of the Quebec system is that fees may be affordable for middle income families, but not necessarily for low income families. For example, a single parent with two children and an annual net income of \$20,000 is paying \$3,796/year in child care fees, or 19% of her income.

The added complexity for many families of having two methods of payment for child care has yet to be assessed, as this is the first year of implementation.

Research has shown that CPEs have the best performance of all forms of care and show positive cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes for children, particularly those from low income families (Guay et al, 2015). Satisfaction among parents using CPEs is very high, and there is evidence that parents using other non-profit or for-profit centres are only using them until a space becomes available in a CPE. There are higher rates of complaints and investigations in the for-profit centres, staff have lower qualifications and staff turnover is higher. So, even though Quebec has undertaken measures to ensure that the net cost to parents is similar across all program types, parents do not have equitable access to quality provision, when they are unable to access a space in a publicly managed, non-profit CPE.

Ontario retains a subsidy system, but significant changes were made in 2006. Fees are assessed on a sliding scale according to income.

- Families pay nothing on the first \$20,000 of income, 10% of income between \$20,000-\$40,000, and 30% of any income above \$40,000 up to the actual cost of care.
- Fees are assessed once a year, based on net income from line 236 of the previous year's income tax return, less any UCCB payment.
- The assessed fee is the same regardless of the number of children in the family in child care. An example:
 - Family A has two children and is assessed at \$15/day. The full fee for both children is \$100/day; the family pays a total of \$15/day.
 - Family B has one child and is assessed at \$60/day. The full fee for the child is \$40/day; the family pays \$40. When they have a second child, their fees rise to \$100/day; they would then pay the \$60 assessed fee.
- Parents can request a reassessment if their income drops by 25% or more in the current year, and are required to be reassessed if their income increases by more than 20%.
- Municipalities have a variety of ways in which parents pay the fees. For example, in Toronto, when a family is using a community-based child care centre and there is more than one child in the family, the fee is paid to the centre where the youngest child is enrolled; in municipally operated centres, fees are collected centrally. The Region of Waterloo bills and collects fees for both subsidized and full fee children in all the school age programs, on behalf of the school boards, who are responsible for school age child care.
- Municipalities have some discretion on the social criteria for eligibility, such as for how long a parent can be seeking employment, or how long an older child can receive a subsidy when a parent is home on parental leave with an infant.

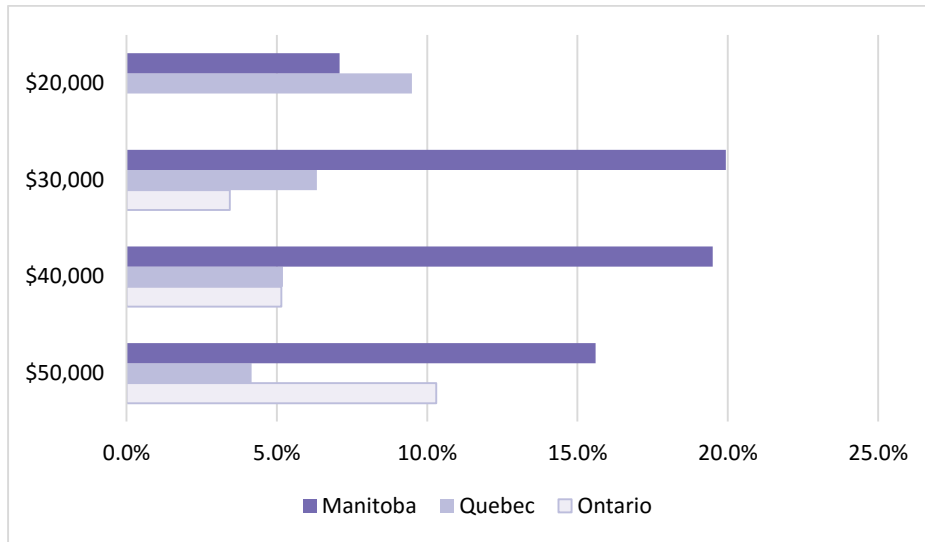
A limitation of the Ontario system is that there are often waiting lists for fee subsidies, even if parents are eligible and can find child care. As there is no regulated maximum fee, families on a waiting list for subsidy may have to "choose" a cheaper, unregulated option, where there is no oversight and the quality may be less than optimal.

How does affordability in Manitoba compare?

In comparing Manitoba to the two provinces that do not use a CAP-based subsidy system, modest and middle income parents in both Ontario and Quebec are paying less in child care fees than in Manitoba.

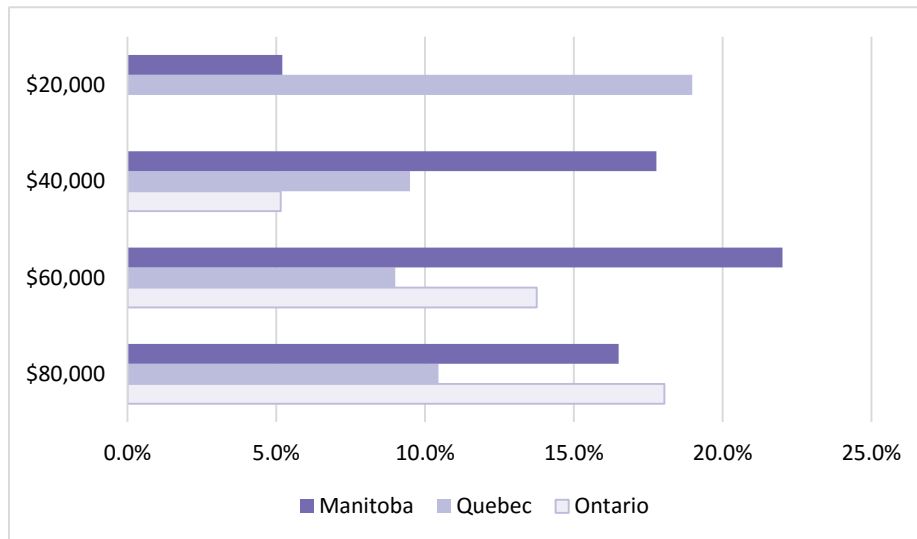
Families with an annual net income of \$20,000 or less pay more for child care in Quebec than in either Manitoba or Ontario. Families in Manitoba with annual incomes below \$80,000 pay considerably more for child care than subsidized parents in Ontario. The charts below show the percentage of income paid for child care for single parents with one child and a two parent family with two children. The highest proportion of income is paid by middle income families in Manitoba; a two parent family with two children pays 22% of their net income on child care, compared to 13.8% in Ontario and 9% in Quebec. Figures 13 and 14 show the fees as a portion of income in Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec for different family sizes.

Figure 13. Child care fees as a percentage of annual net income in Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec: single parent, one infant, 2015



Note: The Ontario figures represent child care fees as a percentage of income for those families who have access to a fee subsidy.

Figure 14. Child care fees as a percentage of annual net family income in Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec: two parents, one infant, one preschooler, 2015



MOVING FORWARD ON AFFORDABILITY

Options to improve affordability of ELCC for families in Manitoba involve both fee structures for all parents, and access to financial help for those who are not able to afford the fees.

A universal approach to ELCC has implications that extend beyond questions about regulated or non-regulated fees, and eligibility for subsidy. A universal approach to supporting young children to have access to high quality early learning opportunities, and to supporting all parents in balancing their work/study/family responsibilities starts with the premise that “a child is a child is a child”. It is difficult to reconcile this type of public policy philosophy with an approach that makes participation in ELCC more expensive for children who are not yet two years of age, albeit recognizing that there are higher costs to a licensed program in staffing for younger children.

In order to move towards a universal approach to provision of child care, it will be important to recognize the benefits to all children and families flowing from access to and participation in high quality early learning environments, regardless of the employment status or income status of parents.

The Commission proposes replacing the current CAP-based subsidy system with a sliding scale based on parents’ net income as indicated on their tax assessments. The specifics of a sliding scale will depend on budget commitments and government spending decisions, but an example is provided that keeps fees for families at the median household income at approximately 10% of net family income, and less for families with incomes below the median. Families would pay the lower of their assessed fee or the maximum regulated fee.

The following example child care fee assessment is based on:

- No fee below \$20,000/year
- 10% of income above \$20,000 and below \$45,000
- 20% of income above \$45,000 and below \$70,000
- 30% of income above \$70,000.

Using the sliding scale above, child care fees would be as follows:

Family A has a net income of \$40,000 and one child. Their assessed fee would be calculated as follows:

- 0% on the first \$20,000 of income
- 10% of income between \$20,000 and \$40,000 = \$2,000

The total assessed child care fee is \$2,000/year or \$7.69/day. Since the family’s assessed fee is lower than the regulated maximum of \$25.00, the family would pay \$7.69/day.

Family B has a net income of \$70,000 and one child. Their fee would be calculated as follows:

- 0% on the first \$20,000 of income
- 10% of income between \$20,000 and \$45,000 = \$2,500
- 20% of income between \$45,000 and \$70,000 = \$5,000

The total assessed child care fee is \$7,500, or \$28.84/day. Since the maximum regulated fee is \$25/day is lower than the assessed fee, the family would pay \$25/day.

Family C has a net income of \$80,000 and two children. Their fee would be calculated as follows:

- 0% on the first \$20,000 of income
- 10% of income between \$20,000 and \$45,000 = \$2,500
- 20% of income between \$45,000 and \$70,000 = \$5,000
- 30% of income between \$70,000 and \$80,000 = \$3,000

The total assessed child care fee is \$10,500, or \$40.38/day. Since the family’s assessed fee is lower than the regulated maximum of \$50.00 for two children, the family would pay \$40.38/day.

Table 8 shows the fees parents would pay under the current subsidy system and the sample sliding scale.

Table 8. Fee comparison: Fees by household income under current system and sample sliding scale

Net annual family income	One infant (single parent) ¹⁰		1 infant, 1 preschooler (two parents)	
	What family pays today	What family would pay under revised approach	What family pays today	What family would pay under revised approach
20,000	\$5.45	\$0	\$4.00	\$0
\$45,000	\$30.00	\$9.61	\$37.00	\$9.61
\$70,000	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$50.80	\$28.84
\$100,000	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$50.80	\$50.00

Note: All calculations are based on 260 days/year.

Figure 15 shows fees for one infant as a percentage of household income under the current subsidy system and the sample sliding scale.

Figure 15. Child care fees for one infant as a percentage of household income

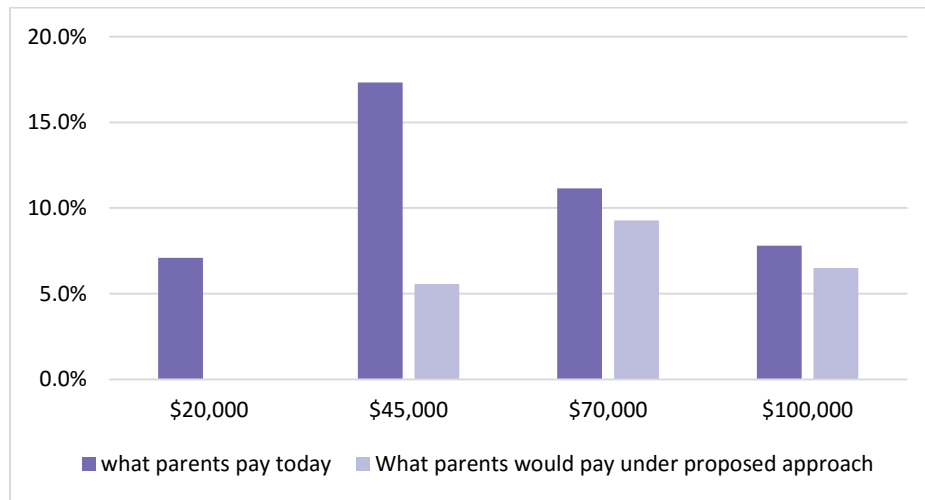
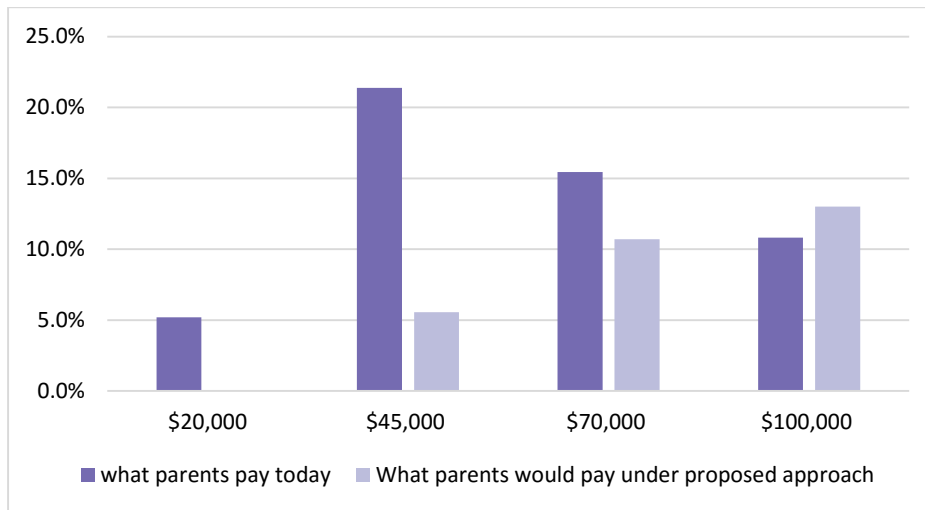


Figure 16 shows fees for two preschoolers as a percentage of household income under the current subsidy system and the sample sliding scale.

¹⁰ Under the proposed approach, fees do not vary by family composition, so single or dual parent status would have no bearing on the assessed fee.

Figure 16. Child care fees for two preschool children as a percentage of household income



What will these changes to fee structures cost?

The costs of implementing a sliding scale will depend on a number of factors, particularly the number of child care spaces at the time of implementation, future expansion, and the incomes of families using licensed child care.

The cost of eliminating the \$2 unfunded fee, for the current number of subsidized children would be:

- 8,614 subsidized children @ \$2/day x 260 days = \$4.5 million

There are considerably more preschool licensed spaces than infant licensed spaces. Moving to one maximum regulated fee for all would reduce costs for infants, and increase costs for preschoolers. The result would likely result an increase in revenue from parent fees, depending on the sliding scale developed.

No data are readily available on the incomes of families currently using licensed child care who do not receive a provincial fee subsidy, so it is not possible to determine the cost of the proposed sliding scale. Different scenarios will need to be tested based on assumptions of incomes of parents using and likely to use child care, as well as the percentages of income parents would be required to pay to a maximum of the revised fees.

PROPOSED: CHANGES TO THE FEE STRUCTURE

In order to have the lowest parent fees outside Quebec, ensure equity of fees across income groups, streamline the approach to assessing parent fees, and improve consistency in arrangements for children, the Commission proposes a revised fee structure and method of assessing parent fees that is based on a sliding scale according to income up to the revised maximum fee.

It proposes that the following steps be taken.

- Eliminate the unfunded \$2/day/child fee.
- Introduce a maximum regulated fee of \$25/day for all children 0-5 years in non-profit and publicly operated centres, and in family child care homes where the licensee holds an ECEII or ECEIII classification. Pro-rate, as appropriate, fees for part time care, school age care, nursery schools and family child care in homes where the licensee does not have an ECE qualification.
- Replace the current system of subsidy by a sliding fee scale applied to all families, to a maximum regulated fee.
- Assess the feasibility of establishing the sliding scale so that families with net annual incomes at the median income for two-parent families with children under six pay no more than 10% of their income for child care, and that families with incomes below the median pay less than 10% of their income. Under the proposed sliding scale, parents would pay the lower of the assessed fee or the regulated maximum fee, regardless of the number of children in the family. Pro-rate, as appropriate, the percentage of income paid for part time care and in school age programs and nursery schools.
- Base assessments for parent fees on the total of the parents' net income from line 236 in the previous year's income tax returns, less any UCCB payment.
- Reassess parent fees on an annual basis, unless there is a significant increase or decrease in family income during the current year.
- Review and revise the policies on eligibility for a child care space for families of all incomes, taking into account that families in low income jobs may not have predictable hours of work and may be frequently in and out of work. The best interest of children must be considered in these policies.
- Continue to manage fee assessments centrally, to ensure comprehensive data collection and accountability.
- Over time, as organizational and technical capacity allows, transition billing and fee collection from individual centres and homes to a centralized system that is managed by the regional Children's Councils.
- Index fees to the cost of living.
- Phase out the policy of allowing worksite child care centres to charge more than the maximum regulated fee (additional fees range from \$1.70 to \$7.20/day among the few centres that charge beyond the maximum regulated fee).
- Should MELCC continue to support families paying less than the centre rate in commercial centres, develop policies that commercial centres be required to charge parents no more than the assessed family fee up to the maximum charged by the individual centre.

Key tasks for achieving the proposed changes to the fee structure are outlined in three phases.

MOVING FORWARD ON AFFORDABILITY PHASE 1

- Eliminate the \$2/day unfunded fee
- MELCC and Finance develop a sliding fee scale according to government parameters
- Prepare the operational systems and policies for assessing fees based on tax returns, and reassessments for families with income changes throughout the year; train staff
- Communicate changes to child care programs and parents
- Develop policies for fee collection for families with children at different child care facilities
- Centres and family child care homes remain responsible for fee collection
- MELCC and school boards develop protocols for school boards to assume responsibility for fee collection in any school age programs they operate.

MOVING FORWARD ON AFFORDABILITY PHASE 2

- Implement new fee assessment processes for all families
- Develop policies for regional Children's Councils to assume responsibility for invoicing and collecting parent fees within their region
- Collect and analyze data on child care use by family size and income for long-term impact study.

MOVING FORWARD ON AFFORDABILITY PHASE 3

- Transition the management of parent billing and fee collection to Children's Councils for children 0-5 and for any school age child care that may be operated by non-profit agencies
- Assess the new system in relation to affordability for parents, consistency for children, impacts on child care facilities, and effectiveness and efficiency within government.

3.3 SUSTAINABILITY

A sustainable ELCC system relies on predictable human and financial resources that are increased incrementally. Programs must be adequately resourced to reflect good practice, and to provide high quality early learning opportunities for children. Data must be collected and analyzed to inform planning, and research and evaluation provide evidence to guide further policy and program developments. Real systems change requires a significant increase in resources; it cannot occur with small amounts of "grant" funding given to existing programs.

Without significant investment there is a shortage of good quality programmes, unequal access, segregation of children according to income, less participation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds or the quality of service is inadequate and women experience barriers to accessing work. (OECD, 2006, p.102)

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Manitoba provides operating funding to non-profit child care centres and to family child care homes. Since 1999, operating grants to funded programs have been based on a "unit" model, which takes into account the regulated parent fee and the differential in staffing composition for regulated age groups, providing programs with funding equity across age groups. Each "unit" is made up of the fee subsidy, the parent fee and the operating grant multiplied by the number of children in the unit, based on legislated child to staff ratios. As of 2015, the unit amount is \$289/day. The unit funding translates into annual operating grants for non-profit child care centres of:

- \$10,985 per infant space
- \$3,983 per preschool space

- \$1,557 school age space
- \$504 for nursery schools operating 6-10 sessions/week (additional funding equivalent to the preschool grants is available for enhanced nursery schools).

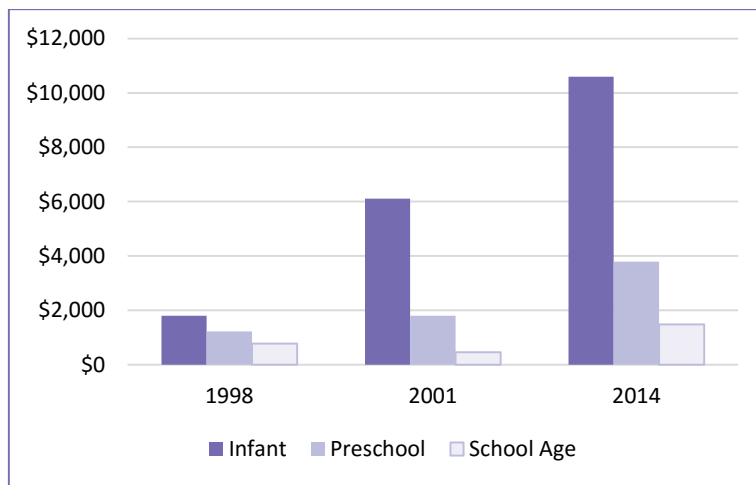
Annual operating grants for family child care are:

- \$1,766 per infant space
- \$1,262 per preschool space
- \$739 per school age space.

There has been a significant increase in funding support to non-profit centres and to family child care homes since the implementation of the unit funding model.

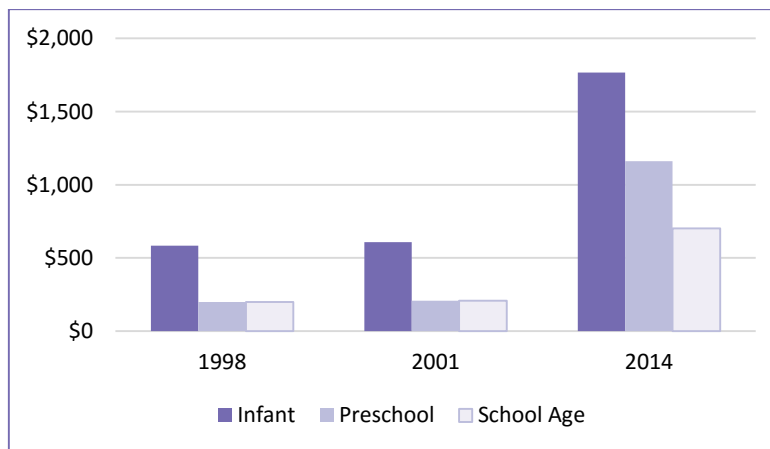
Figure 17 shows the per space grants in funded child care centres by age group in 1998, before the unit funding was implemented, in 2001, after the model was implemented, and the amount as of 2014.

Figure 17. Per space annual operating grant by age group in funded centres 1998, 2001, 2014



As Figure 18 shows, over the same time period there has also been a substantial increase in operating grants for family child care providers.

Figure 18. Per Space Annual Operating Grant by Age Group in Funded Family Child Care Homes, 1998, 2001, 2014



Combining the annual operating grants and the parent fee provides the basic cost of a space, helpful for projecting costs of expanding spaces, and for modelling different proportions of parent fees and

public funding and the impact of increasing the unit amount. The basic cost of infant and preschool spaces in funded programs at current funding levels and fee rates are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Estimated basic daily cost per infant and preschool space in funded centres and homes

Age group	Non-profit centre	Family child care; provider is an ECEII or III	Family child care; provider is a CCA
Infant	\$72.25	\$36.79	\$28.79
Preschool	\$36.12	\$25.65	\$23.05

Note: The costs of school age and nursery school spaces vary by the periods of attendance and months of operation, and are therefore not included.

Other funds are available for eligible centres or individuals on an application basis. These funds are not disbursed to all centres, so an average per space cost cannot easily be applied. The funds and grants include:

- Inclusion support
- Training grants for CCAs and ECEIIs
- Recruitment incentive grants for qualified ECEIIs and ECEIIIs to return to the field, under applicable conditions
- Staff replacement grants for the cost of substitutes for CCAs attending a workplace training program
- A wage adjustment fund to ensure a minimum starting wage for ECEs of \$15.50/ hour and for CCAs in training of \$12.25/hour
- A wage enhancement grant for long term ECEs.

In 2014 operating grants represented:

- 58% of a centre's revenue for infant spaces
- 41% of a centre's revenue for preschool spaces
- 30% of a centre's revenue for school age spaces.

The balance of revenue came from parent fees and fee subsidies on behalf of eligible parents.

In addition to the annual operating grants to funded centres and homes, and selected grants and funds to eligible programs, MELCC provides support for the employer contribution to pension plans, up to 4% of employee salary and matching RRSP contributions for family child care providers up to a maximum of \$1,700/year. In 2014, MELCC spent a total of \$4.96 million on pensions, RRSP contributions and retirement supports for long term staff.

Total spending on early learning and child care 2014

Total operating expenditures on child care will be important to consider for future modelling work necessary to determine the proportionate costs to be paid by government and by parents, based on the level of operating support, various levels of sliding fee scales and proportion of costs to be paid by parents. Table 10 shows the estimated total expenditures by government and parents in 2014.

Table 10. Expenditure on regulated child care in Manitoba 2014

Source	Amount
Operating grants	\$94,372,000
Inclusion funding	\$15,402,000
Fee subsidy	\$29,594,000
Pension support	\$4,962,000
Total government funding	\$144,330,000
Parent fees	\$104,622,306 ¹¹
Total expenditure	\$248,952,306

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Two other provinces – Quebec and PEI – have undergone a fundamental system redesign. While the circumstances were different in each province, they both invested significant additional resources and moved to public management of their systems.

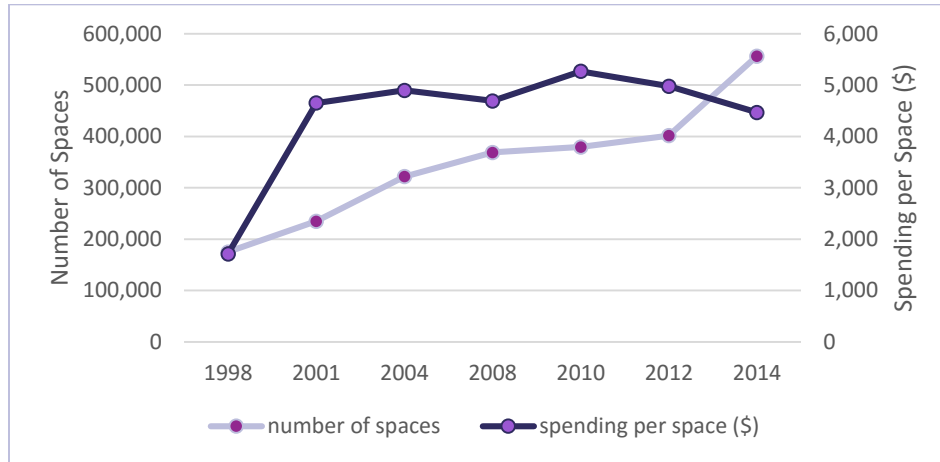
Quebec implemented the changes to its system over a four-year period beginning in 1998, and has significantly increased the number of spaces in each year since. The spending per space increased significantly during the implementation period, and has generally followed the subsequent growth in spaces, with the exception of the last two years, where more unfunded spaces have opened (but for which parents are reimbursed through the tax system on a quarterly basis).

As Figure 19 shows, prior to systems change, the allocation per space was \$1,713, and by 2010 had reached \$5,260. With the addition of unfunded commercial centres, the overall average amount per space had decreased to \$4,466 by 2014¹².

¹¹ Parent fees were calculated based on fees by the number of children in each group and care type, plus the \$2/day unfunded fee paid by subsidized parents. Family child care fees were estimated at the preschool rate as specific numbers of children by age group is not readily available. Parent fees for full fee parents in commercial centres were not included as information about the rates is not available. The costs do not include any optional allowable additional fees that centres may charge parents for care of more than 10 hours/day, for meals or snacks, field trips or other miscellaneous charges.

¹² The spending per space only reflects the supply side funding – that is funding to reduced contribution centres and family child care coordinating agencies. It does not take into account the increased spending on refundable tax credits to parents using unfunded commercial centres.

Figure 19. Number of spaces and annual spending per space in Quebec before and after system change



Source of data: Friendly et al 2015

The overall allocation for child care increased from \$299.9 million in 1998 to \$2.59 billion in 2014.

Quebec has a complex variety of formula-based grants to support the operation of funded (reduced-contribution) centres. Program funding includes:

A basic allowance for:

- Occupancy costs: a flat amount for the first 30 annualized spaces and an amount for each additional space
- Overhead for administrative and related costs, based on the number of spaces
- A per child “child care and education” amount, based on the age of the child
- A “performance” deduction if annual average enrolment falls below 85%.

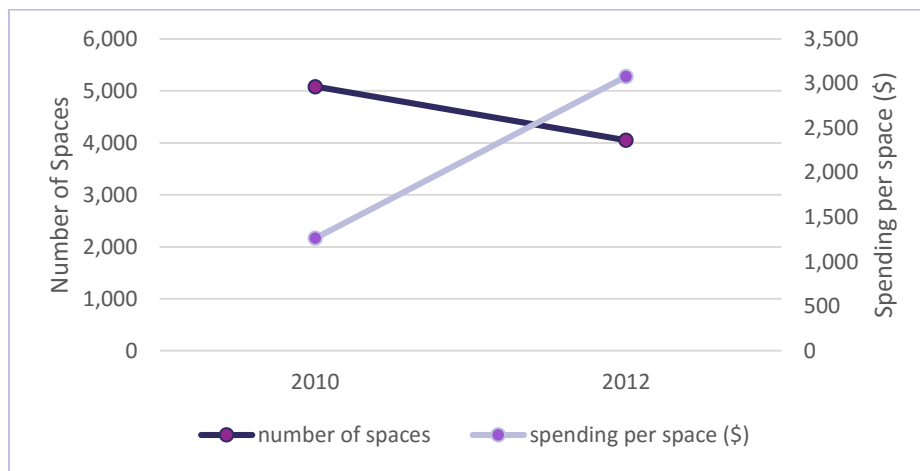
Supplementary allowances for:

- Facilities in disadvantaged areas
- Facilities to compensate for the parental contribution exemption for those on income security who are entitled to child care at no cost for the equivalent of 2.5 days/week
- The inclusion of children with extra support needs
- The inclusion of school age children where child care is not available in their local school
- Group insurance, maternity leaves and pension plans
- Special projects as approved by the ministry.

PEI’s system redesign took place over a very short period of time, and included the development of publicly managed, community-based Early Years Centres (EYCs), for which operators had to apply and meet criteria beyond the regulatory requirements, as well as agree to provide infant spaces, establish parent advisory committees, and provide inclusive programs for any children requiring additional supports. Changes included a provincial wage scale, maximum parent fees, enhanced training requirements, mandatory implementation of the provincial early learning framework, and a funding formula that allowed EYCs to meet the requirements. Unlike other jurisdictions, PEI had a surplus of child care spaces, in part due to moving kindergarten programs into the school system, so actually reduced the number of spaces by enabling operators who did not wish to become EYCs to retire their licences. As a result, expansion planning was not part of system redesign in PEI.

As shown in Figure 20, between 2010 and 2012, in PEI the spending per space increased from \$1,265 to \$3,078.

Figure 20. Number of spaces and annual spending per space in PEI before and after system change



Source of data: Friendly et al 2015

The overall allocation for child care rose from \$6.43 million to \$12.47million in the same time period.

Prince Edward Island has a very streamlined approach to program funding for its funded Early Years Centres, as follows:

- A provincial wage scale sets out what centres must pay staff based on each staff member’s qualifications and experience, even if they exceed the minimum regulatory requirements for the number of trained staff.
- Based on the centre’s staffing and benefits cost, an operating amount is calculated, with 78% being allocated for staffing costs and 22% for all other costs, including occupancy, program costs and staff pd. This provides an incentive to hire more than the minimum required number of trained staff.
- The total revenue (from parents’ regulated fees) is deducted from the calculated centre operating budget, and the balance is paid as an operating grant. Grants are paid on a quarterly basis, following analysis of submitted financial statements.
- Centres receive additional funds for inclusion support.

MOVING FORWARD ON SUSTAINABILITY

The unit funding model provides an equitable approach to funding across age groups, but limitations with the current formula need to be addressed in order to ensure program sustainability and equity for staff.

PROPOSED: AMEND THE UNIT FUNDING MODEL

- **Include a province-wide wage scale in the unit formula.** Unlike PEI and Quebec, the other two jurisdictions with regulated parent fees, Manitoba does not have a regulated wage scale. Since the introduction of the unit funding model, MCCA has developed salary guidelines based on classification, position and experience, and in 2007, established a Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale that is updated annually. While these guidelines are taken into account in determining the amounts of operating grants, the wages are established by individual parent boards.
- **Allow for flexibility in allocations for occupancy.** The unit funding model does not take into account the variation in occupancy costs that centres incur. Centres located in schools may have considerably lower occupancy costs than centres that are in commercial space, paying market rent. Even among school divisions, there is wide variation in lease agreements and amounts that centres pay. Centres in free or low cost space are more likely to have more funds to allocate to wages than those in high rent facilities.
- **Reflect the training levels of all staff in the funding formula.** The unit funding model is based on the required number of trained staff for each age group served. As a result, there is no funding recognition for centres that have a higher complement of trained to untrained staff than the minimum requirement.
- **Fund all eligible non-profit centres.** Not all eligible non-profit centres or spaces are funded. Some centres choose not to be funded; however, some funded centres expand the number of spaces they operate, without funding for those additional spaces. These spaces receive operating funds as they become available, but in the interim operators have to manage their budgets with limited funds, creating further challenges to paying equitable wages, and new centres sometimes open without funding for any of the spaces.
- **Where feasible, streamline additional grants and roll into unit funding.** Over the years, MELCC has added several grants to address a number of issues. While it may not be feasible to eliminate all of the additional grants, a number may no longer be necessary with the implementation of a wage scale (for example, the wage adjustment grants and the wage enhancement grant for long term ECEs). Over time, inclusion funding, funding for staff replacement costs for staff participating in workplace training could be managed by the Children's Council and be tied to the planning process.

Key tasks for achieving the proposed changes to the funding model are outlined in three phases.

MOVING FORWARD ON SUSTAINABILITY: PHASE 1

- Revise the unit funding model to reflect a provincial wage scale, as proposed in Section 4
- Revise the unit funding formula to enable operators to pay all staff at the appropriate level in the wage scale, according to their classification and not just the minimum number of trained staff required. Explore equitable ways for operating funding to reflect occupancy costs
- Work with the Manitoba School Board Association to determine the feasibility of consistent lease arrangements for community-based operators providing child care in schools, and that reflect the benefits to the school of the co-location of child care centres
- Develop policies on lease agreements for child care located in public facilities other than schools, including social housing, post-secondary institutions, government offices and other provincially-owned space

- Place a moratorium on allowing any additional worksite child care centres to charge above the regulated fee. Phase out the ability for worksite child care centres to charge additional fees at such time as unit funding enables centres to pay wages in accordance with the provincial wage scale.

MOVING FORWARD ON SUSTAINABILITY: PHASE 2

- Develop and adopt new funding model that takes into account the restructured approach to parent fees
- In collaboration with school divisions and other partners, assess the impact of any variations in funding between any board-operated and any community-based school age programs to ensure equity for staff and parents
- Establish protocols for integrating data systems on parent fees and operating funding
- Move responsibility for HCM grants and operating funds for work of previous parent child coalitions to the Children's Councils, to be used within the scope of provincial guidelines.

MOVING FORWARD ON SUSTAINABILITY: PHASE 3

- Assess effectiveness of new unit funding model
- As availability of child care increases, assess the feasibility of phasing out guaranteed fee payments to grandfathered commercial centres on behalf of subsidized families.

4 QUALITY

It is widely accepted that the level of quality in an early childhood program is the key element that determines whether a child's experience in that program will have a positive or negative influence on long term human development. Defining "quality" however, is a different matter. A definition of quality depends on who is making that definition – and there are different interests and views of all who are involved in using, developing and managing programs, including parents, children, ECEs, and policy makers. Understanding quality – and how it is to be measured – depends on our understanding and beliefs about what childhood means, and our values as to what is important for children to develop. Perceptions of quality – and therefore approaches to measuring quality – are dependent on the view of the child, and of childhood itself:

An understanding of child development which views the child as an active participant in learning means that the child's program would be developed to build on the child's strengths and interests, and the role of the adult is one of facilitator. On the other hand, an understanding and belief that the child is a person who must be filled with knowledge would be interpreted in an early learning and child care program to mean that the adult must determine what it is that the child will learn – and will focus on meeting specific learning objectives. Each interpretation of childhood has an impact on how quality would be measured. (Flanagan, 2010, p.46)

4.1 PEDAGOGY

EARLY RETURNS - Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Preschool Centres and Nursery Schools notes that "the child-centred approach to curriculum is focused on meeting the needs of each child, and built around the idea that children create their own knowledge and learn through active involvement in play". The Framework proposes that children:

- are competent, curious, motivated learners
- are active and social learners
- bring previous knowledge and experiences
- begin to make sense of their world from the moment they are born
- come to your program influenced by family, gender, culture and previous experiences
- have a variety of learning styles and ways of understanding and constructing knowledge.

The Framework also emphasizes the importance of:

- Diversity: "the range of similarities and differences among children, staff and families in your program and community. It includes race, culture, abilities, gender and age." (p.9)
- Inclusion: "more than the presence of a child with additional support needs. Genuine inclusion ensures active and meaningful participation by every child in the daily program and with one another. How this occurs will be different for each child based on his or her individual abilities and needs. All children should be valued, have friends and feel that they belong." (p.10)

In 2003, federal, provincial, and territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services agreed on a set of principles for effective approaches to practice in the Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Child Care including:

Inclusive: Early learning and child care should be inclusive of, and responsive to, the needs of children with differing abilities; Aboriginal (i.e. Indian, Inuit and Métis) children; and children in various cultural and linguistic circumstances. Examples of initiatives that support inclusiveness could include special needs programming and supports, and culturally and linguistically appropriate resources and training.

More recently, the Government of Manitoba has adopted a definition of inclusion: *Inclusion means children of all abilities have equal access to and participate meaningfully in child care programs. When children are together as part of the group, their development is enhanced and positive social attitudes are fostered.* (Government of Manitoba, 2009, p.3)

Manitoba's *Writing an Inclusion Policy: A Guide for Child Care Centres and Homes (2009)* explains that:

In a high quality, inclusive program the centre staff or family child care provider is responsive to the individual abilities and needs of each child. Opportunities are provided for all children to learn through play with their peers, supported by knowledgeable staff or provider. All children need support to reduce or eliminate barriers so they can learn and fully engage in experiences with their peers. Adaptations and strategies are specific to each child.... Occasionally, additional staff are required as part of a strategy to include every child. Genuine inclusion is more than just a child's presence. It ensures active, meaningful participation by every child in the daily program and with one another. How this occurs will be different for each child, based on individual abilities and needs. All children should be valued, have friends and feel they belong.

(Government of Manitoba, 2009, p.3)

MOVING FORWARD ON PEDAGOGY

PROPOSED: PEDAGOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR ABORIGINAL CULTURE

Recognizing that Aboriginal children comprise a significant proportion of Manitoba's population, and recognizing the importance of ensuring that diversity and inclusion are honoured in all ELCC programs, the Commission proposes that:

- 1) Pedagogical guidelines be established to ensure that Aboriginal culture is reflected in all ELCC centres
- 2) Curriculum and other resources be identified for all ELCC programs to reflect Aboriginal culture

QUALITY ELEMENTS

It is not the purpose of this report to examine quality in depth. However, a basic understanding of quality is often conceptualized by examining structural and process elements of an ELCC program:

- Structural elements refer to the measurable and quantifiable aspects of the provision of the ELCC program, and generally include such factors as staff qualifications, including access to professional development, wages and working conditions; staff:child ratios, group/class size, requirements for indoor and outdoor physical environments, and pedagogical (curriculum) frameworks. Structural elements may also consider public policy frameworks, including regulatory requirements; public funding; and how affordable or accessible programs are for parents and children.
- Process elements are less tangible, and relate more to what actually happens from day to day in an ELCC program, such as the types of activities that are available for children, both indoor and outdoor; the interactions between children; the interactions between children and adults; leadership; and overall staff morale.

While it is impossible to regulate attitudes and interactions, numerous researchers have suggested that process elements of quality are more strongly associated with better developmental outcomes for children, and that certain types of structural elements are more likely to predict improved measures of

process elements:

- In Canada, using data from the *You Bet I Care!* study, researchers found that the number of trained staff was a significant direct predictor of child care quality. (Doherty and Stuart, 1997; Goelman et al., 2006) The same study found that higher wages and better working conditions were positively associated with better scores using a standardized assessment tool to measure quality in licensed child care programs.
- Friendly, Ferns, and Prabhu (2009) note the importance of the interplay between structural elements, and that ratios/class size cannot be considered independently from teacher qualifications, classroom structure and composition, group size and working conditions.
- The Canadian Council on Learning (2006) reports that child-care providers with college diplomas or university degrees in early-childhood education are more responsive to the needs of the children in their care.
- The level of ECE training is the most frequently identified predictor of quality level in both Canadian and U.S. research. (Doherty, 2005)
- Ontario's Expert Panel on Human Resources noted that the single most critical factor affecting the quality of early learning and care programs is the knowledge, skills, and stability of the early childhood workforce. (Government of Ontario, 2007)
- In the United States, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in describing the rationale for post-secondary standards for early childhood program accreditation notes that "Children benefit most when their teachers have high levels of formal education and specialized early childhood professional preparation. Teachers who have specific preparation, knowledge, and skills in child development and early childhood education are more likely to engage in warm, positive interactions with children, offer richer language experiences, and create more high-quality learning environments." (Standard 6: NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Teachers Standard)

Governments seek to provide a basic measure of quality in ELCC programs through their regulatory frameworks. Provincial child care regulations in Manitoba are seen to be strong, particularly regulations outlining staff qualifications. It is anticipated that the restructuring of the ELCC division and relocation of child care coordinators to a centralized location will provide for greater consistency in the licensing, monitoring and application of provincial regulations and policies among child care facilities.

In all jurisdictions, child care regulations reflect the current private delivery approach and are significantly different in content and nature than standards in the publicly-delivered education system. While there is strong attachment by the child care community to the regulations, there are sometimes challenges for co-located schools and child care centres in addressing the different requirements of each system. If school divisions continue to become involved in early childhood program delivery, the alignment of programs offered by schools and by child care organizations will require more attention.

In Manitoba, a number of excellent programs in highly disadvantaged areas have drawn success from a community development approach and a high level of community input/involvement, combined with attention to quality elements in the child care program. These programs have had impacts on child development, family functioning, and the broader community. It will be important in any system change to maintain the capacity for individual community innovation and responsiveness.

4.2 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

There is wide consensus in the literature on quality in ELCC programs that the level of qualification of early childhood educators is a key predictor of quality, and that specific knowledge and skills related to early childhood education is associated with better outcomes for children. Across Canada, provincial

and territorial governments¹³ have recognized this by introducing regulatory requirements for post-secondary credentials in early childhood education. Although there is a high degree of consistency from one jurisdiction to the other, qualifications may vary by type of setting, such as centre-based programs, family child care homes, and school age child care programs; by the percentages of staff required to hold credentials; and/or by the nature of the credential itself, e.g., certificate, diploma, degree.

Government's decision to create 12,000 new ELCC spaces for Manitoba by 2021 will require a significant expansion of the size of the qualified ELCC workforce. A very rough estimate is that for every 1000 spaces created, there is a corresponding need for 100-150 new Early Childhood Educators. This rough estimate includes both early childhood educators and directors. Using this calculation, Manitoba will need approximately 1200 to 1800 more qualified Early Childhood Educators to staff 12,000 new licensed spaces. There are a number of factors to consider in refining this estimate, including:

- The nature of local plans for expansion to be created by individual Children's Councils, and the types of spaces to be created (e.g., infant spaces will require more staff)
- The impact of moving school age child care to the Department of Education for delivery by school divisions, thereby creating the opportunity for spaces to be converted to infant and preschool
- The potential, as outlined in the November 2015 Throne Speech, to work with post-secondary institutions to increase opportunities to post-secondary early childhood education programs
- Impact of strategies proposed by the Commission (see below) to address recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

A comprehensive workforce strategy will be needed to consider the demand for ECEIs to meet the current regulatory requirements and those needed for future space expansion, as well as the desire for a higher level classification that may enhance the leadership capabilities and professionalism of the sector.

The Commission proposes a three pronged strategy to increase the size and capacity of the ELCC Workforce.

CURRENT CONTEXT: HUMAN RESOURCES

As is the case in all jurisdictions, Manitoba is experiencing challenges with the recruitment and retention of qualified Early Childhood Educators. In March 2013, 26.7% of centres did not meet the licensing requirements for trained staff. Of those 174 centres, approximately 40% had an approved training plan in place. In April 2015, there were about 8,000 classified staff working in regulated child care settings. Of the total workforce, 89.7% worked in child care centres, 7.5% in nursery schools and 2.7% in family child care homes. Table 11 shows the percentage of staff at each classification level by setting.

¹³ Nunavut does not have regulatory requirements for staff qualifications in early learning and child care programs.

Table 11. Percentage of staff by classification and setting

Classification	Centres	Nursery schools	Family Child Care	Total
CCA	63.5%	61.7%	61.2%	63.3%
ECEII	23.8%	23.8%	25.1%	23.8%
ECEIII	12.7%	14.5%	13.7%	12.8%

A detailed examination of staff turnover, migration between settings and regional differences would be necessary to better understand the extent of the shortage of qualified staff, but it is evident that the majority of the workforce, regardless of setting, are CCAs. With a requirement that half of nursery school and school age staff be classified as an ECEII, and two-thirds of staff working in infant and preschool centres, it appears that there is a significant shortfall, even taking into account that a number of CCAs may be working as supply staff, in the Workplace Training Program, or providing inclusion support. The *You Bet We Still Care!* study (Flanagan, Beach and Varmuza, 2013) found that in 2012 Manitoba had the lowest percentage of new hires with an ECE credential among all jurisdictions, at 37.6%.

FIRST PRONG: STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELCC PROGRAMS

Manitoba's regulated requirements for staff qualifications in ELCC programs are generally on par with and sometimes stronger than those in other jurisdictions in Canada:

- Manitoba is the only province to require either post-diploma study or degree credentials for Directors of ELCC centres, although consultations are currently underway in Prince Edward Island regarding degree requirements for centre directors.
- Manitoba's requirement for two thirds of staff to have an ECE credentials is on par with Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, and Nova Scotia (although directors in Nova Scotia are included in this calculation). This required ratio is the highest in Canada.
- Manitoba's requirements for Child Care Assistant hours of training are within the current range of PT requirements for those with entry level designation, from a low of no requirements in Ontario, to 45 in Alberta and Manitoba, 60 hours in Yukon, 90 hours in PEI, and 120 hours in Saskatchewan.

Manitoba requires that 50% of staff in school age programs hold ECEII certification. This requirement is very strong, as compared to a number of jurisdictions that do not regulate qualifications for school age programs.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELCC PROGRAMS

As mentioned, Manitoba's regulations regarding staff qualifications are considered among the strongest in Canada. There are, however, three components of current regulations where changes may be considered:

- Director level qualifications:** Manitoba currently has the strongest requirements for Director level qualifications. A survey of ECE faculty conducted in Canada for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (Forer, Flanagan, Beach, 2007) found that 69% of respondents thought the amount of training currently required by provinces and territories for directors was inadequate. Of those that provided comments on suggested length of training, 31.7% thought directors should have a related degree and 68.3% thought directors should have a post-diploma credential. In the same report, front-line staff with ECE credentials were also supportive of additional requirements for directors. They suggested that:

the director sets the pace and tone for the program, and that the director's

understanding of child development and curriculum approaches had an impact on how their own ideas and suggestions were received and acted on, and that this level of understanding contributed to problem solving approaches that were richer and more appropriate to the situations at hand. (Ibid., p.26)

The members of Manitoba's Child Care Education Program Approval Committee (CCEPAC) have recommended to the Commission that future ECEIII classification require successful completion of a CCEPAC approved degree program or equivalent. While there are a growing number of 4-year degree programs in Early Childhood Education in several provinces, this would make Manitoba a leader in Canada, in requiring a degree for some of its ECE workforce.

- **Child Care Assistant qualifications:** Like Manitoba, a number of jurisdictions have introduced entry-level requirements, generally in an attempt to ensure that untrained staff have some type of orientation to ELCC. Requirements vary from 40 – 120 hours of study. Like Manitoba, other provinces have found that numbers of staff with entry-level certification may be higher than those with post-secondary credentials in Early Childhood Education, and are taking steps to address this. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador has announced that with pending legislation, entry-level staff will have a specific time frame within which they must complete requirements for the next level of certification. In Prince Edward Island, entry level requires 90 hours of study, which is then applied to a one-year certificate, which is then applied to a two-year diploma. Those with diploma credentials then may articulate to a bachelor's degree.
- **School Age Staff qualifications:** Manitoba requires school age programs to employ 50% of staff with ECEII qualifications, and a Director with ECEII qualifications. Key informant interviews and discussions with representatives of the ELCC sector suggest that ECE graduates in Manitoba do not feel that their post-secondary education has prepared them for working with children of school age. Focus groups conducted across Canada for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council's Training Strategy (Flanagan & Beach, 2007) found the same comments from ECEs who worked with this age group.

There is considerable variation across PTs in required qualifications for staff working in school age programs. Staff training requirements range from none to 2/3 requiring a post-secondary ECE credential. In some jurisdictions the educational requirements to work with school-age children are the same as those to work with preschool-age children; in other jurisdictions, the requirements for the amount of training required or the percentage of staff who require the training is lower – or different. Newfoundland and Labrador is the only jurisdiction that requires specific school-age training and classification.

- In New Brunswick – where there are currently no regulated staff requirements for working in school age child care programs – recent focus groups in that province suggested that ECE post-secondary education was not appropriate for this age group. Focus group participants suggested that while ECE *concepts* were reasonable, there needed to be different training and focus on the school age population, with particular emphasis on conflict resolution, mental health, and familiarity with academic curriculum for the appropriate grade levels. One of the most important skills identified was the ability to communicate with the child's teacher and other staff in the school setting.
- In Sweden, virtually all employees in child care services have some form of training for working with children. There are four staff categories – preschool teachers, recreational instructors, daycare attendants and child minders in family daycare. At leisure time centres (Sweden's school age centres) 70% of the employees have degrees in

recreational or leisure education or in some other kind of teacher's training. About 5% of employees at leisure-time centres are men.

- A review of literature of best practice with regard to staffing practices in school age / out of school child care programs suggests consistent qualifications such as knowledge of the developmental nature of children in the specific age groupings, communication skills, and ability to identify with children and youth. The importance of ongoing professional development is also noted.

MOVING FORWARD: QUALIFICATIONS

FIRST PRONG: MOVING FORWARD ON STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

CERTIFICATION LEVELS

- Redesign the current ELCC Certification model to include the following categories and training requirements:
 - Child Care Assistant – 40 hours (to be phased out over five years)
 - Assistant Entry Level: 90 hours – *New*
 - ECE 1 – one year ECE certificate – *New*
 - ECE 2 – two year ECE diploma
 - ECE 3 – two year ECE diploma plus post-diploma study
 - ECE 4 – ECE degree – *New*
- Work with CCEPAC and post-secondary institutions to design a program of study that allows for continuous study toward an ECE degree, so that the first 90 hours is applied toward the one-year certificate; the one-year certificate allows entry to the second year of a two-year diploma program; two-year diploma graduates are able to articulate to a 4 year ECE degree program with two years of advanced standing.
- Certification at Assistant Entry Level is valid for two years, after which the person must either have completed a one-year certificate or be enrolled in a certificate program.
- After 5 years, eliminate the Child Care Assistant level, but continue to recognize existing staff with this level of certification. By 2020, CCAs must enroll in entry-level courses (for 90 hours) after 1 year of certification at Assistant level.
- Introduce a requirement for annual professional development of a specified number of hours, and renewal of classification every three years.

SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE QUALIFICATIONS

The Commission proposes that the current requirement for an ECE credential for school age child care staff be eliminated.

The Commission further proposes that a School Age Transition Team develop standards for qualifications for school age child care providers as employees of Manitoba school boards.

SECOND PRONG: POST-SECONDARY ECE EDUCATION

In 2014, there were approximately 200 ECE graduates from colleges across the province (noting that not all graduates become classified and work in the child care sector); of those, more than one-third graduated from a workplace program. At Red River and Université de Saint-Boniface there were more graduates from the *Early Childhood Education Workplace Training Program* than the day programs.

The *Early Childhood Education Workplace Training Program* was introduced in April 2002, and has been highly successful. The program is an accelerated post-secondary diploma level ECE course of study that allows eligible students to attend class for two days per week, while continuing to work in a licensed ELCC program for the remainder of the week, and continue to earn their regular weekly salary. The centre is funded by the Department of Family Services to cover the cost of substitute staff during the time that the employee is in class. Practicum placements are done in the centre where the employee works. Employees are responsible for tuition and related costs. Eligibility requirements include high school completion and a minimum of two years of employment in a licensed ELCC setting.

During key informant interviews and group discussions, the “workplace program” was consistently identified as a positive component of Manitoba’s Early Learning and Child Care system. Many educators reported the relevancy and flexibility of this type of training, and noted that it provides a more meaningful experience and greater access to training for staff. There is a very high satisfaction rate among graduates and those who complete the program tend to stay in their jobs.

In addition to ECEs graduating from colleges, a number of child care staff are classified through the Competency Based Assessment (CBA) process as well as through the labour mobility provisions¹⁴ of Canada’s Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT).

MOVING FORWARD: QUALIFICATIONS

SECOND PRONG: MOVING FORWARD ONPOST-SECONDARY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WORKPLACE TRAINING PROGRAM

Recognizing the success of the ECE Workplace Training Program in providing accelerated training and the retention of graduates in the ELCC sector, and recognizing that many people who hold the CCA designation already have earned post-secondary credentials (diploma/degree) in other fields of study, the Commission proposes that:

- 1) MELCC begin to work immediately with post-secondary ECE programs to determine the potential for increased capacity in student intake.
- 2) Admission criteria for those with a post-secondary credential be reduced to one year of experience in ELCC.
- 3) Post-secondary ECE programs develop strategies to fast track CCAs with degree credentials in related fields of study.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS: DIPLOMA TO DEGREE (as noted in First Prong)

Recognizing the need for highly qualified ELCC Directors for centres as well as faculty in post-secondary ECE programs, and building on the intentions stated in the November 2015 Throne Speech to “work with partners such as Red River College and Université de St. Boniface to expand the early childhood educator workforce”;

- 1) Begin discussions with post-secondary institutions to promote and enhance articulation agreements between colleges and universities in order to allow early childhood educators the opportunity to move seamlessly into degree granting programs.

¹⁴The Labour Mobility provision (Chapter 7) of Canada’s Agreement on Internal Trade requires all provinces with certification models to recognize the certificates issued by other provinces for the same scope of work, despite any differences in educational requirements. In effect, any change to certification made by a province or territory (with a certification model) has an impact on all other jurisdictions with certification.

THIRD PRONG: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Recruitment

In a study conducted for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council in 2009, it was noted that there was a current Canada-wide shortage existed of more than 4,800 staff to fill available positions. As a result, employers were increasingly hiring staff with lower qualifications than required by regulation. (Centre for Spatial Economics, 2009).

The most recent national study of human resources in ELCC in Canada found there was a considerable range across provinces and territories in the percentage of newly hired staff who had an ECE qualification. Employers in Nova Scotia (81.7%) and British Columbia (77.5%) reported the highest percentage of new staff with an ECE credential, compared to Manitoba (37.6%) and New Brunswick (49.4%) with the lowest. (Flanagan, Beach, & Varmuza, 2013).

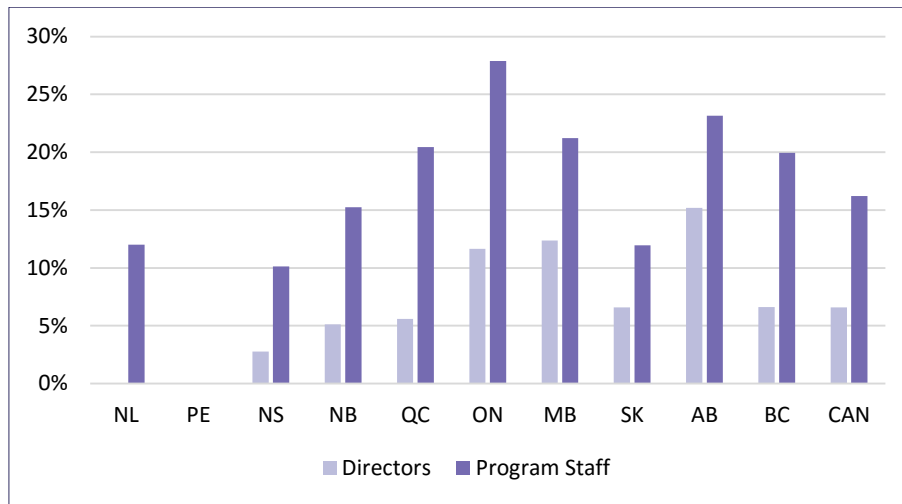
Retention

Both Canadian and American research indicates that turnover rates for those working in licensed ELCC programs continue to be high. The 2013 You Bet We Still Care study found that retention of qualified early childhood educators continues to be problematic. In the national survey, employers were asked how many permanent staff had left their centre in the previous 12 months:

- 72.1% hired at least one program or supervisory staff in the past 12 months.
- 65.5% of employers reported at least one permanent staff leaving their centres in the past 12 months. (Note that additional employers were still involved in hiring staff for reasons of expansion, or to replace a staff on leave).
- Of the 65.5% of employers who did have permanent staff leave 73.4%% reported that at least one departing staff was a qualified ECE
- Commercial centres reported a somewhat larger average number (2.4) of qualified staff leaving than non-profit centres (1.9).
- Employers in Newfoundland and Labrador and Alberta reported the highest average number of permanent staff with an ECE credential leaving in the past 12 months (4.0 and 3.8 respectively) and in PEI, Quebec and Manitoba the lowest (1.5, 1.6 and 1.7 respectively). The Canada-wide average was 2.4.

The 2013 national survey also asked staff (Directors and Program Staff) to indicate if they were actively looking for a new job. Figure 21 shows responses by province.

Figure 21. Percent of directors and program staff currently looking for a new job



Source: Flanagan, Beach & Varmuza, 2013

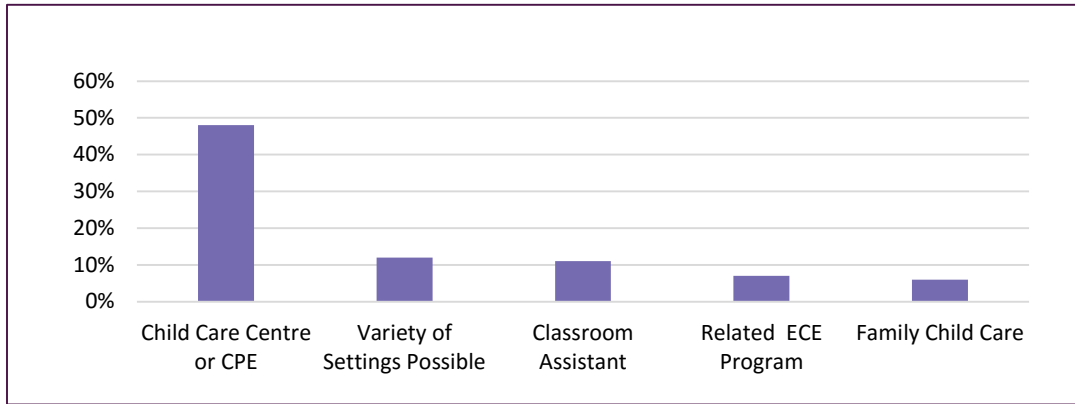
The study also examined different aspects of work in full day ELCC centres and found that for program staff, satisfaction with wages and benefits “ranked lower than hours of work, work schedule, leadership in the centre, and career opportunities. Although the study found gains in wages in most jurisdictions, the issue of compensation continues to be the aspect of the work that is least satisfying.” (Flanagan, Beach, & Varmuza, 2013, p.18)

American researchers report similar findings and suggest that retention has not significantly improved in the years between 2002 and 2014:

Teacher turnover rates have remained at 14 to 15 percent per year for the past decade, with only about a quarter of programs experiencing no turnover.... The share of teachers ascribing their departures to compensation has hovered around 30 percent for this period, as well. Individual state data further reveal that about 30 states had average teacher turnover rates at or above 15 percent (31 states in 2007, and 29 in 2013) and about a dozen states had turnover rates at or above 20 percent (12 in 2007, and 13 in 2013). (Whitebook et al., 2014, p.35)

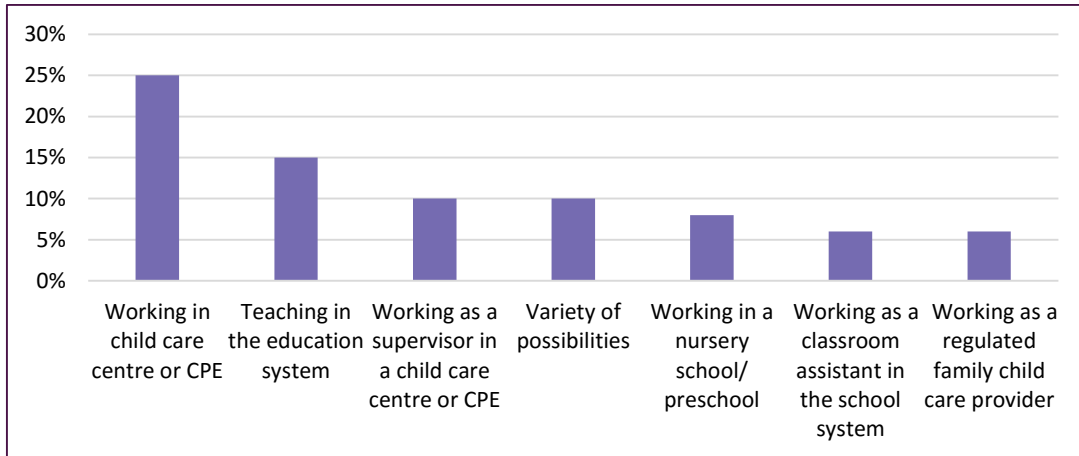
Manitoba officials report that although about 200 individuals graduate each year with diplomas in early childhood education, many move on to other types of employment in working with young children, and do not accept positions in the licensed ELCC sector. In the Spring 2006 survey of ECE graduates conducted in Canada for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (Forer, Beach & Flanagan, 2007), researchers found that 54% of graduates intended to work in the licensed child care sector, (48% in centres/CPE and 6% in family child care - See Figure 22). When asked about future plans, 50% indicated they planned to be working in some part the regulated sector in five years. (See Figure 23).

Figure 22. ECE graduates plans for work after graduation



Source: Forer, Beach, Flanagan ECE Graduate Survey (2006)

Figure 23. ECE graduates plans for employment five years after graduation



Source: Forer, Beach, Flanagan ECE Graduate Survey (2006)

Discussions with key informants in Manitoba as well as meetings with professional organizations and individual directors and board members of licensed ELCC centres indicate that retention continues to be an issue in Manitoba as well. Many reported that qualified early childhood directors are recruited by the Education system for positions as educational assistants – with better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

The topic of human resource development, and especially the topic of retention, will be further discussed in Section 5: Data Collection and Analysis/Research and Information

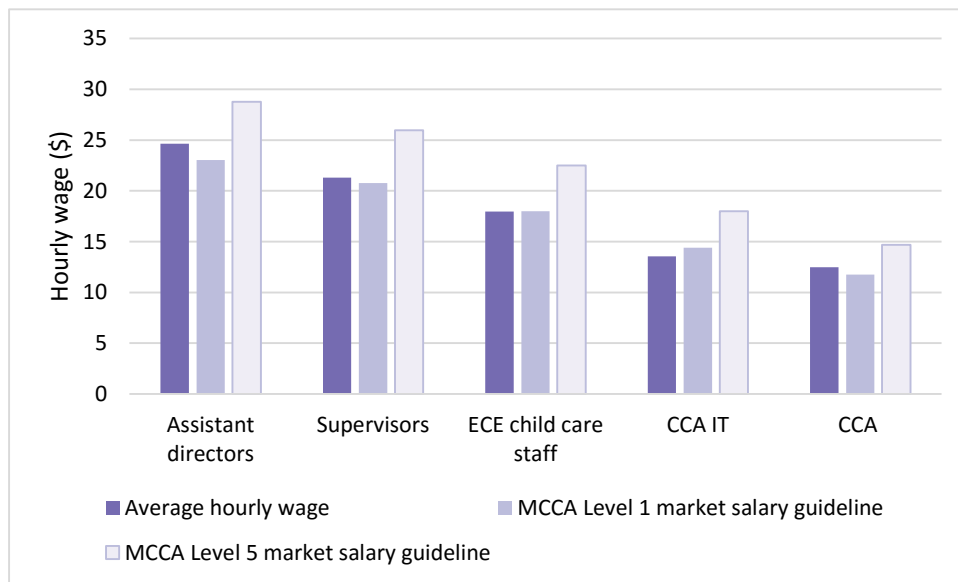
4.3 WAGES

Good wages and working conditions have been shown to be a key predictor of quality in child care (Goelman et al, 2000). Historically low wages have been a characteristic of the child care sector and have resulted in ongoing challenges in recruitment and retention of qualified staff. The challenge has been compounded by increased opportunities for ECEs in the Education sector at higher wages, increased benefits and shorter working hours. American researchers report that wages for child care workers in the USA have only increased by one percent since 1997. (National Research Council, 2014)

For many years, MCCA has produced salary guidelines, and since 2008, a market competitive salary guideline, based on competitive rates of pay within comparable positions in various sectors. As shown below, the current average hourly wage is at or very close to the minimum (Level 1) market rates, but is considerably lower than for higher levels. Operating grants are increased on a regular basis, intended to help raise wages; however, other increased operational costs, such as rent, may limit the amount available for wages. Many Directors of ELCC programs in Manitoba told the Commission that there is no incentive for staff to pursue additional training or certification, as there is no funding available to increase wages for staff who voluntarily attain higher credentials – other than those positions that are required to be at that particular level.

Figure 24 shows the actual average wages and MCCA competitive salary guidelines by position (2014-2015). The MELCC average rates and MCCA salary guidelines for directors have not been included in the chart below; the data are not comparable as MCCA has several recommended levels, based on the size of the centre the director is responsible for as well as experience and education. The MCCA guidelines range from \$25.94/hour for a director of a centre of 50 or fewer spaces who is at Level 1, to \$45.24/hour for a director of a centre of between 151-200 spaces who is at Level 5. The overall average hourly rate for directors is \$26.59 for an ECEII and \$30.24 for an ECEIII.

Figure 24. Actual average wages and MCCA competitive salary guideline by position 2014-2015



Across Canada, almost all jurisdictions provide some type of wage enhancement for early childhood educators through various mechanisms. In some jurisdictions, wage enhancement is a separate type of operating grant; in others, a portion of a comprehensive operating grant is designated for wage enhancement. In some jurisdictions, decisions regarding disbursement of the wage enhancement is left to the centre; in others, the amount of the grant depends on educational qualifications, position, and/or experience as an ECE.

The key to quality early childhood care and education services lies in providing sufficient funding to pay adequate wages and benefits to staff.

Beach & Costigliola (2010)

There are only two provinces with province wide wage scales. In 2000, Quebec introduced a wage scale for staff working in non-profit centres (CPEs) and family child care homes. Wages are based on education and experience. In 2010, Prince Edward Island introduced a mandatory wage scale for its Early Years Centres; wages are based on a combination of education, experience, and job position.

Funding for Early Years Centres allows those centres to pay the wages specified in the wage scale. A benefit package is also mandated for Early Years Centres.

Manitoba and Quebec are the only two provinces to provide a pension plan for Early Childhood Educators. In Manitoba, the pension plan is available for those working in non-profit centres, as well as family home child care providers (in the form of a matched RRSP contribution).

MOVING FORWARD: WAGES

THIRD PRONG – INTRODUCTION OF AN ELCC PROVINCIAL WAGE SCALE

Recognizing the key role of qualified staff in determining the quality of an ELCC program and improved outcomes for children, and recognizing the impact of wages and benefits on both recruitment and retention of staff in ELCC programs, the Commission proposes that:

- 1) Manitoba introduce a provincial wage scale that is incorporated into a new funding formula for licensed centres, and that recognizes:
 - a. Level of certification and years of experience
 - b. Scope of practice and responsibility
 - c. Recommended wage levels as proposed by the MCCA Competitive Market Wage.
- 2) Parity with average wages for Education Assistants working in public schools with comparable educational qualifications and responsibility.
- 3) Any staff with current wages above the new provincial wage scale would be red-circled at that level until the scale meets their wage.
- 4) The provincial wage scale be indexed annually.

5 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS / RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

A coordinated, responsive, well-planned and accountable ELCC system relies on good information about the size and scope of the system, its impact on the children and families it serves, the effectiveness and efficiency of investments in the system, areas for improvement, and plans for sustainability.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Administrative Data

The Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care office tracks administrative data such as:

- The size and scope of the licensed ELCC system (number of centres and spaces), staff qualifications in those centres, funding to those centres
- The number of families waiting for a licensed space – by region, and age of the child
- Capital investments
- Child care subsidy expenditures and family characteristics (size, income) of those who access subsidy
- Licensing and renewal applications, along with variances and complaints
- Certification levels of early childhood educators, including number of staff who participate in the Workplace Training Program.

The MELCC office maintains data and statistics, tracks growth in new centres over multi-year time periods, and regularly publishes statistics on its website and in annual reports. However, while it was not the purpose of this work to examine the processes and procedures used for data collection, the Commission has noted that access to data is sometimes hampered by the lack of up-to-date management programs. Often, requests for data or for analysis of data using cross tabulations required manual manipulation of data – or were impossible to obtain.

Child Outcome Data

The Healthy Child Manitoba Act mandates that the HCM office report publicly on the status of Manitoba's children in relation to achieving the outcomes of the Healthy Child Manitoba strategy's goals for children, i.e., the extent to which children in Manitoba are, to their fullest potential:

- physically and emotionally healthy
- safe and secure
- successful at learning
- socially engaged and responsible

Healthy Child Manitoba issued its first report in 2012, and used a variety of data sources including several national data files from Statistics Canada, as well as provincial data from Manitoba's Youth Health Survey (YHS), the First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS), Manitoba census and administrative data from Statistics Canada, as well as provincial data from various government departments and offices, including the Healthy Child Manitoba Office, Manitoba Education, Manitoba Family Services, and Manitoba Health. Healthy Child Manitoba also collaborated with the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP), and cross-referenced information from the MCHP report "How Are Manitoba's Children Doing?"

The Healthy Child Manitoba Office (HCMO) is also coordinating a Provincial Evaluation Strategy that works with cross-sectoral partners to inform and support HCCC policy accountability, and to build

capacity for research and evaluation, through all stages: consultation, evaluation framework development, evaluation implementation, and community knowledge exchange. As part of a Manitoba model for measuring progress in child-centred public policy, HCMO is developing a provincial strategy that better integrates research.



Healthy Child Manitoba Knowledge-Action Cycle

Child Outcomes – ELCC

Currently, Manitoba does not have child outcome data that measure the impacts of participation in ELCC programs. Other than limited data as to when a child received subsidy, it is not possible to track children by type of program (e.g., centre-based / family home), the intensity (full time/part time) or duration (a few months, one year, four years) of their involvement, or the age of the child when he/she first attended a program.

As well, the provincial EDI scores for five-year-old children – which are then used to track the child’s performance through school – are not currently able to identify children who have participated in ELCC programs.

Human Resources

MELCC collects information about individuals who are certified as Early Childhood Educators at the time of classification. Information is updated if the person returns for re-classification at a higher level (upon completion of additional studies). As well, data is collected re place of employment for ECEs currently employed in licensed centres or homes, but this data is not regularly analyzed due to technical limitations of the data management system. MELCC reports that 42,730 individuals have been classified since the early 1980s, but that 81.5% of those individuals are not currently employed in the ELCC sector. Since Manitoba does not require ECEs to renew their classification, there is no current contact information for the majority of these individuals. It is not possible to know how long they worked in the ELCC sector before leaving, the reason for leaving, or if those former ECEs even still live in Manitoba.

Most jurisdictions do not collect human resource survey data on a regular basis. This means that in Manitoba (as elsewhere), there limited information about classified ECEs who are currently working in the ELCC sector, e.g., plans for retirement, level of job satisfaction, secondary employment, etc. Without this type of data, it is difficult to plan for future needs for classified ECEs for expansion of spaces or to plan for intake at post-secondary institutions.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Canada, there is both a national and provincial/territorial lack of regularly collected data on ELCC

provision. While there have been some national and provincial/territorial reports prepared, there are no jurisdictions that regularly collect comprehensive data. Purposes of data collection have been identified by researchers and although the intent in the 2003 report was to comment on national comparable data sets, the purposes of data collection are relevant at a provincial level:

- To determine appropriate policy responses and to design policy (e.g., by identifying needs, preferences, use patterns, etc.)
- To monitor policies once implemented, to evaluate their effects over time, and to report to the public (e.g., are target groups being reached, has employment participation been affected, are child outcomes improving, what are the costs, are the clients satisfied?)
- To ensure accountability for public spending on programs (e.g., administrative data)
- To provide information to parents and service providers that will help them make better decisions about ECEC use and provision (e.g., child outcomes, quality indicators, and program characteristics)
- To assist the public and NGOs in evaluating the progress of Canada's children and their services (e.g., analyzing the gap between current supply and needs, analyzing benchmarks of progress in ECEC provision and child well-being). (Cleveland, Colley, Friendly & Lero, 2003, p.x)

All provinces and territories regularly collect administrative data for licensed ELCC programs, although often the full range of data collected is not analyzed or reported in useful fashion. From time to time, there have been some one time only PT studies (longitudinal, program evaluation, human resources); however, there are no provinces or territories that currently have comprehensive data systems in place to regularly monitor the impact of ELCC participation on child outcomes; to assess parent satisfaction; to assess the interplay of quality elements such as qualified staff vs number of complaints or staff turnover; or to regularly monitor/assess human resource trends in ELCC. There have been some comprehensive provincial and national studies, both in Canada and other countries:

- Quebec has conducted several studies examining the effects of child care experiences including *The Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development* (QLSCD 1998-2010) which examined the use of and influences on child development for children in child care from birth to eight years of age, and the *Montreal Survey on the Preschool-Entry Experiences of Children in Kindergarten* (2010).
- The Prince Edward Island Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, with support from the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation (MWMFF) funded a baseline evaluation study to assess the efficiency the first year of implementation of the Preschool Excellence Initiative and to establish a baseline of data to inform subsequent evaluations of the Initiative. A Management Team was established to include representatives of both the DEECD and the MWMFF. The baseline evaluation study used quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.
- Several national studies of human resource issues in licensed child care programs have been conducted in Canada, including *Caring for a Living* (1991); *You Bet I Care!* (1998); and *You Bet We Still Care!* (2013).
- Canada's *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth*¹⁵ (NLSCY) did ask parents if the child was attending a licensed child care program – but there was no information to verify that the program was licensed, the quality of the program, or length of time the child was involved.
- In the United States, the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) started the Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (SECCYD), formerly the NICHD Study of

¹⁵ The NLSCY began in 1994 and ended in 2009 after eight rounds of data collection.

Early Child Care (SECC), in 1991. Working with more than 1,300 children and their families from when the children were infants until they turned 15, the researchers collected information in four phases and analyzed how different child care arrangements related to measurements of the children's health, behavior, school performance and other indicators of development in infancy, early childhood, middle childhood and middle adolescence.

MOVING FORWARD: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS/RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

The 2013 Auditor General Report on Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Program suggested that data collection be improved to better inform future plans to expand the program, specifically noting need to understand reasons for declining numbers of certain types of programs, or to understand reasons and extent of staff turnover.

The Commission has positioned ELCC within Manitoba's comprehensive strategy for children – *Starting Early, Starting Strong*, and envisions a system of universal access to ELCC as encompassing both the licensed ELCC sector as well as the broad range of community and school based programs for children in their early years, and prior to school entry. The opportunity to understand the impacts of participation in ELCC programs on child outcomes, and to analyze the differences in quality indicators on that participation will not only place Manitoba in the forefront of this type of longitudinal research in Canada, but will inform the type of investments the Department of Family Services makes in the ELCC.

PROPOSED: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS / RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Recognizing the importance of reliable evidence in the policy planning process, and recognizing the need for the Department of Family Services to be accountable for significant investments in ELCC, and recognizing the need to understand and support practices that improve outcomes for children, the Commission proposes that:

- 1) The Department of Family Services invest in a re-designed data management system for ELCC administrative data that allows for in-depth analysis.
- 2) Healthy Child Manitoba expand its current approaches to monitoring and measuring child outcomes to include newly collected population health data for children attending licensed ELCC programs.
- 3) The Department of Family Services (in conjunction with proposed actions on Human Resource Development in Section 4.2) better monitor human resource trends of classified early childhood educators, with specific attention to retention, job satisfaction, and future plans (e.g., retirement or career changes).

6 CONCLUSION

"Alice: Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

The Cheshire Cat: That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

Alice: I don't much care where.

The Cheshire Cat: Then it doesn't much matter which way you go.

Alice: ...So long as I get somewhere.

The Cheshire Cat: Oh, you're sure to do that, if only you walk long enough."

— Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

The Government of Manitoba has articulated a bold vision for moving toward a universally accessible system of Early Learning and Child Care that is of high quality, and built on a model of non-profit delivery. Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Commission has provided the Government of Manitoba with a set of principles supporting a comprehensive policy framework, and a road map to lead to the province's vision. This work will require a multi-sectoral commitment, with strong government leadership.

Key informant interviews and consultations with Manitobans have informed the Commission that the primary purpose of early learning and child care is to provide children with high quality early learning experiences to foster optimal child development. Based on the multi-faceted and complex nature of child development, in order to create an ELCC system that prioritizes the child's early experiences, the Commission has elected to align ELCC for children in the years prior to public school entry with Manitoba's exemplary model of integrated children's services. The Commission also recognizes that schools have become multi-faceted community places that are best served to provide before and after school programs for the children and families they serve.

The ELCC system, however, also children in their families – and so the Commission's plan is intended to ensure that ELCC programs are not only available to them when they need or want them, but that they are also able to afford them, and that the programs will be good for their children. This plan is not based on a linear approach. Early Learning and Child Care is complex, and strategies to build a system are necessarily complex, inter-related, and multi-pronged.

The Commission envisions that local communities – supported by regional Children's Councils providing the infrastructure for planning, monitoring, and development – will be able to explore and build on opportunities for a truly universal approach to early learning and child care that incorporates a rich array of programs and services that meet the needs of children and families. This will be a challenging task – and one that must consider that some children and families – whether infants, newcomers, or children and families needing intensive support, will require special consideration when plans are being developed for local expansion of programs and services. The concept of proportionate universality must drive expansion.

The Commission also emphasizes the importance of measuring and monitoring and regularly evaluating the impacts of investments and programs. Without attention to such measuring, Manitoba will never know if the ELCC system is still on the right road.

The road map presented by the Commission, along with a clear sense of where the province wants to go, will support this strategy through changing economic, environmental, and political and social realities. The ELCC sector has been walking "long enough". The plans for a redesigned comprehensive systems approach will give Manitoba a clear sense as to which road to take to reach its destination.

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APPENDIX A: MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE COMMISSION

Mariette Chartier	Research Scientist, Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, University of Manitoba
Wenda Dickens	Coordinator, Early Childhood Education Unit, Department of Education and Advanced Learning.
Carolyn Duhamel	(Retired) Executive Director, Manitoba School Boards Association
Scott Forbes	Early Childhood Educator II, Kings Park Child Care
Irvin (Issie) D. Frost	(Retired) Senior Counsel, Department of Justice, Civil Legal Services
Don Giesbrecht	CEO, Canadian Child Care Federation
Terra Johnston	Policy Consultant, Healthy Child Manitoba Office
Susan Prentice	Professor, Sociology, University of Manitoba; Childcare Coalition of Manitoba
Kathy Reid	(Retired) Director, Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care
Diane Roussin	Project Director, the Winnipeg Boldness Project
Gail Watson	(Retired) Independent Consultant and Facilitator; former School Trustee
Pat Wege	Executive Director, Manitoba Child Care Association

APPENDIX B: LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE REPORT

AIT	Agreement on Internal Trade
AHSUNC	Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities
CAP	Canada Assistance Plan
CBA	Competency Based Assessment
CCA	Child Care Assistant
CCEPAC	Child Care Education Program Approval Committee
CPE	Centre de la petite enfance
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Educator
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
ELCC	Early Learning and Child Care
HCM	Healthy Child Manitoba
MASS	Manitoba Association of School Superintendents
MCCA	Manitoba Child Care Association
MCHP	Manitoba Centre for Health Policy
MELCC	Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care
MELS	Ministère de l'éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
MFA	Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés
MSBA	Manitoba School Boards Association
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NICHD	National Institute of Child Health and Development
NLSCY	National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QLSDC	Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development
RHS	First Nations Regional Health Survey
SECCYD	Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development
UCCB	Universal Child Care Benefit
WRDSB	Waterloo Regional District School Board
YHS	Youth Health Survey