

Province expands opportunities in early childhood education^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Creating more opportunities for Nova Scotians who want to pursue a career in early childhood education will strengthen and develop the workforce and help meet the needs of families with young children.

Government is working with the Nova Scotia Community College to create 135 new seats in the early childhood education program over the next three years. The total investment is \$1.45 million.

"Families need child care and early learning opportunities and want a child care sector that is prepared to meet their changing needs," said Zach Churchill, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. "As the need for these services continue to grow, so does the demand for qualified early childhood educators. We're creating opportunities for Nova Scotians, while addressing the long-term workforce needs of the sector."

Government will also invest \$800,000 to create a temporary tuition support program for Nova Scotians who attend an early childhood education program at one of three private career colleges in the province. This funding comes from a three-year, \$35 million early learning and child care funding agreement the province signed with the federal government in January.

"Education plays a vital role in the development of a child," said Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. "I am pleased to see that funding from the Canada-Nova Scotia early learning and child care bilateral agreement will be used to expand this valuable tuition support program to train additional childhood educators who support children to have a good start in life so they can succeed."

Government is also amending the Day Care Regulations so that children who are registered in pre-primary will be able to attend before and after-school programs that are currently only available to school-age children.

Staff to child ratios will increase when there are eight or more pre-primary children in a school-age program to ensure the health and safety of all children.

These amendments will address the changing needs of the workforce by providing more opportunities for individuals to earn their early childhood education diploma while working under the mentorship and guidance of other early childhood education professionals. Operators can apply for a temporary staffing plan to support this work and learn model within their workplace. The changes are effective Sept. 1.

"Training is vital to providing quality child care for children in our province," said Sonia Hage-Cameron, owner and operator of Play, Learn, Grow. "This announcement recognizes that the field of early childhood education is evolving. Today's initiatives by the government will help to meet the diverse and ever-changing needs of our child care centres and the children and families we support."

Other initiatives to support Nova Scotians, the sector and families include a bursary to increase cultural representation within early childhood education workforce and a recruitment campaign.

The bursary, announced at the end of June, is available for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years with successful applicants receiving up to \$5,500 per year for up to two years. Pre-registration for the bursary closes Aug. 1. More information is available at, <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/pd/CulturalBursary.shtml>^[3].

The recruitment campaign launched in early July will run for seven weeks to attract new early childhood educators to the province and encourage early childhood educators who are not working in the field to come back.

Related link:

Region: Nova Scotia^[4]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/07/province-expands-opportunities-early-childhood-education> [2]

<https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20180724005> [3] <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/pd/CulturalBursary.shtml> [4]

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