

Wage increases planned for child-care workers in Saskatchewan

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EXCERPTS

Early childhood educators (ECE) in Saskatchewan are getting a raise.

The governments of Canada and Saskatchewan announced Wednesday they're giving qualified child-care workers a wage increase of up to \$3 per hour as part of a \$9.6-million investment.

"Our government is thankful for the hard work Saskatchewan ECEs do every day," Saskatchewan Education Minister Dustin Duncan said in a media release. "This investment will recognize that hard work while creating an incentive for people to consider becoming ECEs themselves."

The money comes from the \$17 million of federal funding to support the workforce as called for in the Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

"Child care is not a luxury, it's a necessity. Supporting the valuable work of early childhood educators is key to the success of a high-quality child care system," Karina Gould, Canada's minister of families, children and social development, said in the release.

"By building a stronger workforce, more children in Saskatchewan will have access to high-quality early learning and have the best possible start in life."

The wage increase is retroactive to July 1, with the money expected to be available to most employers by December.

The increases will depend on ECE certification levels, with up to \$1 per hour, \$2 per hour and \$3 per hour for ECE certification level I, II and III respectively. The provincial Ministry of Education currently is collecting information from licensed child-care facilities to work out the wage increases.

The wage bump also will figure in the Government of Saskatchewan's development of a wage grid for early childhood educators. The government is aiming to have that grid in place by the end of 2022-23.

The Government of Canada has signed deals with a number of provinces — including Saskatchewan — that will see families pay \$10 per day on average for child care within the next five years.

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