

# Canada-New Brunswick Canada-wide early learning and child care agreement: Action plan 2021-2023 <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

[Access full action plan in English \[PDF\] <sup>\[2\]</sup>](#)

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Excerpted from action plan

## New Brunswick's priorities and investments – Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in FY 2021-2022 and FY 2022-2023

This Action Plan outlines New Brunswick's commitments and targets. Its implementation will require consultations across the province with parents, partners, and stakeholders. The outcomes of the consultations may result in required adjustments to the Action Plan to ensure it meets the needs of New Brunswick families. Discussions with the Government of Canada Implementation Committee will be held if the implementation needs to be adjusted to reflect the realities of the system over the course of the 2021-2026 Canada-Wide ELCC Agreement.

All designated facilities are eligible for funding under the Canada-Wide Agreement. The Designation Program is voluntary, and operator driven. Existing facilities that are not designated can choose to become designated. Only designated facilities are eligible for the funding for reduction in parent fees and for new space creation. Funding for professional development will be prioritized for educators in designated facilities. New Brunswick will support all licensed facilities in the development of their inclusion policies, but support will be prioritized for designated facilities.

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### PRIORITY #1: AFFORDABILITY

2022-2023: \$55,000,000

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New Brunswick commits to making early learning and child care more affordable by reducing the out of pocket fees for families enrolled in designated facilities by an average of 50% by December 2022. New Brunswick is in the process of finalizing a funding model that will enable more families to access quality child care. It will build on the current Low-Fee Policy for designated facilities which includes the Market Fee Threshold (guide for fee setting for Operators) and the Parent Subsidy Program which provides free child care for lower income families and a sliding scale subsidy for families with annual income between \$37,501 and \$80,000.

By December 2022, average daily parent fees will be reduced by 50%. Over 11,000 New Brunswick families will see a reduction of approximately \$3,000 per year in their early learning and child care fees.

New Brunswick's model will be finalized following consultations with parents, partners, and key stakeholders. New Brunswick commits to reaching an average of \$10/day child care fees by March 2026 with a particular focus for low- and middle-income families. By December 2022, a standardized provincial parent fee grid will guide the fees charged to parents by operators. The reduction of the out of pocket expenses for parents will be financially supported by two methods: 1) low- and middle-income families will continue to benefit from additional financial aid through the incomes tested parent program, with some parents getting free child care and adjusted, partial subsidy, and 2) grants to operators to offset the reduction of out of pocket funding from parents.

### PRIORITY #2: ACCESS

## 2021-2022 \$4,000,000/2022-2023 \$17,200,000

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New Brunswick is taking a multi-pronged approach to meet the objectives of increasing quality and to ensure the responsible management of public funds. To achieve this, New Brunswick will create an additional 3,400 new child care spaces in the designated system over the five (5) years of this agreement, including 500 spaces in the first two years of this agreement. In creating these spaces, New Brunswick commits that:

- 2,400 of these spaces will be created in not-for-profit and home-based child care providers within the New Brunswick Early Learning facility designation.
- 1,000 of these spaces will be created in for-profit child care centers within the New Brunswick Early Learning facility designation.

While creating these spaces, the province commits to:

- Look at ways of supporting the voluntary transition of for-profit facilities into the not-for-profit model.
- Conduct a research study in 2022-2023 to identify barriers and potential strategies to foster greater not-for-profit participation in the publicly managed system and include potential options in the next Action Plan.
- Have regular discussions with the Government of Canada on the evolution of the designation process in ensuring the responsible management of public funds. In addition, New Brunswick will aim to maximize the utilization of current existing child care spaces, by providing adequate funding to fill at least 2,000 currently unoccupied spaces in designated centres and homes.

## PRIORITY #3: INCLUSION

### 2022-2023: \$2,900,000

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New Brunswick will explore ways to continue to further remove barriers to an equitable access for vulnerable children and children from diverse populations to high quality affordable early learning as an equalizer to create engaged and well-prepared young learners. Vulnerable children and children from diverse populations include, but are not limited to, lower-income families, Indigenous families, lone-parent families, and families in underserved communities, including Black and racialized families; families of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports; and families with caregivers who are working non-standard hours.

New Brunswick will do this by developing and funding a plan to enhance or improve inclusion of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports by:

- Exploring funding for full-time quality early learning and child care for four (4) year old children from low income families or families who would not otherwise have access. In this prototype New Brunswick will fund 100 spaces annually for children starting in 2022-2023. This may include children's tuition fees, transportation and additional ECEs.
- Improving access to enhanced or individual supports for children with complex needs, with mobility and self-care limits, where warranted, who are participating in early learning and child care. New Brunswick will increase the number of available seats for children who need one-on-one care by 31 additional spaces in 2022-2023, bringing the total number of spaces up to 140 across the province. New Brunswick will add an additional 32 spaces under the 2023-2026 Action Plan to bring the total number of spaces up to 172 by 2025-2026.
- Addressing the challenges for the recruitment and retention of the inclusion support workers.
- New Brunswick will collaborate with First Nations organizations and communities to better understand their needs and establish a plan for early learning and child care services for Indigenous children.

## PRIORITY #4: QUALITY

### 2022-2023: \$23,000,000

## STRENGTHENING OUR WORKFORCE

### Recruitment and Retention:

New Brunswick will explore ways to improve ECE recruitment and retention by:

- Developing and implementing an ECE wage grid that will support the recruitment and retention of qualified educators and attract others to the profession no later than 2022-2023. This wage grid will be based on levels of training and steps and recognizes years of experience. This grid will be regularly updated.
- Increasing operational funding to assist with the daily costs associated with running an early learning child care facility and increasing the wages of ECEs in facilities participating in the Designation Program.

- Exploring an ECE retention strategy in consultation with the early learning and child care sector.
- Building upon the mechanism for recognition of qualifications for ECEs who completed their training outside of Canada to facilitate recruitment of new Canadians ensuring that they can fully benefit from the wage supports and contribute to the ECE workforce gap.
- Exploring ways to fast track immigration for individuals wanting to work in the early learning and child care sector.
- Expanding the access to more high school students to the Introduction to Early Childhood Education online course offered as part of the Experiential Learning Program in anglophone and francophone public high schools as a method to recruit ECEs.

#### Training:

New Brunswick commits to improving training for ECEs by:

- Developing and implementing a robust, comprehensive professional learning plan that will support ECE in upgrading their skills, knowledge, and practices. To achieve this, New Brunswick will continue to build on the 2021-2025 Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement and the 2021 ECE Workforce Strategy and support ECE through the innovative training models, the ECE Career Growth and Development Program and the Emergent Leaders Institute.
- Annual spending for training and professional development will increase in proportion to the increase in regulated child care spaces and the number of ECEs.
- Building on the ECE Workforce Strategy, New Brunswick commits to increasing the percentage of trained educators to 60% from the current level of 49% by 2025-2026. This represents 376 educators and home operators receiving training by 2025-2026.
- Committing to working with the ECE workforce to identify pedagogical tools and supports needed to deliver high quality, inclusive early education and maximizing learning and care for vulnerable children.
- Exploring standards of practice for ECEs on pedagogical approaches and practices to deliver high quality, inclusive early learning.
- Extending access to the innovative “Early Childhood Education” training for ECEs in collaboration with the New Brunswick Community College and the College Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick.

## PRIORITY #5: REPORTING

2021-2022: \$1,600,000/ 2022-2023: \$8,200,000

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New Brunswick commits to further exploring data collection methods leveraging the Registry with New Brunswick Institute for Research Data and Training (NBIRD) and the ability to conduct an annual census. New Brunswick will also hold consultations with key stakeholders, and partners, including parents and early learning and child care operators to identify data that can be collected and the preferred methods for collecting the requested data. New Brunswick collects data on provincially licensed facilities and spaces located in Indigenous communities, however no additional data will be collected on Indigenous children without consultation and approval from the Indigenous community.

**Related link:** [Building a Canada-wide early learning and child care system](#) [4]

**Region:** [New Brunswick](#) [5]

**Tags:** [universal child care](#) [6]

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Links

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