

Inclusion support workers receive hourly wage increase in line with early childhood educators ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

FREDERICTON (GNB) – Inclusion support workers at early learning and child-care facilities will receive an increase in hourly wages, matching their compensation with early childhood educators. This is in recognition of inclusive learning practices and to support equal opportunities for every child.

“Inclusion support workers ensure children with additional needs have the support they need to participate in early learning with their peers,” said Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Dominic Cardy. “It is important that we recognize all that they do. The department is actively working on many initiatives aimed at developing the existing early learning and child-care workforce and attracting, recruiting and retaining qualified professionals to this sector to promote affordable, high-quality and inclusive early learning and care for every child.”

Trained inclusion support workers, who have completed the one-year Early Childhood Education certificate or equivalent, will have their salaries increased to \$23.47 per hour. Untrained inclusion support workers will have their hourly wage increased to \$16.90. This includes funding provided to operators to address increases in the minimum wage. The increase will come into effect Aug. 1.

To help support the overall workforce strategy for the early learning and child-care sector, the department has contracted the Restigouche Community Business Development Corporation to hold job fairs in the coming weeks along with sector associations and operators to help facilities recruit qualified early learning staff and attract other professionals to the sector.

“The child-care workforce is at the heart of our Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care System,” said federal Families, Children and Social Development Minister Karina Gould. “Today’s announcement shows the value of their essential work and will help ensure they have the support they need to continue nurturing our children.”

In partnership with Working NB, the provincial government will engage with the sector to develop a robust recruitment and retention strategy and a three-year action plan to specifically meet the recruitment and retention needs of this sector. This will support ongoing engagement sessions which aim at ensuring early learning and child-care sector initiatives are meaningful and impactful in the long term.

The department will also be covering a one-year membership for all early learning and child-care operators to Econocoop to support their day-to-day operations. The cooperative enterprise allows providers access to significant discounts, free personalized coaching, and a revenue and expenses calculator.

“The recruitment and retention of qualified early childhood educators has often presented challenges for operators in creating new spaces at facilities,” said Cardy. “Our workforce strategy aims to promote the profession and provide valuable resources to operators that can assist them in growing their businesses and providing high-quality early learning and child care to our children.”

These initiatives supporting the workforce strategy are made available through the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, which provides a federal investment of almost \$492 million, plus over \$48.1 million through the extension of the Canada-New Brunswick Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and the one-time investment of \$9.2 million in 2021-22 to support New Brunswick’s early childhood educator recruitment and retention efforts.

In addition to the federal contribution, the provincial government is contributing \$53 million over the course of the agreement, which builds on the more than \$70 million invested annually in the province’s early learning and child-care sector.

Region: New Brunswick ^[4]

Tags: wages ^[5]

inclusion ^[6]

government ^[7]

early childhood education and care workforce ^[8]

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