MCCA media release – Canada-Manitoba ELCC Agreement – One year later [1]

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EXCERPTS:

August 9th, 2022 marks the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Canada-Manitoba Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. One year later – what has changed for early learning and child care (ELCC) in Manitoba and what are the next steps? Supporting the Province of Manitoba with the historic and transformative Canada-wide plan, MCCA has recommended in its Roadmap to a Quality Early Learning and Child Care System in Manitoba, 25 policy actions that are essential to the success of building an ELCC system in Manitoba. They are: affordability, accessibility and of critical importance, quality.

Affordability – In an effort to make child care fees more affordable to Manitoba families, the Province of Manitoba has relied on its subsidy system to reduce out of pocket expenses. However, affordability for Manitoba families must transition from this outdated approach via core operational funding that supports all child care operations, which will allow for a set/low maximum fee for all families, along with a further reduction or elimination of fees for low-income families. This will further support equitable and inclusive programs for all.

Accessibility – Manitoba has established an ambitious target of the creation of 23,000 new spaces over the next 5 years. To date, $8.1M in grants have been announced to fund more than 3100 expansion spaces. To reach this target, the Manitoba government must develop a comprehensive, multi-year expansion plan and ELCC workforce strategy that prioritizes the 3,000 plus ECEs who will be required to work in these new spaces. Further, MCCA recommends that the plan for accessibility be collaborative with all orders of government and includes developing an inventory of public buildings and lands that have the potential to house child care centres, or to provide opportunities for the construction of new facilities.

Quality – Manitoba's ELCC workforce is the key to quality. ECEs and providers require fair wages and benefits. In order to achieve this, MCCA has submitted to the Province of Manitoba its Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale 2022- 2023. This research and evidence-based scale has been developed with salary data from comparative jobs that require similar training and responsibility and accurately reflects the current labour market in Manitoba. Its implementation will be essential to support holistic system building and the recruitment and retention of ECEs and providers.

The Manitoba Child Care Association is a membership funded organization that advocates for a quality system of child care and works to advance early childhood education as a profession.
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