

Government of Saskatchewan offers free training for early childhood educators ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Saskatchewan is committing nearly \$9 million for training and professional development grants for the early learning and child care sector. This is part of Saskatchewan's commitment to improve quality in the early years and child care sector, and is just one of many programs delivered through the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

The province has partnered with Collège Mathieu, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) and Saskatchewan Polytechnic (Sask Polytech) to make Early Childhood Education (ECE) training opportunities available at no charge. The three post-secondary institutions have programming available beginning in 2022-23.

"Early Childhood Educators have a positive impact on the learning and development of Saskatchewan's youngest learners," Education Minister Dustin Duncan said. "That's why we are working with post-secondary institutions to deliver training opportunities for ECEs and those who want to work in early learning and child care."

"There is no child care system without an Early Learning and Child Care workforce," Canada's Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, said. "Early Childhood Educators do incredible work in nurturing our children, and these training and professional development opportunities are meaningful to ensure they have access to the tools and resources they need to succeed."

Early childhood educators, regulated child care home providers and child care home assistants will be prioritized for enrolment and other participants wanting to become ECEs or to open their own family child care home are also welcome to enroll. Much of the training is online so that it can be taken on evenings and weekends, at the student's pace and when it is most convenient for them.

The training and professional development opportunities range from ECE certificate courses and diploma training to more specialized training such as an Autism Certificate of Achievement, a Francophone course for ECEs to support children with Autism, and Truth and Reconciliation workshops.

"This collaboration between the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education and Collège Mathieu will allow us to continue to promote better access to flexible training and an enhancement of the Early Childhood Education program offered by our institution, to increase a Francophone workforce and support sufficient staffing in early childhood centres," Chief Executive Officer of Collège Mathieu, Francis Kasongo said. "It will also contribute to the professional development and enrichment of any person, Francophone or Francophile, who is already working or considering a career in the field of Early Childhood Education."

"Our commitment to providing accessible training options for Early Childhood Educators that are culturally responsive, grounded in Indigenous pedagogy and traditional practice, and based on community and industry need, remains steadfast," President and CEO of the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, Riel Bellegarde said. "SIIT is excited to continue developing and delivering various professional development and Early Childhood Education Level I, II and III certification programs to Indigenous learners and child care professionals across Saskatchewan."

"We are deeply grateful to the Government of Saskatchewan for investing in the institution's early childhood education programs," Saskatchewan Polytechnic CEO and President, Dr. Larry Rosia said. "Through this funding, Sask Polytech is able to offer additional seats through the School of Continuing Education, as well as to provide free tuition to students enrolled in the Building the Future program. By growing the number of trained Early Childhood Educators across the province, we give an opportunity for childcare centres to meet the needs of parents and caregivers and provide a higher level of care for Saskatchewan's children." Other grant funding is available for regulated child care home providers and child care centres to support their staff participating in the training. Facilities can visit saskatchewan.ca or contact their Early Learning and Child Care Consultant for more information on available grant funding.

Providing grants for Early Childhood Educators is just one part of a larger initiative by the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan to implement a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care System. The Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, signed a year ago, provides a federal investment of nearly \$1.1 billion over five years for regulated early learning and child care

programs and services for children under the age of six in Saskatchewan. With 70 per cent child care fee reductions already announced in the province, the goal is to bring down average fees for regulated child care to \$10-a-day by the end of March 2026.

Region: Saskatchewan ^[3]

Tags: early childhood education and care workforce ^[4]

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