ECEBC | early childhood educators of BC

ECEBC Responds to Pedagogy Program Cuts

The purpose of this statement is to express our deep concern about the government's recent decision to discontinue funding for the Early Childhood Pedagogist Program and to recommend the next foundational step: embedding pedagogical leadership within British Columbia's child care system, building on the significant investments and progress achieved to date. This position is informed by the Pedagogy Network learnings and the positive impacts of the program shared by Early Childhood Educators and operators across British Columbia.

Since 2011, The Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) has committed to a vision of a public, relational, and ethical system that enshrines the human rights of children and ensures equitable access to high-quality, affordable, accessible child care, as outlined in the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning (also known as the $10aDay Plan) in which Early Childhood Educators are valued for their professional contributions.

This recommendation is grounded in ECEBC's extensive history, the learning generated through the Early Childhood Pedagogical Program, and the overwhelming feedback we have received from educators, operators, and families who have experienced its positive impact firsthand. Across British Columbia, educators have shared their disappointment with the decision and have urged continued investment in pedagogical leadership, recognizing its essential role in supporting educator practice, strengthening professional identity, and enhancing the quality of early learning environments for children. It is through sustained pedagogical presence and relationships that support educators in enacting the ELF in ways grounded in children's experiences.

The key themes emerging from the impact of this program include:

- Supporting educators across the province in enacting the complex pedagogical, ethical, relational, and inclusive commitments articulated within the BC Early Learning Framework (Government of British Columbia, 2019).
- Pedagogists play a unique role, requiring familiarity with the field and specific qualifications.
- The network has provided meaningful opportunities for educators to deepen their practice, strengthen their skills, and develop confidence as professionals.
- Children have experienced more responsive, rights-based, and meaningful early learning environments.
- The Pedagogist Program has had a positive impact on recruitment and retention.
- The program has enhanced vital professional development that elevates practice and care.

As one program manager stated, “This program has been a huge driver for retention and recruitment purposes…working with pedagogists has helped create the conditions for educators to make the ELF accessible to families, liveable in tangible ways within their practices and create a sense of pride in the deeper parts of their work” *(H. R., Nelson, BC)*

A father of three children who accesses $10aDay child care explained in his email, “I know budgets are tight, but I strongly urge provincial decision-makers to retain pedagogists in the childcare system. Removing this role would be a false economy: pedagogists raise quality, build educator confidence, and ultimately benefit children, families, and communities.” (*J.I. East Vancouver, BC)*

#309 – 515 West Pender St, Vancouver BC V6B 1V5
P 604 709 6063 F 604 709 6077 TF 1 800 797 5602
www.ecebc.ca

A long-time Pedagogist shared, “I see first-hand the difference that pedagogical support makes for ECEs and children in everyday practice and how having a professional role for ECEs as another option to aspire to throughout their career trajectories is vital, especially in these times of struggling with recruitment and retention across the field as well as continuing to provide support for complex and vital work done on the floor as ECE.”. (N.N. Victoria, BC)

From our initial understanding, the original intent was for the Pedagogy Network to examine how to implement the pedagogist role (as described in the BC Early Learning Framework) so that it would be part of the delivery of a universal, inclusive and high-quality early years system, which aligns with ECEBC’s position, “Educators create and work with pedagogical commitments to respond to current conditions of our time. Today’s children inherit challenging issues including rampant climate change, systemic racism, global pandemics, ongoing violence and displacement, war and persecution, poverty, and extractive global trends amongst many others. They also inherit advances in human rights, technology, artistic movements, and other positive shifts in societal values. These conditions demand careful ethical and pedagogical responses that have the potential to enact transformative change. Educators collaboratively craft these pedagogical responses in local contexts, always responding to particular local values as well as global challenges and opportunities without applying universal solutions. These pedagogical commitments and responses contest the dominant discourses of developmentalism and schoolification and bring new narratives into early education,” The Role of Early Childhood in British Columbia (2022).

Additionally, the Early Childhood Pedagogical Program has seen 91% of educators report improved work performance, 77% report changes in their pedagogical practice for the better, and 83% report changes in children's curriculum experiences. ECEBC has hosted numerous free online engagements with the ECPN, totalling a staggering 1123 participants in April 2025 - March 2026 alone.

ECEBC supports this role and, with the documented success, logically leads to a permanent system integration worth investing in. ECEBC urges the government to reinstate its commitment to implementing the pedagogist role in a manner that preserves the role's integrity and ensures equitable access to pedagogists across the province. This aligns with the ChildCareBC Plan and represents a significant step toward advancing its priorities of quality and long-term workforce sustainability.

ECEBC is committed to a continued partnership to create a sustainable system of early childhood education that is inclusive and enables all children and educators to flourish.