

Media Release May 26, 2021

Evaluation of the Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy in British Columbia: Final Evaluation Report 2020

The Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) is pleased to share the *Evaluation of the Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy in British Columbia, Final Evaluation Report 2020*. Funding for this report was provided through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement.

B.C. has made a \$136M investment in an Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (ECL R&R Strategy) for BC's Early Childhood Educator sector. An evaluation project was set up to develop a continuous mechanism for the sector to provide feedback and information regarding the impact of diverse ECL R&R Strategy tactics as they are implemented.

This report is the first to capture how the ECL R&R Strategy has impacted the sector over time. The results include multi-year data from administrative sources, the 2019 and 2020 cross-sectional workforce survey, case study interviews and more. These data document the province's position in 2020 on many of the Key Performance Indicators in the evaluation framework and changes relative to 2019 and earlier. Observations from professionals working in the sector add meaning to these statistics.

Along with the many findings, the report provides provisional early answers to the evaluation questions together with policy and implementation recommendations. While the influences of COVID-19 have created unprecedented challenges in the sector and in the evaluation project, it has also caused an increase in the public's appreciation of child care professionals and not significantly increased burnout. Further results can be found in the report.

The research and community engagement process is governed by a Sector Steering Committee, key stakeholders who provided expertise and disseminated the engagement opportunities within their networks. Their commitment to the project is instrumental to its success.

The research, analysis and report were provided by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC). SRDC is a non-profit research organization, created specifically to develop, field test and rigorously evaluate new programs.

The Early Childhood Educators of BC advances early childhood education and educators in the province of British Columbia. ECEBC is dedicated to building respect for early childhood education and educators and advancing the profession. *"This project continues to provide the sector with rich data to quantify fundamental aspects of the ECL labour market. While the ECL R&R Strategy has had a marked impact on wages, 40% of professionals lack basic benefits such as paid sick leave and up to 50% do not have extended health care. Renewed effort is needed to ensure regional disparities are addressed and a provincial system of child care is built."* Emily Gawlick, Executive Director of the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC).

The Sector Labour Market Partnerships program provides “funding to organizations within an economic sector, region, or population, to develop projects that help respond to workforce challenges.” For more information about SLMP projects, see <https://www.workbc.ca/Employer-Resources/Funding-and-Programs/Sector-Labour-Market-Partnerships.aspx>

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