

For Immediate Release – Wednesday February 18, 2026

BC Budget 2026: No cuts to child care. Not a celebration – just a sigh of relief.

“We and thousands of others across the province have been crystal clear that Premier Eby’s government must not abandon the goal of universal access to quality \$10aDay child care” said Sharon Gregson, provincial spokesperson for the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC.

BC Budget 2026 creates a pause with a small provincial lift of \$90 million in 2026, bringing spending to \$947 million, with an additional \$20 million in 2027 and in 2028. Meanwhile, the federal government contributes over \$1 billion each year for child care in BC.

“We always knew that a quality, affordable, universal child care system was attainable,” said Katrina Chen, former Minister of State for Child Care and CCCABC Board Director. “After two years of no provincial budget increases, BC families need to see the government reaffirm its child care commitments and get the ChildCareBC plan back on track.”

“Government appears to have listened to the outpouring of voices arguing the economic case for a child care system with low capped fees, expanded access, and a fair wage grid for educators who are the heartbeat of a quality system” said Emily Mliczko, Executive Director of the Early Childhood Educators of BC.

“While we are relieved to see this budget is not undoing the early progress made after 2018” said Gregson, “this is not a celebration: BC has the most expensive child care in Canada; only 10% of spaces are \$10aDay, while next door in Alberta they have a province-wide fee of \$15 a day; 75% of children in BC have no access to licensed child care, and; educators still don’t have a fair wage grid.”

A short pause to implement better policies is better than moving backwards and we are committed to working with the government to achieve a universal quality \$10aDay child care system with valued and fairly compensated educators.

There’s a lot of work to do in the year ahead.

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Sharon Gregson, CCCABC Spokesperson
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