

# Child Care Expansion in BC Implementation Roles and Responsibilities

TECHNICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILD CARE POLICY MAKERS AND THE SECTOR

Written by Eric Swanson, Third Space Planning | Updated April 3, 2026

**T**his paper advances a longstanding \$10aDay proposal to make school districts responsible for planning and managing all child care expansion in BC, though not necessarily for operating the resulting programs. A district-led model would replace the current unplanned, grant-based, and market-driven approach, aligning expansion with the BC government's commitment to an integrated early learning and child care (ELCC) and K-12 system.



## CONTENTS

**PART 1 BC's Current Approach  
to Child Care Expansion / 3**

**PART 2 A Better Expansion Model  
for Universal Child Care / 5**

**PART 3 Roles at a Glance / 7**

**PART 4 Coordination Bodies / 11**

**PART 5 Additional  
Considerations / 12**

**PART 6 Conclusion / 13**

## PREAMBLE

# Indigenous early learning and child care

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC) and Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) prioritize meaningful and reciprocal connections to, collaborations with, and learnings from First Nations, Métis, and urban Indigenous early learning and child care organizations.

To date, these relationships have often confirmed many shared goals for early learning and child care that advance the well-being of children, families, educators, and communities, while also making space for the unique differences and distinct rights that exist.

Specifically, the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia, including with respect to governance over the design and delivery of early learning and child care (ELCC) services — rights that both the federal and provincial governments are obligated to uphold.

For example, Action 4.19 of British Columbia’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) Action Plan commits the province to:

*... work in collaboration with B.C. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples to implement a distinctions-based approach to support and move forward jurisdiction over child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who want and need it in B.C.<sup>1</sup>*

The present document does not presume to prescribe how the advancement of Indigenous jurisdiction over child care and child care expansion should occur.

Overall, we recognize that the technical analysis, discussion, and recommendations contained in this document — which are aimed at the BC government — may not fully resonate with First Nations and Métis governments or Indigenous early learning and child care organizations. We offer this work in the spirit of dialogue and acknowledge that distinctions-based approaches may require different pathways, structures, and policy tools.

# BC's Current Approach to Child Care Expansion

The BC government's current approach to child care expansion is **unplanned, grant-based, and market-driven.**

Unplanned in that — unlike K-12 or health care — there are no provincially-approved plans or delegated local authorities driving expansion. Instead, it is largely up to hundreds of individual organizations (public, non-profit, and for-profit centres and home-based providers) to voluntarily undertake all of the work of creating new spaces.<sup>2</sup>

Grant-based, in that some of these organizations can compete for a limited number of provincial capital grants, when available.<sup>3</sup> And market-driven, in that — whether grant-supported or independently financed — the province still relies on a 'market' of willing proponents to initiate, design, and deliver projects.<sup>4</sup>

## Rationale for Current Approach

One could argue that BC's unplanned, grant-based, and market-driven approach offered a route to rapidly deliver new spaces following the province's groundbreaking 2018 commitment to universal child care. It avoided having to set up new public planning and delivery structures by tapping into existing sector experience and willingness to voluntarily expand, allowing for rapid fund deployment and an overall expansion that could be characterized as "sector-led." These same drivers were present when historic levels of federal child care funding began flowing in 2021.

## Problems with current approach

BC's initial approach to expansion has now become entrenched, creating at least six major, systemic problems.

### 1. There is still no designated planning authority.

Eight years into BC's 10-year ChildCareBC plan, there is still no public body with responsibility for formal expansion planning or for ensuring demand is met.<sup>5</sup> While the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC) administers several child care funding programs — whose eligibility and criteria have provided some limited prioritization for new spaces — these programs serve only a broad mandate to improve access.<sup>6</sup> In practice, new spaces are established wherever a non-ministry proponent can assemble a feasible project: typically through some combination of competitive provincial capital grants, their own resources, evolving assumptions about provincial operating funding and — in the case of for-profits — profit potential.

The persistence of this project-by-project, proponent-led expansion — which stands in sharp contrast to the coordinated, public capital planning systems used in K-12, health care, and other core public services — has led to the additional problems described below.

## **2. It has maintained highly unequal access, with large gaps to universal coverage.**

While BC reports gaining 44,000 child care spaces since 2018,<sup>7</sup> the current distribution of spaces is highly unequal — ranging from 15% of children having access in some school districts to more than 40% in others — with an estimated 255,000 additional spaces required to achieve universal coverage (including school-age care).<sup>8</sup>

## **3. It is inefficient and compromises quality.**

The competitive capital grant process consumes significant time, effort, and resources across the sector, including for the many unsuccessful applicants. For both grant-supported and independently financed projects, BC's current approach also creates strong incentives to reduce per-space costs at the expense of quality — often by meeting only minimum licensing requirements instead of incorporating the best practices in BC's own Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the system forgoes the economies of scale, design consistency, and quality assurance that coordinated planning could achieve.

## **4. It has facilitated a problematic increase in for-profit care.**

Contrary to BC's commitment to prioritize public, non-profit, and Indigenous child care expansion,<sup>10</sup> for-profit child care has grown rapidly in recent years. For example, recent estimates suggest for-profit spaces accounted for 76 per cent of expansion from Q4 2022 to Q1 2025, the third-highest for-profit share in the country.<sup>11</sup> Numerous studies have demonstrated that, *on average*, for-profit centres are less stable, more expensive, and lower in measured quality.<sup>12</sup> In other words, for-profit expansion is risky. While BC must fairly and effectively integrate existing for-profit child care into the system, for-profit expansion should not be further incentivized with public funds; instead, policy should focus on transitioning all operators — public, non-profit, and for-profit — into a transparent, consistent,

accountable, “two-pillar” public funding model (low set fees combined with competitive and equitable set compensation for educators).<sup>13</sup>

## **5. It makes it difficult to accurately budget.**

Relying on a market of individual organizations to initiate and implement child care expansion means that, so long as provincial operating funding streams remain open to all new licensed providers, it's more difficult for the province to reliably forecast and control its operating budget. That challenge is particularly true for the roughly 50 per cent of expansion that is independently-financed (not grant-supported).<sup>14</sup> For these spaces, the province typically only learns of their existence once they're completed and licensed. This unplanned and unpredictable approach creates indirect pressures to limit operating spending in other system-undermining ways — such as by suppressing educator compensation — and exacerbates inequitable expansion (see 2, above).

## **6. It doesn't guarantee child care over the long-term.**

While the for-profit component of child care expansion is inherently less stable,<sup>15</sup> even public and non-profit organizations are free to transition new, provincially-funded child care facilities to non-child care uses after five to 30 years (depending on the grant amount and year).<sup>16</sup> This is in contrast to publicly-funded and owned schools and hospitals that, generally, continue to provide the intended service over the building's entire life.

There is now a clear opportunity — while the construction of new spaces catches up to funding — to create a more effective long-term expansion model for universal child care.<sup>17</sup>

# A Better Expansion Model for Universal Child Care

## Building on past work, and describing a goal state

It is important to note the proposed child care expansion model set out in this document is:

- Consistent with and builds on the recommendations of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan, which aims to create universal child care in BC, as developed and updated by CCCABC and ECEBC; and
- A goal-state in that it focuses on describing a long-term, stable expansion model, not on the variety of short-term transitional phases that could be designed to achieve the goal.

### Goal

To solve the problems created by BC's unplanned, grant-based, and market-driven approach — and in alignment with the government's commitment to an integrated ELCC and K-12 system<sup>18</sup> — child care expansion should be planned and coordinated at the school district level, by school districts: a “district-planned and managed” model. The following sections describe how this could work.

Goal: Child care expansion needs to move from market-driven to school-district-planned and managed.

### Summary of the model

Boards of Education become the primary child care planning and contracting authorities in BC.<sup>19</sup> They assess local need, and develop and implement multi-year plans to meet that need — including by commissioning and managing a mixed-provider network across school and non-school sites. Here, “managing” does not necessarily mean “operating”: much of BC's child care system would remain privately operated (including by both non-profits and for-profits), over time with an increasing proportion of district-run child care. Local governments continue to manage land-use, work collaboratively with school districts and provide input into district plans, and accelerate expansion through available tools. The Ministry of Education and Child Care is the overall system steward, inheriting licensing functions and personnel currently managed by health authorities.



There is now a clear opportunity to create a more effective long-term expansion model for universal child care. PHOTO PAWEŁ PIASKOWSKI

## District plans

At the heart of a “district-planned and managed” model are district child care plans submitted by each Board of Education for ministry approval. Mirroring current K-12 planning, each district’s overall child care plan would include:

- **A NEEDS ASSESSMENT** — modelling local child care demand,<sup>20</sup> projected out 10 to 15 years, and updated annually;
- **A MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN** — a ~three-year district-wide service plan, updated annually, describing high-level service outcomes, targets, and priorities related to access, equity, inclusion, program quality, community-specific needs, and auspice<sup>21</sup> — aligned with BC’s Early Learning Framework and the ECEBC Code of Ethics;
- **CATCHMENT PLANS** — analogous to school plans, optional service plans for specific catchments;
- **A LONG-RANGE FACILITIES PLAN** — a 10 to 15 year facilities strategy to achieve and maintain universal access as per each district’s needs assessment and strategic plan (identifying priority neighbourhoods, preferred facility types and sites, long-term capital needs, etc.); and
- **A ROLLING FIVE-YEAR CHILD CARE CAPITAL PLAN** — specifying the concrete, prioritized projects the Board will pursue in the next ministry funding cycle and forming the basis of child care-related submissions into the provincial capital planning system.

# Roles at a Glance

## Ministry of Education & Child Care — system steward

The ministry holds ultimate responsibility for the function and expansion of child care across BC.

- **POLICY AND LEGISLATION:** Sets system direction and desired outcomes; establishes funding frameworks; develops the regulatory and program policy architecture; administers relevant legislation.
- **OPERATING FUNDING:** Develops a provincial operating funding budget anchored in approved district plans and an improved operating funding model;<sup>22</sup> runs the central operating-payments engine that directly funds operators.
- **EXPANSION AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT:** Co-develops and implements, with the Ministry of Infrastructure,<sup>23</sup> a multi-year provincial child care capital plan anchored in approved district plans and creating 100 per cent public ownership of new buildings.<sup>24</sup>
- **OVERSIGHT AND STANDARDS:** Guides, evaluates and approves district plans; sets data and reporting standards; maintains and mandates consistent facility design standards.<sup>25</sup>
- **LICENSING AND INSPECTION:** Inherits this function and associated personnel from health authorities (integrating child care operational oversight into one ministry).
- **INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS:** Participates in negotiating federal funding agreements, and incentivizes local government participation in child care expansion.



## Boards of Education – primary local authority

Boards of Education/school districts are designated and resourced as the local planning and contracting authorities for child care, and are a preferred public operator.

- **PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:** Prepares and implements multi-year strategic plans, long-range facilities plans, and five-year capital plans (see “District plans” on page 6).
- **CONTRACTING / PROVIDER MANAGEMENT:** Procures, contracts, and manages the local network of mixed-auspice child care providers on school and non-school sites. For clarity, “managing” does not necessarily mean “operating”: much of BC’s child care system would remain privately operated (including by both non-profits and for-profits).
- **PREFERRED PUBLIC OPERATOR:** Acts as a preferred public operator for *new* programs on school properties and other publicly controlled lands, prioritizing other public operators (e.g., local governments) or non-profit operators when not Board-run.
- **SECTOR EXPERTS:** Through the hiring of dedicated early childhood professionals, and child care planning and administrative staff, school districts develop child care expertise equivalent to their expertise in K-12 education.

## Local governments – land-use authority and planning partner

Local governments are key land-use and planning partners that enable and accelerate child care expansion.

- **ZONING AND PERMITTING:** Use official community plans (OCPs), zoning, and permitting processes to facilitate new child care facilities.
- **PLANNING INPUT:** Provide local planning expertise and input as active members of School District Child Care Councils (see below).
- **ACCELERATION TOOLS:** Utilize available tools to accelerate local expansion to the extent prioritized by local governments; for example, by incorporating child care into civic capital projects, allocating public land, and employing amenity cost charge (ACC) or density-bonusing policies/contributions.
- **ALTERNATIVE PUBLIC OPERATOR:** Directly operate new child care programs where there is a history of and/or a desire to do so (e.g., in municipally-owned facilities).



PHOTO PAWEŁ PIASKOWSKI

## Individual operators — delivery agents

Individual operators deliver child care programs, and can voluntarily participate in both Neighbourhood Child Care Networks (see Part 4) and district-planned expansion.

- **PROGRAM OPERATION:** Deliver high-quality child care programs consistent with ministry-approved district plans and service standards that align with the BC Early Learning Framework and the ECEBC Code of Ethics; receive operating funding directly from the ministry; can voluntarily participate in local coordination networks.
- **EXPANSION:** Can submit land for consideration to host new publicly-owned child care buildings; can sell buildings to the district for conversion to child care use.

## Other public entities — partners and operators

Other public entities, including the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), health authorities, Crown corporations, post-secondary Institutions, etc. serve as planning and inclusion partners, and in some cases operators.

- **SYSTEM ALIGNMENT:** Participate in district child care councils to ensure that internal capital projects (such as new hospitals, community health centres, and campus buildings) are aligned with established district child care plans.
- **OPERATORS:** A range of public entities will continue to directly operate child care (e.g., post-secondary institutions, some health authorities, etc).
- **INCLUSION:** Health authorities will continue to integrate clinical support within child care contexts. MCFD may continue to coordinate services such as supported child development; alternatively, this function could be brought over to MECC.

## Indigenous governments and organizations — self-determined roles

The specific roles of Indigenous governments and organizations (including First Nations and Métis governments and governing bodies) in child care expansion will vary from context to context, reflecting differences in the nature of Indigenous governments' desired jurisdiction, desired timelines for jurisdiction transition, etc.

As such, and per the preamble above, the present document does not presume what these roles should be, but rather calls on the BC government to uphold its commitments to Indigenous peoples in collaboratively determining them. Similarly, non-governmental Indigenous organizations will determine their own roles in child care expansion, for example in some urban settings, where the BC government's commitment to collaboration could lead to different models for co-creation of culturally appropriate programming.

We note the recent requirement for Boards of Education to establish Indigenous Education Councils, rooted in DRIPA Action Plan Item 4.3, and the potential parallels for child care, particularly in the context of this document's recommendation for the role of Boards of Education to be expanded into child care system planning and management.

# Coordination Bodies

Two new kinds of coordination bodies could help co-develop and deliver district child care plans.

## School District Child Care Councils (planning/oversight)

Board-facing planning and advisory bodies that help develop district child care plans. Convened and chaired by Boards of Education, with membership including trustees, district leadership, early childhood professionals, local governments, Indigenous leadership representatives, child care resource and referral agencies (CCRRs), provider representatives (public, Indigenous, non-profit and for-profit), community reps, and allied public partners (e.g., post-secondary).<sup>26</sup>

**MANDATE:** With new dedicated resources, co-develop and recommend a single unified district child care plan to the Board of Education for adoption (see “District Plans,” above); ensure transparency by publishing an annual progress report.

## Neighbourhood Child Care Networks (delivery/operations)

Practitioner-facing collaboratives that serve as the community level operational hub for child care delivery. Convened and chaired by Boards of Education and aligned with school catchments, open to educators and administrators from all licensed and and license-not-required providers (group, family, multi-age), CCRRs, plus school principals/ELCC leads.

**MANDATE:** With new dedicated resources, coordinate standardized waitlist tools, substitute staff pools, professional development calendars, inclusion transitions, and transport links; provide input into the district child care plan regarding the local needs of families, potential service sites, etc.; provide rapid feedback on access and quality barriers.

*The functions of these two bodies could be merged in districts where that was more practical.*

# Additional Considerations

## Evolution of school districts' role

Boards of Education currently govern and operate public schools, and host a limited number of child care programs. In an integrated child care and education system, their role and funding would expand to include planning, contracting, and managing all child care programs across multiple providers and sites. Here, “managing” does not necessarily mean “operating”: much of BC’s child care system would remain privately operated (by both non-profits and for-profits). This would bring school districts’ scope functionally closer to that of health authorities, which also manage networks of private providers alongside their own direct operations.

In other words, Boards of Education become **Boards of Education and Child Care**.

## School-age care as a near-term opportunity

In a district-planned and K-12 integrated child care system, all licensed child care is planned and commissioned by Boards of Education. Initially, mandating and resourcing school districts to provide universal school-age care is an obvious, cost-effective, and near-term opportunity toward that expanded scope. The key is to communicate and immediately begin the process of resourcing districts to become the primary local authorities for all child care, while this near-term opportunity is leveraged.

## Why not local governments as system planners?

While BC has historically funded some child care needs assessment and planning projects at the local government level,<sup>27</sup> and while some systems (e.g., in Ontario) designate local governments as primary child care system planners and managers, in BC’s context it makes most sense for school districts to take on this role. The two main reasons are: BC has already committed to and is actively working toward an integrated ELCC and K-12 system;<sup>28</sup> and unlike Ontario, BC does not have a legislative framework or history of local governments being core social service system managers, i.e., local governments would need to buy-in, major legislative change would be required, a whole new system established, and major questions addressed about whether this signals or initiates a transition to *other* social services being similarly managed, as in the Ontario system. While school districts should therefore be the primary planning authority, local governments continue to play other, key roles (see p. 8).

## Ending public funding for unplanned expansion

For clarity, moving to a school-district-planned and managed expansion model would mean that in order for new child care programs to be eligible for public operating funding they would need to be established within that framework — that is, created or contracted by a school district as part of the approved district plan for child care in that community.

# Conclusion

Following BC's initial commitment to universal child care in 2018, the provincial government's unplanned, grant-based, and market-driven approach to child care expansion provided an expedient path to new spaces and early results – allowing growth to begin before a planning system akin to those in K-12 and health care could be established.

However, eight years into BC's 10-year ChildCareBC plan, the persistence of this unplanned approach has created and exacerbated major, systemic problems in the child care sector and for the province.

To address these problems, the province should now transition to a school-district-planned and managed model better suited to achieving high-quality, universal child care, bringing system planning closer to that used in other core public services.

Alongside this transition, the province needs to implement other major system reforms including:

- A province-wide wage grid, plus pensions and benefits for educators;
- Implementing the above via a significantly-improved \$10aDay operating funding model; and
- The transition of all publicly funded programs to this improved \$10aDay model.

See [10aday.ca](http://10aday.ca) for more details.

In the absence of these additional reforms, many newly-built spaces will lack the willing operators and/or qualified educators required to provide the high quality, inclusive, and affordable child care services that BC families need.



# Endnotes

- 1 Government of British Columbia, Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan (2022-2027), (p. 25). For more information see also: First tripartite memorandum of understanding signed on early learning and child care for First Nations (2024), and the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework.
- 2 In a few cases, municipalities have stepped in to help fill this gap. For example, the City of Vancouver has a long history of assessing child care needs and supporting the development of new spaces through partnerships and a variety of funding tools, including development cost levies and community amenity contributions. In June 2022 Council approved *Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy*, which established renewed directions for childcare that align the City's policies, investments and other municipal tools to support the goal of **a senior government-led system of universal childcare**. In the absence of such a system, several other municipalities have adopted various approaches to help address the child care needs of their residents.
- 3 Provincial capital grants have included the "Rapid Renovation Fund," the "New Spaces Fund" (with the most recent round open to public, non-profit and Indigenous applications), as well as the much smaller "Start-Up Grants" program (open to licensed home-based care providers), altogether accounting for roughly half of new space creation since 2018.
- 4 Here, the 'market' of proponents can include any combination of public (e.g., local government) and private (non-profit or for-profit) organizations. In other words, 'market' is used to describe a mode of initiation rather than a particular sector of society.
- 5 Although sometimes referred to as a "plan," ChildCareBC functions primarily as a funding and policy framework rather than an operational or spatial plan for delivering universal child care across BC. Likewise, the only published "Action Plan" under BC's CWELCC funding agreement with the federal government ("Annex 2") sets high-level goals and targets but does not assign planning authority, specify where or how new spaces should be developed, or create district- or region-level governance structures comparable to those used in K-12 or health care.

In 2019, under the Community Child Care Planning Program administered by the Union of B.C. Municipalities, the province provided small (< \$25,000) grants to local governments aimed at developing "community child care space creation action plan[s]." However, these local plans: (a) used varying methods to assess need; and (b) were created in the absence of any formal system governance akin to K-12 or health care (i.e., no one was given the formal responsibility or clear resourcing to actually execute child care expansion). In short, one could characterize these 2019 grants as essentially the province asking local governments to think about what they could voluntarily do themselves without any guarantee of provincial support.
- 6 For example, the Premier's January 2025 mandate letter to the Minister of Education and Child Care assigns the broad task of "continu[ing] implementing ChildCareBC to improve access to accessible, affordable child care" and of expanding spaces cost-effectively (ChildCareBC is discussed in endnote 5). The ministry's 2025/26-2027/28 Service Plan likewise uses broad language — describing the ministry as responsible for "ensuring a strong and accessible child care system" and "increasing the number of available child care spaces" — but does not provide or reference any framework for regional or district-level planning responsibilities, geographic access targets, or system-governance or accountability structures. Taken together, these instruments reflect high-level policy mandates to improve access, not the kind of formal system planning used in K-12 or health care, which aims for universal access.

As referenced in MECC's 2022/23 - 2024/25 Service Plan (p. 14), at one time there was a plan to establish six regional child care offices, further described in a Government of BC information presentation (p. 12) as a "single point of contact" for child care organizations in each region. However, publicly available documents do not describe a detailed governance model or mandate for these offices, and in any case this initiative was subsequently cancelled (per its absence from the subsequent service plan).
- 7 Government of British Columbia, Ministry of Education and Child Care 2025/26-2027/28 Service Plan (p. 7); the cited 44,000 spaces is reported as equivalent to a 39 per cent increase since 2018.
- 8 Current levels of access – as well as the estimated gap to universal coverage – are broken down by school district and age at [10aday.ca/highly\\_unequal\\_access](https://10aday.ca/highly_unequal_access).
- 9 Government of British Columbia, Ministry of Education and Child Care, "Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres." The stated intent of these guidelines includes "support[ing] and align[ing] with the principles identified and described in the B.C. Early Learning Framework, the ECEBC Code of Ethics, the federal Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework and the federal Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework" (p. 11).
- 10 Eric Swanson, "Auspice prioritization under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements," CCCABC, 2024.
- 11 David Macdonald, "Cash Cow: Assessing child care space creation progress," Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2025 (p. 21, Figure 5). Although provincial "New Spaces" capital grants now exclude for-profit providers, public operating funding continues to support their unlimited expansion.

- 12 For example, see: Martha Friendly et al., “Risky Business: Child care ownership in Canada past, present and future,” Childcare Resource and Research Unit, 2021.
- 13 Eric Swanson, “Bringing BC’s for-profit child care operators into a \$10aDay model: Technical recommendations for child care policy makers and the sector,” CCCABC and ECEBC, 2024 (pp. 3–5). And Eric Swanson, “A Two-Pillar Model: Set Fees for Families and Set Compensation for Staff — Technical Recommendations on Child Care Operating Funding for Policy Makers and the Sector,” CCCABC and ECEBC, 2024.
- 14 Eric Swanson, “Child Care Expansion in BC,” 10aDay.ca, January 19, 2026.
- 15 See endnote 12 (Friendly et al.).
- 16 For example, the 2019 New Spaces Guidelines required grant recipients to commit to only 5–15 years of child care operation as follows: less than \$50,000 → 5 years; between \$50,000 and \$500,000 → 10 years; and over \$500,000 → 15 years. These commitment levels evolved through subsequent intakes, with the 2024–2025 intake requiring the same number of years of child care operation for grants under \$500,000, but introducing a new range of 15–30 years for larger grants.
- 17 Between fiscal year 2018/2019 and September 2025, BC had provided grants for a cumulative total of 42,234 new child care spaces, of which only 27,781 (two thirds) were operational. Data as per “B.C. Child Care Data and Reports,” Accelerated Space Creation tab, accessed December 5, 2025 at [studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/childcare).
- 18 An integration that was further advanced by the October 2025 introduction and subsequent passage of Bill 19, which enables boards of education to directly provide child care for all ages, year-round.
- 19 As per the Preamble, this may not be the case wherever a First Nations or Métis government chooses to advance their jurisdiction over child care by becoming or creating this authority themselves.
- 20 See: Eric Swanson, “Child Care When Families Need It: 30 Recommendations for Advancing Non-standard Hours and Flexibly Scheduled \$10aDay Child Care in BC,” CCCABC, 2025. In particular, refer to recommendation #21 and pp. 22-25.
- 21 Regarding auspice, each district should — consistent with BC’s CWELCC agreement and to avoid the issues of expanding for-profit child care (as per endnotes 12 and 13, Friendly et al., and Swanson) — exclusively expand via public, Indigenous, non-profit, and in some cases licensed home-based operators. With respect to BC’s commitment to an integrated ELCC and K-12 system, each district should assess the best local strategy for creating tightly integrated ELCC and K-12 teams, including deciding on a targeted proportion of Board-operated child care programs.
- 22 Refer to endnotes 13 and 20 for recommendations to improve BC’s operating funding model.
- 23 As of writing, certain K-12 and child care capital planning responsibilities have been/are being transferred to the new Ministry of Infrastructure. The present document treats the specific internal division of capital planning responsibilities between MECC and Mol as to-be-determined. The *essential* change is for new child care projects to enter the provincial capital pipeline as components of ministry-approved, multi-year district child care plans led by boards of education, rather than as standalone, proponent-initiated applications under the historic New Spaces Fund.
- 24 To the extent public capital funding is needed to sustain programs operating out of existing, privately-owned buildings, this public capital funding should come with strict accountability guardrails (e.g., see endnote 13 “Bringing B.C.’s for-profit child care operators...” pp. 7-8).
- 25 That is, above current licensing minimums, making key aspects of BC’s current *voluntary* design guidelines *mandatory* for all new facilities.
- 26 These District Child Care Councils would be similar to the “Early Childhood Councils” proposed by ECEBC in a 2020 position paper: “Integrating the Early Childhood Education Professional and Programs into the Ministry of Education,” with the following clarifications: (a) the District Child Care Councils described in the present document would be a planning/advisory body, with the district itself directly managing implementation via the establishment of specialized internal teams/departments; (b) the “Early Care and Learning Service Plans” in the 2020 position paper are elaborated on in the present document by way of the described “District Plans.”
- 27 See endnote 5 (re: Community Child Care Planning Program).
- 28 Progress towards this integration includes: (a) a unified Ministry of Education and Child Care; (b) BC School Act measures that integrate all-age, year-round child care into school districts’ purview; (c) MECC funding for ELCC leads in all districts; and (d) the vast majority of districts already hold a license to operate child care (including some who operate infant/toddler and/or 3–5 in addition to school-age care).

This facility receives direct provincial funding to reduce child care costs for families.



ChildCareBC

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Our offices are located on ancestral and traditional Coast Salish territory, including the lands belonging to the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.